Social Media- a new Virtual Civil Society in Egypt?

Abdulaziz Sharbatly

This is a digitised version of a dissertation submitted to the University of Bedfordshire.

It is available to view only.

This item is subject to copyright.

•

Social Media -   a new virtual civil society in Egypt?

UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE

November 2014

Social Media: a new virtual civil society

in Egypt?

by

Abdulaziz Sharbatly

A thesis submitted to the University of Bedfordshire in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Research Institute for Media, Arts & Performance

Journalism & Communications Department

November 2014

Abstract

This project seeks to trace the power of social media in serving as a virtual civil society in the Arab world, focusing on Egypt as a case study. This study aims to explore the role of social media in mobilising Egyptian activists across generations, and particularly in reaching out to people under the age of 35 who constitute around 50 per cent of the population. Studies preceding the 2011 uprising reported that young Egyptians were politically apathetic and were perceived as incapable of bringing about genuine political changes.

Drawing on a range of methods and data collected from focus groups of young people under the age of 35, interviews with activists (across generations and gender), and via a descriptive web feature analysis, it is argued that online action has not been translated into offline activism. The role of trust in forming online networks is demonstrated, and how strong ties can play a pivotal role in spreading messages via social media sites. Activists relied on social media as a medium of visibility; for those who were not active in the political sphere, social media have been instrumental in raising their awareness about diverse political movements and educating them about the political process, after decades of political apathy under Mubarak's regime. The most important benefit of using social media is the increased political knowledge and information available regarding the political situation in Egypt, despite many young people still confining their political activities to passive acts of 'share', 'like' or 'post' on social media. Activists have used social media to ensure visibility of their actions, not only nationally, but also regionally and internationally. There remains a strong need for offline organization and activism by using social media as a communication avenue, not necessarily as a catalyst for changing the political process.

A number of problems associated with the use of such media in political deliberations concerning Egypt are highlighted, notwithstanding the positive effects of social media on the political socialisation of young Egyptians. One such problem is the lack of sustainability in online campaigns which should ideally

convert into offline collective action. It can be argued that a sustainable civil society and a truly diverse public sphere rests on more sustainable, offline action, which can indeed bring about significant changes in the Egyptian political sphere.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Ph.D. at the University of Bedfordshire.

It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Name of candidate: Signature:

Date:

Acknowledgement

While working on this dissertation and the underpinning fieldwork, I have had the privilege of receiving the support of many people, to whom I would like to extend my deep gratitude. First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor at Bedfordshire University (and prior to that, at Kingston University), Professor Noha Mellor, who helped me stay on track, especially during the difficult times, when I felt so unsure about the project. The staff members at the Research Graduate School at the University of Bedfordshire were also very helpful and were always ready to offer their support and advice.

My deepest gratitude goes to my family - without their support and encouragement, I would never have been able to complete this project. I would also like to especially thank my wife for her understanding and support.

Table of Contents

Table of figures

List of tables

Introduction

0.1 Objectives

The Egyptian activist, Wael Ghonim, addressed thousands of Egyptian demonstrators in Tahrir Square, after his release from state security custody on 7 February 2011, as the administrator behind the *Facebook* page that sparked the protests. Wael Ghonim was *Google* Marketing Manager in the Middle East, and the founder of the 'We are all Khaled Said' *Facebook* page, set up to commemorate the 28-year-old man, Khaled Said, beaten to death by police officers who suspected that he was the mastermind behind a political rally. The *Facebook* page became a hub for international support which also sparked another *Facebook* page, calling for the huge demonstrations that have paralysed Egypt from 25 January 2011 until the present.

Wael Ghonim was reported 'missing' (incarcerated), following this uprising on 27 January, and re-appeared two weeks later. Ghonim admitted in his first TV interview, following his release, that many people, including police forces, did not take his and other young people's use of social media as a sign of real mobilisation; not many could have predicted the power of the internet or what Ghonim called 'the revolution of the youth of the internet'; when the uprising proved successful, Ghonim and other young men were arrested, suspected of having been backed by 'foreign forces' who offered training and funding, although many of those young men, as Ghonim said in his interview, were well-off: 'If I was [*sic*] a traitor I would have stayed in my villa with my swimming pool in the Emirates. We are not traitors,' he said. Ghonim's role in sparking the uprising on the internet was acknowledged in the government's attempts to block *Facebook* and *Twitter* accounts in Egypt, amidst condemnation by the U.S.A. and other Western countries.

This project seeks to trace the power of social media in serving as a virtual civil society in the Arab world, focusing on Egypt as a topical case study. The project then addresses an acute area of research, documenting the impact of media technologies on political movements, particularly in a region like the Arab world, which has witnessed severe political turmoil following its independence in the 1950s and 1960s. A particular investigation will be conducted on how social media could facilitate the change in the balance of power between the Egyptian regime and the opposition, and how the use of this type of media may lead to more collective action in Egypt.

The massive protests of 2011, which marked the end of 'the spiral of silence' for millions of Egyptians (Iskandar, 2013), and the massive coverage across regional as well as international media was significant for this researcher, not only because of family connections in Cairo, but also because it was relevant to this thesis. The revolution of 2011 appeared to be the climax of the political situation in Egypt; however, the upheaval would be repeated in 2013, following the election of a Muslim Brotherhood (MB) member as president, who would be ousted after only one year in power. The fast pace of this dynamic field in Egypt has its challenges (see Chapter 4) but it has also proved academically stimulating to be at the heart of events as they unfold, and to witness how people's attitudes and responses to questions (by academics or journalists) could change within a short time.

The role of social media in the uprisings has attracted a great deal of attention from many postgraduate students, including this researcher – one only has to consult the repository of theses at the American University in Cairo to access a long list of Master's dissertations dealing with similar issues, in one way or another, regarding the role of social media (*Facebook* or *Twitter*), in the revolution; despite the inevitable challenges of studying a field in flux, it has been a privilege to have been in the middle of these events in Egypt and to have talked to so many citizens, including those interviewed for this research.

0.2 Problem statement

This study aims to explore the role of social media in mobilising Egyptian activists across generations, and particularly in reaching out to people under 35 years old, said to constitute around 50 per cent of the population. The study demonstrates the activists' perception of the role of social media and their use, since 2011. Another theme pertinent to this study is the ability of these activists to utilise social media to convert online activities into offline collective action by reaching out to marginalised groups, or the silent majority (what Egyptians call the 'Couch Party'). The study therefore has the following objectives:

> (i) to identify the uses of social media in political activism in Egypt, drawing on fieldwork among activists (across generations) since 2011;

(ii) to assess the views of the young generation (under the age of 26) in the use of social media for their activism, and whether the so-called '*Facebook revolution*' has had an impact on encouraging them to further participate in the political process;

(iii) to assess whether social media have, or could have been used to mobilise previously marginalised groups (socially or politically) into offline action.

0.3 Research questions

This project aims to propose answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent has the internet changed the political sphere in Egypt: has it allowed a more democratic environment?

2. To what extent has the use of social media led to more collective action in Egypt?

3. Have social media facilitated the transformation of online activities into offline activism?

4. How have social media contributed to attract the socially or politically marginalised groups in Egyptian society?

0.4 Methodological considerations

The uprisings that swept the Arab region after December 2010 began in Tunisia with the toppling of Ben Ali, followed by Egypt and the fall of Mubarak, and continued through Syria, Yemen and Libya. They attracted global attention, not only from media professionals, but also from academics, who saw in this wave of protests an ideal opportunity to investigate the role of technology, especially the internet and social media, in mobilising massive protests. The advantage of these new and social media is that they can connect citizens across the world, and in the case of Egypt, Egyptian citizens residing in Egypt can link up with Egyptians in Diaspora, who can play a role in publicising the local Egyptians actions by using the same media (Iskandar: 2013).

Social media can be used as a powerful political and mobilisation tool. The most recent example is in Egypt, where several websites, especially those ignited by the so-called 'April 6 Youth Movement' (following the strike of 6 April 2008, calling for socio-economic and political reforms), have had a pronounced impact on the current protests in the country. The movement demanded higher wages, better public services and the end of government corruption and police torture. Faced with continuing protests, the government shifted into a policy of making concessions that would appeal to the protest groups.

Theories of social movement and collective action (Tarrow: 1998; Tilly & Tarrow: 2007) acknowledge that collective action may be bound to its specific cultural context, as participants' dispositions and repertories tend to differ from one region to another. Technology is one variable that impacts on the success and sustainability of collective action, including protests, strikes, sit-ins, and so on. Technology here should not refer only to information and communications technology (ICT), social and new media, but it should also embrace other technological advances such as the use of web-based radio stations: the *Banat-wa-Bas* ('Girls Only') station in Egypt, for example, which gained fame for its owner and director, *Amani-el-Tunsi*, which subsequently witnessed the 2011 uprising. It can also refer to the rise and proliferation of satellite television channels beginning with *Al-Jazeera*, set up in Qatar in 1995. It is to be noted that the number of such channels has risen to over five hundred since then (Mellor *et al.*, 2011),. While some scholars praise such satellite technology for advancing the public sphere in the region (Miles: 2005), others (Mellor: 2007) warn that this advance has not yet translated into any real transformation of the political structure within the region.

Citizens have not been free to form or join social movements in an authoritarian state such as Egypt; since its independence from Britain in 1952, the country has been under the tight control of army officers, beginning with Gamal Abdel Nasser, who dissolved civil society associations and banned political opposition as well as imprisoning large number of Muslim Brotherhood supporters. Egyptians were occupied with accumulating wealth and 'making ends meet' during Sadat's rule in the 1970s, under his 'open door' policy. Associations such as the Muslim Brotherhood and trade unions were allowed to practice their activities, but they were threatened by the emergency laws which could lead to

sudden imprisonment, without trial, of some of their members. Mubarak's rule began in 1981 and was characterised by more privatisations; many of the young protestors who joined the 2011 protests, grew up during this period and became accustomed to wide-spread corruption, the large gap between social classes, and the alliance between the government (particularly Mubarak's son, Gamal) and wealthy businessmen (see Chapter One).

Studies preceding the 2011 uprising reported that young Egyptians were politically apathetic and were perceived as incapable of bringing about genuine political changes (Abdel Ghany, 2004; Asaad and Barsoum, 2007). How could the same youth trigger a massive revolution in 2011?

This project will be an example of interdisciplinary research, linking social theories with media studies; while traditionally, media and cultural studies (particularly Birmingham School) have been deeply rooted in literary and textual analysis, sociology and social theory have been more concerned with the overall analysis of social systems and structures such as labour, demographics, urbanisation, globalisation, and so on. The combination of these two approaches will provide powerful analytical tools to unearth the intricate and intertwining relationship between subjectivity embodied in the activists' narratives with the analysis of objective conditions such as the globalisation of communication and political development.

Research methods are better drawn from a variety of disciplines as 'no single methodology can hope to capture the rich complexities of life on the Internet' (Norris: 2001: 36); indeed, it has been difficult to attempt an analysis of the current evolving and dynamic political scene as Egypt, but it is believed that this project will benefit future studies. The new insights into young people's media use are presented here by utilising descriptive web feature analysis as well as qualitative analysis (interviews and focus groups - this cohort audience is particularly important because they are expected to play a crucial role as participants in shaping the political future of the country). It will also shed new light on the significant role that social media are expected to play in the future, particularly with the declining credibility of traditional mainstream media in the Arab world, usually run by political parties; as a result, social media are actually reshaping how

15

politicians relate to their constituents, and how young people are demanding more political reforms, demonstrated in the recent popular uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt. All this serves as proof of the significance of social media, but also of the speed of their progress throughout the Arab world. This analysis will seek to unravel how young people evaluate the generational gap in accessing new technology, and the impact that social media has, not only on their sense of national identity but also on their vision of Egypt's future, and how they assess the risks of using these modern types of media.

0.5 The role of new and social media in collective action

'Social media' is defined by Mayfield (2008) as online media which allow: (i) participation via users' feedback and interaction; (ii) openness due to their accessibility to everyone, without restrictions on membership or engagement (except, of course, economic and access issues due to lack of funds or connection break-down to wired PCs); (iii) conversation and two-way communication amongst users; (iv) community formation amongst people with similar interests; and (v)) connectedness through providing links to other sites and networks. One important feature of social media is their speed in spreading information as well as ideas and debates: such media have become immensely popular over the past decade or so.

These new media sites have been seen as a potential opportunity to confront authoritarian regimes, while simultaneously avoiding heavy state interference in the public sphere. The significance of these media is not to be measured by how many users there are in Egypt (or elsewhere in the region) but rather, by what users can do with such media, compared to mainstream media which may be blocked by professional gatekeepers such as journalists. These media provide a flexible communication structure that can also be creative and disseminated under anonymous profiles in order to escape state control. Social media are part of the so-called Web 2.0 services which also embrace blogs, *Wikis* and *Google+*, among many others. What is unique about Web 2.0 is its interactivity, in that users can comment, interact and even produce content, rather than merely receiving information without being able to respond to it, thereby facilitating the creation of digital networking.

Networking is the core activity of activism and a key to the success of collective action (McAdam & Paulsen: 1993), with the internet transforming societies into a network-

based society (Shirky, 2011). Once people join a network, they engage in maintaining links to other members, but the important step is to recruit participants to this network, and here lies the significance of strong ties, or the relationships which potential users have within or outside of a network, which may influence their decision to join the network or not. Social media allows users to access others' 'friends' and send messages to a large number of people with a click of a button, which makes the transmission of information instantaneous and free, compared to other media (Boyd & Ellison: 2007). Users can also identify others, who may not be their friends, offline, because they share similar interests or views (Boyd & Ellison: 2007; see also Chapter Eight); consequently, users can maintain strong as well as indirect ties with other users via social media sites (Ellison *et al.*: 2006).

An important feature of the use of social media in political action is that such media usually lack the hierarchy present in offline networks, therefore, a social media movement, for instance, can be either 'leaderless' or related to a few leaders, but later able to disperse itself amongst different users and locales (such as the 'April 6 Youth Movement', which later split into at least two groups). It is also important to note that *Facebook* groups, for example, may target Egyptians across all ideologies such as Islamist, liberal, Nasserite, and so on, if, and only if, they manage to embrace one goal such as that of ending Mubarak's rule. Participants here are bound by their shared grievances (Spier: 2011), but once the goal is achieved, the challenge will be to sustain the group and its network (see Chapters Six, Seven and Eight).

0.6 Contribution to knowledge

This thesis aims to contribute to the growing literature about the role of new and social media in mobilising for collective action, particularly in authoritarian regimes such as that in Egypt. The study also aims to contribute to the understanding of activists in Egypt: their perception of the role of social media in their political activities, as well as how these activities are perceived by young users who may not necessarily be part of any political action, movement or party. Given the newness of this field of study concerned with social media and their relationship to activism in the Arab region, this project enhances the understanding of this field for the benefit of future studies,

particularly if such studies take comparative approaches between Egypt and other Arab states. The thesis addresses further knowledge in understanding the role of social media, beyond the usual dichotomy of embracing or dismissing that role as facilitator of political action; the project acknowledges the role of such media as a factor that has to be seen alongside other factors such as agency, offline activism, viability of civil society association and state censorship. The project benefits from the synthesis of social movement theories and civil society formation in order to comprehend the dynamic role played by online networking in mobilising offline action. The project contributes to previous literature on collective action by situating it in the context of the developing world, focusing on Egypt as a topical example. What the following chapters demonstrate is the heterogeneity of Egyptian groups, despite their ethnic and, for the majority, religious unity.

0.7 Outline

The thesis is divided into eight chapters as follows:

Chapter One presents a historical background of the Egyptian case, including discussion of historical key events in Egypt. This chapter also examines political, economic and education challenges which faced Egypt prior to 2011, which are also currently on-going.

Chapter Two provides a review of selected studies which have dealt with the role of social media in the Egyptian uprisings, as well as some studies which compared mainstream and social media. The review is divided into three broad themes: (i) new media for collective action; (ii) *Facebook* revolution; and (iii) traditional versus new media.

Chapter Three provides a theoretical discussion of the development of social movements and the emergence and role of civil society. The discourse draws on literature developed in Western democracies, before it discusses the unique situation of the Egyptian case, shedding light on the development of civil society associations in Egypt.

Chapter Four introduces the methodology of this study, by examining the significance of qualitative research and the choice of each method used here: interviews, focus groups and web feature analysis. The summary concludes with a reflection on ethical and other challenges encountered during the fieldwork.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven present the research findings. Chapter Five begins with scrutiny of the web content analysis, focusing on four selected *Facebook* groups: *Dar Es-Salam*, 'April 6 Youth Movement', 'We are all Khaled Said' and *Tamarod*.

Chapter Six discusses the findings of the interviews, with a sample of Egyptian activists. The analysis is anchored in the themes that emerged during the interviews which revolved around the use of social media for political socialisation, the visibility gained via social media sites, how politics can be decentralised on social media, and the activists' perception of the role of mainstream (traditional) media vis-à-vis social media.

Chapter Seven continues the analysis of interviews, focusing on the tendency of some activists to denounce joining parties, preferring instead to form and join movements with a mission similar to NGOs such as eradicating illiteracy, poverty and housing problems. This group of activists forms what this researcher refers to as 'independent political movements', illustrated by focusing on independent media as topical examples.

Chapter Eight presents the findings of the focus groups conducted primarily with young citizens under the age of 35. Here again, the discussion is thematically divided by focusing on young people's perception that 2011 was a turning point in their engagement with political discussions, and how they perceived the role of mainstream vis-à-vis social media.

The final Discussion and Conclusion consolidates the discussions presented in the above chapters and concludes with pointers for future research.

Chapter One

Egypt – historical background

1.0 Introduction

One remarkable fact about Egypt is that 97 per cent of its land is barren while the remaining 3 per cent, around the Nile Valley, is the most densely populated and economically active. With a fast growing population (85 million inhabitants), the population density is around 83 inhabitants per km^2, occupying only 3 per cent of the total territory, which is not only a major burden on the public service providers, but on the environment, in general. Access to water is another problem in Egypt, as the amount available is insufficient: the annual entitlement is 55 billion cubic metres from the Nile River, whose total flow is shared with other African countries, including Sudan and Ethiopia. If the population grows as forecast (around 150 million by 2050), then the country would need about 50 per cent more of that water to meet the demand (Ibrahim, 2012). Most of the Nile water is used on agriculture (3 per cent of the total).

Egypt's energy sector contributes about 6 per cent of GDP, and a proportion of the gas production is exported to other countries such as Jordan and Syria; the controversial gas supply treaty with Israel was cancelled in 2012 (Feteha, 2012). Egypt has extensive reserves in the Western Desert, and, after Algeria, is regarded as one of the largest gas producers in Africa; despite these reserves, the government has announced plans to import gas from Qatar in the future, if Egypt is to maintain the envisaged growth rate of 5 per cent per annum (Feteha, 2012). Households consume a major part of the gas supply and industry uses about a third.

The country's GDP has seen a steady annual increase of about 4 per cent over the past decade (except 2008 when it leaped to 7 per cent), but living conditions have deteriorated for the average Egyptian, and the percentage of poor (those earning less than $2 a day) has soared to 40 per cent of the population. The national poverty index classifies the poor as those who earn less than $1.25 a day, reducing their percentage of

the population to around 25 per cent. This rate increased from 16.7 per cent in 1999 to 25 per cent in 2010-2011, during the last decade of Mubarak's rule (Abdel Razek, 2011). An average Egyptian needs about LE265 per month, according to the national poverty index and a family of five would need LE2, 275 per month to survive: the minimum wage is only LE700. It is also argued that illiterate people are those most likely to be hit by poverty (Abdel Razek, 2011).

This chapter provides a brief historical introduction to Egypt, focusing on selected key moments in Egypt's political and economic development. It begins with a brief overview of the significant revolutions in Egypt's recent history, starting with the 1919 revolution, regarded as the trigger that set off Egypt's independence. A brief discussion follows on the political and economic impact of these revolutions in the post-independence era.

1.1 Historical turning points

The first significant mass revolution in recent Egyptian history was the 1919 revolt, staged mostly by peasants and fuelled by the workers and *Wafd* party. Its importance lies in its emergence as the culmination of European colonialism and the beginning of the modern state in Egypt (Goldberg, 1992). The revolution erupted after four national leaders were exiled, including Saad Zaghloul, leader of the *Wafd* Party, for insisting on recognition of the status of its delegation to the Versailles Peace Conference, at a time when Egypt was declared a protectorate. The massive protests were eventually put down by British troops. The revolution resulted in a new constitution in 1923, with Saad Zaghloul as the first popularly elected prime minister in 1924. Britain also recognised Egyptian independence, although continued to be physically present in Egypt. That period witnessed dire living standards for peasants and workers, with their food supplies declining and rising inflation (Goldberg, 1992, p. 267). Beinin argues that the working class experienced its formative period between 1882 and 1913, with the beginning of the Egyptian occupation and the flow of foreign capital to Egypt (1981, p. 13). This represented about 70 per cent of the total capital; by 1916, Egypt had around 15 modern-style factories, employing around 35,000 workers, most of which were established and run with foreign capital.

Discontent with British domination fuelled several protests until January 1952, which witnessed the burning of Cairo and climaxed in the Free Officers' coup in July of the same year. The Free Officers, led by Gamal Abdel Nasser and Mohammed Naguib, called for independence and the end of the monarchy, and mobilised Egyptians around the project of modernising Egypt (Sedra, 2011). The newly independent government embraced a different version of socialism; private enterprises were still present in the country, working alongside the nationalised factories, while the state was taking over welfare services, including housing and education. The state outlawed strikes, suppressed political pluralism and introduced new workers' rights. The government enforced new legislation aimed at protecting workers, such as reducing working hours to seven a day, and introducing a minimum wage, pensions, injury compensation and health insurance. The state also selected workers' representatives on management boards in public sector firms, and initiated the provision of a share in the company profits to its workers. It also subsidised the cost of basic food items such as bread and sugar. This did not mean the end of private entrepreneurship; although the state enforced a minimum wage in private businesses as well, it encouraged the private sector of small and medium enterprises, making a distinction between the government's socialist philosophy and traditional Marxist ideology. Nasser stressed this difference, in fact, when he said:

> There is a difference between us [Socialists] and Marxists. The latter do not believe in private property whereas we divide it into two categories: one that exploits and one that does not exploit. We are against the exploiting enterprise. Thus, the mode of production should be nationalised and be under the total control of the people. This means that the public sector should have the lion's share of production [...] in our Arab Socialism - we did not abolish private property. So in our land reform, we did not nationalise the lands, but gave it back to the peasants. We took it from the landowners and gave it to the peasants as their own property. This is so different from the Communist ideology which calls for getting rid of land ownership altogether, and confining it to either state owned land or collective ownership. This applies to housing as well: we did not nationalise housing, but we built state houses and sold them to the people. We give those with limited resources the opportunity to own their flats (quoted in Al- Shelby, 2004, p. 144).

The workers' unions, however, were largely monopolised by public sector workers who depended on the state for many services, including education of their children, health insurance and pensions. Unions were also the place to inform workers about the

revolution and its ideology, based on the belief that workers had rights to several services, but also had duties towards their workplace and the state; in return for state services, the Nasserite regime abolished pluralist political life and banned parties and associations - apart from those authorised and controlled by the state. The Free Officers decided to monopolise power, setting up an authoritarian regime and warning against diversity which might lead to chaos and tensions. The power was in the hands of the military elites, and the state set up the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) in 1962 as the only alternative to political parties, and the only legitimate political institution in the country.

The rising pressures on state budgets after the war (and defeat) of 1967, followed by the death of Nasser in 1970, persuaded the new president, Anwar Sadat (also one of the Free Officers), to take the country into an era of *Infitah* or 'Open Door' policy, launched in 1974. Egypt was open to foreign investment and trade, according to this initiative, which resulted in the rise of inflation and imports. Real wages also fell, and Sadat was forced to remove the state subsidy on basic food elements in 1977 by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Workers protested against the deteriorating living standards and the rising prices, and these protests intensified in January that year when the state attempted to carry out the IMF instructions to end the subsidies, which forced the state to reverse this decision. Protests and strikes hit the capital, Cairo, between 1974 and the massive protests of 1977, with workers chanting, 'where is our breakfast, hero of the crossing?'[1] (Pousney, 1993, p. 96).

Sadat's aim was to show that his regime would restore pluralism in political life by allowing the establishment of three political fora representing the right, centre and left, within the ASU. These were the Liberal Socialist Forum, Arab Socialist Forum and Nationalist Progressive Unionist Forum. All fora participated in the 1976 parliamentary election, and Sadat later decided to transform them into full political parties, consequently allowing other parties to also launch themselves. Among the new ones were the New *Wafd* Party, the National Democratic Party (replacing the ASU and led by Sadat) and the Socialist Labour Party. These new decisions, while taking the shape of political reforms, continued to reinforce the role of the state as the decision-maker in

---

[1] referring to Sadat, following the crossing of the Bar Lev line, built by Israel and crossed by the Egyptian army in the 1973 war, see http://countrystudies.us/egypt/43.htm.

liberalising or restraining political life in Egypt (Hassan, 2010, pp. 320-321). Sadat also allowed the Socialist Labour Party to win 29 seats in the election, but this did not stop his confrontations with the opposition, peaking in 1981 when he ordered the arrest of all opposition leaders. He also introduced the famous 'Law of Shame' of May 1980, threatening critics of the regime, including journalists and editors, with imprisonment and exclusion from any public or syndicate post. The crackdown of 1981 and the arrest of over 1,500 opposition leaders and journalists, culminated in the assassination of Sadat during the celebration ceremony of the anniversary of the October 6 War.

Following the assassination of Sadat, Hosni Mubarak, his deputy, took over the leadership. He was also an army officer who had participated in the October war. Learning from Sadat's mistakes, Mubarak aimed to loosen the grip on political parties, especially after 1987 when the constitutional court ruled that the election law was illegal. Mubarak held new elections in 1987 which marked the beginning of relatively democratic and fair elections, allowing all opposition groups, including the Muslim Brotherhood, to participate under the umbrella of the Socialist Labour coalition. The opposition won 22 per cent of the seats, compared to 13 per cent in 1984, whereas the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) lost some seats: from 87 per cent in 1984 to 78 per cent in 1987 (Hassam, 2010, pp. 323). Mubarak's early years appeared to introduce political reforms; in reality, his regime still ruled Egypt based on one-party ideology, with his NDP as the dominant party on the political scene; as a result, the opposition asked Mubarak to step down from leading the NDP, and become instead the president of all Egyptians (Hassam, 2010, p. 323).

State monopoly of power continued with the parliamentary elections of 1990 and 1995 and the landslide victory of the NDP, which triggered the constitutional court's ruling that both elections were unlawful, delegitimising the NDP's method of winning those elections. The discontent with the NDP continued until the 2005 presidential elections, following a national referendum which would allow several candidates other than NDP nominees. The voters, however, were surprised that Mubarak still secured a landslide victory over two opponents, Ayman Nour of the *Ghad* ('Tomorrow') Party, and Noaman Gomaa of the National *Wafd* Party. Other candidates were also excluded, for example, Sadat's nephew, Talaat Sadat, and Muslim Brotherhood members. Other parties such as

the leftist *Tagammu* Party boycotted the election, declaring the whole process as fraudulent (Hassan, 2010, pp. 326). Ayman Nour, who was placed as distant second in the 2005 presidential election, was later arrested on charges of forgery and was stripped of his parliamentary immunity as MP for the *Ghad Party*; he was released in 2009 on health grounds. Gomaa, on the other hand, criticised the state apparatus of propaganda against the opposition candidates, including himself, as a 'token candidate' (Spiegel, 2005).

Nasser relied on the support of workers and trade unions exalting his Socialist Union as the only legitimate political forum in Egypt, while Sadat relied on the right and more liberal movements, based on the support of the middle-class and private sector elites. This could arguably have been connected to Sadat's shift towards more liberal policies, in order to please his new ally, the U.S.A. His 'Open Door' policy appealed to the private sector elites, and Mubarak continued and expanded this policy, while avoiding the sudden removal of state subsidies which triggered the 1977 protests. This group of elites proved to have a central role in Egyptian political and economic life, not only during Sadat's rule but more so during Mubarak's. It was particularly during the rise of Gamal Mubarak, the president's son, in the Egyptian political scene in 2000, and rumours of a plan to groom him for the post of president, that the private sector elites gained more and more powers. During Nasser's, Sadat's and Mubarak's rule, the state and the president enjoyed unrivalled legislative and executive powers. Presidential decrees could therefore become formal laws, such as the 'Law of Shame' introduced by Sadat. Even if laws were debated in parliament, the president usually had control over the majority of MPs, mostly from the ruling NDP. The state also tolerated corruption, as long as it secured the loyalty of the influential group of businessmen. Many of them were encouraged to participate in parliamentary elections, competing for parliamentary immunity that came with such posts. Gamal Mubarak was known to be friends with many such businessmen, particularly Ahmed Ezz, who monopolised steel manufacturing in Egypt. These businessmen spent large sums of money on buying votes during the elections, particularly from their workers in the new satellite industrial cities. Ezz was sentenced to seven years in prison and fined $3 billion in October 2012, on charges of corruption. He was arrested only a few days after Mubarak's resignation, following the

revolution of January 25 2011; however, he was released in 2014, after paying a fine of 100 million Egyptian pounds.

1.2 Political life

In his book, *Neopatriarchy*, the late Palestinian intellectual, Hicham Sharabi suggested that Arab societies are based on neo-patriarchy or:

> The dominance of the Father (patriarch), the center around which the national as well as the natural family, are organised. Thus between ruler and ruled, between father and child, there exist only vertical relations: in both settings the paternal will is the absolute will, mediated in both the society and the family by a forced consensus based on ritual and coercion....the neo-patriarchal state, regardless of its legal and political forms and structures, is in many ways no more than a modern version of the traditional patriarchal sultanate (1988, p. 7).

The constitution of 1923 laid the foundation of a democratic system in Egypt, with such measures as freedom of the press and political pluralism. The 1952 coup, however, ended this democratic experience before it had matured. The Free Officers resorted to authoritarian rule and revived the patriarchal state to which Sharabi referred. The Nasserite regime removed political opposition, bestowing all legitimacy on the Socialist Union. Sadat experimented with minor political reforms by permitting the establishment of political parties, but his rule ended with the so-called 'iron-fist' policy towards political opposition (Hassan, 2010, pp. 320-322). Sadat once said that he and Nasser were the last Pharaohs: 'The rules [...] have been issued for our successors. Ordinary presidents such as Mohammed, Ali and Omar will follow us. And of course, they need these rules' (cited in Hassan, 2010, pp. 327).

Mubarak's rule did not differ greatly from his predecessors in that his NDP monopolised political power and corruption was allowed to flourish in Egypt. The early years of Mubarak's tenure propagated democratic reforms and he was quoted as saying that:

> Democracy is not only essential in itself, but also predicts stability and ensures prosperity. It is a requisite for the growth of the economy and the welfare of the people. The regime is for everyone and the opposition is an indivisible part of it because Egypt is the homeland of all Egyptians (cited in Hassan, 2010, pp. 323).

The 1990s and 2000s witnessed a major setback to these promises of political reforms, however, with accusations of monopolising political power as well as falsifying election results; in spite of being under judicial supervision, the NDP managed to win landslide victories such as that in the 2000 election, not to mention Mubarak's victory over his rivals in the 2005 presidential election (Hassan, 2010, pp.323-26). It was predictable that protest movements would grow in Egypt under these circumstances.

Hassan (2010, pp. 328) divides the protest movements in Egypt into three categories: the first is the political protest of the *Kefaya* ('Enough') movement, established in 2004, opposing the rule of (political) inheritance and the grooming of Gamal Mubarak to succeed his father; the second category refers to the series of labour and workers' protests against high prices and low wages; and the third refers to the youth movements, particularly on the internet and social media sites such as the 'April 6 Youth' movement and 'We are all Khaled Said' groups, calling for the end of corruption and state emergency laws. The emergency law enforced in 1981 was an attempt by the state to curtail any dissent on the basis of protecting state security and stability; however, the law was mainly used to suppress collective action such as demonstrations and protests. Business elites were also content with the financial benefits they gained from their alliance with the regime, and consequently did not challenge Mubarak (Huntington, 1991, pp. 67). Civil society associations did not support political or social reforms in the country, despite the presence of the above three categories of protest movements in Egypt. This is because, as Tadros argues, such associations were manipulated by the state and their political agenda changed according to the agenda of their donors; for instance, US support for this sector in Egypt soared after the events of 9/11, in order to drive home the need for democratic reforms and human rights-friendly policies. This scheme weakened after 2006, and support for human rights associations was reduced by 70 per cent in 2009 (Tadros, 2009, pp. 11).

State laws such as No. 84 of 2000, gave the Ministry of Social Solidarity the power to ban any civil society association if it proved to 'violate public morality', a term which can be stretched to mean any threat to public order, however that is defined by the government. NGOs, for instance, could not join international networks without prior permission from the government. One such NGO was the New Woman Foundation set up

in the 1980s, but whose application to the ministry was rejected; although the NGO challenged the ministry's decision in court and won the case, the court's decision was not enforced (Tadros, 2009). The state therefore managed to curtail citizens' participation in public affairs, even though the law approved of citizens' involvement in political life. The civil society sector did not necessarily challenge state power, but re-defined the public sphere and set the agenda for political debates. This sector expressed the demands not only of workers, but also of the rising bourgeoisie calling for additional rights. The 'April 6' protest movement was based on the objections of both female and male workers in textile factories in Mahalla town. The movement used the workers protest as a pretext for their initiative on social media, in order to set up the 'April 6' group on *Facebook*. A small number of families had accumulated huge wealth from seizing state funds during Mubarak's rule (Hassan, 2010, pp. 324) and nepotism prevailed; with corruption, resistance to change, centralised authority and the patron-client relationship between the regime and the elite, and despite public distrust of state institutions such as hospitals and schools, Egypt was dominated by authoritarian rule until the outbreak of the massive protests in January 2011. The working classes were deeply dissatisfied with deteriorating state services and the state's protection of the business elites; this was illustrated in 2006 when the *Al-Salam* ferry, carrying 1,400 passengers - mainly Egyptian workers returning from Saudi Arabia - sank. The accident was due to the owning company's failure to meet minimum safety standards, and led to the death of over 1,000 passengers, the majority of whom were poor workers. The accident fuelled public resentment and protests, after the owner of the ferry was allowed to leave the country and before the conclusion of the investigations, which eventually freed him.

Radical Islamist groups such as *Gamaat Islamya*, on the other hand, managed to accumulate public support, particularly in poor neighbourhoods across Egypt during the 1970s, during the 1980s, such groups attacked tourist sites, cinemas, churches and arts festivals, escalating in the early 1990s. The number of violent attacks rose to 741 during the five-year period between 1992 and 1997, compared to 143 during the period from 1970 to 1991 (Hafez, 2003, pp. 34-48). The 1980s saw the state reluctantly accept the status of the Muslim Brotherhood as a movement but not as an independent political

party; the Muslim Brothers won parliamentary seats through their alliance with the *Wafd* party.

The above movements were characterised by their loose organisations and exclusive membership, such as the Muslim Brotherhood (Hafez, 2003, pp. 110-111). This flexible structure gave rise to competition between group members in order to win their support, either through moral disengagement, the ethical justification of violence or the abrogation of responsibility for violence (Hafez, 2003, pp. 190).

1.3 Economic challenges

Sadat initiated the 'Open Door' policy, Mubarak and his regime followed with a major privatisation project which eventually managed to increase foreign and local investments, but failed to alleviate poverty or increase living standards (Joffe, 2011, pp. 520). The regime had been concerned with the project of modernising and re-vamping Cairo as a global metropolis since the mid-1980s, evidenced by the numerous construction projects, particularly of hotels and touristic sites. These sites, even if located within the heart of the capital, may have appeared to be disconnected with the surrounding urban environment to the ordinary people; for instance, new gated communities were constructed on the outskirts of Cairo, with unit prices that were only affordable by the minority wealthy elite. These new constructions, whether hotels, shopping malls or trading centres, may also have seemed unrelated to the surrounding areas, for example, the World Trading Centre towers built in the heart of Imbaba slums, symbolised global capitalism and the economic impact of this fast-moving economic development with which many citizens simply could not match. Such buildings were usually the result of global cooperation in planning and construction, and touristic sites were normally guarded by heavy 'high-tech' security measures, due to fear of the surrounding urban masses (Kuppinger, 2005, pp. 349). These sites exemplify the intersection of capital, consumption and leisure moulded after American models such as the World Trade Centre towers: 'they almost seem like "quasi-fortresses [...] inaccessible to most urban residents except as workers' (Kuppinger, 2005, pp. 349).

Mubarak's era saw the construction of new hotels to host the growing number of tourists, and new tourist villages were built in remote cities such as Sharm-el-Shaykh, which later became the Mubaraks' favourite resort. Egypt also depended on the revenue

of tourists from neighbouring Arab countries, although these numbers may plunge and rise, according to the political and security situation in the whole region. Militant Islamic groups targeted the tourism industry in the early 1990s, particularly aiming at Western tourists through a series of violent attacks and explosions. These incidents intended to illustrate the growing power of such militant groups and their dominance in certain neighbourhoods in Cairo, particularly poor areas such as Imbaba. The country had lost massive revenues from plunging tourism by the mid-1990s, triggering violent confrontations between government security forces and the militant groups, which seemed to lead to the elimination of such groups in Cairo (Kuppinger, 2005, pp. 354).

The fast moving economic development had its negative consequences in increasing the poverty rate across Egypt, particularly in rural areas. 20 per cent of the population was below the poverty line in 2011, as previously mentioned, and the unemployment rate was growing, particularly among the youth. The younger generation outnumbers the rest of the population, therefore it should be playing a significant role in the modernisation project. A large number of them face unemployment, and they lack adequate learning opportunities, given the deteriorating state of public education and the rise of expensive private schools and foreign universities. They feature in public discourse, sometimes as 'confused youngsters' and other times as 'makers of life', as disseminated by the televangelist, Amr Khaled. Khaled became famous through his televised Islamic programmes, appealing to the young to utilise their physical and mental abilities to help others in eradicating illiteracy or collecting donations for the poor, for example; although they represent the majority in Egypt, young people may feel detached and apathetic, which is why one in four of them dream of emigrating to another country (Achy, 2010). Nine out of ten jobless in Egypt are under the age of 30, and the unemployment rate for women is higher. This situation means that the basic dream of a decent job and affordable housing may seem unattainable to many young people, and also accounts for the late marriage age in Egypt. Giant shopping malls built since the late 1990s had become a safe and modern haven for many urban youths in the meantime, who took refuge in these air-conditioned spaces to pass the time (Abaza, 2006).

Young people were also seen as an untapped source, particularly the case of Islamist and development NGOs; for instance, educated middle-class preachers such as Amr Khaled

and Moaz Masoud appealed to a large, young audience and their TV shows called for them to place their available resources at the disposal of their country. This is the same discourse propagated by NGOs such as *Resala* Association, originally set up by a group of engineering students which later became one of the largest charities in Egypt; even though the main driver behind *Resala* is religion, the benefit of this charity work reaches out to several segments of the poor, through various projects set up to help them such as providing small medical equipment or donating other goods or services. Young people's engagement in these charities calls for a new way of analysing development discourse in Egypt, not only as the linear expansion of elements such as education and technology, but also as an integral system of relationships between these different elements (Escobar, 1995, 40); for instance, although young Egyptians participated in numerous charities such as *Resala*, they did not particularly challenge the political and economic *status quo*, but provided instead, instant and short-term solutions to the poor's problems, such as donations in cash or kind, rather than eradicating structural economic and political problems which were causing the poverty level in Egypt to rise. They also did not question or aim to eliminate the increasing segregation between factions of the population, or what Abaza (2006) termed 'the new liberal dream' of segregation. This concept refers to the former regime's efforts to attract foreign and local investments in the construction of gated communities in Cairo's suburbs, housing the rich minority while reinforcing the vast gap between the rich and poor through barrier separation.

This growing gap between the rich and the poor, or minority and majority, led to several rebellious outbreaks since independence in 1952. One of them was the massive protests in January 1977, when Sadat's regime announced the abrupt end of state subsidies on basic food stuffs: the protests forced the regime to reverse its decision. Egyptian skilled and semi-skilled labourers have emigrated to the neighbouring oil-rich countries since the 1970s, as a temporary solution to the pressing economic situation. Their remittances not only constituted an important source of revenue for Egypt: their investments in real-estate projects upon their return were a significant contribution to the economy.

This disparity between the 'haves' and 'have-nots' also led to a number of young people embracing radical Islamist ideologies such as *Al-Takfir wal-Higra* (Repentance and Holy Flight) during the 1970s and the subsequent violent clashes with state security forces,

following the kidnapping of a former minister for religious endowments in 1977. These clashes took place again in the 1990s, when militant Islamist groups took possession of the poor neighbourhood of Imbaba, declaring it their 'emirate'. The dominance of these militant groups formed, what Ismail (2000) called 'spheres of dissidence', which were temporarily beyond state control. New clashes and rebellious outbreaks erupted in the country, such as the demonstrations staged by the *Kefaya* movement, set up in 2004, when Mubarak announced his intention to run for a fifth term, and rumours circulated around his plan to make his son, Gamal, his successor. The case in Syria was similar when Bashar inherited his father's position as head-of-state. New protest movements broke out in 2006, following strikes in the textile factory in Mahalla town, giving rise to the *Facebook* group, 'April 6' movement, and attracting young people in Egypt and the Diaspora. 2010 saw further protests, following the killing of a young man, Khaled Said, by security agents, in an Internet cafe in Alexandria. This episode gave rise to the *Facebook* group, 'We are all Khaled Said', which attracted thousands of young Egyptian sympathisers. The 2000s saw a period of crackdowns on many bloggers and new media activists such as Wael Abbas, whose famous blog about police torture in Egypt made headlines in international news outlets. Abbas was later sentenced to six months in prison. Other bloggers were detained and jailed, sometimes for years, on the charge of criticising the president, religious institutions or religions (Islam and Christianity). Nasser and Sadat had controlled youth gatherings such as student unions through legislation (Law 357 of 1952), Mubarak's regime sought to extend this ban and control the new media and internet; this, however, appeared to be beyond state control. The rise of the new 'media-savvy' generation of bloggers and social media activists is the focus of this investigation on the educational and technological developments in Egypt, particularly over the past three decades of Mubarak's rule. The following sections account for key trends in these changes.

1.4 Education and information

The revelation that the second-in-command of *Al-Qaeda*, Ayman Al-Zawahri, and Bin Laden's confidant, was a graduate from the Faculty of Medicine in Cairo in 1974, and the fact that several of the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks were university graduates,

commentators began to draw attention to the Egyptian schooling and university system: whether it served as an incubator for radical Islamic thinking (Fahmy, 2012).

Mohamed Abouelghar (2006), a professor of medicine at Cairo University, diagnoses the problem of higher education in Egypt as lacking in critical thinking, or, as he puts it:

> Egyptian university graduates are capable only of waiting for orders and executing them. No thinking, no arguing, no questioning; no objecting and not even dialoguing: a personality that does not (and cannot) create or think. This graduate is usually stuck with this type of passive personality for the rest of his or her life. So no matter how high he climbs in the hierarchy, he still listens to the orders of those above and gives orders to those below, leaving no room -- not the slightest possibility -- for thinking or questioning, not to mention criticising and hopefully improving. We then end up with a state of paralysis: a frozen society unable to move, grow, develop or produce. Who would expect a great scientist, an inventor or a philosopher to emerge from such a society?

Other commentators wondered if the higher education system in particular should not emulate the Western (Anglo-American) model, as it was arguably not suitable for Egypt, where the majority of the population is Muslim. Islamists, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, debated whether the educational system should follow secular Western models or be rooted in the Islamist tradition; in the light of the rise of radical Islamist groups during the 1980s and 1990s, another debate focused on whether there should be closer scrutiny of schools' curricula: (i) in order to ensure that they provided adequate guidance for youngsters in learning about moderate Islam; and (ii) whether the curricula were based on education (*ta'alim*) and not on guidance (*tarbiyya*), referring to the name of the Ministry of Education in Egypt which is literally translated as the Ministry of Guidance and Education (*tarbiyya and ta'alim*). The debate centred on the meaning of Islamic thinking and the conflicting interpretations of Islam, and how these should be integrated into the national education system (Cook, 2000, pp. 488-489). The number of universities in Egypt increased from four state universities in the 1950s to 18 government universities in the 2000s, while the number of private and foreign universities also increased, with fees exceeding LE60,000 per year. Private schools and universities generally distinguish themselves from public universities by their investment in new technology and facilities.

State investment in advanced technology has increased during the past decade and this is illustrated in the number of mobile phone subscribers as well as the statistics showing access to the internet in Egypt, summarized in the following tables.

Indicator	Unit	Nov 2010	Nov 2011	Annual growth rate per cent
Mobile Subscription	Million Subscription	66.87	81.70	22.18
Mobile Penetration	per cent	85.71	100.79	15.08

Table 1.1. Penetration of mobile phones in Egypt
(Source: Ministry of Communications and Information Technology)

The following table summarises the growth in the ICT sector:

Indicator	Unit	Nov 2010	Nov 2011	Annual growth rate per cent
ICT companies	Companies	3889	4388	12.83
Number of People Employed in ICT Sector	Thousand Employees	204.53	213.12	4.20
ICT Issued Capital	Billion EGP	44.80	45.34	1.21

Table 1.2 ICT sector in Egypt
(Source: Ministry of Communications and Information Technology)

The total number of *Facebook* users in the Arab world was more than 21 million Arabs (in 2010), with the highest penetration in the UAE. Egypt had around 22 per cent of the total users in the region, and young people made up 75 per cent of *Facebook* users in the Arab world, with a ratio of 2:1 male to female users, compared to 1:1 globally.

Percentage of Individuals using the Internet													
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Egypt	0.64	0.84	2.72	4.04	12	13	14	16	18	26	31	40	44

Table 1.3 Usage of Internet in Egypt
(Source: World Telecommunication ICT indicators, available at: www.itu.int)

The highest growth was registered among people between the ages of 15 and 29, who constituted one third of the total Arab population (Dubai School of Government, 2011). The Arab Knowledge Report (2009) estimated the number of Arab users on the internet reached 60 million, and in December 2010, Google estimated that the number of Arab users would exceed 100 million Arabs by 2015 (Ghannam, 2011). Traditional campuses' failure to provide critical thinking spheres, encouraged young Egyptians to resort to virtual reality as a field for debating their future. The Egyptian regime, and Arab regimes in general, however, reacted with direct aggression and violence against the young people who used social media to voice their dissatisfaction which was regarded as a challenge to the existing regimes. The Bahraini government, for instance, imprisoned the blogger, Ali Abdulemam, for posting what they claimed to be false news, on his BahrainOnline.org site (Ghannam, 2011, 5). The site revealed the government's crackdown on the Shi'ite population, the majority of Bahrainis; in addition, a study by the Harvard Berkaman Centre showed that Egypt had the largest number of blogs in the region in 2009, and that blogs were usually used for political and social purposes (Bruce *et al.* 2009). Radsch (2008) identifies three phases of the Egyptian blogosphere: the first one is an experimentation phase with blogs used by an elite group; the second is an activist phase which marked the rise of such movements as *Kifaya;* and the third is the diversification phase which includes a plethora of blogs dealing with political, social and religious topics. Many of those bloggers were journalists, which showed a dynamic interaction between journalism and social media. Faris (2010) also provides a pioneering study regarding the use of social media in Egypt, in order to combat authoritarian regimes and how such media lead to more collective action. This is despite the attempts, at least by the former regime, to show foreign donors, especially the U.S.A., that the

country was implementing democratic reforms. Heydemann (2007: 7) argues that authoritarian regimes such as the former regime in Egypt, created what is called 'upgrading authoritarianism', meaning that they created opportunities in the electoral arena and the economic sphere and maintained close ties with foreign regimes that shared the lack of interest in human rights. The Egyptian government invested in the development of its ICT infrastructure, with the aim of serving commercial and administrative needs while reducing its capacity to mobilise political unrest. This is why it did not filter the internet (as the Syrian government did) and instead, set up the Internet Police in 2004 (Faris, 2010, 62).

Protestors can move their dissent to other arenas such as mobile phones or emails, even if authoritarian regimes filter internet access. New media can indeed be used in resistance movements, such as email bulletins in Zimbabwe (Rahimi, 2003). Faris (2010, p. 7) argues that the presence of an independent press such as the *Al-Masry Al-Youm* newspaper helped to bridge the link between bloggers and human rights activists by exchanging information and stories about human rights violation in Egypt. Egyptians usually used social media as their own personal news agencies to exchange news about torture and other regime abuses, such as the blogger, Wael Abbas, mentioned above. Abbas once said that Egyptian bloggers like him were 'recording history so that in the future no one [would] dare to lie about it' (cited in Faris, 2010, p. 100). Another activist, Hosam El-Hamalawy, commented on the ease of organising a demonstration by using social media, compared to the traditional methods in the 1990s:

> in order to organise a demonstration in the 1990s, there was so much secrecy, you couldn't
> talk over the phone, you would meet people, you would chat, and how would you publish
> for a demonstration, you had to 'print out something (cited in Faris, 2010, p. 107).

It is still important, however, to recall that social and independent media cannot in themselves replace civil society (Nanabhay & Farmanfarmaian, 2011). The following chapter provides a review of some of the key studies about new media and activism.

1.5 *Chapter summary*

Egypt has passed through different regime stages: from the Free Officers' coup in 1952 to the revolution against the last Free Officer, Mubarak, in 2011. Nasser used the rhetoric of helping workers and the poor through implementing socialist principles, and Sadat

appealed to the rising middle-class. He initiated the 'Open Door' policy to stimulate the economy and attract foreign investments to Egypt. His policy was followed by Mubarak, who managed to attract foreign investments while increasing the gap between the rich and the poor; indeed, the poverty rate increased dramatically during Mubarak's rule. What the three former leaders, Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak, had in common was that their rule was authoritarian in the sense that as presidents, they had unrivalled legislative and executive power. This is an important fact that is still being debated in Egypt during the writing up of the new constitution. The restraint on individual and collective freedoms, however, did not stop new social movements, particularly among the majority of young people; although apparently leaderless, they took the new social media as their preferred platform to debate and expose the regime's violation of basic human rights.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a brief overview of selected studies regarding the role of technology, mainly the internet concerning the Arab Spring, with a particular focus on the Egyptian case. The position of technology should be seen in the light of the growing ICT expenditure in many Arab states, which had increased dramatically, but the highest percentage was registered in the GCC states; while Egypt's ICT spend in 2004 was 2.37 per cent of its GDP, Bahrain invested 6 per cent of its GDP in its ICT infrastructure (Dutta *et al.* 2007, p. 84).

The internet bandwidth in Egypt increased from 850 Mbps in 2003 to 2060 Mbps, a year later (Dutta *et al.*, 2007, 83). Egypt also had the largest IT sector in the region, in order to meet the increasing demand for software - and 70 million Egyptians owned a mobile phone which could be used to access social media (Dutta *et al.*, 2007,p. 84). Egypt also set up 'Smart Village' to attract foreign investors such as Microsoft, Oracle and HP (Attia *et al.*, 2011, p. 2).

Abdulla (2007) shows that the internet in the Arab world proliferated among people aged 20 - 30; in fact, there were more than 1 million *Twitter* users in Egypt (in 2001), and the revolution resulted in 100 per cent increase (Chebib & Sohail, 2011, p. 141). The Arab world had more than 300 million inhabitants in 2007, but Arab web pages represented less than 0.5 per cent of the total web pages in 2006 (Dutta *et al.*, 2007, p. 85).

It can be difficult to classify youth as a social set, owing to a range of different and equally important characteristics that influence this categorisation. They can be defined according to their methods of communication, for instance, 'the *Facebook* generation' (El- Sharnouby, 2012, pp. 21-22), or according to their religiosity (Sobhy, 2009).

The 1950s and 1960s generation, or 'Nasser generation', had a clear sense of identity, in historical terms, as they subscribed to the pan-Arabism project (El-Sharnouby, 2012, p.

23); economically, this group of young people (under the age of 29) constituted an important consumer segment, comprising around 47 per cent of the working age population in the Arab region (Dhillon *et al.*, 2009). It was arguably for that reason that the former Egyptian regime invested one million Egyptian pounds to support youth enterprises in 2004, and arranged for the National Bank for Development to dedicate about 25 million Egytian pounds for the same purpose (El-Sharnouby, 2012, p. 8). Following the economic 'Open Door' policy of the 1970s, the unemployment rate among people aged 16 to 24 increased and contributed to the delay in marriages, partially caused by the difficulties in finding affordable housing (El-Sharnouby, 2012, p. 8). The young generation were then turned into a problem rather than the hope of the nation; they had simply become the youth bulge. They also became a social problem: *rewish* generation - politically apathetic (El-Sharnouby, 2012, p. 29) prey to Western impulses. The Egyptian writer, Saad Edeen Wahba, once wrote that the presence of McDonald's restaurants in Cairo was an American conspiracy to corrupt young Egyptians (Al-Kahtani, 2000, p. 105). This gave rise to a new religious discourse in the media by young televangelists such as Amr Khaled, Moez Masoud and others. Khaled declared his purpose in *Sonna' el-Hayat* was 'to wake youth up from their sleep' as well as 'to challenge and combat programmes such as "Star Academy", "Super Star" and "Star Makers" and the role they played in corrupting Arab youth' (Sobhy, 2009, p. 32). Amr Khaled's preaching, available on his multi-lingual website, called for the young to define their 'target in life' and reach it, calling them 'life makers'.

A recent survey among Arabs between the ages of 18 and 24 (Khoury, 2011, p. 14) shows the influence of family and religion on their lives; in Egypt, for example, young people expressed the belief that starting a family was the most important goal for around 63 per cent of them; in Jordan, however, they tended to link success with the status of their family in society rather than with their own efforts; in the GCC states, they showed high levels of optimism about their future, except in Bahrain. Frustration with, and distrust of, existing regimes also triggered a new form of youth civic activism, whether through traditional NGOs or political action through youth organisations, or both. Examples of civic activities are *Resala* in Egypt, *Tawasul* in the Emirates and *Sharek* in Palestine (see Khoury, 2011 for an overview of such recent studies).

The following sections review selected studies dealing with how young people used technology and the internet to mobilise collective action. These studies are grouped into three broad themes relevant to this project. The choice to place these studies into these categories is based on the belief that it will better reflect the focus of previous studies on the Egyptian uprisings and the role of social media, and that it will also help to provide pointers for discussion in the fieldwork, to be reviewed in the discussions on methodology and theoretical framework.

This review has helped to shape the focus of the fieldwork, concentrating on the questions posed to the interviewees regarding:

- The role of new social media in fostering cyber-activism
- New social media as a virtual public sphere
- The symbiotic relationship between new social media and mainstream media

The following sections critically review each theme, drawing on relevant previous studies and concluding with pointers for the fieldwork.

2.1 New media for fostering cyber activism

Communication networks are the dynamo of power in modern societies, according to Castells. He defines a network as 'a set of interconnected nodes [...] [a] complex structure of communication, constructed around a set of goals that simultaneously ensure a unity of purpose and flexibility of execution by their adaptability to the operating environment' (2009, pp. 19-21). This network can be controlled by a process of 'switching' in which networks can be connected or disconnected to form certain strategic alliances (Castells, 2009, pp. 45-46). The internet can be used to challenge top-down hierarchal authority models in favour of more horizontal networking, as is the case in cyber Islamic movements (Bunt, 2009, p. 2). Another example is the anti-globalisation movement, which, according to Castells (2001, p. 141), 'is not simply a network, it is an electronic network [...] and because the Internet is its home it cannot be disorganised or captured'.

Social media are communication tools that facilitate interpersonal and group interaction by using a large variety of devices such as 'sharing', 'adding', 'commenting', and uploading texts, images, audio and video material. *Facebook* is widely used by Arab populations, and, in Egypt alone, there were more than 8 million *Facebook* users (in

2011), the majority of whom were aged between 15 and 29. The first quarter of 2011 saw the highest increase of *Facebook* users in Egypt (Chebib & Sohail, 2011, p. 140). Social media have affected political elections and changes in the U.S.A., Canada, Iran, China, Malaysia, in addition to several Arab states such as Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, Syria, Algeria and Bahrain (Attia *et al.*, 2011, p. 1). The term 'web 2.0' refers to the second stage of internet development in which users can share and interact online. The so-called user-generated content has thus turned users into 'producers' who simultaneously consume and produce content (Bruns, 2008). This development has been seen as promising a new openness and power for citizens and users, and thereby ending the 'gatekeeper' ideology in which a few (whether politicians or media professionals) control the dissemination of information (Scholz, 2007).

The recent events in the Arab World or what is referred to as the 'Arab Spring', have drawn attention to the use of the internet and social media in collective action. Fadi Salem, Director of the Governance and Innovation Programme at the Dubai School of Government, commented that 'it is no coincidence that Tunisia witnessed an 8 per cent sudden surge in the number of *Facebook* users during the first two weeks of January 2011, coupled with a shift in the usage trend from merely social in nature into primarily political' (cited in Chebib & Sohail, 2011, p. 144). Social media have also made it easier for journalists to approach new contacts and obtain access to citizens' postings. The internet can also be used as a means of surveillance by state security, for example, or for filtering information such as in Syria. 'Reporters without Borders' (RSF) classified Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia and Libya as 'enemies of the internet' in 2005; this list added Egypt in 2010, but in 2011, the list was confined to Saudi Arabia and Syria. Following the Egyptian revolution, citizens in North Sudan announced wide protests against the regime of President Al-Bashir. The government followed the protestors' communications on *Facebook* and managed to send police forces to arrest them prior to demonstrations, having used social media to spy on them (Comninos, 2011, p. 10).The same happened in Saudi Arabia, where protests were scheduled for 11 March 2011, but the activists were arrested for promoting them on *Facebook* and *Twitter* (Comninos, 2011, p. 10).

Crisis situations motivate peoples' need to access and exchange communication as fast and as widely as possible, which may explain the proliferation of *Twitter* usage in the

Middle East. The combination of traditional, mobile and social media also helps demonstrators to coordinate their protests. Other scholars (Vedel, 2003; Chadwick, 2006) identify four main functions of technologies in social changes, such as campaigning, information dissemination, e-government, and virtual participation. The increase of social media usage should also be seen as part of the revolution of media in the Arab world, starting with the proliferation of satellite television. One of the frequently cited quotes during the revolution was that of a young Egyptian activist who claimed that demonstrators used '*Facebook* to schedule the protests, *Twitter* to coordinate, and *YouTube* to tell the world' (cited in Chebib & Sohail, 2011, p. 139). Egyptian activists did not only send 'tweets' to each other but also addressed international media and the whole world (Idle and Nunns, 2011, 20). Even trans-national media such as *Al-Jazeera* depended on footage sent by citizen journalists on the ground (Chebib and Sohail, 2011, p. 139).

The Egyptian uprising in 2011 spurred a wave of scholarly and media articles and commentaries linking street protests to cyber activism, seen as a tool for encouraging civic engagement and providing a new platform for political expressions (Khamis & Vaughn, 2011). Leaning on Howard's definition of cyber activism (2011, p. 145), Khamis & Vaughn (2011) regard this as the way new and social media are used to advance a political cause, which is otherwise difficult to promote offline. Understood this way, cyber activism can mobilise citizens by spreading stories of injustice (blogs about police torture discussed in Faris, 2010), or advocating a strong political cause avoiding state censorship (such as campaigning to end Mubarak's succession plans – Lim, 2012); although it lacks the planning and facilitation characteristics of offline mobilisation, cyber activism can still lead to mobilisation by encouraging civic engagement (Khamis & Vaughn, 2011).

 Miladi (2011) also argues that new media have played a key role, not only in Egypt but in neighbouring Tunisia, where voices of the youth reached international media, thanks to cell phones, blogs and social media, thereby serving as an alternative uncensored news agency. Social media provided new tools to call for protest, and it was not unusual to find notices encouraging citizens to congregate in certain public Squares (Miladi, 2011). *Twitter* for instance, Idle & Nunns (2011) argue, was used as a tool for citizen journalism

during the Egyptian uprising. Mellor (2013) argues that social media accounts can serve as artefacts to help commemorate the uprisings, as well as individual testimonies of those taking parts in the events.

Communication technologies can foster a collective identity across a geographically dispersed population. Individuals may get the sense, through online discussion groups for example, that they are members of a larger community with shared grievances (Garrett, 2006; Aday, 2010). This allows civic groups to find and attract new members and to build affiliations with groups in other cities and countries (Howard, 2011). Relationships can be strengthened through the maintenance of networks across distances, sharing information and discussion. The creation of community and collective identity can, in turn, facilitate mobilisation in support of collective action (Garrett, 2006; Aday, 2010). Social media can also facilitate collective action through framing processes. The creation of particular group understandings regarding the meaning and significance of specific events and politics can be crucial to the support of a movement. Social networking services and satellite television in Iran, for example, circulated videos of the killing of a young woman, Neda Agha-Soltan, during post-election demonstrations in 2009, filmed by mobile phones. She became a symbol of the protests and a signal to the general public that the protestors are 'like them' (Aday, 2010). This framing was particularly significant in an environment where the government had attributed the protests to foreign agitators. Howard (2010, p. 3) argues that the new information and communication technologies such as cell phones and the internet have been utilised by social movements and activists in Muslim countries to mobilise people, such as in Indonesia in 1998. Other examples cited by him were the 'Tulip Revolution' in Kyrgyzstan in 2005, when cell phones were used to organise activists, or in Kuwait in 2005, when young protestors relied on text messaging to co-ordinate demonstrations.

It can be argued that communication via social media sites has replaced interpersonal or face-to-face communication, particularly in times of political upheaval. It is when citizens lose trust and confidence in state institutions that they resort to personal interactive communication; consequently, *Twitter* and *Facebook* users trusted their messages from each other rather than the government media (Attia *et al.*, 2011, p. 4). Collective action is

simply not possible without mobilising other citizens or users, or, as Arendt (1958, p. 188) puts it: 'action [...] is never possible in isolation; to be isolated is to be deprived of the capacity to act.'

Egyptian activists used social media such as *Twitter* to post maps indicating safe routes for protestors, away from government-hired thugs (Meier, 2011). Social media facilitated activists in spreading the word, share ideas and even arrange practical action such as requesting blood donations (Idle & Nunn, 2011). These media also helped activists not only link up with Arabs in Diaspora, but also international media and organisations, thereby creating a virtual global public sphere (Khamis & Vaughn, 2011). Social media, therefore, served not only as an 'alternative' communication tool and medium, but also as a platform for exchanging views and information, which leads this review to the next theme: how new and social media served as a virtual public sphere.

2.2 New social media as a virtual public sphere

Online deliberation can facilitate a critical debate with citizens from diverse geographical spaces, arranged at low costs, unlike offline debates which require a strong network, enough resources to arrange meetings and communication matters. Habermas sees the potential of the new media and the internet in serving as a virtual public sphere, or, as he puts it: 'a dispersed public interconnected almost exclusively through the electronic media can keep up to date on all kinds of issues and contributions in the mass media with a minimum of attention' (2006, p. 9).

The internet alone cannot provide the platform or structure, however, which allows citizens to effectively deliberate, especially when media professionals, such as journalists, can still act as gatekeepers, filtering or moderating forum discussions, not to mention that not all online discussions can be meaningful as envisaged in the normative idea of a public sphere. The most important obstacle to having a fully-fledged online public sphere is arguably the dominance of certain online groups such as famous activists, artists or journalists and politicians. This obstacle, argues Papacharissi (2010, p. 122), makes most discussions on the internet 'amorphous, fragmented, dominated by a few, and too specific to live up to the Habermasian ideal

of 'rational accord'. This view is shared by Peter Dahlgren (2000, p. 158), who sees online deliberation as fragmented fora amongst groups of users who share similar views, which is far from the normative Habermasian idea of a critical, rational debate amongst groups with different views; in addition, not all citizens have access to the internet or social media, and this is particularly the case in developing societies such as Egypt, where the digital divide amongst social groups can be wider than that recorded in Western societies. This usually makes online deliberations to be dominated by those already politically active, offline (Cammaerts & van Audenhove, 2005, p. 193). The internet, like offline media, can therefore be dominated by experts, pundits and media professionals, rather than being a forum for marginalised actors across social groups (Gerhards & Schäfer, 2010).

Some scholars, on the other hand, argue that despite its shortcomings, the internet and new media can provide different avenues in order to seek, retrieve and disseminate information, relevant to rational and critical deliberation (Slevin, 2000, p. 185). Online discussions are fundamentally different from offline ones, which make it difficult to effectively compare them; for instance, comments by online users can be exchanged at different times: they can be posted much later, not immediately as in offline discussions. This means that, the internet provides different communication avenues with its distinct rules, according to Bohman (2004), but it still serves as an alternative forum for rational deliberation. Citizens can also access myriad different opinions and not just the views of like-minded people, argues Goode (2005, p. 119). This can promote further reflection and dialogue, and the internet is able to encourage citizens who normally do not engage in offline discussions, to contribute to an online debate and share their ideas.

The internet can indeed allow for fast and wide dissemination of messages; it can also provide a new avenue for deliberation and discussion amongst diverse groups, thereby encouraging users to familiarise themselves with dissident views. The Egyptian uprising of 2011 was an example of employing the internet, and particularly social media, to disseminate information and spur participation (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012, p. 376; Lim, 2012, p. 244).

The recent uprisings in Egypt and other parts of the region have been called '*Facebook revolutions*', due to the spread of the use of social media to disseminate information about the protests and protesters (Comnions, 2011). The user-generated content uploaded by the protesters was created by amateurs in the form of blogs, 'tweets', video and audio clips. There were more than a million *Twitter* users in Egypt between January and March 2011, and the most popular 'hashtags' during that period were '#egypt' and '#jan25' (Chebib & Sohail, 2011 p. 141). Many Egyptians resorted to the internet during the January 25 revolution; for instance, a survey by Kavanaugh *et al.* (2012) showed that the vast majority of a sample of 240 Egyptians used the internet and social network sites such as *Facebook* on a daily basis during the uprising. Papacharissi & Oliveira (2012) examined *Twitter* archives for the period from 25 January to 25 February 2011 for the #egypt hashtags, and applied a content, computer-mediated text analysis to identify patterns, topics and network frames in the *Twitter* posts. Their analysis showed that posts tended to revolve around big events in proximate locations and reflected network framing and actions. They were also inclined to be associated with specific activists and intellectuals such as Wael Ghonim and Gigi Ibrahim. The camera-phone footages were collected and posted online by satellite broadcasters such as *Al-Jazeera*, which not only added to the fame of these activities but also to the role of social media; as one activist put it, 'we built a media camp in Tahrir Square. It was two tents, and we were around five or six technical friends with their laptops, memory-readers, hard disks. We all had physical means with us and we hung a sign in Arabic and English on the tent saying: 'Focal point to gather videos and pictures from people in the street'[…] and we received a huge amount of videos and pictures and then we go [*sic*] back online and keep posting them online. In the first few hours, I gathered 75 gigabytes of pictures and videos from people in the streets' (quoted in Aouragh & Alexander, 2011, p. 1352).

Mohammed's study (2011) aims to analyse the Egyptian blogosphere and whether it plays a role in providing a virtual public sphere. He examines the major themes in Abbas's blog, and its major discursive features such as style, language, quality of argument, and actors in this discourse. One of his selected blogs was that by the Egyptian activist, Wael Abbas, a freelance journalist and award-winning activist. His blog, *Egyptian Awareness,* is

informal and is written entirely in familiar Egyptian dialect, which makes it accessible to all Egyptians. Four issues relate to online public spaces: access, freedom to communicate, deliberation of discussion and quality of discourse (Mohammed, 2011, p. 44). He analyses blogs, because they are a tool available to all citizens, assuming they have access to the internet. Mohammed claims that most Egyptian bloggers are women and they usually write about their life experiences, both personal and political (p. 46).

Tufekci & Wilson (2012) provide a study based on a survey of participants in the Egyptian revolution. They argue that *Facebook* was utilised as a new source of information which was not easily controlled by the former regime. They also argue that social media here played a pivotal role in shaping how citizens made decisions about participating in the protest and how they organised it. Their aim was to show whether protestors used social media to plan and mobilise the protests. They conducted 1,200 interviews with participants and asked them to complete questionnaires in Arabic. The results showed that the average age of participants was 26, and the majority of them was male (75 per cent); 60 per cent of them were educated at college or university level. Female participants tended to use social media, such as *Facebook,* more than males, and also for reporting about the protests. The study showed that satellite TV and phones were still the most popular media choices for participants; almost half of the participants produced and disseminated video or images from the protests using *Facebook*, mobile phones and *Twitter*.

Using modelling analysis, Al Ani *et al.* (2012) provided an analysis of Egyptian blogs authored between 2004 and 2011. They showed how blogs were used by social movements such as the *Kefaya* (Enough) movement to disseminate news about protests and to mobilise events. Blogs were also used as an alternative media channel for posting eyewitness accounts of harassment. Their analysis covered 18,000 individual posts, of which nearly six thousand were in Arabic and the rest in English. Their analysis documented a remarkable reduction in the personal topics blogs between 2006 and 2011, compared to a constant increase in political ones. The blogs consequently shifted from a focus on particular narratives towards more universal issues. Personal blogs continued to reflect bloggers' concerns with the impact of human rights violations on their daily lives, thus highlighting their role as citizen journalists. Blogs in English tended

to focus on human rights and revolutionary issues, which is justified by the fact that these blogs were inclined to be 'outward-facing instruments of communication to a foreign audience' (p. 22). Al Ani *et al.* (2012) divided the blogs into three types: those reporting news, those providing commentary and the remaining coded as 'other', which covered a range of topics including art and TV programmes. The majority of blogs provided commentary, during the revolution, rather than news about the events. Bloggers saw a means to challenge the coverage in mainstream media in their blogs, such as the Egyptian blogger who remarked on the coverage of the Tunisian uprising:

> The official media is [*sic*] reminding us over and over, by all possible and provoking ways, that what happened in Tunisia can't and will not happen to Egypt, the official media is speaking about pseudo-achievements of Mubarak's economic policies, living in their dream world that the people will buy their lies anymore. All these statements and all these denials are actually a strong indicator of how scared and fragile the Egyptian regime is currently […]' (p. 23).

The bloggers therefore provided counter-narratives and testimonies to what the national state media was offering, highlighting their testimony as first-hand experience and description of the protests.

Another important aspect in analysing social new media as a virtual public sphere is the issue of access: not only in terms of access to hardware, but also linguistic and media skills needed to communicate with groups located overseas. Allam (2012), for instance, shows that English is the common language for young Egyptians who use social networking sites, although many of them also use both Arabic and English. The majority of her informants confirm that they used social networks in order to improve their country, while 50 per cent of them used it to seek out political information or engage in political debate. El-Sharnouby (2012, p. 13) conducted a research among a sample of young Egyptians who had been involved in the demonstrations since 25 January 2011, as well as those who had not. She carried out 29 interviews with young people, in total, of whom 17 were female and the rest male. She grouped them into two main categories: lower middle-class (salaried employees who earn less than £40 a month) and upper middle-class, (salaried professionals earning considerably more). El-Sharnouby states in her interviews with young people from Tahrir:

Class was a very important factor in the imagination of a young person that could bring about change as they are to a great extent educated and organised. Hence, heroic youth who made Tahrir were strongly related to the image of middle-class, educated, decent-looking men (El-Sharnouby, 2012, p. 41).

An example of this perception is reflected in one of her interviewee's statements when she saw pictures of 'martyrs' on the streets:

They looked as if they just [come] out of prison. They …[did] not looking like demonstrators or people who love[d] their country. I got the feeling they [were] youth who went out to steal and then died [...] they [had] a scary look on their faces. If they […] pass[ed] by you on the street, you [would] get the feeling they [were] *baltagyya* [thugs] (El-Sharnouby, 2012, p. 41).

Another informant defined the (ideal) participant as:

Someone [who] is dressed nicely and goes on the street to chant, without [using] swear words, while focusing on his [or her] freedom. I saw some in the demonstrations where I felt they [had] nothing to do with the Revolution, like some looking at women and just going for fun. Someone who is well-travelled and educated; someone who saw people abroad and underst[oo]d things. Someone who underst[oo]d basic human rights (El-Sharnouby, 2012, p. 42).

Another interviewee stressed that the protests were attributed to the high-tech and media-savvy youth:

The first people who started the demonstrations [were the] youth from *Facebook* who got to know each other through the internet. They are the ones who are well-educated. The government thought that the ones who would demonstrate, however, [could] only be from poor [backgrounds] who cannot live [under the current circumstances]. So this was new - the revolution does not come from the poor and hungry but from [the] educated who are upset [...] the old regime did not see this coming as they were all old and [did] not know anything about the internet. [...] they thought the youth only [sat] on the net to chat or watch sex movies, and really, everyone thought so (El-Sharnouby, 2012, p. 42).

An informant from the lower middle-class said that the upper middle-class youth could not do a demonstration without the Muslim Brotherhood, especially the class that was there: 'The upper middle-class who has some money, their purpose in life is so different

[from] ours. They might be upset that a police [officer] would stop them and look at their car [...] but I would not be upset [by] these things' (El-Sharnouby, 2012, p. 43).

Another one, who worked as a driver, said: 'if I had the money that would cover me for a week then I would take [to] the streets [...] so unfortunately I could not protest but my heart was with the protestors' (El-Sharnouby, 2012, p. 44).

Hossam El-Hamalawy noted that activists who were fluent in English would be responsible for informing their networks abroad:

> even after the government banned *Twitter*, I was logging in via a proxy site in order to disseminate the news about the protests to mainly people abroad. And that is part also of the division of labour; I mean we have allies abroad...trade unionists, human rights activists, foreign journalists, all of these people we need to get the word out to' (quoted in Aouragh & Alexander, 2011, pp. 1349-1350).

Another activist, Amr Gharbia, said:

> what we call a social network is not actually a social network; these are social tools. *Twitter* and *Facebook* are not the social network: we are the social network. And we have personal relations with each other. And to prove that, when the social networks were gone, they were filtered or blocked, during the high days of the revolution in Egypt a couple of weeks ago, we still operated [...]. The social network is us. We use whatever tools we have. They may be internet tools; they may be phone lines; they may be paper-based communications. Turning off the technology doesn't turn off the social network, because it is about people, not about technology (quoted in Aouragh & Alexander, 2011, p. 1351).

The above examples of activists illustrate the typical image of protestors in Tahrir Square (at least during the 2011 uprising) being middle-class with high education credentials (mostly from foreign schools or universities) and high media skills. This constitutes an obstacle to the function of new social media as a liberating and alternative public space for deliberation, if users are already discriminated against due to their social ranking or cultural and social capital; also, for the internet to function as a virtual public sphere, online debates should echo offline discussions, thereby extending the possibility for citizens to engage in meaningful and topical exchanges of opinion which can result in significant offline action. This latter point is crucial to the fieldwork, and will be discussed in more detail in Chapters Five,, Six, Seven and Eight. The next section reviews studies on the comparison of the final

theme in this research: the symbiotic relationship (if any) between mainstream and new social media in the 2011 uprising.

2.3 The relationship between mainstream and new social media

Some scholars (Peterson, 2011, p. 14) argue that international media such as *Al-Jazeera* helped shape public opinion outside of Egypt by messages communicated via social media. Hermida (2012) also argues that, in general, the Arab Spring coverage was characterised by the use of non-elite sources such as 'tweeters', which shows the influence of this group in reaching out to international media, even though this cohort of users is small, compared to the overall population of Egypt. New and social media have facilitated the dissemination of news about the uprising in Egypt, prompting many more Egyptians to take to Tahrir Square; however, owing to the fact that not everyone in Egypt had access to social media, people depended on other means of communication such as inter-personal networks and mainstream media such as *Al-Jazeera*.

Hamdy & Gomaa (2012) provide the content analysis of a sample of newspaper articles collected from semi-official and independent newspapers, in addition to posts from social media sites. The analysis identifies four main frames: conflicts, responsibility, economic consequences, and human interest. Semi-official newspapers unsurprisingly depended on the conflict frame in contrast to social media posts in which the human interest frame dominated. The independent press, on the other hand, used a range of frames, including conflict as well as human interest. Social media posts tended to highlight not only human suffering as a result of the revolution, but also 'martyrdom' and anger.

Al-Maskati (2012) analyses the coverage of the Egyptian protests provided by *Al-Ahram*, *Arab News*, *China Daily*, *Guardian International*, *International Herald Tribune* and *Jerusalem Post*, focusing on the intensity of the coverage, potential shifts in tunes and interaction with social media. His study shows that the Egyptian *Al-Ahram* attempted to delegitimise the protesters and their demands, by depending on pro-government representatives as their sources, and regularly employing negative keywords to portray

the protesters. The two Arab newspapers, *Arab News* and *Al-Ahram* showed some changes from being less pro-government to more pro-democracy, while the remaining newspapers were consistent in their coverage. All the newspapers preferred to rely on conventional sources in breaking the news about the protests, rather than those from social websites, although significant quotes from such websites were sometimes used.

In her survey of a sample of Egyptian audiences, Allam (2012, p. 166) shows that the main source of information during the revolution was satellite television such as *BBC Arabic* and *Al-Jazeera*, followed by international outlets such as *CNN*. Private television channels were also among the preferred outlets (*Dream TV, Al-Mehwar, ON TV* and *Al-Hayat TV*). Television was also seen as playing an important role as the main source of news during the uprisings; for instance, one of Egypt's most famous online activists, Wael Ghonim, acknowledged the impact of *Al-Jazeera*:

> The channel's talk shows offered heavy criticism of many Arab leaders. Within a few short years, Al-Jazeera became the most viewed channel in Egypt and the entire Arab region. The network sets an example that has been followed by many channels throughout the Middle East (2012, p. 38).

Aouragh & Alexander (2011) propose a distinction between the use of the internet as a tool to bring about change from below, and as a space for collective dissent. Their interviews with a sample of Egyptian activists who used social media reflect their rejection of the claim that the events of January 25 were a *Facebook* revolution, as this risks drawing a simplistic causal relationship between technology and the uprising, while the latter depends primarily on the support of millions of people, whether online or offline. Such a simplistic claim, in their view, undermines the decades-long protest movements in Egypt which started early in the twenty-first century. The study aimed to explain how the activists used the internet and the techniques that worked on online activism.   One such activist saw the internet as an online space to galvanise public opinion:

> to have a space, an online space, to write and talk [to] people, to give them messages which will increase their anger, this is my favourite way of online activism. This is the way online activism contributed to the revolution. When you asked people to go and demonstrate against the police, they were ready because you had already provided them with materials which made them angry (quoted in Aouragh & Alexander, 2011, p. 1348).

New communication technologies have become the infrastructure for sharing and learning about diverse views and for new approaches to political representation and participation (Howard, 2011; Mäkinen and Kuira, 2008). The 'April 6' movement in Egypt, which relied on *Facebook* and other social media tools, provided a structure for a new generation of Egyptians to 'virtually' assemble and communicate about their grievances. They fell outside the small, traditional group of activists and opinion-makers in the country, and represented a new form of civil society organisation. Howard stresses that new civic associations were emerging throughout the Muslim world, due to the relevant infrastructure provided by information and communication technologies. The formation of such groups is especially important in countries where political parties can be illegal (Howard, 2011). Social and new media such as 'blogs' and *Facebook,* tend to play a significant role when access to mainstream media is restricted (Papacharissi & Oliveira, 2012: 266). *Twitter*, for instance, allowed communication during the Iranian state censorship of mainstream media coverage, following the 2009 elections (Christensen, 2009).

Arab youths from Tunisia and Egypt asserted that *Facebook* was primarily used to raise awareness about on-going civil movements and to spread information to the whole world, and, to a lesser extent, to organise action, according to a survey by the Dubai School of Government (2011). The survey showed that the total number of *Facebook* users in the Arab world reached nearly 28 million by early April 2011, almost double the figure noted in the same period in 2010. The Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries continued to dominate the top five *Facebook* users, while Egypt had nearly a quarter of all *Facebook* users in the region; as for *Twitter*, the School's report estimated the number of users to be around 1.1 million in the region, and the most popular topics that were 'tweeted' were Egypt, the January 25 Revolution, Libya, Bahrain and protests; in fact, the report estimated that over 60 per cent of all 'tweets' generated within the first quarter of 2011 originated from users in Kuwait, Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Information and communication technologies reduce the outlay associated with publishing and accessing information, and facilitate communication and coordination across distances. This, in turn, reduces the transaction costs for organizing collective action and the costs of participation (Aday, 2010; Meier, 2009; Garrett, 2006). The

internet, for example, more specifically allows groups advocating social change to spread not only their ideological messages, but also their training programmes and operation plans. *YouTube* videos enable core activists to explain a movement's principles and tactics in order to disperse followers without having to travel (Papic and Noona, 2011). *Ushahidi* in Kenya significantly reduced the costs of participating in a collective human rights campaign: the sole requirement being a mobile phone signal (Goldstein and Rotich, 2008).

Howard (2010, p.38) argues that the new information technologies have played a causal role in democratisation in several Muslim states; for him, the term 'digital divide' should not be measured merely by the distribution of hardware and software among populations, or the skills needed to handle this information technology, but rather, by the impact of using it to further develop political institutions. The use of new media such as the internet, has also been the result of the presence of political opposition parties in exile, and their use of new media as a means of communicating with their supporters inside their home country. The internet has also been used as 'the site of political contestation between the state and civil society, and between secularism and Islamism' (Howard, 2010, p. 132). Kurds used emails and faxes as their primary tools for organising demonstrations in 22 countries across Europe, following the abduction of Abdullah Ocalan in 1999 (Howard, 2010, p. 133). the Committee for the Defence of Legitimacy Rights and Movement for Islamic Reform in Saudi Arabia, made use of the internet to expose the royal family's corruption, and to debate the implementation of *Shari'a* law (Howard, 2010, p. 134). Howard argues that online civic life flourishes when the state is authoritarian and bans civic political life, or when the opposition is legal but ineffective in challenging single-party governance (2010, p. 135).

To sum up, some scholars (Feezel, Conroy & Guerrero, 2009, p. 17) argue that online groups seem to perform positive civic functions as well as off-line groups, and that online engagement triggers a more efficacious reaction among online users in comparison to traditional media users. Other scholars, however (Gladwell, 2010) argue that ties among online groups are weak, and that *Facebook* 'friends', for instance, are not real friends, and thus, they cannot serve as platforms for high-risk activism.

2.4 Chapter summary

Saco (2002) argues that there have been two positions regarding the effect of technologies on social change: utopian and dystopian; while the former is more optimistic and sees technology as a catalyst for change, the latter is more pessimistic and sees technology as a potential means of reinforcing the *status quo*. Howard (2010) adds a third view which sees technology as a facilitator for change, but states that technology alone cannot lead to democratic transformation without the presence of well-educated strata that contribute to an active civil society. He illustrates his argument by referring to the situation in Iran, noting that Farsi was the tenth most popular blogging language (Howard, 2010, p. 4), and that images of the death of Neda Agha-Soltan, who was killed during a protest in Iran in 2009, were distributed digitally and helped inspire the protest movements, 40 days later (p. 7). Iranian protestors were eager to fill the space of the foreign press by sharing captured images and clips from the Iranian streets on social media, even when the Iranian government blocked foreign correspondents from reporting within Iran (p. 8).

New media technology has certainly offered unprecedented opportunities for civic engagement in Egypt. It is true that Tahrir provided a space for all young people, across gender, class and religion, and the same space was offered virtually, thereby defying state censorship and state centralisation. The impact of social media was even illustrated in an Egyptian parent's appreciation of *Facebook* to the extent that he named his daughter 'Facebook', during the 2011 revolution (Kaveney, 2011).

The above review identified three important themes relevant to this study: the role of new social media in fostering cyber activism; the role of such media in serving as a virtual public sphere and civil society; and the relationship between mainstream and social media. A closer examination of the role of actors and agency in mobilising action (cyber activism) is lacking in the above studies: the engagement in deliberation (virtual public sphere) and with mainstream and social media, alike. This study adopts qualitative methods (interviews and focus groups) in order to fill this gap in research, by examining how activists as well as (social and mainstream) media users perceive the role of social media in mobilising people for action and in facilitating virtual deliberation avenues,.

The three themes identified in the Literature Review will be further discussed in the Methodology chapter as pointers for the interviews with focus groups, and reference will be made to them in the discourse on civil society in Egypt, as part of the Theoretical Framework. The subsequent chapters will discuss the situation in Egypt in more detail, and question whether Egyptian citizens and activists managed to translate online activities into offline activism.

Chapter Three

Civil society – a theoretical framework

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an assessment of selected theories that discuss the emergence of social movements, and how they may be incorporated as part of a thriving civil society. The discussion will begin with views regarding social movements and civil society which are largely applicable to Western democracies, followed by a section dedicated to examining opinions regarding Egypt, thus shedding some light on the role of civil society in the Egyptian political sphere, and providing a few examples of recent movements and civil society associations. The discussion ends with an inspection of the role of social and new media in paving the way for these associations, as well as allowing social movements to flourish, by comparing the views of scholars who were enthusiastic about this role to those who were more cautious in their evaluation.

3.1 Social movement

A social movement is 'a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences', whether in favour of, or against social change (McCarthy & Zald, 1977, pp. 1217-1219), whereas social organisation would imply a more formal entity 'which identities its goals with the preferences of a social movement'. Social movements usually depend on trust generated via social networks as a basis for recruitment (Snow *et al.* 1980, p. 791). One example here is Amani el-Tounsi's testimony on the Egyptian uprising in her book, *Amani: A Girl from Tahrir* (2011), in which she reflects on the exchange of views with like-minded individuals who finally convince her to return to the Tahrir protests, following the violent battle on 2 February. It is this exchange with friends and people she trusted which helped her make up her mind. Movements are based on trust, not only between close friends, but also between strangers with common interests (Stolle & Rochon, 1998, p. 48). It is also claimed that movements which are linked to other groups will grow more rapidly than those which are closed and exclusive (Snow *et al.* 1980, p. 797).

Socialisation is regarded as playing a major role in motivating activists into action, and so are self-concept and values (Duncan, 1999; Hercus, 1999). Activists are not necessarily those who are more knowledgeable and motivated towards political action than non-activists; in fact, research shows that the major difference between activists and non-activists is the amount of time and effort dedicated to political projects, and that activism is usually preceded by previous engagement in social or political movements, even on a voluntary basis (Wiltfang & McAdam, 1991; Stewart, Settles, & Winter, 1998). There are also some demographic characteristics that predict the level of social activism among populations; for instance, the middle-class is claimed to devote more time to volunteering activities than the working classes, and women and young people tend to offer more of their time to such activities than do men or the elderly (Franz & McClelland, 1994). Some scholars (Giugni, 1998) argue that social movements can result in noticeable changes traced through three different levels: the change of power relations (cultural), the change in policies (structural or institutional), and change at both cultural and institutional levels. These changes, moreover, must be explained through a prism of theories acknowledging the changes at technological, social and cultural levels (Mackay & Gillespie, 1992, p. 686; Schroeder, 2007).

The uprisings in 2011 in the Arab World are said to have begun with a series of non-violent similar uprisings in the past, confined to local surroundings. One example is the first Palestinian *Intifada* (1987-1993) and another, the Cedar Revolution in Lebanon (2005), in the wake of the assassination of the prime minister, Rafiq Al-Hariri, resulting in the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon in that year (Bayat, 2010, p. 6). Bayat also argues that people resort to street politics if they are prohibited from practicing their voting rights.

Recent social movements in Egypt, include the famous movement,' We are all Khaled Said', named after Khaled Said who was beaten to death by the Egyptian police forces in June 2010, while sitting in a cybercafé in Alexandria city. Khaled's family released photographs of the corpse, showing evidence of a brutal assault which triggered massive public anger. The incident also resulted in the emergence of several *Facebook* groups condemning police brutality, such as 'We are all Khaled Said', founded by Wael Ghonim, who was then working for *Google* in Dubai. The page attracted hundreds of thousands of

people within a few days, and many of them used Khaled's photograph as their profile picture. The former regime arranged the trial of the two detectives involved in Khaled's death, as a result of this massive protest. Social movements such as the above-mentioned 'We Are All Khaled Said', began campaigning in order to form a network. The success of this network would determine its sustainability in the future, for example, in the form of a legal entity or organisation. Not all campaigns follow this model, however, as only a few remain justifiable or sound. The following diagram reflects the life-time of a successful social movement:
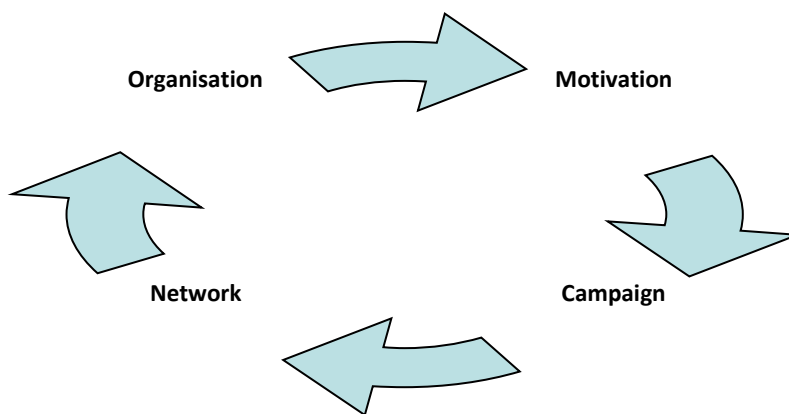
- Figure 3.1 lifetime of social movement

A return to this model will be made in the overall findings discussion, in order to place social media in this cycle. Suffice to say here, that when a movement turns into an institutionalised group, it is then claimed to be part of organised civil society, which is necessary to preserve a healthy public sphere, as will be discussed in the following section.

3.2 Civil society

The concept of civil society is found in de Tocqueville's example of voluntary association as a means of promoting democratic and public participation (Foley & Edwards, 1996). Gramsci also emphasised the role of social institutions in challenging the *status quo* and state dominance (Katz, 2003). Civil society can be defined as 'a sphere of social interaction between the household and the state which is manifest in norms of community cooperation, structures of voluntary associations, and networks of public

communication' (Bratton, 1994, p. 2). Civil society associations include diverse groups such as neighbourhood committees and charity organisations (Foley & Edwards, 1996, p. 38).

Calhoun (1993) distinguishes between civil society and public sphere, where the definition and importance of the latter 'is largely to go beyond general appeals to the nature of civil society' in explaining 'the social foundation of democracy' (p. 269). It is worth noting that Habermas has not elaborated on the theory of power in his notion of public sphere, and how power can be a barrier to communicative rationality (Flyvbjerg, 1998, p. 215). Foucault, on the other hand, focuses on 'conflict and power relations as the most effective point of departure for the fight against domination' (Flyvbjerg, 1998, 224).

The rise of markets led thinkers such as Adam Smith, to suggest social activities 'without the intervention of government' (Calhoun, 1993, p. 271). A successful political sphere 'depends on a favorable organisation of civil society' (Calhoun, 1993, p. 274), whereas a public sphere is essential for citizens to express and exchange personal views, civil society is the 'organised expressions of these views' (Castells, 2008, p. 78); moreover, the identity 'of the political community is a product, not simply a precondition, of the activity of the public sphere of civil society' (Calhoun, 1993, p. 280). The Hegelian definition of civil society is based on the educative element of civil society, Foucault's work suggests the role played by civil society in enforcing power and 'exerting hegemony through consent in a way that is perhaps more subtle but no less authoritarian than the exertion of dictatorship through coercion' (Hardt, 1995, p. 31).

Civil society is defined by Diamond (1999, p. 21) as 'the realm of organised social life that is open, voluntary, self-generating, at least partially self-supporting, and autonomous from the state, and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules.' Civil society includes NGOs, informal networks and formal organisations engaged in public action, in order to bring about social change. Scholars such as Diamond (1992) and Hadenius (1992) postulate that democratic countries tend to be wealthy and enjoy high literacy rates; however, if these were the only criteria, then the GCC states (comprising Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) would be democratic, *par excellence*, as the adult literacy rate in this region is over 90 per cent; in addition, their GDP has been increasing annually by an average of 5 per cent since 1998. This rate of

growth is expected to continue until 2020, thanks to the higher crude oil prices boosting a nominal GDP of more than $1 trillion USD (Baabood, 2011).

The increase in voluntary and civil society organisations does not in itself guarantee a higher degree of political freedom, as postulated by Gill (2000); for instance, Egypt has witnessed a significant increase in this voluntary sector; in fact, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and Lebanon have the highest number and most active civil societies in the region (Yom, 2005).

The reason for this is that regimes, particularly authoritarian ones, can exercise a number of methods to restrict civil society organisations; for instance, they can promote them as long as the they do not question the power of the state. The state can exercise its coercive power if they do so, by shutting down organisations or even imprisoning activists such as was the case with the Egyptian-American activist, Saad Eddin Ibrahim, who was incarcerated in 2001 and his human rights centre was shut down for three years. Other methods include imposing robust regulations to control activism before it shows threatening signs, or setting up organisations that mimic civil societies such as the National Council for Human Rights in Egypt (Yom, 2005).

Civil society is also associated with certain virtues such as charity, volunteering, and altruism. This could also be seen as an arena for political and social actors who promote their own interests and needs. Cohen and Arato (1992) see civil society as the sphere between the market and the state, thus free of both market pressures and colonisation. It is perhaps for this reason that civil society in the Western tradition is categorised as the non-profit sector.

Giffen *et al*. (2005) divide previous definitions of civil society into roughly two categories: the neo-liberal approach and the alternatives. The neo-liberal approach refers to the view of seeing civil society as an instrument in the development of good governance, and it sees NGOs and similar organisations as the bedrock of such civil society, which aim at strengthening democracy and delivering services to citizens. Here, civil society is seen to roll back the position of the state, and civil society associations working in partnership with both the market and the state, but are defined in contrast to the state. That view also draws on Robert Putnam's concept of social capital (1993)

where associations involve citizens in collective action, thereby contributing to good governance as well as a thriving economy. This neo-liberal approach is seen as deeply engrained in Western developmental agenda, promoting civil society associations in the developing world with the aim of building social capital and facilitating liberal political and economic reforms (see also Howell & Pearce, 2001).

The alternative approach, on the other hand, goes beyond seeing civil society as a collection of organisations; instead, it sees it as a force of empowerment and change through people's participation. 'People' here refers to all categories of citizens, including women and marginalised groups, not only associations and organisations. Harmsen (2008, p. 19) argues that the revival of this approach emerged during the 1980s and 1990s when Western donors criticised the idea of state-led modernisation in the developing world. This approach was built on the concept of the public sphere as a space for rational and critical debate amongst a diverse group of actors, with the aim of influencing policy-making. Gaventa (2003) also endorses this alternative definition by seeing participation in debate as pivotal to democracy and exercising the right to vote in political elections. This view is also based on diving the public sphere into closed space (where decisions are made by the elites), invited space (elections in which citizens participate through pre-defined processes) and claimed or created space carved out by civil society groups (Giffen *et al.*, 2005).

This is not far from Wiktorowicz's (2000, p. 43) definition of civil society as

> [...] the constellation of associational forms that occupy the terrain between individuals and the state. It is viewed as a mechanism of collective empowerment that enhances the ability of citizens to protect their interest and rights from arbitrary or capricious state power.

Wiktorowicz states that in Jordan, for instance, even 'small talk' in social gatherings is an opportunity to discuss politics (2000, p. 50); despite the proliferation of civil society activities in the country, the Jordanian regime has managed to control and closely monitor these activities through legal codes and regulation (p. 57).

Kaldor (2003) distinguishes between three definitions of civil society: (i) activist version: engagement in opposing state repression; (ii) neo-liberal version: associated with ideas

63

about the non-profit sector which is located between the state and the market, in order to minimise state intervention and based on trust and social interaction; and (iii) post-modern version: 'a more culturally sensitive concept which involves various national and religious groupings and a contestation of narratives' (Kaldor, 2003, p. 10). Civil society actors are usually seen as non-representative, as their status is not based on public nomination and voting (Kaldor, 2003, p. 6). Kaldor provides a typology of civil society actors based on four types: social movements, NGOs, social organisations, and nationalist or religious groups. The focus of the first type is to emancipate the poor whose activism is based on protests, and their organisations are characterised by their loose network structure, compared to the other three types.

Civil society is based on trust and inclusion, similar to social movements. Public communication plays a vital role in fostering civil society as citizens need to communicate and debate with one another, either through the use of public media, such as print and broadcasting, or alternative media sources (Bratton, 1994, p. 2-3). Wael Ghonim illustrated this importance of trust when he recounted his correspondence with an activist in Cairo, who was able to identify the whereabouts of Ghonim from his IP address in Dubai; although they were co-ordinating 'Silent Stand' ('We are all Khaled Said'*)* demonstrations, they were still cautious; as Ghonim put it:

> the problem was that with my IP address in hand, he could easily locate my home as well. I tried to defuse the situation. I sent him a smiley face and told him I was using the software Tor: I could have been in Norway, or Iceland, or Switzerland, and the software would hide me. He did not believe me and asked me to relax, as he didn't plan on telling anyone […] the last thing I wanted was for someone I did not know to obtain details about my personal life. But to my relief, this episode ended in peace (2012, p. 3)

Trust here refers to the belief that citizens (within the same group) would not aim to deliberately harm one another but would join forces in working towards a collective goal, in this case, ousting Mubarak. To nurture this trust, it is important that people become more involved in voluntary activities to meet each other and learn how to trust one another (Newton, 2001, p. 202). Trust then is the 'main component of social capital and social capital is a necessary condition of social integration, economic efficiency, and democratic stability' (Newton, 2001, p. 202). Putnam (1993, p. 176) argues that 'social capital, as embodied in horizontal networks of civic engagement, bolsters the

performance of the polity and the economy, rather than the reverse: strong society, strong economy; strong society, strong state'. Egyptians' involvement in voluntary organisations, including charitable enterprises, varies, therefore, it is important to take the local context and this variation into consideration, before applying Western ideas and concepts such as 'public sphere' or 'civil society', when accounting for the diverse facets of public resistance and collective action in Egypt. It is important, therefore to consider all types of groupings which could generate collective action and citizen engagement, including bowling clubs, for instance.

Trust has been absent in the Egyptian political sphere, at least prior to 2011, due to the wide-spread corruption of Mubarak's regime. One stark example of this mistrust is of Ahmed Ezz, the steel tycoon and confidant of Gamal Mubarak. Ezz had an illegal monopoly on steel, according to Egyptian consciousness, based on his relationship with the regime and the Mubaraks. Not only did he win this lucrative business monopoly due to this relationship, Ezz also amassed political power, as, it was claimed, he was the architect behind the fraudulent 2010 parliamentary elections. Ezz was the leading figure in Mubarak's *National Democratic Party* and was Secretary for Organisational Affairs. Ezz denied any corruption in his interviews with the media, and pointed instead, to the role played by businessmen in raising the standard of living in Egypt. One example he mentioned in one of his interviews with *Al-Masry Al-Youm* in 2009 was the rising sales of cars in Egypt (from 80,000 in 2003 to 300,000 in 2008) which, for him, was an indication of the improving financial conditions of middle-class Egyptians (Schenker, 2011, 82 p. 3); indeed, if citizens do not trust their parliament, which is their representative institution, then this marks a serious flaw in the process of political participation and a serious breach of trust and confidence in such an institution (Newton, 2001: 205).

Autonomy is another important characteristic of civil society:

> autonomy from traditional politics seems to be a prerequisite for oppositional advocacy [...] civil society is treated as an autonomous sphere of social power within which citizens can pressure authoritarians for change, protect themselves from tyranny, and democratise from below (Foley & Edwards, 1996, p. 46).

Wael Ghonim's *Facebook* page, 'We are all Khaled Said', provides an example of mobilising young people who need an online presence and visibility as well as a moral and political purpose (Gerodimos, 2008, p. 983). Gerodimos argues:

> The first steps in mobilising young people and building their sense of efficacy should include showing the moral importance of an issue, the links of the issue to the individual's everyday life, the existence of participation tools that can really make a difference, and the likely outcomes or benefits of that participation (2008, p. 967).

It is important to highlight that civil society is not synonymous with 'society' at large, because, in contrast to the latter, civil society consists of citizens who 'act collectively in a public sphere to express their interests, passions, preferences, and ideas [...] to hold state officials accountable' (Diamond, 1999, p. 221). These citizens (or activists) show dedication to their causes, usually centring on relaxing rigid legislation or lifting welfare standards, and thus, such civil actions are seen as the cure for many socio-economic ills. It is particularly in developing states such as the Arab ones that civil society organisations, especially within the political and human rights fields, are seen as playing a pivotal role in pushing for democratic reforms and political change in the region. These organisations are also seen as helping to improve inadequate state services, particularly charity organisations, as will be discussed below.

Salamon *et al*. (1999) state that there has been a surge of studies about civil society, which is also known as the voluntary sector, third or independent sector, or non-profit sector (p. 3). These associations can be defined as those which operate in the private realm, are separate and independent from the state, not interested in profit-making, and their membership is voluntary (pp. 3-4).

The advance in communication technology has stimulated this surge as well as the expansion of an educated middle-class. Its role has increased in importance as it operates in 'a "middle way" between sole reliance on the market and sole reliance on the state' (p. 5). Salamon *et al.* (1999, p. 21) show the patterns of non-profit structures in twenty-two countries around the world, ranging from education-dominant in countries such as the U.K., Israel and Mexico, health-dominant in the U.S. and Japan, social services-dominant in France and Germany, culture-dominant in Slovakia and Romania, and balanced in Finland and Australia. The major source of funding in such structures is the public

support, and not private philanthropy, as might be expected (p. 24). Employment levels in this sector have also out-paced those in other market-based sectors.

3.3 Civil society in Egypt –definition and role

This section begins with the definition of civil society in a country such as Egypt, characterised as being a Muslim and developing nation, and is followed by a historical overview of the rise of civil society in Egypt.

Civil society is termed as *mujtama'ahli* (or people's society) in Muslim societies, such as those in the Arab region, and includes, for example, trade unions and *awqaf* (endowments), which aim to help families and individuals (Harmsen, 2008, p. 47). These societies, however, are usually barred from expressing political views, which consequently confines their work to welfare services. It is remarkable, however, that state authoritarianism seems to be mirrored in many of these associations' organisational hierarchy (Harmsen, 2008, p. 414). State control is therefore one of the important aspects of civil society's function in the Arab region; another is the fact that the state usually relies on welfare associations, typically religious charities, to provide services to marginalised groups, which relieves part of the state's burden in delivering social care (Harmsen, 2008, pp. 74-5).

Several Islamist movements set up civil society organisations in Egypt from students' unions to trade unions and charity associations, drawing on the rhetoric that Islam provides guidance and concrete action to develop society from within. The Muslim Brotherhood, for instance, the largest Islamist movement in Egypt (and the Arab region) managed to dominate several trade unions such as those representing doctors and engineers by the early 1990s. This involvement not only helped these movements to gain insight into the citizens' needs, but it also allowed them to build responsive organisations (Berman, 2003); more importantly, however, it also helped these movements to avoid government crackdowns, because it was difficult for the government to monitor all local associations. Berman (2003, p. 266) argues that Egypt does not need stronger civil societies, rather, it needs 'more effective and responsive political institutions.'

The last decade has also seen the rise of several youth organisations supported by modern Islamic preachers such as Amr Khaled. These organisations combine welfare activities with human development, with the aim of mobilising young people to become more involved in local communities (Lei Sparre & Petersen, 2007, p. 90).

Scholarly interest in civil society was reflected in a symposium about Arab civil society arranged by the Centre for Arab Unity Studies in Beirut in 1992, and, in the same year, the Ibn Khaldoun Centre for Developmental Studies in Cairo produced a newsletter on 'Civil Society: Democratic Transformation in the Arab World' (Al-Sayyid, 1993, p. 228). Civil societies in Egypt include professional syndicates, NGOs working on enhancing training and education, human rights activists, women's movements, and informal groups such as youth leagues (Yom, 2005). There are around 23 trade unions in Egypt, of which 21 are for educated professionals such as lawyers and journalists. Protest activities carried out by any association were usually led by dissenting unionists, rather than being arranged by the union leadership (Al-Sayyid, 1993, p. 232). The irony in Egypt is that the state has allowed the establishment of civil society agents and actors, yet shows intolerance for the practice of freedom of speech (Al-Sayyid, 1993, p. 229).

Egyptian trade syndicates used to play an important role as a platform for voicing political opposition during the 1980s and 1990s. Their elections were relatively fair, and that period witnessed the rise of Muslim Brotherhood members into leading roles in several syndicates. Syndicates and trade unions also suffered from government interference, however, in an attempt to block the Brotherhood members from winning elections in various unions. The state's response was to impose new legislation which placed unions under government administration, (particularly during Nasser's era), if the elections did not have high voter turnout. The state facilitated the election of its own supporters on other occasions, especially amongst members of the ruling party at the time, The National Democratic Party (Langohr, 2004, p. 187). Another law issued in 1992 placed the board of syndicate directors under government control, which further diminished civil liberties in Egypt (El-Gawhary, 2000, p. 39). State interference continued by the imposition of law 156 of 1999 to regulate the NGOs and control the right to form associations. The government assigned the task of approving or rejecting the formation of associations to the Ministry of Social Affairs, especially those in receipt of foreign

donations: foreign funding was important for the NGOs, not only regarding the limited state assistance available, but also to ensure independence from government institutions. The State, on the other hand, declared in 1999 that the NGOs' acceptance of foreign donations created a channel for outside interference in Egyptian affairs: it would allow other nations to disrupt the Egyptian political process, according to the Minister of Social Affairs ((Al-Gawhary, 2000, p. 39).

The Egyptian Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) launched a raid on several NGO offices in Cairo on 29 December 2011, following the January 25 uprising, in a crackdown on several human rights associations primarily funded by the U.S. and European NGOs. The crackdown came after a massive media campaign, particularly in state-owned media, accusing them again of allowing foreign donors to meddle in Egyptian matters, particularly in the critical times following the uprising (Yerkes, 2012).

The rise of civil society associations in Egypt came as a result of the deteriorating economic and social conditions as well as the lack of political and civil rights, which culminated in the 1980s with the rise of violent Islamic *jihad* groups. These groups carried out many assassinations, including that of former President Sadat in 1980, harming the tourism industry and decimating Egyptian revenues for at least a decade. The economic reforms imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) also led to harsh privatisation programmes, the massive lay-off of workers coupled with considerable price rises. This situation resulted in the poverty rate of the population in Egypt to increase from 21 per cent to 44 per cent between 1990 and 1996 (Langohr, 2004, p. 186).

Women's groups also appeared, such as Arab Women's Solidarity Association, founded in 1982 by the famous activist, Nawal Al-Saadawi. A year later, the Arab Organisation of Human Rights was set up in Cairo, thereby becoming the first human rights group in Egypt. The number of such groups has increased significantly since then, including associations that focus on prisoners' rights and torture, and, after the revolution, new groups surfaced that focused on the legitimacy of putting the revolutionaries on military trial.

The voluntary sector in Egypt reached its peak during the period beginning in 1920 until the Free Officers' coup d'état in 1952; many associations were closed under Nasser's regime, after the state imposed several restrictions on them, such as Law 32 of 1964 to regulate them. Some associations managed to operate under these legislative conditions by changing the 'label' of their activities. Associations were normally required to apply for permission to operate, which could be denied without good reason; even if the permission were granted, the associations would have to inform the Ministry of Social Affairs of all activities, including meetings, minutes of meetings and fund-raising activities but excluding membership dues. Religious (Islamic) voluntary associations were generally allowed to work, and the state was reluctant to hamper them, mainly because their work centred on providing social services to the deprived population (Langohr, 2004, p. 193). Those hit by the state laws were the human rights and advocacy associations, but some of them re-registered themselves as civil companies (Langohr, 2004, p. 193). Foreign donors such as the American Agency for International Development (USAID), the major donor for Egypt, called for less restrictive legislation and offered the government a package of several million dollars dedicated to the purpose of revamping the law, but the state declined it. Other European donors such as the Netherland Organisation for International Development Cooperation, expressed similar concerns with the restrictive legislations, but the government responded by only allowing NGOs more freedom in raising money within Egypt (Langhor, 2004, p. 194).

The NGOs reacted to the restrictive laws by forming an alliance with other similar organisations from twelve governorates entitled the *Civic Forum*. Their meetings were attended by a few members of parliament in 1998, who promised to discuss Law 32 in the People's Assembly, and in 1999, Law 153 was issued in its place. This replacement law, known as the Law on Civil Associations and Institutions, recognised the freedom of association while balancing it with the state's right to monitor the NGOs. The then Minister of Social Affairs, Mirvat Al-Tilawi, announced that Law 153 abolished 22 clauses of Law 32, such as the requirement that NGOs should seek governmental permission to own real estate outside of their geographical areas, as well as reducing the state's power to appoint board members (Alexander, 2000). What also contributed to this change was the campaign that delegitimised the state's power to reject the establishment of NGOs,

on the grounds that they were politically active (Langohr, 2004, p. 195). The revised law, however, was a matter of concern for human rights organisations, such as the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights and Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, pointing in particular to article 8 of the law which gave the government powers to 'harass' NGOs that criticised state policies on the pretext that these organisations may be violating public order, and also the vague interpretation of what constituted such an order (Alexander, 2000).

Women's and human rights groups also threatened to move their offices to Geneva, as the laws made it difficult to operate within Egypt (Langohr, 2004, p. 196). The Egyptian government issued Law 84 in 2002 to release some of the restrictions contained in Law 132. The new law gave the state the power to dissolve NGOs if their activities were considered to interfere with public morals (Hassan, 2011); thus, the law maintained the powers of the state to dissolve NGOs and to scrutinise their leaders and funding (Human Rights Watch, 2005). The grounds for such interference were the 'protection of public order', a popular and ambiguous term often used by the state. The government therefore upheld its power, not only to approve or reject NGOs, but also to monitor activities and detain leaders; for instance, in April 2003, Ashraf Ibrahim Marzuq was detained for three and half months, before appearing in front of the Emergency Higher State Security Court, accused of being on the steering committee of a revolutionary socialist group, and sending false information to overseas organisations; he was jailed and released in March 2004 (Human Rights Watch, 2005). Some scholars (Ottaway, 2003, p. 3) called the former regime 'semi-authoritarian', in that it was able to consolidate its authoritarianism while simultaneously applying liberal measures such as allowing NGOs to operate in Egypt. It is generally argued that Islamic organisations, which are usually excluded from Western funding, have a stronger base compared to secular ones (Mustapha, 2000). Other scholars (Hassan, 2011, p. 3) postulate that Egypt is a soft state where laws do not apply because wealthy people can escape criticism and punishment owing to their money and power. Hassan (2011, p. 3) gives an example of the earthquake of 1992 which paralysed the state and exposed its failure to deal with the resulting severe housing problems, leaving ample opportunity for the Muslim Brotherhood to open shelters and provide medical aid for the victims.

Egypt has a large number of civil society organisations, estimated to have reached more than 27,000 in 2007, and it is assumed by the Egypt 2008 Human Development report that 70 per cent of these associations were concentrated in urban governorates such as Cairo and Alexandria, while poorer regions had far fewer. There were more than 30,000 civil society organisations in Egypt by 2008, or one for every 2,800 Egyptians, and religious and development associations made up roughly half of that number. There were about 138 human rights associations concentrated in Cairo and Giza, which is why they were seen as elitist and incapable of representing the widest societal base. They usually depended on funding from foreign donors, which cast doubt on their independence (Hassan, 2011).

The majority of associations are classified as service and welfare organisations, and include religious associations such as the Coptic Evangelic Organisation, *Al-Resala* ('Message'), and Friends of Cancer Patients. Islamic civil society in Egypt has witnessed dramatic growth in the last decade, such as *Al-Resala* which depended on young people as volunteers (Sparre, 2008). One of the most important religious groups was the Muslim Brotherhood which was active across Egypt. There were also a steady increase in the number of philanthropic establishments such as *Sawiras* Foundation, set up by the Egyptian businessman, Naguib Sawiras, Vodafone Foundation and EFG-Hermes Foundation. Other organisations included women's associations as well as human rights groups which promoted knowledge and awareness about women and human rights. There were more than 60 Human Rights groups in Egypt, according to the figures of 2007, including the Egyptian Association for Personal Rights and the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights; in addition, there were associations concerned with environmental and consumer protection issues, trade and industry groups to support businesses and private enterprise such as the Businessmen's Association, Businesswomen's Association and Chapter of Commerce. There were also a number of youth centres and associations managed by the National Council for Youth, such as the Youth Association for Population and Development. This provided opportunities and venues for young people to socialise. Federations existed to ensure collaborative and collective work among NGOs, such as the Egyptian Youth Federation and the General Federation of NGOs. Professional syndicates also constituted one of the well-established types of NGOs, serving a number of

professionals and workers including the Bar Association (founded in 1912), Judges Club (founded in 1939), Journalists Syndicate (founded in 1941), Engineers syndicate (founded in 1946), Dentists, Pharmacists and Veterinarians (founded in 1949), Actors and Artists (founded in 1955), Accountants and Auditors syndicate (founded in 1955), Nursing Professionals (founded in 1976), Tour Guides syndicate (founded in 1983), Sports professionals (founded in 1987), and so on.

A report by the World Alliance for Citizen Participation (CIVICUS) stated that nearly half of the civil society associations registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs in 2004 was inactive. CIVICUS also acknowledged the spread of religious associations and their contributions (whether monetary or goods and services) to charity. It also stated that many associations lacked not only financial resources but also technical and human resources (CIVICUS, 2004, p. 7). CIVICUS defines civil society as 'the arena, outside of the family, the state and the market, where people associate to advance common interests' (CIVICUS 2004) and as per this definition, the organisation provides the following types of associations as examples of civil society in Egypt:

1. Philanthropic Organisations

2. Development Organisations

3. Human Rights Organisations

4. Business Associations

5. Chambers of Commerce

6. Co-operatives

7. Professional Syndicates

8. Trade Unions

9. Youth Centres

10. Sports Clubs

11. Women's Organisations

12. Faith-based Organisations

13. Churches and Mosques

14. Other organisations registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs

Some of these associations are also claimed to be elitist in terms of their membership and leadership, which exclude the poor and women (CIVICUS, 2004, p. 80). Many of them try to deal with immediate and practical problems, rather than seeking solutions to acute structural causes behind these problems (ibid.). Civil society institutions in Egypt generally aim to fulfil certain objectives: (i) to contribute to democratic reform; (ii) to contribute to combating poverty; and (iii) to empower women and promote their economic and political participation (Kandil, 2010, pp. 8-9).

Hassan (2011) provides a historical account of the evolution of civil society in Egypt, dividing it into five stages: (i) (1821-1881) the working and middle-class demanding their right to form associations; (ii) the 'colonial phase' (1882-1922) in which associations, trade unions, cooperatives and political parties allied in order to defend the interests of Egyptian citizens; (iii) the liberal phase (1922-1952) following the adoption of the constitution of 1923 guaranteeing basic freedoms; during that time, more than 80 newspapers appeared, and civil society called for the government to introduce more democratic reforms such as free elections and transparency. This phase was ended by the Free Officers seizing power in 1952; (iv) the Nasserite phase (1952-197) marked the state's forceful intervention, concentrating power in the hands of the governing elite. The trade unions were grouped into a Federation of Trade Unions, and a new law was imposed in 1964, giving the state the right to disband or refuse the creation of any civil society associations; and (v) the 'Open Door' policies which started in 1974 and were still current at the time of writing this thesis (2015); although many more organisations have been set up since the mid-1970s, the state has continued to impose its control via various laws and means (Hassan, 2011).

The Egyptian defeat in the 1967 war with Israel unleashed massive public discontent, particularly among the Marxist left, shown in the series of outbursts by students and workers in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Some of this movement's leaders came from the Nasserite establishment, the Arab Socialist Union and the Organisation of Socialist

Youth. They showed sympathy towards the old communist groups, such as the Egyptian Communist Party and the Democratic Movement of National Liberation which were persecuted under Nasser. The majority of the Marxist movement, however, included young workers, professionals and students who did not belong to the Nasserite establishment or to the old communist movement; in fact, they were critical of the Soviet Union's role in the Middle East (Lachine, 1977, p. 4). The protests continued well after the 1973 war, despite the partial victory of the Egyptian army, and were largely due to corruption and deteriorating economic and living conditions. There was also widespread discontent with the security forces and their ruthless approach to protests and gatherings. The year 1975 witnessed massive riots, after the government refused to consider the demands of the workers in Helwan region via their trade unions. The regime accused the communist movement of triggering the riots, especially since the Communist Party announced its comeback in the same year, which also coincided with a two-week strike by textile workers. This followed a strike by transport workers in Cairo, which was aggressively stopped by the security forces, resulting in the killing of many workers and the arrest of several more. University students also led a peaceful march to the People's Assembly to demand an end to the rigid legislation on human and individual rights, including the right to demonstrate and strike. They also wanted the regime to stop interfering in trade unions and other professional associations, but again, the security forces intervened and ended the march; meanwhile, the state-controlled media broadcast claims that the strikes and events were caused by gangs of criminals (Lachine, 1977, p. 5).

The state's imposition of new legislation not only affected NGOs, but also civil society associations calling for radical political, economic, and social change.

3.4 Cases of civil society association*s*

Examples and a discussion of other movements and civil societies in Egypt - most of which were centralised in the capital and Alexandria – are presented below.

20 March for Change movement: founded in 2003, following the American war in Iraq. Egypt witnessed massive demonstrations in Tahrir Square prior to the war, and the square was used as a platform for one day, 20 March 2003. The movement made the following demands: end oppression and dictatorship, end corruption, fight Zionism.

Workers for Change: founded in 2006 as a protest against the massive privatisation plans, following the prescription of the IMF, resulting in the laying-off of thousands of workers or forcing them into early retirement. Their demands were to increase the minimum wage, commit the state to employing university graduates, penalise the use of child labour for children under 16, increase safety measures in factories, and ensure the workers' rights to form or join unions.

The Egyptian Campaign for Change: founded in 2004, embraced diverse national parties and associations from all walks of life such as the Socialists, Muslim Brotherhood, 20 March movement, Communist Party, *Ayman Nour*, the National Arab Women Solidarity Association, Islamic Media Watch London, a number of human rights centres, and individual journalists, lawyers, university professors and actors. Their main demands were to force political reforms and end the plan to pass on the presidency to Mubarak's son.

Doctors for Change: founded in 2005, demanding the lifting of the emergency laws, ending torture in prisons and also ending Mubarak's rule at the next elections.

The National Association to Defend Egypt's Wealth: founded in 2008, calling for an assessment of Egypt's resources and to stop exploiting them for the benefit of the ruling elite. Chief among their demands was to stop the export of natural gas to Israel which was said to be sold for a fraction of its market price. One leading figure in this movement was Abou Al-Ezz Al-Hariri, MP and former presidential candidate in 2012.

Solidarity with Asbestos workers: founded in 2004, embracing workers in the factories of '10th Ramadan' city, where many workers opposed the use of asbestos, which was banned in Egypt, but was still imported for manufacturing purposes, and was claimed to cause major side effects when inhaling airborne asbestos fibres. The movement demanded the release of their salaries which were withheld by the employers and the introduction of health and safety measures in the factories, especially after 46 workers were diagnosed with cancer.

3.5 Civic engagement and social media

One key question for this project is how new and social media have transformed collective action in Egypt, and whether they have equipped social movements to challenge the Egyptian authoritarian regime. The internet has the capacity to create more networking opportunities for activists and citizens, in general, as well as to form alliances and groups more visible to the general public. The significance of new and particularly social media, is the fact that they do not need to be run by professionals, amateurs are equally capable, thereby challenging the typical role of gatekeepers (Mehanna, 2010). Bloggers, for instance, have attracted a great deal of attention from regional and global media since 2006; for example, *Al-Jazeera* channel ran an episode about Egyptian bloggers in May 2006, by interviewing the veteran journalist, Mohamed Hassanien Heikal, who admitted to avidly following one of those bloggers much more than he had ever followed known journalists (Mehanna, 2010). The state responded with robust prosecution of these bloggers by arresting and imprisoning many of them; one example is the blogger, Kareem Amer, who was sentenced to four years in prison for insulting Islam and defaming the president, in his blog (Mehanna, 2010). The government was able to block IP addresses as well as introduce a new registration process in which each visitor to an internet café had to scratch a card to obtain access, and also had to fill out a form with personal information. This mainly applied to cafés in less privileged neighbourhoods and was introduced in 2008, while coffee shops used by the upper and middle-class were left unmonitored (Mehanna, 2010).

Wolfsfeld *et al*. (2013) have assessed the role of social media in collective action, focusing on the recent 'Arab Spring'. They argue that understanding the overall political context is pivotal in this assessment, and that the use of new and social media in protests follows, rather than precedes, offline protest activities; in this sense, politics comes first, they argue, in that it has to be included in the analytical framework, in order to understand collective action, rather than claiming that the media sphere is separate from the political process. They give the example of the so-called '*Twitter* revolution' in Iran in 2009, as it was depicted by Western media, although *Twitter* was only used by fewer than 9,000 Iranians out of a population of seventy million. Some scholars and others are also optimistic about the role of new and social media mobilisation (Shirky, 2011), while there

are those who downplay the significance of technology in political mobilisation (Morozov, 2011). The important factor then is not technology, as shown by the Gulf States, which are 'high-tech' societies but have low levels of protest (Howard, 2011). Norris (2004) argues that social networking played a crucial role in facilitating collective action, long before social media were created. People can join in sporadic protests as a manifestation of their anger, while those joining in systematic collective action often share similar interests and can be more organised in their protests (Tilly, 2011). Societies with stronger network ties are claimed to experience collective action more than those with weaker ties; thus, a citizen is likely to participate in an organised protest if he or she resides within the same area of like-minded friends who encourage his or her participation (McAdam & Paulsen, 1993). Weak ties can help to spread the message across diffuse networks, while strong ties benefit from the bond created within the groups (McAdam & Paulsen, 1993); furthermore, Lerner (2010) argues that the use of the internet does not necessarily result in producing sufficient social capital or stronger ties needed for sustained social action; on the contrary, she adds that the abundance of uncontrolled information online may end up confusing the public and even providing inaccurate or misleading data (2010, p. 557). There is no replacement for face-to-face communication, therefore, in order to ensure a certain degree of solidarity, the bedrock for social action. Lerner also argues that a combination of both online and offline action can prove very effective in collective action, especially in authoritarian regimes in which the internet can provide an alternative media platform.

Perez (2004) also argues that the internet can provide multiple forms of deliberation, thereby catering for different individual needs, and Witschge (2004, 110) regards the role of the internet as essential for promoting deliberation and encouraging dialogue amongst citizens. Deuze (2003, p. 211) argues that the internet provides 'netizens', or active users, with new platforms on which to communicate and exchange views with less censorship. This view is shared by Agre (2004), who also sees a new venue for political interaction in the internet. Citizens then can practice so-called 'citizen journalism' which is a challenge to traditional gatekeepers such as professional journalists, and which can develop citizens' ability to communicate and deliberate (Leonard 1999; Nip 2006). The term usually refers to media content which is created by unpaid citizens and published in any

format on the internet, and it is sometimes referred to as 'user-generated content' or 'participatory journalism' (Gillmor, 2004); according to Hall (2006, p. 6): '[Cyber activism] today has become an alternative platform that offers voice and contact to those outside the mainstream media'.

One example of a cyber activist is the Egyptian, Esraa Abdel Fattah, who started a *Facebook* group, not only in solidarity with the 'April 6' movement but also to mobilise support for the January 25 revolution. She expressed her views as follows:

> I wanted to do something positive for my country, and I thought of using *Facebook* because I got tired of participating in the civil society in the physical world given the restrictions that were put on it by the Mubarak regime. So, I thought the virtual world was more open and more conducive for political activism. I started a Facebook group on April 6, 2008, and I was calling for a general one-day strike as a sign of complaint about the high prices of basic goods. My idea coincided with the laborers' strike to complain about their poor living conditions. I joined efforts with Ahmed Maher, another political activist, and we formed the Facebook group that called for the strike. We chose April 6 because there was another strike that was organised by the laborers on December 6 of the previous year, and it was successful, and so we chose the sixth of the month as a good omen. Through the group, I called on people not to go to work on April 6 and to stay at home. I also called on people to do other things on that day, such as wearing black, hanging the Egyptian flag on their balconies and abstain from buying products (cited in El-Nawawy & Khamis, 2012).

Abdel Fattah's group attracted more than 77 thousand followers and Abdel Fattah, or *The Facebook Girl,* as she was known then, was arrested on charges of disrupting public life, and spent 18 days in prison. El-Nawawy & Khamis (2012) provide another example of female cyber activists, namely Asmaa Mahfouz, who posted a video on *YouTube* and *Facebook,* urging people to join the mass protests on 25 January 2011. She commented on her role as follows:

> The idea of the video originated when four Egyptians set themselves on fire on January 18, 2011 to complain about their deteriorating economic situations. And when one of them died, several people started calling on taking action to change the situation on the ground and break the political status quo. So, I announced on my *Facebook* page that I was going out to Tahrir Square to demonstrate and I called on people to join me and posted my cell phone number. Then, I went out to Tahrir Square on 18 January 2011, and I was joined by just three of my friends.

I carried a banner saying: 'Four Egyptians set themselves on fire because of poverty, humiliation and hunger.' And I started yelling at people and saying: 'Come on Egyptians, join me and demonstrate against the suppression. When will you move? When will you take action?' Then, the state security started chasing and harassing me and they threatened to lock me up. In the course of all this action, I had to leave and headed straight to a human rights centre in downtown Cairo. Over there, I took my video camera out and said the same things that I was saying at Tahrir Square on the video. Then, I uploaded the video on *Facebook* and it started to get so much public attention, which I did not expect. On the video, I also called on people to protest on 25 January 2011. On the video, I did not specify demands, but I made it general by calling on people to go out asking for their rights and to regain their dignity. Since I posted the video, my mobile phone did not stop ringing. I posted my cell phone number in the video as well. I was also surprised that pamphlets were disseminated on the streets using my slogan of 'Go out and ask for your rights.'[2]

3.5 Chapter summary

The above discussion shows there are several definitions of civil society and how it functions in modern states. This research will adopt the so-called 'alternative' approach to civil society, namely, the way of seeing it as a realm of deliberation amongst individuals and groups, and not only of formal associations, aiming at empowering citizens and achieve genuine civic engagement. This approach seems relevant to the Egyptian context; although Egypt has a high number of NGOs and civil society associations, these are still very much under the control and monitoring of the state, which makes it imperative to include other forms of deliberation and civic engagement challenging this form of censorship.

The 2011-uprising will be remembered for its theme of liberation from state-controlled media and propaganda, providing new forms of communication and deliberation (namely social and new media), if nothing else. This researcher sees new and social media as a created space for deliberation, and this approach will be a key theme in the fieldwork between interviews and youth. It is important to remember that the issue of

---

[2] It is not possible to cite the page number, as this is an online article.

control and monitoring did not disappear after the uprising, however. The Foundation for the Future (2011) argues in its survey of a number of civil society organisations in Egypt post-2011, that such organisations are cautiously positive about the transition in Egypt, with many of them not having seen much improvement in the situation of civil society organisations, as censorship still prevailed. The main issues facing civil society and civic engagement in general, are therefore the lack of apparent leadership in avoiding divisions between them, and also the fact that they have not provided a new model for change or a new roadmap for the future of Egypt, apart from toppling a regime or demanding the end of corruption.

It is also important to state that this research does not take a deterministic view of new and social media as the main cause of collective action, nor does it deny the role of such media. The above discussion aimed at providing a fair and balanced assessment of the role this media has in political deliberation. The following chapters aim to illustrate the role of new and social media in facilitating discussions amongst citizens and, above all, in increasing visibility of groups and topics. The internet then is one variable that has to be seen in combination with the overall political, social and cultural context. It may be true that social media have facilitated new forms of interaction and dialogue amongst citizens, but scholars suggest there is no consistent correlation between the use of social media and successful collective action (Howard & Hussain, 2010; Faris, 2010). One important advantage of using social media maybe that it can easily attract the attention of international and regional media, especially if these outlets are unable to access the region, which can help boost the profiles of active users such as regular bloggers. Korany and El-Mahdi (2012, pp. 10-12) argue that social media create a new political opportunity structure that attracts a large number of protesters at certain points in time, sharing certain objectives. Drawing on Assef Bayat's notion of 'quiet encroachment' (Bayat, 2009), Korany and El-Mahdy (2012) argue that analysing political movements in the region should not emphasise the politics of the elite but politics from below, or at grassroots level. Bayat (2009, p. 14) continues his argument by stating that young Egyptians can be mobilised to join protests when they are excluded from formal autocratic institutions, dominated by the political elites. This is an interesting perspective when applying it to the Egyptian context, as many of those joining the massive protests of

2011 did not have prior experience in political parties or movements, nor were they active as bloggers or social media activists.

Chapter Four

Methodology

4.1 Introduction

As mentioned previously, this project deals with the impact of social media on political activism and social movements in Egypt. The preceding two chapters discussed the soaring number of blogs recorded over the past decade which led many communication scholars to analyse the new and social media through the lens of the public sphere theory (Castells, 2008, 90). Blogs from the Middle East have particularly received considerable notice (Fares, 2010).

The Iranian citizen, Neda Agha-Soltan, for instance, caught the attention of global media with footage showing her collapsing to the ground during the post-election protests in Iran in 2009, especially after the footage went viral on *YouTube* (Mayfield, 2011), and similarly, the Lebanese *Hezbollah*'s use of social media during its fight against Israel in 2006, helped to stir public opinion against Israel (Mayfield, 2011, p. 80). It has been argued that blogging in China could be used as a weapon against the authoritarian regime which continues to find new ways to ban online political opposition (MacKinnon, 2008). The penetration of mobile phones, the internet, and social media across the Arab region has highlighted popular dissatisfaction with the authoritarian regimes, as well as the rise of so-called 'cyber activism', or 'the act of using the internet to advance a political case that is difficult to advance offline [...] the goal [...] is often to create intellectually and emotionally compelling digital artefacts that tell stories of injustice, interpret history, and advocate for particular political outcomes' (Howard, 2011, p. 145). The recent uprisings since 2011 have sent shockwaves across the region, with protests in Algeria, Jordan and Bahrain during 2010 and 2011, and the continuing unrest in Syria and Yemen. It is here that the role of social media has received much attention in Western scholarship (as illustrated in the literature review chapter). The importance of new technology, it is argued, is not only in measuring the number of wired citizenry, but, more importantly, in revealing how citizens (activists or not) actually use such technology in the political process.

This project aims to propose answers to the following questions:

(i) to what extent has the internet changed the political sphere in Egypt, allowing a more democratic environment?

(ii) to what extent has the use of social media led to more collective action in Egypt?

(iii) have social media facilitated the transformation of online activities into offline activism?

(iv) how have social media contributed to attract the socially or politically marginalised groups in Egyptian society?

This chapter discusses the methods of analysis adopted in this research which combines descriptive and analytical tools, based primarily on qualitative methodologies. Table 4.1 maps the research questions onto methods and themes of analysis.

This research adopts an integrative approach of inductive and deductive research. Inductive approach is defined as moving from the specific to the general and based on observations (*a priori* experience) (Trochim, 2006, p. 1); conversely, a deductive approach will move from the general to the specific and is best suited as a top-down approach in which the researcher works from a hypothesis to data (Creswell & Clark, 2007, p. 23). The inductive approach typically characterises qualitative research while deductive characterises quantitative research; in line with Creswell (2005), the approaches and methods have been adopted which are considered appropriate for this particular research, relevant to the research questions and relevant to this researcher's experience and training. The analysis begins with *a priori* themes (or constructs) to guide the qualitative research, however, using existing constructs may compromise the ability to observe new emerging themes in the interviews and focus groups, thereby limiting the research findings; an integrative approach is therefore adopted, in which an examination is made for pre-identified themes in the fieldwork. Some flexibility is required regarding the semi-structured interviews for integrating additional emerging themes and constructs (such as the findings on alternative media in Chapter Seven). There is consensus with

Duneier in this respect, as he does not see a research approach as being strictly inductive or deductive, considering that some questions are 'brought to the site from the beginning', while others are 'discovered through various routes' (2002, p. 1566).

The literature review identified three themes, explained in the previous chapter, which are relevant here: cyber activism, virtual public sphere, and the relationship between mainstream and social media; by using these themes as points of departure, the research hypotheses are presented in table 4.1; it is important to mention, however, that these themes are combined with the themes that emerge in the fieldwork, as explained in the discussion chapter.

Overall theme	Sub themes	Operationalized questions	Method
Cyber-activism Virtual public sphere	• Activism • Mobilisation • Political process • Knowledge	How have social media changed the political sphere in Egypt? How have social media helped create new opportunities for political activity while avoiding political oppression? How have social media facilitated the mobilisation of collective action online and offline?	Qualitative interviews Focus groups
Mainstream versus social media	• Gatekeepers • Visibility • Centralised political process • Knowledge	How have social media contributed to attract socially or politically marginalised groups in Egyptian society? In what way have social media helped generate coverage of marginalised topics and groups?	Web content analysis Focus groups

Table 4.1 mapping research questions against methods of analysis

-

An attempt to propose answers to the above research questions by relying on triangulation which Norris recommends: 'no single methodology can hope to capture the rich complexities of life on the Internet' (2001. p. 36). A qualitative analysis has been the main research method for interviews and focus groups as they are both useful tools, not only to uncover social change but also the motivation of different social groups pioneering such change (Blee & Taylor, 2002, 96).

4.2 Qualitative research

Quantitative research is concerned with measuring instances of human behaviour or attitudes, and aims to document them from the point of view of the people concerned with this research (Hammersley, 1992, p. 166). Qualitative methods tend to be used 'to explore and assess things that cannot easily be summarised numerically' (Priest, 1996, p. 5), thereby challenging the view that quantitative techniques are the only tools that should be used to establish research validity because it can be based on a large sampling and statistics (Silverman, 2001, p. 7). This is not to say that qualitative research implies a higher 'quality' than quantitative research; in fact, combing different techniques can strengthen research methodology and reliability (Jensen, 2002, p. 207). The choice between quantitative and qualitative methods, or the choice of combining them, should 'depend upon what you are trying to find out at the end of your research' (Silverman, 2001, p. 11).

There is no doubt that quantitative research (or the positivist paradigm) dominated social science research during the 1950s and 1960s, which saw the world as a measurable objective sphere, but it failed to provide an in-depth understanding of human experience (McPherson & Leydon, 2002). The constructivist paradigm has gained a foothold since the late 1970s due to its emphasis on the need for new methods to explore problems about which very little is known, or where there is a need to explore the wider context of the research topic, and where substantial

interaction is required between the researcher and research participants (Rodwell, 1998).

This research adopts a complementary use of qualitative and quantitative research methods, currently prevalent in media and communication research (Jensen, 2002, p. 254), combining web content analysis with interviews and focus groups. The use of multiple data is deemed to be a research technique 'in which more than one method or more than one worldview is used' (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 11) and contributes to improving the research findings. It is believed that this triangulation method of research could enhance the rigour of this project. Web content analysis provides more descriptive data and overall themes which are then explored in more depth in the interview and focus group methods. Multiple methods could help elicit an in-depth understating of the research topic (Denzin, 1994) and it could also add breadth to the investigation. The following section elaborates on the use of interviews and focus groups as the selected qualitative method, and this is augmented with the use of web content analysis of a selected sample of *Facebook* groups. It is important to mention here, that the fieldwork was conducted over the course of three years (from 2011 to 2014) and to bear in mind that this is a field in flux, as will be argued in the last part of this chapter. The interviews were carried out mostly in 2011 and a few in 2013 and 2014, while the focus group discussions were conducted in 2014. This is mainly because this researcher mistakenly thought that these would be easier to arrange post-2011, given the euphoria felt among many Egyptians who would be happy to engage in political conversations; the fast-paced changes in the country, however, made people more suspicious of research (as explained later in this chapter). The web content analysis was carried out between 2013 and 2014, relying on historical archives of the selected *Facebook* groups.

4.3 Interview*s* as a research tool

Interviews can be defined as a method of collecting information from persons based on their background and focusing on their experiences and views (Busha and Harter,

1980). They can be carried out face-to-face, by telephone or other communication tools such as *Skype*. There are different types of interviews: structured, semi-structured or unstructured (Saunders, 1997). The choice between these types would very much depend on the research topic under investigation and what the researcher seeks to obtain from the interviews. One advantage of using interviews, in contrast to quantitative surveys, is that researchers can usually eliminate answers such as 'don't know', and interviews also give the researcher the chance to observe their interviewees while they respond to the questions. The disadvantage clearly lies in the fact that interviewing is usually time-consuming and can be costly if conducted in other geographical locations than where the researcher is based.

Interviews conducted for this research can be classified as ethnographic interviews in that they aimed to immerse the researcher in the field, while directly observing the particular groups being studied (Rubin & Piele, 2005; Bentz & Shapiro, 1998). Interviews here were carried out as casual conversations with the participants, rather than a systematic interview with a pre-defined set of questions. A set of questions had been prepared by this researcher, but he was more concerned with maintaining the informality of the conversation than asking the informants pre-determined questions. It is this rapport between the researcher and informant which eases the conversation, especially about sensitive issues such as opposing authoritarian regimes, activism, or the informant's views about the involvement of the military in Egypt. This type of interview, therefore, can help uncover the way participants assess their experiences (Ortiz, 2003, p. 37), and as such, it can help the researcher to gain a better insight into the research topic while keeping control of the order of interview questions (Stacks, 2011); it is also important to remember however, that such interviews may not necessarily reveal the informants' values or unearth their ideologies (Silverman, 2001).

20 interviews were arranged and recorded: 5 female and 15 male activists, all residing in Cairo, tabulated as follows:

Name	Gender	Age	Date of interview
Tariq	Male	41	15 June 2011
Mustafa	Male	29	15 June 2011
Mona	Female	34	1 July 2011
Kholoud	Female	36	1 July 2011
Hala	Female	43	17 June 2011
Omar	Male	33	17 June 2011
Essam	Male	32	16 Nov. 2012
Ahmed	Male	27	16 Nov. 2012
Amr	Male	28	8 Oct. 2012
Ibrahim	Male	56	8 Oct. 2012
Ziad	Male	37	14 Nov. 2012
Sherine	Female	43	19 Nov. 2013
Taher	Male	56	19 Nov. 2013
Said	Male	32	1 Dec. 2013
Khaled	Male	28	7 Dec. 2013
Manal	Female	28	7 Dec. 2013
Karim	Male	28	7 Dec. 2013
Yasser	Male	56	1 Dec. 2013
Hosam	Male	34	9 Feb. 2014
Eyad	Male	58	9 Feb. 2014

The majority of interviewees were between 28 and 40 (13 informants) and the rest were between 41 and 50+ (7 informants).

The interviews were analysed as narratives constructed through interaction with participants and their views on the political process in Egypt, at a time of turbulent change (Berger 1997). Narrative analysis is an inherently inter-disciplinary approach, drawing on humanities and social sciences, borrowing from structural to thematic

analyses of information (Cortazzi, 1993). Narratives are stories, according to Clandinin and Connelly (1994: 415) who state: 'Stories are the closest we can come to experience as we and others tell our experiences [...] is the stories people live. People live stories and in the telling of them reaffirm them, modify them, and create new ones'. The choice to analyse these narratives thematically has been made by probing the overall thematic categories shown in table 4.1 above.

The process began by contacting a number of activists who were personally known to this researcher, and through a snowball technique, new contacts were accumulated from each of those activists. All interviewees and focus group participants were asked to give their consent. Their voluntary participation was clearly stated and there was no coercion to take part. The interviewees were informed about the research aims, methods and storage of data and their right to decline to participate in this research.

Research ethics clearance was obtained for this project[3]. All interviews were conducted in Arabic and were transcribed. The transcripts were coded into broad themes based on the research objectives and interview questions. The following chapters will elaborate on these themes.

4.4 Focus groups as a research tool

A focus group is defined as participants in a 'carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions in a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment (Kreuger, 1998, p. 18). Each group discussion typically lasted for around one to two hours of conversation involving between six to twelve participants (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). The number of groups can vary from one project to another, although some scholars recommend three groups, while others recommend only one group, in order to allow more time to observe the group dynamics (Moran, 1988, p. 42). Three groups were chosen for the purposes of this project, based on the recommendations received from this researcher's doctoral transfer seminar in 2013.

---

[3] from two universities: I requested to be transferred with my supervisor to a new university

The choice of focus group discussions as a method of analysis also reflects a belief in the constructivist paradigm, and its commitment to a human-centred approach which concentrates on how participants really perceive particular problems and their surrounding circumstances. Focus group discussions therefore, supplement individual interviews, as group discussions provide a more active sociable conversation, inviting agreements and disagreements within a group, which is not possible to capture in one-to-one interviews.

There were three groups in total, and each group had six participants. Two of the groups (Groups A & B) belonged to the middle-class and upper-class and the last group (Group C) belonged to the lower middle-class. Group A had six male participants aged from 18 to 19, and all were private secondary school or private university students. Group B had six female participants aged 26 to 35, all of whom had had a university education but were not working, except one, who had a job in administration. Group C had six female participants aged between 18 to 21, and were all either state school or state university students.

A note is due here about the Egyptian social class system: usually the middle-class is defined as those who have a greater social mobility compared to other social groups, and they are likely to demand more rights such as freedom of expression. The middle-class is inclined to spend a large part of its income on education, especially foreign language schooling (Booz & Co, 2012). These classes also express less trust in the media and in state services which makes them 'unable to act as a stabilising factor against external economic shocks' (Booz & Co, 2012, p. 11). It may be difficult to differentiate The Egyptian middle-class from the Marxist tradition of an exploiting bourgeoisie and petite bourgeoisie (Kandil, 2012, p. 199). The groups included here who are defined as belonging to the upper middle-class have certain things in common: their affiliation with English colleges or universities in Cairo and they live in upper middle-class neighbourhoods (Mellor, 2015, ch. 3), while the participants in the last focus group attended state schools and state universities and lived in more modest neighbourhoods than the previous groups.

Careful attention was paid to the group consensus in analysing the data, as well as to latent disagreements expressed within each group (Barbour and Kitzinger, 1999). A choice was made to analyse this data thematically, reading through each group script several times before mapping the data onto emerging themes. Several participants were quoted in each extract in order to provide a broader context for the analysis and choice of themes, instead of merely focusing on isolated individual comments. Each group discussion was transcribed verbatim and read through many times to ensure the understanding of the dynamics of discussion (Barbour and Kitzinger, 1999). Notes were then taken about each manuscript in order to identify emerging themes, and each reading would help to narrow down the number of themes (tabularised above).

It only remains to say that both interviews and focus group discussions were accompanied by field notes and observations, which, according to Myers, have the advantage of leading to a more nuanced interpretation of the collected data (1999, p. 2). Observations helped this researcher to become even more familiar with his field of research and the relationships participants form as activists and citizens (Grills, 1998, 3). The number of interviewees and focus group participants is limited, as is the case with many qualitative methods. This can raise some doubts about the representativeness of the sample (Brewer & Hunter, 1989, p. 45), however, it is believed that one important advantage for this researcher is that he had easier access to the field of research as members of his family lived in Egypt, which helped with his personal immersion in the on-going discussions about the political process in that country: not only amongst the informants but also amongst many other Egyptians, in general. These methods can be time-consuming and costly, as previously mentioned, but in this case, and given the duration of the doctoral project, extra time could be taken in the field in order to understand the overall cultural context. These methods can arguably lead to more interesting insights unavailable via quicker methods such as surveys or short *Skype* interviews.

4.5 Web feature analysis

The intention at the beginning of this project was to select only two case studies from current websites or blogs such as Revolutionary Socialists (http://revsoc.me/) and *Tamaroud* (http://www.tamarud.net). The first site was chosen because it is directly linked to the British Revolutionary Socialists and has connections with other similar groups in Europe; additionally, many activists from this group, such as Hossam Al-Hamalawy and Gigi Ibrahim were very visible in the global media during and after the January 25th revolution. The second site was selected because it was launched as a campaign to collect 20 million signatures from supporters of the end of former President Morsi's rule. The campaign was successful, thanks to the military intervention on 3 July 2013, and the site recently announced the intention of its administrators to launch what they called an 'alternative media service'. Given the continuous changes in Egypt since 2011, to streamline the selected sample and enlarge it to include more than one movement; consequently, four groups have been selected:

We are all Khaled Said: The group began with the death of a young Egyptian man called Khaled Said, who died in police custody in Alexandria, in June 2010. The police was accused of using brutal force on Said and a picture showing his battered face went viral on the internet. A *Facebook* group was set up in his name by the activist, Wael Ghonim, who was then an executive at *Google* Arabia, based in Dubai. Khaled's story became the rallying point for many protestors in 2011. The police denied charges of brutality, although the use of force and torture by policemen in Egypt is not uncommon.

Tamaroud: ('Rebellion') movement founded by five activists in April 2013 who aimed to collect millions of signatures calling for the end of the rule of Mohamed Morsi, a key member of the Muslim Brotherhood. The movement announced that they had collected more than 22 million signatures at the end of June 2013; this figure was later contested by other members who split from the movement and set up their own group. There were also claims that *Tamaroud* was supported by the police force who helped distribute the petition for signatures. *Tamaroud* called for a massive

demonstration on 30 June 2013, marking the first anniversary of Morsi's rule; the Armed Forces gave the president until 3 July 2013 to solve the crisis, but Morsi refused to resign. The Armed Forces removed him by force, offered a strategic road map, and appointed the head of the Supreme Constitutional Court as an interim president.

Dar Essalam: set up by a group of young people residing in the neighbourhood of Dar Essalam and Maadi in Cairo, in the wake of the 2011 revolution. The group's aim was to discuss local issues; they also used their *Facebook* group to raise national issues such as the referendum on the constitution, elections and other matters.

April 6 Youth movement: The group was set up in 2008 to support the workers in a factory in the city of Mahalla, who were planning to strike on 6 April. Bloggers used social media to report on that strike and they managed to draw national and international attention to the campaign. The group used the 'raised fist' symbol as their slogan. The group had a *Facebook* page but because of the rise of opposition within the group, some members formed another *Facebook* group with the same name, but with different leading activists; in 2014, a famous TV talk show claimed that the group was funded by foreign donors to stabilise the system in Egypt and the group received a court banning order in April 2014.

Scrutiny of websites draws on descriptive textual analysis, socio-cultural analysis or feature analysis (Schneider and Foot, 2004, p. 117). The first is a discursive analysis of website content; the second can be an analysis of the site's links on the web; and feature analysis, on the other hand, can draw on both quantitative and qualitative methods to systemically analyse web features available on the homepage. The intention here is to use feature analysis by focusing on the following five categories (explained in more detail in Chapter 7):

- focus: national or local

- updates

- characters

- links

- mobilisation

The analysis of this social media content could draw on features from established techniques such as content analysis, which can efficiently be used to investigate media content (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006, p. 150). It is possible to draw on the advantages of content analysis in that it allows messages to be analysed separately from senders and receivers, especially if examined within a strong theoretical framework (Riffe *et al.* 2005, 38). This technique also allows the analysis of a large quantity of data, not to mention its availability, and has fewer constraints in accessing such social media sites, without being bound by certain timeframes, as is the case with interviews or focus group participants. Reliance was placed on the above categories for describing the content of the selected *Facebook* groups by concentrating on 'the messages or communications actually produced in practice and in that regard [web content analysis] may be considered a major methodological tool that bridges research methods' (Stacks, 2011, p.120). It is important however, to stress the limitations of such an analysis which is inherently descriptive, and cannot provide the basis for statements about citizens' or users' perceptions of participating in a *Facebook* group; it is mainly used to explore interactive features and show how the researcher interprets and links these features with the themes of mobilisation and visibility.

4.6 Ethical considerations

This researcher has had valuable access to the field as an Egyptian-Saudi, the advantage of speaking the language (two dialects: Saudi and Egyptian) and being conversant with the culture. This advantage facilitated a great deal of the fieldwork and enabled the recruitment of participants to the interviews and focus groups, who treated him as one of them, once they saw that he was able to converse in Egyptian dialect; on the other hand, the fact that this researcher resides in the U.K., could

trigger suspicion or doubt (Clark, 2006). The fact that there are family connections in Cairo has greatly helped to maintain that link with Egypt, and has indeed, made many informants feel at ease in the interviews and discussions (Clifford & Marcus, 1986).

Being able to converse in two different Arabic dialects was believed to be an advantage, however, it was considered prudent to tailor the use of the Saudi dialect according to the changing political scene in Egypt; for instance, in 2011, immediately after the fall of Mubarak, many activists saw Saudi Arabians as the greatest supporters of Mubarak and it was claimed that Saudi Arabia had pressurised the Egyptian government not to charge Mubarak and his family. Saudi Arabia was regarded as an unlikely ally of the Muslim Brotherhood during Morsi's rule in 2012, and many liberal activists were open to discussing the role of Saudi Arabia in Egyptian internal and external policies; by 2013, with the toppling of Morsi, Saudi Arabia had become a favourite ally of Egypt, especially after the generous financial support it offered to the military council in 2013 and 2014. This change of attitude towards Saudi Arabia illustrates the fast-paced changes in this field, which is further discussed below. It became less problematic therefore, to converse in the Egyptian dialect, while down-playing any Saudi connections. It is not unusual that students In Egypt and many other Arab countries, seek postgraduate courses at MA and Ph.D. level abroad, particularly in Europe and the U.S.A., albeit a privilege of well-off families who can afford foreign university fees, or those who can access the few state bursaries available. A large part of this researcher's studies were undertaken in Europe, therefore, he could be seen as both an insider and outsider (Henry, 2003), indeed, many informants enquired about life in London, and, on many occasions, justification for the British government's policy in the Middle East was demanded.

Being a 'native' does not mean that this analysis will be more insightful than a non-native researcher, as, according to Bolak: an 'indigenous researcher runs the risk of being blinded by the familiar' (1996, 109). An attempt has been made to secure a balance of the interpretation of the data by consulting the relevant supervisor and talking to various academics in the field. No claim to complete objectivity and neutrality is made, as this researcher's personal identity must have had some impact

on this project (Henry, 2003), however, as Miraftab (2004) argues, fieldwork is generally characterised by reflexivity rather than the presumption of objectivity as a meta-narrative (Sherif, 2001). Being native did not necessarily mean that it was possible to exercise more power in the field, as some informants can also attempt to use research as a communication forum by treating the researcher as a messenger between them and the West (Sulieman & Anderson, 2008).

Given the fast changes occurring in Egypt over the course of the past three years, the field accessibility also changed, accordingly; for instance, in 2011 and in the wake of toppling Mubarak, there was a marked euphoria in public spaces such as cafes and universities. At that time, it was not unusual to find someone, from any walk of life, willing to talk about politics, activism, and even foreign policy. It was then much easier to approach informants, even without common contacts, as everyone was happy to discuss the 2011 revolution, regarded as the first public revolution in the modern history of Egypt. This situation, however, had changed drastically by 2013, when many people were reluctant to speak or reveal their political inclinations or affiliation. Many supporters of the MB attempted to conceal this support and it was not easy to approach new informants without prior arrangement via common acquaintances. The situation became worse in 2014; even when interviews with informants, via acquaintances, were arranged, many of them did not show up. It was particularly challenging to arrange the focus group meetings conducted in 2014, a female acquaintance had to be present in order to speak to selected female participants. This fieldwork spanned over three years, due to the hazardous security situation in the country during that time, which forced this researcher to stay in London for a major part of the year.

A famous talk show, 'Black Box', featured on the *Qahera wel Nas* channel, dedicated several episodes to discussing what the host claimed to be a conspiracy against the Egyptian regime. He broadcast intercepted telephone calls between key activists such as Wael Ghonim, Mostafa Naggar and Israa Abdel Fattah, claiming that they were referring to foreign donors (from the U.S.A. or Europe) in their calls, and those donations were aimed at using the activists to disrupt the political scene in Egypt, in

order to prolong the chaos and disorder. Such media messages impacted indirectly on the fieldwork, in that many informants (Egyptians in general) had become suspicious of Arabs and Egyptians living in Western countries, in case they also had a hidden agenda to disrupt the stability in Egypt.

Another major challenge in the field was the fast-changing political map in Egypt. Many new parties and movements have emerged since 2011, to the extent that often voters can no longer differentiate between these parties and movements (see Chapter 7). Some of the informants, for instance, joined one movement in 2011 only to shift to another, a year or two later. Shifting was not necessarily a decision based on the new group's ideology, but rather on other considerations such as whether the new movement would support social justice or better health care or improve education policies. Many informants had also become rather suspicious of political parties and preferred to join and form loose movements (see Chapter 7).

A note summarising the challenges in such a dynamic field as Egypt post-2011 is presented in the conclusion: on 5 February 2013, the Frontline Club in London arranged an event to discuss the transformation in Egyptian journalism. One of the participants, Dr Walter Armbrust of Oxford University, said that writing a book about the Egyptian revolution at that stage was like fixing a bike while riding it. That comment indirectly summarises the challenges in a field in flux.

Chapter Five

Web Content Aanalysis

5.1 Introduction

The internet provides a vast range of opportunities for its users to interact and exchange content, and thus users can participate in collaborative debates in order to express their views via media such as blogs and chatrooms (O'Reilly, 2005). It is this exchange of views and information that gave rise to the so-called 'citizen journalist', which refers to any user who can establish a dialogue with others by reacting to their information and sharing their own; as such, online communities can reinforce social networks, while allowing for a debate with others who may hold opposing views (Ward, 2008, p. 43). The internet can therefore provide 'an online structure as a way of communicating a particular stance on citizenship' (Ward, 2008, p. 43). The power of the internet lies in facilitating the exchange of information, not only augmenting participants' understanding of political and social issues, but also increasing their participation (Garrett, 2007, p. 206). It is this debate that gave rise to the argument that the internet could provide a virtual platform for participation and thus become a virtual public sphere. The flow of conversation online, as Goode (2009) argues, provides the potential for virtual democratic participation through citizens' active engagement via blogs, chats, comments, and so on. This conversation is underpinned by the citizens' online debates, deliberating with each other and discussing social and political issues in a transparent environment. The online conversation is consequently facilitated by a range of interactive features.

Any political or social movement will depend on the ability of its members to unite around one coherent and collective identity as well as to define the aims of the movement (Della Porta & Diani, 2006). It is this collective identity that helps the group to mobilise, and this mobilisation is achieved through rhetorical and ideological

strategies. It is the aim of the following analysis to identify such strategies and examine how they help to achieve the goals of the selected online political movements.

An examination of specific measures taken in each *Facebook* group shall be made, in order to identify these strategies. Previous studies (Ben Moussa, 2011) identified selected features for such an analysis, including the frequency of updating, mobilisation messages, hyperlinks, interactivity, types of information and whether it is local or national. The frequency of updating sheds some light on the use of portals to attract new users and motivate existing users to return to the page (Gibsom & Ward, 2000). Mobilisation can be directly accomplished via disseminating requests to join a network, donate, volunteer or sign a petition (Downey & Fenton, 2003). Examining the links on the page, moreover, could illustrate the motivation of the group and whether it is to encourage civil participation, in civil society association, for example, or linking to alternative media affiliated with such associations. Types of information can also illustrate the objectives of the group in informing their users, whether it is local or national news and whether this information is little or extensive.

The following features were examined, after reading the *Facebook* posts in each selected group below, based on the recurrent themes in each group; these features shed light on the interactive characteristics expected within such political groups, and they also helped to identify the resources available to each group, in terms of hiring someone to regularly update the site:

- Focus of the campaigns and whether this was national or local.

- Updating of the webpage and whether this happened frequently: daily, weekly or monthly.

- Characters often cited or referred to in the groups.

- Links to other sites, particularly mainstream or alternative media or civil society associations.

- Mobilisation activities such as urging users to join an event or a protest.

5.2 Web feature analysis

Interactivity is crucial for a website's credibility and to attract new participants to engage in a conversation (Sundar, Kalyanaraman & Brown, 2003). Stromer-Galley (2004) differentiates between computer-mediated and person-to-person interactivity, or the interactivity as process (human interaction) and interactivity as product (interaction with technology), and the two approaches require different research foci, therefore, having interactive features on a website does not inevitably mean an increase in users' participation. There is some research that supports the thesis that more interactive features could lead to higher participation, such as Tedesco (2007). Other studies such as those of Sundar, Hesser, Kalyanaraman, and Brown (1998) as well as Kiousis and Dimitrova (2006) argue that interactive features and graphics could influence users' trustworthiness towards, and perception of, the credibility of a website. It is therefore important to consider the influence of interactivity on users' political participation. Interactivity often refers to the users' ability to participate in generating information and not just as passive recipients of content; consequently, interactivity requires a two-way communication between users and producers of information.

The success of a social movement depends on its repertoire of contention which in turn is tied to three factors: mobilising structures, political opportunity structures, and collective action or a 'cultural frame' (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996; Davenport 2005). The first factor refers to the formal organisation and leadership as well as a connection between the members of the movement or group and how they manage and coordinate their action. The second factor refers to the events that trigger social networks, and hence collective identity, and mobilise action around commonly defined themes and symbols (such as Khaled Said's death). The third factor refers to the frame that provides ideology and motivation for the group (Tarrow 1998). Members of a movement, especially in a coercive state, need to share a common understanding of injustice, and a trust in the group and its goals, so that they can stand up to state

representation. This shared culture functions as the glue that binds the movement's members together and helps them identify and articulate their contention (McAdam and Tarrow 1998; Tarrow and Tilly 2001). Another crucial factor for the success of social movements is the flow of information and the way in which they manage to communicate both amongst themselves and with potential new participants.

There are different kinds of repertoire in relation to political action; for instance, the action can depend on the time and risk required to engage in a political movement (Klandermans, 2004). An example of an action that requires little time and little risk is signing a petition; on the other hand, taking part in a strike can require substantial risk but little time to plan and implement; moreover, joining an organisation can require substantial time and risk. Engagement with political action also requires different kinds of resources: for instance, financial resources from donations to a movement or rhetorical skills if the group member wishes to represent the group (Verba *et al.* 1995). Time is also a resource in order that members of the group can dedicate part of their spare time to meet with each other. Norris (2002) refers to two types of resources (or predispositions) needed for political participation: individual resources including education and money, and political motivation. As resources are unevenly distributed in a society, people's engagement differs: those who have enough time, money and education tend to dedicate more resources to political participation simply because they can afford to do so (Rosenstone and Hansen, 2003, 12; Verba *et al.* 1995).

Traditional mass communication media such as newspapers and magazines as well as television and radio, have helped diffuse information across vast geographical areas, linking, for instance, cities with remote towns and villages, thus, such media helped move previously localised and small-scale action to a broader national action (Tarrow 1998; Rucht 2004). The new media such as the internet have provided greater opportunities to turn a national movement into a global action and helped reduce the cost of movements, serving as a rapid and inexpensive 'architecture of participation that challenges or alters dominant, expected or accepted ways of doing society,

culture and politics' (Atton 2004, p. 19). This technology makes the internet an ideal platform for political action and social movement, as users can connect to the internet via different systems such as cell phones or laptops. They can also communicate in real time and their communication can take a range of forms, such as email, text message and audio-visual messaging, and so on. It is also onerous for states to control this flow of information as it requires control of various media, such as cell phones. This, however, has not prevented some states (such as Iran, China and Egypt, during the early days of the 2011 revolution) from switching off the internet and penalising online activists as well as attempting to filter its content (Neuman 2011).

A total of four groups have been chosen (see Methodology chapter). One of them is a local group (*Dar Essalam* and *Maadi* Youth group) and this is to align it with other national groups such as the 'April 6' movement and *Tamarod*. 'We are all Khaled Said' group has also been included, which can be classified as national, because it did not target one neighbourhood, and yet it dealt with one specific topic and was largely confined to large cities, particularly Cairo and Alexandria. The discussion begins with the *Dar Essalam* and *Maadi* group which started, as the name suggests, in one of Cairo's neighbourhoods.

5.3 Dar Essalam *and* Maadi group

The group was set up on 24 February 2011, nearly two weeks after Mubarak stepped down. There are no names of administrators for this page but there are at least three phone numbers given for users to contact if they seek more information about the group. A post on the FB page dated 1 March 2011 regarding its rationale, stated that the group met after the 2011 revolution to debate the situation in Egypt in general, and in their neighbourhood in particular, and to ask themselves, 'what do we want to happen after 25 January?' There were many answers posted such as eradicating illiteracy, raising political awareness, knowing the difference between the local council and the parliament, cleaning the neighbourhood, price monitoring in the area, monitoring the performance of local hospitals and councils, requesting that the police

service improve (it was interrupted shortly after February 2011), monitoring the performance of police forces (implicitly referring to previous incidents of torture and killings during Mubarak's regime and during the 2011 revolution).

The page introduces itself as follows:

> The Committee of *Dar Essalam* and *Hadaieq Maadi* Youth is a group of young people who wish to make their neighbourhood better and we are very focused on developing our neighbourhood. We believe if the youth in every neighbourhood wish to develop it, and eradicate illiteracy amongst its residents, all of Egypt will develop and will be much better. By the way, illiteracy is not just about reading and writing. Eradicating illiteracy also means eradicating political and cultural illiteracy so that we know our rights and duties, and learn to dream of a better tomorrow. While meeting, we have found common goals such as ensuring security, cleaning our neighbourhood, and ensuring transparent elections, having better hospitals, eradicating corruption from the local councils, so we decided to organise pressure campaigns to get our rights and raise awareness. This is the beginning and God willing there will be no end.

The group then decided to agree on one single objective to launch their committee: a campaign to make *Dar Essalam* a safe and clean neighbourhood. The campaign was for one month - from 25 February to 25 March 2011. The agreed steps were to continue with cleaning campaigns, to launch a number of workshops in order to raise awareness among residents, launch a weekly bulletin to distribute locally about the campaign, visit the families of 'martyrs', and to call for a conference on 25 March 2011 inviting police and local authorities to attend.

A few of these goals seemed to have been achieved, according to what was posted on their FB page. There were several calls for meetings, for instance, to discuss the problems in this particular neighbourhood, and there was one reference to a meeting with the local Councillor of Dar Essalam on 3 March 2011, to discuss possible projects for the development of the neighbourhood. A photograph of the meeting was posted on the page, however, the conference planned on 25 March 2011 did not

seem to materialise as there were no references to it. One possible explanation is that the period following Mubarak's toppling witnessed numerous protests and demonstrations against the military council, and young people in Dar Essalam might have been more occupied with these national events. The group did, however, attempt to raise the residents' political awareness - for instance, there were many calls to attend meetings and workshops such as the following:

- a call to a meeting on 7 March 2011 at 11pm at a local café

- a calendar posted on 8 March 2011 of 6 meetings within the campaign to clean up the area

- a call to a meeting on 13 March 2011

- a series of meetings on 28, 30 and 31 March 2011.

What is notable on the page is the infrequency of its posts: it began with a weekly update from February until April 2011, then a monthly update in June and July followed by infrequent posts in November 2011, January 2012, March 2012, June 2012, a few posts in 2013 (April, August and November) and only two posts in 2014 (January and April).

The frequency of updating can provide an important signpost on the FB page's potential to serve as an information source. It also reflects the administrators' ability to coordinate their sources, and use the page to attract new users and encourage existing users to return to the page (Gibson & Ward, 2000). The low frequency of updating *Dar Essalam*'s page reflects the group's incapacity to use *Facebook* as a tool of organised action: although they did use it to call for sporadic meetings. Except for the series of meetings to clean the streets, there was no planned action calendar showing a series of meetings for a particular goal. This could perhaps impact on the group's sustainability and capacity to continue updating their site if, for instance, the time and effort of its members were rather limited; moreover, the page does not provide a large number of documents or information, although it began with a strong

ambition to serve as a grassroots activity and a hub for communications about local campaigns and initiatives.

The original aim was to serve the local community, but the group did not use the site to post several news items germane to the neighbourhood, save for one or two items, such as one headline about an explosion posted on 6 July 2011. The remaining comments were made about national politics such as the constitution referendum in 2011, the presidential election of 2012, and attempts by members of Mubarak's party to join the parliamentary elections:

The page did not involve users in mobilisation activities (apart from announcements for local meetings) such as asking for volunteers, donations, petitions or boycotts; the exception was the implicit call not to vote for Ahmed Shafiq (standing against the Muslim Brotherhood's Mohamed Morsi) in the presidential elections of 2012. The page did not explicitly ask the users not to vote but used a few images imported from other sites to emphasise the same point:

The posters said:

> Share. When you see a shop hanging a photo of Shafiq, pretend that you wanted to buy an item, and just before paying, look at the photo and return the item and say, "I do not buy from anyone who wants to elect a thief and killer".

> If you lived in Mubarak's age, and did not die on a ferry, or get burned on a train, or were diagnosed with Virus C, cancer or kidney problems, and if you want to fail in your studies or work, you still have a chance with Shafiq.

The calls were sporadic, although the group indirectly made them to users to boycott Shafiq's campaign. During the period from 2011-2013, the group did not issue a call for users to volunteer or donate in support of its initiatives. Only in April 2014 did the group post a volunteer form, but this form was for the *Al-Hak* Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, which was the primary link on the page.

A similar example of this link to the *Al-Hak* Centre for Human Rights and Democracy was a post published on 17 August 2013 announcing telephone numbers for

journalists to use if they wished to complain about attacks by police forces. Another post was published in November 2013 which was a scanned news item about the arrest of *Al-Alem* TV's manager in Cairo (*Al-Alem* is a channel subsidised by Iran) and the intervention of the Al-Hak Centre to release the manager:

There were no links to either mainstream or alternative media except for a post with a scanned front page from the daily *Al-Ahram*, dated 4 March 2003, about Mohammed Al-Baradei, who was the current Head of International Atomic Energy Agency (AEA), and his statement that Iraq did not possess nuclear weapons in 2003. The post was preceded by a rhetorical question: 'to all those who wonder if Al-Baradei is a spy', as an indication that he had shown integrity in his previous role in an international organisation.

To sum up, the group began with a clear local focus on the community of Dar Essalam and Maadi neighbourhood in Cairo, but at times it reported on other national events such as constitutional referenda and elections. The updating was infrequent which

shows that the group lacked resources for a dedicated administrator to regularly update the page. Links were usually to national mainstream media although there were also some to a human rights association. There were no key figures behind the group, consequently, the group can be characterised by its moderate mobilisation efforts in that it urged users to join a campaign or a meeting even if organised by another movement or a party. The group began with a modest action calendar such as planning meetings in the neighbourhood, but such announcements faded a year after the revolution.

5.4 The April *6 Youth* Movement

The group was set up on *Facebook* on 30 August 2008. It introduced itself as 'The Egyptian resistance movement: April 6 Youth', with its motto: 'Patriotism above politics, and principles above interests'. It was also declared as a group of young Egyptians who gathered around their love for their country and their goal to reform it: 'We do not call for a new movement, or a new party, but we call on all Egyptians (whether individuals, groups, parties) to join us around one project which is to awaken these people and to stop injustice, and to remove corruption'. The group clearly stated that 'reforming Egypt [would] not be the result of rhetoric but of real action and offer[…] alternative and feasible solutions'. They introduced their occupation as being employed by the 'Egyptian people'. The group identified their code of ethics in the first posts with instructions for users not to engage in either heated religious or sectarian debates or ideological debates to prove the other party wrong, by using party propaganda.

There were only 4 posts in 2008, and the *Facebook* page was not updated daily but monthly. There was not much activity in 2009, but in 2010 the group marked its presence on *Facebook* with frequent updates, and that presence was strengthened in 2011 when the site was updated weekly. This could be a sign that the group was receiving increased financial support and resources such as the number of people who could update the site. The 2011 uprising inevitably boosted traffic, as did the activity

of the group which began linking with sister groups (such as those in governorates or to *Tollab* April 6 (students in the April 6 movement), the Information Committee of April 6, Students and Reform and April 6 in Al-Maasara, Al- Haram, and Al-Zaytoun neighbourhoods, among others.

The first posts in 2008 were pictures of youth meetings with people from Abu Regala farm: residents were asked to evacuate their farm, and the April 6 movement offered its moral support. There were several posts about the various conferences and *Ramadan* meals in which members of the movement participated.

The movement called for civil disobedience in 2010, in order to force the government to raise the minimum wage:

They also posted photographs of graffiti which referred to 6 April such as the one posted on 3 May 2010 saying: 'Down with Mubarak. 6 April'.

3 May 2010

Other media links were primarily to mainstream media, particularly with regard to their coverage of the 6 April movement as well as of other sister groups. The photographs inserted were usually of leading figures within the movement. The group called for a massive protest on 26 November 2010, in what they called 'Friday of Wrath' against Habib Al-Adly (former Minister of Interior) and his practice of torture:

There were also posters about 6 April supporters in Europe in 2010 aiming to link with Egyptians in Europe. Mobilisation activities such as polls began in 2011, for instance, a poll on 20 June 2011 asking users if they were ready to go out on the streets again to complete the revolution, and the majority affirmed their intention to join new protests. There were also polls about the constitutional referendum with a link to a video campaign which ran on national television but with no mention of subsequent offline activities. There were no calls to donate or to ask users to join the movement and become members: the only calls were to a few conferences without directly urging users to join them. This could mean that the group was more interested in making itself visible to other users, and perhaps donors, rather than using social media to recruit new members.

There was a temporary shift in early 2011 towards mentioning regional events, although the group was focused on the local and national activities of its leading figures. One example was the picture of the Palestinian leaders from Fatah and Hamas

holding hands with a caption that read: 'See what the [Egyptian] revolution did. Long live the Egyptian revolution […] long live Palestinian unity […] Long live the Arab nation.

Another example was an image of graffiti in Libya with a caption attributing it to those who 'commemorate the great Libyan revolution, which brings hope for freedom, patience in the face of corruption, and young determination to challenge a 'crazy' dictator who reigned for 40 years until people rebelled against him.

There were a few links to *Mubasher* 6 April, a news agency on *Facebook* which sends frequent posts about the group's news, particularly focusing on incidents of arrest and calls to free imprisoned members such as Ahmed Maher, in addition to references to Egyptian mainstream media and their coverage of the movement.

The group was launched in late 2010 and intensified its activities in 2011. The coverage of the group was national in that it announced activities in branches across Egyptian governorates. The key events highlighted on the group's *Facebook* page were however, still concerned with national and not local politics. Key figures profiled on the page were the heads of steering committees in Cairo and Alexandra. The group's updating accelerated in 2011 which may indicate an increase of funding or resources, following the 25 January revolution. The group generally established links to mainstream media and selected civil society organisations but had fewer links to

alternative media. The group highlighted activities pertaining to their campaigning, in terms of mobilisation, by urging users to join those activities.

5.5 'We are all Khaled Said':

The page has the Egyptian flag as its symbol

It was created on 10 June 2010 and introduced its aim as to be 'dreaming of an Egypt that respects human rights, of an authority that is rightly elected and of a state that is sovereign and respected around the world'. It stated that it was 'set up to defend Khaled Said and what injustice [he faced], and God willing, the page will turn into a platform to defend every Egyptian's right to a decent life'. As *Facebook* asks for information about aims and interests, the page administration added: 'the page is for all Egyptians regardless of their religion, age, gender, education, social class or political ideology. We have gathered because we want our country to be better and because we [also] want Khaled Said's rights [to be observed], as a symbol which awakened all Egyptians. We want to tell about Egyptians' problems, especially with regards to breaches of human rights provided for in the constitution'. The page 'admin' refers to a *Google* email (elshaheed@gmail.com) and it is noted that there is a webpage called elshaheed.com ('martyr') which is dedicated to the case of Khaled Said.

There are several calls to take part in a protest or even click 'like' to show support for a view or a protest. There was a call, for instance, to a protest on 18 June 2010 at 5 p.m. on which more than 3,000 people clicked that they would attend, and on the same day there were calls to a similar protest in Alexandra; for those who could not attend because they had college or university examinations, the page asked them to wear black as a symbolic contribution and to show moral support to those who took to the streets.

The group aimed to mobilise action but not necessarily to build up a network. There were calls to stand in a square in Cairo wearing a black T-shirt and remain silent,

without necessarily interacting with the others in the street or attempting to identify them. There was a photograph of such an action in June 2010:

The group posted a call to all users on 4 July 2010, urging them to 'like' the post and proposing the idea of sending a message to police officers as a *Facebook* post. The post read: 'We'll do something important which will be picked up by the mass media and will influence police officers […] please take part. Give some of your time, from half an hour to two hours […] details will be posted within an hour […] this is the least we can do for Khaled'. Another post included a screenshot of some of the users' messages, and the administrator posted that he had entered the group with a fake account and some users had sent him polite messages, thinking he was a police officer:

Another example of virtual mobilisation was a call on 14 July 2010 to obtain a copy of the Egyptian Constitution, read it and make copies of article 54 which allows the right to demonstrate.

The administrator (Wael Ghonim) inserted a very long post on 30 August 2010, entitled 'Facebookian dialogues, we're now half a million users'. Ghonim boasted about the number of users in this post, which exceeded the number of readers of all state-owned newspapers (at the time). He claimed that some of the users sent videos and images and took part in protests and sit-ins, whereas others 'just observe[d] from a distance, although deep inside they might be supporting us and others who use[d] the page to ruin our efforts because their interest [was] not to have independent media out of the state's control'. The administrator further stated that it is no bad

thing to disagree with each other, reprinting some of the comments as responses to the ideas posted on the page. The idea of calling for people to take part in a silent stand in Cairo for instance, received some sarcastic comments, as well as some serious ones from some of those who wanted to join in. The same was true of other calls or posts, such as some comments criticising the page for focusing on only one case, Khaled Said's, while others asked to focus only on that case. The main aim was to plead for users to accept views different from their own:

حوارات فيسبوكية ـ بقينا ربع مليون مشترك

30 أغسطس، 2010، الساعة 09:52 صباحاً

الحمد لله .. بقينا ربع مليون مشترك أغلبهم بيشوف التحديثات اللي على الصفحة بشكل يومي وبصفة دورية يعني احنا باختصار بنوصل لقراء بيزيد عددهم عن قراء كل الجرائد غير الحكومية مجموعين على بعض .. وده في حد ذاته تحدي كبير جدا.

ـ ربع مليون مشترك مش بس بيقروا الاخبار لكن بعضهم بيشارك في صنعها وبينزل أخبارهم مش بس في الجرائد المحلية لا والعربية والعالمية كمان .. منهم ناس بيصوروا الصورة والفيديو ويكتبوا القصيدة والمقالة ويشاركوا في المظاهرة والوقفة .. ومنهم اللي بيتفرج وبيتابع من بعيد وهو لسان حاله بيقول ربنا معاكوا .. ومنهم اللي داخل عشان يحاول يبوظ الجهود دي عشان مصلحته ان ميبقاش فيه اي حد معاه اعلام حر مش تحت سيطرة اجهزة الدولة.

خلينا أحكيلكم نموذج للي بيحصل في الصفحة والكومنتات والايميلات اللي بتجيني:

ـ نشر اقتراح محمد عيسى الخاص بتنظيم فكرة الوقفة الصامتة على الكورنيش

<> ههههه وقفة صامتة .. والله انتم عالم هايفة .. متعملوها فايبريشن أحسن! الثورة هي الحل

<> فكرة حلوة اوي اوي اوي وتسلم ايد اللي اقترحها .. □جد تحححححفة يا ادمن

It is notable that the same activists' blogs and social media groups were used as a kind of alternative media and they prided themselves on having more readers than mainstream media (see Chapter 7). The page secured massive visibility before and

after the January 25 revolution, but there was no strong evidence of direct mobilisation to offline activities other than an *ad hoc* sit-in with no coordinators and open for anyone to attend.

The group administrator focused on posting comments about other victims of police brutality asking users to 'like and share' thereby confining political mobilisation to virtual 'approval'. One example was a post about a university student (Somya Ashraf) who was beaten by the police and was moved to a hospital after she refused to be checked by a police officer when entering the university gates:

Another example was a post on 28 November 2010 about 'thugs' who scared away voters, and the administrator asked: 'How can you call these elections transparent?' It is also worth reprinting the post of 26 November 2010 when *Facebook* brought back the group's page, which had apparently been suspended for a short period. The comment was: 'Dear *Facebook*, thanks for bringing this page back!', written in English as if it were addressed to *Facebook*'s management in the U.S.A. The post featured a blue heart with the *Facebook* logo. That particular post, unlike any other, received more than 10 thousand 'likes':

Users' content, moreover, was confined to selected posts such as a link to a 5-minute *YouTube* film (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUZpjg2OpIU) about 3 young men who had gathered round an old car. One of them was determined to repair it but the other two did not want to participate, saying: 'it's 50 years old and doesn't move'. One was thinking about what other people who had gone to the rich Gulf, could afford. Finally, he repaired it, after persuading the others to help, and they all drive off in the Nasr car, and the film ends with a folkloric song. The moral of the film, although not commented on explicitly, is not to give up on one's native land and to face local challenges.

The administrator, Wael Ghonim, published a long post on 11 February 2011, clarifying 'his personal view', after television reports about his arrest and imprisonment for 11 days (from 27 January to 7 February 2011). He was secretly incarcerated and his employer, *Google*, as well as his family appealed to the media to report his disappearance. Ghonim became an influential figure after his release, and he gave an emotional interview to the media in which he admitted his role as the administrator of the group. He was later named as one of the 100 most influential people of 2011 by the *Time* magazine. He also released his book 'Revolution 2.0' about his role in the 2011 revolution and particularly in the *Facebook* page 'We are all Khaled Said'.

Ghonim wrote in his post of 11 February 2011 that he had been 'fighting the Ministry of Interior' for eight months, and had been imprisoned for eleven days by asserting that someone like him would never strike a deal or want anything but freedom for Egypt. He also declared that he was not a hero, and the youth in the (village and town) squares did not intend to cause chaos, but rather to fight corruption. He finally said that he was not concerned with those who accused him of being a traitor, whether for or against the regime.

توضيح كامل لموقفي الشخصي وإجابة على كل التساؤلات

11 فبراير، 2011، الساعة 05:00 صباحاً

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

أولا: مصر فوق الجميع .. مصر فوق الجميع .. مصر فوق الجميع

ثانيا: أنا كنت باحارب الداخلية لمدة 8 شهور ومعرض حياتي للخطر ودعيت ليوم 25 يناير واتسجنت 12 يوم كنت كل يوم بانتظر الموت فيها ولسه هاضحي وقلت إني مستعد أموت. صدقوني مستحيل أعقد أي صفقات لأني لا أطمع في أي حاجة ومش عايز غير حرية مصر والمصريين وكرامتهم.

ثالثا: الموقف صعب جدا ومعقد وصوت الشعب أقوى من صوت أي أشخاص أو رموز. من البداية قلت من كل قلبي لست رمزا ولست بطلا ولست متحدثا رسميا باسم الشعب. الشعب أقوى والشعب الآن في الشارع يفرض وجهة نظره بغض النظر عن رأي وائل غنيم أو غيره.

رابعا: لا توجهوا لشباب الثورة الاتهامات بالتخريب أو تعطيل الأعمال. المسؤول الحقيقي زي ما قلت في حلقة منى الشاذلي وهو إن اللي قتل الشباب واللي بيخرب مصر واللي بينهب ثروات الناس دلوقتي مش المتظاهرين هما اللي قاعدين على كراسيهم وفاكرين إنهم فوق مستوى الحساب.

تاسعا: لا يضيرني أن يتهمني البعض بالخيانة سواء كانوا من المتظاهرين أو من النظام. أنا هافضل أعمل اللي بيقوله لي ضميري اللي عمره ما هيموت لأنه صحي عشان بلده.

The group therefore centred on one key figure, Wael Ghonim, who had also attracted a great deal of attention in Western media such as in America, given that he worked for the American company, *Google*, and that he was married to an American citizen. Ghonim announced that the group's users had reached one million on 5 March 2011 and he asked them to 'like' his post:

Ghonim signed a book deal worth millions of dollars in 2012, and announced he was launching a charity in Egypt. One of his projects was entitled 'The Poor First', which aimed to collect money to help the poor. The group's *Facebook* page featured advertising for the campaign:

Links were mainly to mainstream media and the way they covered protests; one link was to the state-owned newspaper, *Al-Ahram*, and what the group called the 'legendary issue of 4 May 2008' (Mubarak's birthday) and the excessive use of his photographs with reference to his and his wife's 'achievements', calling his rule 'the day Egypt was born again'. The group re-printed photographs of that issue on 20 February 2012:

جريدة الأهرام - العدد الأسطوري 4 مايو 2008 - عيد ميلاد المخلوع (12 من الصور)

There were references to victims other than Khaled Said, as previously mentioned, who also suffered from police brutality. Most of the cases occurred in Egypt but there

was also a single reference to the famous case concerning Ahmed Al-Gizawi which occurred in Saudi Arabia. Al-Gizawi, an activist arrested in Saudi Arabia in April 2012 triggered massive protests from Egypt against the Islamic Kingdom. It was claimed that Al-Gizawi travelled to Saudi Arabia on a pilgrimage, when he was detained in a Saudi prison on 17 April 2012; prior to his trip, he had filed court cases against the Islamic Kingdom for detaining Egyptians in their prisons without fair trials. It was then claimed that he was sentenced to a year in prison and 20 lashes for insulting the king, but the Egyptian ambassador in Saudi issued a statement, denying the whole trial story and declaring that Saudi laws do not allow the trial of non-Saudi citizens for acts committed outside of the Kingdom. Other officials claimed that Al-Gizawi was trying to smuggle anti-anxiety pills into Saudi Arabia. The whole affair caused more than 1,000 Egyptians to protest in front of the Saudi Embassy in Cairo on 27 April 2012, demanding Al-Gizawi's release along with other Egyptians in Saudi jails. The Kingdom replied by shutting down its embassy and other consulates in Egypt, which prompted the Egyptian Military Council to accelerate diplomatic efforts to heal the rift with Saudi Arabia.

We Are All Khaled Said group took part in the demonstration regarding this incident by posting a comment explaining the case in brief and asking Egyptians to demonstrate against Saudi Arabia. The post read:

> 24 April 2012. Ahmed Al-Gizawi's case in a nutshell: an Egyptian citizen expressed his view on an Egyptian television channel. The view was regarded as a crime in Saudi Arabia. Ahmed is not resident in Saudi Arabia but had gone there on a pilgrimage. The Saudi authorities decided to punish him for his view, which was not a crime in Egypt. One basic legal principle is that the act did not happen inside Saudi territories and Ahmed is not a Saudi citizen. If we remain silent, Ahmed will be imprisoned for one year and receive 20 lashes. Perhaps Ahmed's case should be opened to allow us to ask for the release of Ahmed and all other Egyptians arrested illegally in Saudi prisons.

<div dir="rtl">

24 أبريل، 2012

قضية أحمد الجيزاوي باختصار:

- مواطن مصري عبّر عن رأيه في قناة إعلامية مصرية

- هذا الرأي يُعد جريمة في السعودية بتهمة التعدي على الذات الملكية!

- أحمد ليس مقيما بالسعودية وسافر لأداء العمرة وهي شعيرة دينية

- السلطات السعودية قررت عقابه على رأيه اللي هو ليس بجريمة في مصر أساسا!

- وحتى أبسط قواعد القانوني بتقول أن الجريمة لم تُنفذ على الأراضي السعودية وهو ليس مواطنا لها!

- العقاب اللي أحمد هيدفعه لو سكتنا هو سنة سجن و20 جلدة!!!!!!!!

يمكن قضية أحمد اتفتحت عشان منطالبش بس بالحرية لأحمد الجيزاوي .. لا عشان نطالب بالحرية لكل مصري بيعاني من الظلم ومُعتقل بدون جريمة في السجون السعودية!

</div>

The group administrator issued a survey form in August 2012, asking users to answer some questions about when they joined the page, their reasons for joining, whether they had contributed with ideas, and to give their suggestions for the future. The group asked users to 'like' other views and to 'share' with friends:
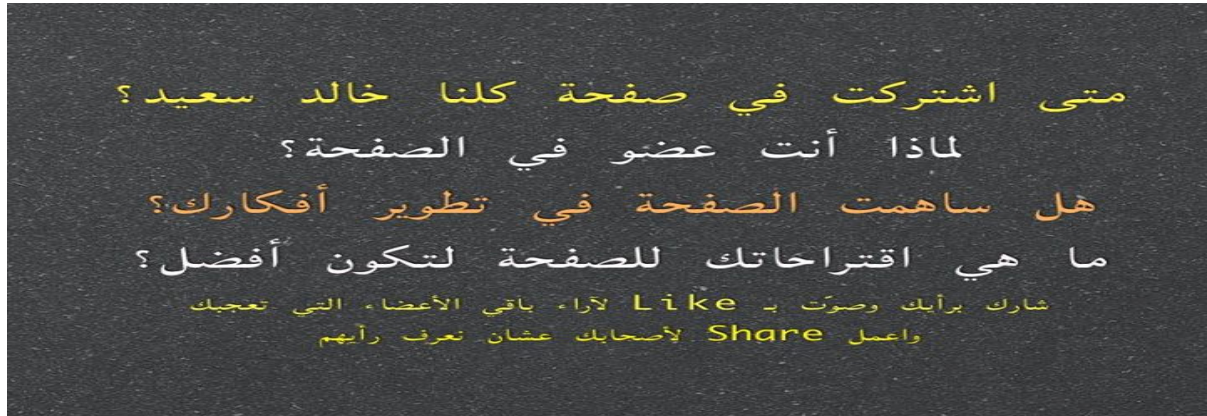
 The group ended on 3 July 2013 when Egypt was waiting for a statement from the military officials regarding the overthrow of President Morsi, a Muslim Brotherhood member; after that date, there was no activity whatsoever on that page.

To sum up, the 'We Are All Khaled Said' group's page was launched on 18 June 2010 ('Friday of Anger') and was updated daily from September 2010, then weekly

throughout 2011 and then monthly, until it ceased to appear from 3 July 2013. There were links to the mainstream media and their coverage of the group, and to media presenters who showed solidarity with the 2011 revolution and its demands. One example was a sports presenter who said while on air: 'God will punish the former regime severely [...] there should be no delay in putting on trial the people who tortured us for years [...] we should hold to account those who support fanaticism in sports'. There were also links to archive material from the state-owned *Al-Ahram* newspaper to reveal its hypocrisy during Mubarak's rule when it arguably appeared to serve as a mouthpiece for the regime. There were very few instances, on the other hand, of links to alternative media such as an amateur movie posted on *YouTube* by young activists but there were a few links to other groups such as the 'April 6 movement'. Mobilisation activities were confined to calling for users to 'like' or 'share' a post with their friends, such as the one calling users to join protests on Friday 18 June 2010 ('Friday of Anger'), or to visit the familes of 'martyrs'. There were also calls for users to express their views, but it is notable that comments and 'likes' during 2010 were modest, compared to the activity recorded in 2011. It is argued here that the activity in 2011 was mainly due to two reasons: (i) the 2011 uprising and the soaring number of *Facebook* users in Egypt, following that event; and (ii) the fame of the group's administrator, Wael Ghonim, who featured not only in Egyptian mainstream media but also in American media. Ghonim seemed to have been the centre of attention on the group's page on which he personally posted comments about his views, following media interviews, or thanking people for joining or advertising his campaign ('The Poor First'). Ghonim's passion to help the poor, fight corruption, and end police brutality, which he expressed in his interviews with mainstream media, were the themes that featured strongly on the group's page between 2010 and 2013. Ghonim disappeared from the Egyptian political scene in 2013, following the overthrow of Morsi, when he left Egypt. He posted a message on his personal *Facebook* account in January 2014

(https://www.facebook.com/WaelGhonim/posts/599343166805431) - in reply to what he called 'rumours about him'. He denied all accusations that he had made a fortune

from his media appearances or the book which he had released in 2011. He asserted that all revenues went to charity projects in Egypt, and he only wanted to help the people and the country. He lamented the violence following Morsi's overthrow, saying that he preferred to stay away rather than join a debate that could contribute to more bloodshed. The posts received nearly 20 thousand 'likes' and thousands of 'shares'. Ghonim's comments came after a campaign in the Egyptian media, particularly independent TV channels, to discredit many of the 2011 revolutionaries, including Ghonim, with claims that they were paid handsomely by foreign agencies to ignite the revolution in Egypt.

5.6 Tamarod

Tamarod means 'rebellion' in Arabic and refers here to the movement launched in April 2013, to lead the protests against the Brotherhood and Morsi. The movement managed to mobilise massive protests to take to the streets on 20 June 2013, the first anniversary of Morsi's rule, demanding that he step down. Morsi refused this demand and was removed from his post by the Military Council led by then current Minister of Defence, Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi.

The group claimed to have collected over 20 million signatures in a petition calling for Morsi to step down, blaming Morsi for all social ills - from crimes to the failing economy. The Brotherhood responded by forming a group called '*Tajaroud*' ('Impartiality') and claimed to have collected 10 million signatures of citizens who wanted Morsi to remain in power: a claim that was strongly refuted by many politicians and commentators.

The group set up a website to post their 1-page petition online in several languages:

Tamarod's petition complains that people should 'reject' Morsi on the grounds that:

- Security had not been restored since the 2011 revolution

- The poor 'have no place' in society

- The government was still 'begging' the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a loan

- There had been 'no justice for the 'martyrs' of the 2011 revolution

- 'No dignity was left' for Egyptians or their country

- The economy had 'collapsed'

- Egypt was 'still following in the footsteps of the U.S.A'.

The website posted a short message, following the toppling of Morsi, thanking everyone who took part in the campaign; since when it had not been updated. There were recent claims by its founder, Mahmoud Badr, that the official *Facebook* page had been stolen and no longer represented or expressed the views of *Tamarod* (*Ramadan*, 2014. The

group split up in early 2014, with some of the members forming *Tamarod* 2. The new group criticised the post-coup government, and claimed that some of the founders of the original movement were agents of the state security system. It was perhaps for that reason that the founder of the original movement, Mahmoud Badr, announced to the mainstream media that the membership of leading figures such as Hassan Shahin and Mohammed Abdel Aziz had been frozen, and gave the names of new spokespeople, including Mohammed Nabawy.

The *Facebook* group was launched on 24 May 2013 with the main message for all citizens to take to the streets on 30 June 2013:

Following the launch, the main posts and images were of people, including celebrities, signing the movement's petition:

It is evident from the group's *Facebook* page that this movement was well-resourced compared to the previously discussed movements. The *Tamarod* page was updated daily, unlike those of other movements, and sometimes more than once a day. They also had a visible presence in many governorates and posted news about meetings and seminars in other towns such as a meeting in Menya, followed by another in Aswan, and another in Luxor:

•

What is more, the group posted the names and numbers of several members who act as coordinators in several governorates together with the mobile number of each member:

The group also announced its campaign in other countries such as Australia, supplying the name and number of their coordinator in Australia and urging all their supporters there not to deal with anyone else who might claim to be affiliated with *Tamarod*.

This widespread group arrangement not only relies on a highly organised network but also on good resources unavailable to a spontaneous grassroots movement, to achieve its aims of presenting itself in mainstream media. These resources helped sustain the group's objectives until they were fulfilled on 3 July 2013, by the toppling of Morsi and the subsequent ban of the Brotherhood.

It is also notable that posts by the group administrators did not receive many 'shares' or 'likes', compared, for example, to the 'We are all Khaled Said' group, in spite of frequent daily updating. The group posted links to mainstream media interviews with *Tamarod*'s founders, such as a link to a programme inviting Waleed Al-Masry, one of the group's members, to defend the group after accusations against them:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

تمرد shared a link.
2 June 2013

وليد المصري في برنامج من جديد وتحديات حركة تمرد بعد إحالة بلاغ لأمن الدولة

من جديد: تحديات حركة تمرد بعد إحالة بلاغ ضدهم لأمن الدولة

من جديد أهلاً وسهلاً بحضراتكو .. في وسط زحمة الأحداث بيتم تمرير إجراءات " من تحت لتحت" زى ما حصل أثناء أزمة الجنود ا المختطفين، في نفس الوقت كان رئيس الجمهوري...

Once Morsi's regime was toppled, Tamarod used its mobilisation activities to call for people to support the Egyptian army. However, their support for the army-backed interim government diminished following the interim president's signing of a new law criminalising protests without prior approval. The group held well-attended press conferences announcing their rejection of the law:

-
-
-

تمرد shared a link.
18 October

اليوم السابع | "تمرد": سندعو إلى مظاهرات حال تصديق الرئاسة على قانون التظاهر
www1.youm7.com

قال خالد القاضي، عضو اللجنة المركزية بحركة "تمرد"، إنهم سيدعون المصريين للخروج في مظاهرات حاشدة حال تصديق الرئيس عدلي منصور على قانون التظاهر الذى تقدمت به الحكومة، مؤكداً أنه قانون يجور على حرية الرأى والتعبير

The group was also known for declining US aid to Egypt and for refusing to negotiate with them. They criticised the US efforts to mediate between the Brotherhood and the interim government, and they launched a campaign to support the Egyptian

government against any form of foreign intervention. the group issued a statement in May 2014, claiming that they were contacted by the US embassy in Cairo to hold a meeting with US officials, but the group announced publicly that they had refused to hold such a meeting on the basis that the US was seeking to harm the Arab world and Egypt; on a previous occasion (October 2013), the group had called for the Egyptian government not to accept US aid:

-

The most featured figures in the group were the leaders and founders and there were several pictures of them holding press conferences or speaking at public events:

The toppling of Morsi achieved its aims in July 2013, and the group featured several campaigns to tackle economic and social problems, such as a festival to revive the tourist industry in southern Egypt, a campaign to monitor sexual harassment in the street and another to monitor prices of basic goods, including meat:

The original group also publicly announced its full support for Al-Sisi's candidacy for the presidency however, the new (split) group announced its support for Al-Sisi's rival candidate, Hamdeen Sabahi. One of the leading members, Mohamed Heikal, said in an interview:

> What happened is that members of the movement conducted a poll to determine which presidential candidates they supported, and the overwhelming majority supported Al-Sisi. Thus, the movement responded to the opinion of the majority. The support voiced by another group for the presidential candidate Sabahi is a personal opinion that we respect,' (quoted in Mokbel, 2014).

Mohamed Abdel Aziz, one of Sabahi's supporters, stressed the importance of a difference of opinion, and that difference should not, according to him, be seen as a breeding ground for division. The group attempted to turn the movement into a political party but there was opposition within the movement. One of the opposing voices, Moheb Doss, said in an interview that turning the movement into a party would simply invalidate its aims, and that it should be dissolved once the parliamentary elections were concluded. Observers, on the other hand, did not foresee the movement as being successful as a political party due to its lack of a clear programme (Mokbel, 2014).

5.7. Chapter summary

The following table summarises the mapping of the selected interactivity features regarding the selected *Facebook* groups, divided by their focus - local or national -, and the extent of their updating, mobilisation activities and the targeted key figures or ordinary people:

Movement	Focus		Updating			Links to			Mobilisation activities		Actors	
	Local	National	Little	Sufficient	Extensive	Mainstream media	Alternative media	Civil society	Petition, campaign, action calendar	None	Founders and leaders	Laymen
Dar Essalam	x		x					x	x		x	x
6 April	x	x			x	x	x		x		x	
We are all KS		x		x		x	x		x		x	
Tamarod	x	x			x	x			x		x	

Table 5.1: overview of interactivity features in selected *Facebook* groups

Table 5.1 shows the prominence of key activists and founders of movements in such groups, who have monopolised debates on reforms and activism, although there do not appear to be any clear aims towards setting up political parties. Some groups such as 'April 6' and *Tamarod*, on the other hand, saw internal splits by members who set up rival groups with the same name but different leaders. It is notable in all these groups is that their mobilisation activities, as well as their desire to engage with users, generally focused on large issues such as reforming the police and the justice system, improving living standards, cleaning the cities, improving examinations and educational services, rationalising prices, and so on. This means that such groups were not acting as political parties with clear manifestos, instead, their mission seemed to centre on improving and reforming the state services (see also Chapters Six and Seven). The groups' activities can therefore be characterised as sporadic rather than focused and strategic. This may not be an indicator of a healthy civil society in which each group is concerned with a particular policy or reform, instead, the selected groups here seem to use social media, *Facebook* in particular, as a medium of visibility and immediate impact rather than for sustainable civil society capacity-building. It is also worth noting that the *Tamarod* and 'Khaled Said' groups have since ceased their activities, and the '6 April' group split up and were later banned by the Egyptian court, and the last group, 'Dar Essalam and Maadi' practically ceased updating their posts. This is another example of social media being used for the purpose of gaining attention rather than focusing on civil society sustainability.

It is true that these *Facebook* groups created a space for debate and interaction as well as collaboration, but their greatest achievement, it is argued here, is that they managed to decentralise political debate in Egypt; for decades, movements and parties were focusing on Cairo and big cities such as Alexandria, with the internet and social media movements, as shown above, were competing against each other in order to launch sub-groups in other governorates, by posting several photographs of events held in remote places, for example. A group like *Dar Essalam* Youth is also an example of this decentralisation, serving one neighbourhood in Greater Cairo, and

calling for neighbours to collaborate on projects for the improvement of their neighbourhoods. Social media may indeed become a catalyst for long-term political gains.

An attempt to distinguish between thick and thin civic engagement is based on Zuckerman's model (2013) of online engagement. The second refers to actions which require little effort such as signing a petition or giving a donation, and the action organisers and coordinators had a clear idea of what they wanted the participants to do, while thick participation requires creativity and contribution towards solving a problem, and here the participants are expected to contribute ideas to the whole campaign. The other axis is best termed 'voice', as Zuckerman argues (2013). It can be symbolic-expressive or impactful-instrumental. The symbolic-expressive side of this spectrum denotes the participants' support for, or opposition to, a certain cause, but there is little expectation that the movement behind the cause will lead to tangible results in changing the laws; the participation, however, could contribute to changing the climate in which that change could occur. Impactful or instrumental voicing, on the other hand, is focused on a specific outcome behind a major change such as passing new laws. It can be argued that the Dar Essalam Youth movement required thin-symbolic involvement in that it did not aim to change any laws or the surrounding environment, but only to increase awareness and the level of people's participation in the neighbourhood; on the opposite scale of thick impactful engagement is *Tamarod*, which directly sought to change the president and the whole cabinet and even eliminate the 'Brotherhoodisation' of the state by sacking officials and ministers hired by Morsi's government.

```
                              Thin



        Dar Essalam and Maadi
                                        We are all
                                        Khaled Said


Symbolic                                                  Impactful



                  6 April                  Tamarod
                  movement



                              Thick
```
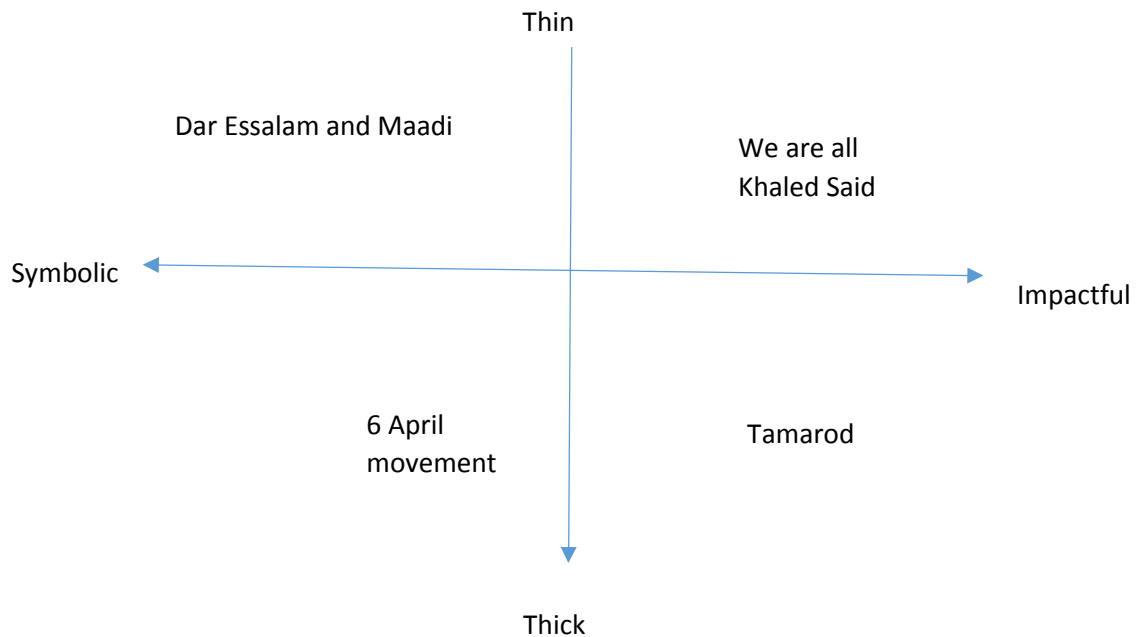
- Figure 5.1 Zuckerman's civic engagement model

There is moreover, a general suspicion of partisanship and organised politics, as activists clearly prefer unaffiliated movements over structured political parties. Disenchantment with parties could be justified by years and decades of living with either one party system (Nasser's regime) or suppressed opposition (Sadat's and Mubarak's regimes). It is in such an environment that individual figures could gain support, regardless of their political affiliation such as Hamdeen Sabbahi (Nasserite) and individual members of the Muslim Brotherhood who were known for their charitable organisations. Once Morsi began to show support for his party's agenda, people denounced him (Iskandar, 2013). This is why movements like 'We are all Khaled Said' have managed to attract many followers and supporters, simply because they refused to be affiliated to a certain political ideology or party. *Tamarod* followed suit and organised its movements by seeking support from political constituencies and ideologies opposed to the Brotherhood. This process made it clear to its supporters that although the members did not seek to use certain slogans, flags or images of

political figures (Iskandar, 2013), once their mission was completed by the overthrow of Morsi, *Tamarod*'s leading figures announced their wish to form a political party and enter politics, but, to date, these efforts have been limited and the whole movement split into two fronts. The following chapters continue with the discussion by focusing on the fieldwork regarding activists and ordinary citizens in Cairo.

Chapter Six

Social media as a tool for political socialisation

6.1 Introduction

Cottle (2011, 657) points out that there is a need for more in-depth analyses of the Arab uprisings by paying close attention to 'how media systems and communication networks have complexly entered into their different and continuing trajectories', consequently, activists who regularly used new media, indirect users of these media and a few journalists from traditional media, such as print and television, were interviewed. The aim is to examine how use of the internet and social media transformed collective action in Egypt.

The 18 days spent in Tahrir Square were like a dream for many informants, especially those interviewed in early 2011, immediately after the success of the revolution which forced Mubarak to step down; for the first time they had discovered a sense of solidarity with other Egyptians, from all walks of life, who represented different ideologies such as Islamism, liberalism and socialism.

> I could never imagine that atmosphere in Tahrir where men and women sit in the same tents in the square and discuss politics. Did you see how Christians formed a circle around Muslims to protect them while [they were] praying, and we [Muslims] also protected them. This is the first time I felt so proud of being Egyptian and I did not care about my family's pleas for me to come home and leave Tahrir. We all shared scarce food and water, and felt this feeling of unity which I have never felt before in my life' (Mona, 34).

This chapter reflects on themes emerging from these interviews by focusing on the advantages of using social media, as highlighted by the informants; such advantages include the immediate visibility gained by using these media, as well as being a tool for information dissemination. The interviewees' opinions of mainstream media versus

social media will also be examined, which should be seen in contrast to the views expressed by focus groups (see Chapter 8).

6.2 Social media as a tool for political socialisation and information portal

The rise of the internet as a new virtual platform has kindled hopes of a more democratic mode of exchanging information amongst citizens within the same national boundaries, and even with others outside of their region; through text, links and multimedia messages, including voice and video streaming, existing and new social movements can avoid state control while directly targeting and addressing audiences inside and outside of their area (Dartnell, 2003). New technology therefore, can play a critical role in facilitating public deliberation and public mobilisation by enabling debates and discussions about state security brutality (Lewinski and Mohammed, 2012). These virtual platforms enable access to like-minded dissidents who can engage in public deliberations while mobilising for political activities, including organised protests. New media and technology do not therefore only shake up political culture nationally and internationally, but also create it. Political culture here refers to activities based on communication, argumentation and building consensus (Almond & Verba, 1963).

This culture serves as a framework for collective action which enables group members to identify and share their anti-regime criticism (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001). It might be difficult to foster and sustain a healthy exchange of ideas in order to build a

consensus in authoritarian regimes like Egypt, unlike the situation in democratic societies. It might be even assumed that the public in such authoritarian societies may not need to engage in any form of collective action, as decisions are not based on a consensus to accept change; in such societies, state institutions and civil society, however restricted these are, may not depend on citizens' deliberations to initiate and implement transformation.

Autocracies also depend on some form of participation, on the other hand, in order to ascertain what the public wants or needs, or even to engage with this public for indoctrination (Fuchs, 2007; Dalton and Kingemann, 2007). Howard (2010, p. 14) argues: 'in an authoritarian context, "political culture" can mean a range of social activities that take on political importance in societies where regimes/elites actively manage cultural interaction'. Scholars such as Inglehart (1997) argue that political cultures differ, according to cultural values that divide societies into those who adopt traditional cultural values (materialist) and those who adopt self-expression values (post-materialist). The traditional culture is seen as the opposite of secular-rational values, where the former foregrounds them as religious values, obedience and patriotism, for example, while the latter emphasise values such as trust, tolerance, equality and citizen participation (Inglehart & Welzel, 2010). It follows that the more cultural values shift towards the secular-rational dimension, the more society experiences dissent and protest. Citizens in such situations, or at least a large number of citizens in a given autocracy, will feel that the regime neither articulates their needs nor conforms to their principles, consequently, the regime would lose its legitimacy; moreover, citizens would lose trust in it from their own experiences, as the regime's policy or actions accentuates the gap between the citizens' principles and values and state rhetoric (Mishler and Rose, 2002). Political culture is thus drawn from citizens' attitudes and values, which, in turn, have been internalised through cultural and political socialisation (Fuchs, 2007).

Western coverage of the revolution and several studies assumed it was a '*Facebook rebellion*', following the events in 2011 in Egypt, referring particularly to the role played by social and new media in shaking up the political culture in country. The

argument is that Egyptian citizens, particularly the young generation, have experienced a new openness to global political discourses, and have therefore shifted their cultural values towards that secular-rational dimension. New and social media were consequently seen as one direct cause of the revolution, which is an argument largely rejected by the interviewees in this research; for instance, Essam (32, male) rejects any direct link between social media and the success of the revolution, arguing that the political situation encourages the use of media, not vice versa: 'It is the political scene that drives bloggers to write and mobilise, not the other way round. Don't forget that millions of Egyptians still do not have access to the internet.'

One of these activists was asked whether he thought that the January 25 Revolution was driven by the 'media-savvy' youth who had access to the internet, he said that it was the former regime's intention to depict it that way: 'The [Mubarak] government wanted to make it look like a *Facebook* revolution in order to create a gap between the working [class] and middle-class. The truth is we all took part and we [middle-class] showed the others that we fight like them (Omar, 33). There is also a belief that blogging or social media politicise people; rather, bloggers and social media users simply use these media to express their views without necessarily being committed activists: 'I know bloggers who only write about their views but not all of them are political activists - a few of them have become well known, even in the American media, because of their political views and they have turned into activists' (Mustafa, 29, male). Social media, according to these interviews, were not the driving force behind the January revolution, although they helped in coordinating events. Some of them did not even hear about the event on *Facebook*: 'I knew about the January 25 [rebellion] from a friend of mine, not from *Facebook*. I then looked on *Facebook* and found a campaign calling for people to take to the streets on the Police Day [25 January] (Karim, 28, male).

Kholoud (36, male) claims that social media have significantly contributed to raising awareness about state corruption and police brutality:

> It was through social media that we heard about people like Khaled Said and what
> happened to him at the hands of the police. There were also debates on social media

about girls who were sexually harassed and even raped during protests. We used technology to reach out to people outside Egypt, even if we do not know all of them very well. We wanted them to know what was happening in Egypt and not to believe what Egyptian television was broadcasting.

Another informant, Hala (43, female) who was trained in making documentaries, said that she went to Tahrir during the 18 days in 2011 to record actual footage of the daily encounters between the youth and the police.

> I filmed tapes and tapes of footage, and every day I went to Tahrir, I was running the risk of getting shot in Tahrir, but I wanted to get those tapes and upload raw footage on YouTube so that my friends abroad would watch it and spread it among their circles. I wanted the whole world to know what was happening to us.

Ziad (37, male) agrees with this view. 'Social media had a role in our protests because they gave us a space which traditional media did not give us.'

Political activism is still seen as an effective and organised process that is based on commitment and engagement with like-minded activists and not just on *ad hoc* networking, as expressed by another interviewee (Amr, 28, male):

> It is still a luxury to have access to the internet and actually dedicate most of your day to writing a blog or a tweet. Even if we all write blogs and tweets, not all of us end up in street protests. We need to raise awareness among all citizens to take part in political action.

Others appreciated the role played by social media in facilitating mobilisation, particularly with like-minded protestors. Sherine (43, female), for instance, argued that *Facebook* was instrumental in the successful spreading of the news about the revolution:

> We used to check FB [*Facebook*] to know about coming events and meetings. FB is the reason behind 25/1 and 30/6. When I went to the street during Morsi's toppling, it was after I heard about it on FB. But 30/6 was because of TV, because of illiteracy. FB and *Twitter* remain leaders. We use them to know about protest places and times. People are connected via FB. I met new activists on FB after 25/1. I was not an activist before 25/1, but after it, I joined political parties. I used

to have a problem with MB [Muslim Brotherhood], and I joined a party to fight them. I started on FB around 25/1, when there was a curfew, 10 hours a day. I used to go on FB, my daughter taught me how to do so. 90 per cent of organisers of 25/1 were on FB. There were youth who have nothing to do with movements not even 6 April. There was no literary participation before 25/1.

She personally depended on *Facebook* to check for any relevant information and arrange for protests and sit-ins, and even to sift through invitations to join such protests:

I know about all movements and events on FB and I make up my mind after following the debates on it; for instance, I decided not to go to Mohamed Mahmoud protests but I followed all about it [*sic*] from FB. If I want to mobilise people for a protest, then I use FB. Of course, I target certain people who are interested in similar causes e.g. quota for women in parliament, and I know like-minded people will join me. I can also follow MB's news on FB. I also get the news about their protests so I avoid those streets. We use FB to upload out[side] events, but obviously we only approach or reach certain like-minded [people]. We have a problem reaching out to lower classes like [Tawfik] Okasha [a famous talk show host known for his large fan base among the poor] does.

Tawfik Okasha, referred to above, was known for his rhetoric against the Muslim Brotherhood, delivered in an easy style and popular language which usually appealed to the less privileged class. He frequently defended the Egyptian army in his shows, calling it 'the oldest and best in the world' (Carr and Al-Dabh, 2013).

Not all Egyptians had access to social media, however, but Sherine argues that they are keen to own a smartphone, and hence be connected to such portals as social media:

FB is a strange phenomenon, you can see an employee who only earns 500 pounds and spends half of it on a smartphone or internet access in order to stay online and follow FB and social media, or use an internet café. There is an increase here I think.

The informants interviewed for this research also strongly argued that *Facebook* and social media had attracted many Egyptians since the 2011 revolution, resulting from the extensive media coverage of several *Facebook*-based groups such as 'We are all

Khaled Said'. Khaled (28, male, interviewee), for instance, said that he moved from one social medium to another following 2011, in an attempt to reach out to his generation who were, in his view, doubtful of traditional political institutions and saw in social media a new avenue for deliberation and political debate:

> I use *Facebook*, although, after the revolution [2011], I left it and joined *Twitter* instead. I did not use it before that time. I used it briefly in 2007, then I stopped using it for a long while. I can't remember seeing anyone using FB for political reasons. After January 25, many people used it [… as they felt…] that it is a new tool to reach out to one another. There is a whole generation out there, and I want to communicate with them. It is a generation against traditional organisation, and they have therefore fled to the FB. For them, this is the kernel of communication and dissemination. These youth are against traditional ideologies and the principle of freedom from belonging to a certain party and tight affiliation; in 2006, people used to blog and there were talks about how blogging could change our political sphere and journalism. Now it is FB which is claimed to have caused the revolution. But blogs have disappeared, and became history. The movements, tools and street have become a very complex mechanism; of course, we can't reach everyone, but I do have new tools today, and the FB is a successful tool, although not everyone uses it. The matter is complicated now, because I have to have online presence on FB and 'Twitter' as well as an actual presence via a party. All new media are tools and the means that help me in my work, but it is not the final aim, it is just the tool.

Khaled therefore disputes the claims that some people make regarding the existence of a strong link between social media and revolution:

> I disagree with many countries which claim that we've just started to take part in politics now. There was mobilisation in 2000 and 2002. There was popular *intifada*, hundreds of thousands and even millions during the Iraq War. Today all of us have become politicised, even children, because of the 25/1 [revolution] and they saw the internet as an important tool that made it easier for them to talk and debate.

Yasser (56, male) also agreed that social media may have galvanised political activity in Egypt, but it did not ignite the revolution:

> Social media have invigorated political activities, but not the revolution, because revolutions [... have to...] 'brew' for a few years because of many reasons on the ground. People resort to online fora, because offline fora are corrupt and usually belong to the state.

6.3 Visibility in social versus traditional media

Another strong motivation for using social media is the degree of convenience available to its users who would otherwise have limited or no access to traditional media, whether state-owned or private. Khaled (28, male) for instance, asserts that visibility has become accessible to many more citizens since the rise of social media use in Egypt:

> Visibility is now available to everyone. I write to people to call them to my events, sometimes I argue with some of them - I call it 'dawa' [evangelism] - to influence and mobilise [them]. I just wait for people to join me. I disagree with those who use FB to educate people. This is not my job. What happens online is that some people come with an idea, others develop it, and others implement it. We discuss ideas online - do the brainstorming like we do offline.

Karim (28, male) provides another example of using social media to mobilise political action, referring particularly to the campaign to support Mohamed Al-Baradei on *Facebook* since 2005:

> At the time of *Kefaya*, our front [political movement] supported Baradei. There were half a million people on our FB page supporting Baradei, and signatures were collected from the street supporting the reform statement. This was well before 2011. Those who signed were street vendors and shoe polishers and many others from all walks of life. [The year] 2011 made a leap in using social media. All of a sudden there was a huge increase in the users. People embraced it, even among the older generation like Hamdeen Sabbahi and Amr Moussa, so it is only popular among youth. We received invites [invitations] to take part in the 'January 25' protests on FB. These [social] media served also as a bridge between Egyptians inside and outside of Egypt. All meetings were on social media, because of security reasons. Instead of meeting offline, it was much easier to meet on FB. We used to hide our identit[ies], every one of us had 10 different accounts. The 'Baradei group' was an important tool. All its youth risked their lives, especially the admins [administrators]. The same with 'We are Kahled Said'. The

[administrators] were the leaders behind these pages. The ordinary citizen has a smart phone now. The number of users increased drastically and the number of pages as well. There was, for example, a huge debate on FB during the referendum of March 2011. There was another debate during SCAF [Supreme Council of Armed Forces] rule, and again during the MB [reign].

Eyad (56, male) also appreciated the role of social media in increasing his and other activists' visibility, in what turned into a crowded political scene, post-2011:

I used the FB to republish some of my articles from 2005 in which I attacked the MB. I used FB [and] blogs but then left them, and now use 'Twitter'. I put links to my articles. The FB users increased dramatically after 6 April 2008 when it was looked [upon] as a dangerous Western tool, especially among the Salafists, now everyone, even Salafists, uses it.

 The crowded social media sphere can be a disadvantage, however, if the search for new media as a tool to document the 2011 revolution is required. 'There has been a random documentation of the 2005 January revolution. Everyone sees it from their own perspective (FB as documentation tool)' (Tariq, 41, male).

The spread of social media use among Egyptians puzzled the state security institutions, asserted Khaled (28, male), since they were seen as part of the international plot to overthrow the regime in Egypt:

The new ideology believed that revolution is a conspiracy, such as the police. They cannot believe that people who went out on 25/1, were complacent - how could people take to the street in Cairo, Assuit and all other cities? They cannot believe it. They do not believe that Egyptians can get into discussion on 'Twitter'. Why these tools are not the monopoly of the police and the army? This is why they think it is a conspiracy.

What the state did not understand, argues another activist (Amr, 28) was that online activities went hand-in-hand with offline activities, paving the way for the 2011 revolution:

Alongside *Kefaya* and the blogs in 2005, protests for judicial independence in 2006, '6 April' in 2008, there was another parallel movement organising blockages in villages and small towns; for instance, villagers could block the main

road if the water services were disrupted; when both trends converged, the revolution erupted.

Western media were not alone in depicting the typical Egyptian protester as social media-savvy (Fox, 2011) but the Egyptian media did so as well, albeit for a different reason. Amr (28, male) went as far as arguing that the state deliberately depicted the uprising in 2011 as being triggered by social media users in order to weaken the solidarity between the middle-class (of which the majority of social media users were) and the less privileged classes (who had limited access to social media):

> The government used to say that it is a FB revolution so that they can separate those from Zamalek [rich neighbourhood] and those from Boulaq [poor neighbourhood, not far from Zamalek area], so that they take the latter to prison and the former to meetings with the regime, or to accuse us of treason. As one of the lucky class, I had to follow a new tactic - to be part of the problem - so we went to the street so that we could be beaten up and other people behind us would protest for us.

Amr (28, male) was not the only activist who stressed that point; a few other middle-class informants said the same thing, and ironically, they all recounted the same experience of being in the squares, and the poor people (usually street vendors or street children) pledging to stay behind, so that they would take the beatings and the bullets, saving the middle-class rebels, on the grounds that the latter group alone was fit to 'clean up the country' in an indication that the poor thought of the middle-class as leaders of the country, even after the revolution. One informant, Ahmed, is 27 years old and has only primary school education. He recounted how some 'middle-class' young men visited his neighbourhood before 25 January 2011, inviting people like him to join the planned protest. He guessed that those middle-class youths belonged to the Muslim Brotherhood; however, when he went to Tahrir Square to join the protests, he could not stay there for long: political activity is class-based, according to the interviewee, and people like him could not afford the luxury of staying out of work for an extended period:

> When we went to Tahrir, we discovered that we [could not] be there for more than two days; after that, we discovered that we [could not] stay there unless we

were rich, [we were unable] to sustain our life there. People like us cannot afford not to work for two days in a row. People who stayed were those from the upper-class and middle-class. We thought Egypt would change but this did not happen. The social justice was only for investors, not for us. You know, during Mubarak's regime, new satellite cities used to have new houses for a moderate deposit, for example, 5,000 [Egyptian] pounds. Right after 25 January, many lands [*sic*] in these new cities were sold, and new units were advertised for deposits that exceed 25,000 [Egyptian] pounds or much more expensive than during Mubarak's regime. 25 January has to happen again in order to ensure social justice.

Using social media can also be seen as a safer alternative to going to public meetings, thereby avoiding heavy state censorship or, as Manal (28, female) put it:

The government tries hard to follow activists online, but they cannot follow everyone, so we have a relatively free space there. I think many people join the online discussions [on *Facebook*] as a means of self-expression, because there is no other alternative for such a discussion otherwise. And in order to protect themselves, many people just use fake names.

To sum up, the activists saw in social media a new forum for participation and conversation that was absent from the real political sphere. Social media, as Mayfield (2008, 7) argues, can therefore promote participation, openness, dialogue and connectedness, however, this does not mean that traditional media such as television have lost their influential role in society: the informants in this research tended to highlight the symbiotic relationship that had recently emerged between traditional media - including the press and television - on the one hand, and social media, on the other.

6.4 Role of mainstream media

The assumption that the 2011 revolution was partially responsible for the ubiquitous social media is contradicted by the 2013 uprising (and coup) being credited to the mainstream media, particularly television channels such as *Al-Faraeen*. The channel's owner, Tawfik Okasha, was often mentioned in the press and other talk shows as a rhetorical force that helped overthrow the Brotherhood's rule. Okasha resigned his job

in state television in 2009, in order to set up his channel, *Al-Faraeen*, and host his own talk show which was characterised by his frequent talks and warnings about conspiracies against Egypt and its army, although he did not produce any factual evidence (Carr and Al-Debh, 2013). He also used his show to attack NGOs such as the 'April 6' movement on the grounds that they received funding from abroad. He also attacked Mohamed Al-Baradei, the former leader behind the *Dustour* Party, calling him an Israeli agent and Freemason (Carr and Al-Debh, 2013). Okasha's rhetoric is characterised by his colloquial language, thus presenting himself as the everyman who understands the ordeal of the less advantaged groups. Two of the informants interviewed (Ahmed, age, male, and Said, age, male) belonged to such groups and they confirmed that they regularly watched Okasha's programme, in which he referred to what he presented as 'indisputable facts'. The channel claimed to have 300 million viewers in Egypt and the Middle East. His rhetoric against the Brotherhood, during Morsi's rule, led to the closure of his channel in 2012, after he was accused of inciting his viewers to kill Morsi. The charges were dropped and the channel went back on the air in January 2013. Following the toppling of Morsi's rule, Okasha produced a short documentary called 'The Two Men', in which he credited himself and Al-Sisi for the success of the massive protests of 30 June (Carr and Al-Dabh, 2013).

Social media can serve as a new source of information for traditional news media, as Karim (28, male) argues:

> Social media provides material for the traditional media like television, which use opinions and news expressed on social media, and also get to know activists from there. SM [social media] has become the television's research tool and producers' tool. Social media can be used for participation, campaign, advocacy, mobilisation, local news, and alternative media.

Khaled (28, male) also agrees with this view, saying that journalists use social media for news-gathering purposes:

> There are journalists who make news from 'Twitter'. They can also follow activists and meetings there, so social media have changed traditional media and news-gathering so journalists do not even need to leave their desks.

Karim (28, male) also asserts that there is a 'symbiotic relationship between traditional and social media' although, in his view, 'television still leads'.

The massive protests against the MB rule on 30 June is strong proof of the power of television and the press in stirring the public debate against the regime; although all the informants interviewed appreciated the role of social media in mobilisation, they robustly argued that traditional media, particularly television, had played a significant role in toppling the rule of the MB. Sherine (43, female) mentioned how each talk show host had secured a distinct fan base which he or she had mobilised, prior to the 30 June protests:

> On *Facebook*, we used to coordinate with the television channels to educate people, but now there is an awakening, even among street vendors. During Mubarak [...'s time], we did not dare to talk, now we can tell you who is honest and who is not. Women went down, during 30/6, with their couches in the street [referring to the group called 'Couch Party']. It was the TV that encouraged them. People like Lamees Hadidi and Tawfik Okahsa, Reem Maged [all talk show hosts] are leaders. These talk shows are very powerful. Okasha [from *Faraeen* channel] has a huge fan base among peasants and the lower class because of his ability to talk politics to them in a very simple style. I saw once on TV a lower-class lady holding [Al-]Sisi's photo in front of Morsi's photo, and the MB supporters hit her. She was then invited to Tahrir channel in Ahmed Mousa's programme, and we knew then that she used to borrow money in order to go to protests against the MB, because she could not afford the travel ticket. On television, she said that she knew about Putin, Obama and Hamas, and she repeated what Okasha used to say in his talk show. Each channel has its supports: Lamees Hadidi [*CBC* channel] has her fans amongst the intellectuals and educated class; *ONTV* [channel] is for revolutionary youth, and Amr Adeeb [*Orbit* channel] talks to the rich because he appears on a subscription-only channel.

Traditional media such as television, on the other hand, can also cause the fall of activists such as Yasser (58, male), who found that his contribution as a guest in a talk show led to his being sacked from his job in the state-owned media.

> Media can help and encourage this revolution. When I heard about the protest, I went to the Square. On the same night [25 January], I was invited to a television

> programme, and I spoke fervently about the protest's first day, about the protesters
> and about the corruption on Egyptian state television. On the same night, I received
> the decision that I was suspended from my job.

Social media, therefore, can serve as a new source of news by defying traditional news sources such as state television, but also as an avenue for further debates on what has been broadcast in mainstream television. News about the Tunisian revolution, for instance, and the fleeing of the former Tunisian president, Ben-Ali, to Saudi Arabia in December 2010, was circulated and debated on social media sites inciting Egyptians 'to rise up like fellow Tunisians' (Karim, 28, male). Young Egyptians then felt urged to follow the example of the Tunisian youth and their brave stand against Ben-Ali's government. Mustafa (29, male) states that 'I follow the news on *Facebook* better than reading the newspapers, except *Al Masry Al Youm*, I think', yet other informants such as Omar (33 , male), were still wary of the fabricated information circulated online: 'I know that some news on *Facebook* is incorrect, so I sometimes check with newspaper websites to make sure the information is correct. Papers like *Al-Masry Al-Youm* tend to be more credible', thus, mainstream media, although now competing with social media, can still serve as a credible source of information.

Several informants saw social media not only as a new source of information but also as a tool by which to monitor the credibility of news broadcast on state media. Essam (32, male), for instance, recalls how he and his friends used social media such as *Facebook* and *YouTube* to check the truth of what state officials were saying on state television:

> There were bloggers [like Wael Abbas] who blogged about police brutality, and
> others who posted videos and short clips proving such brutality, while the [former]
> minister of the interior would appear on state television, denying that the police
> were ever brutal in their dealings with us.

Information on social media, argues Essam, is seen as uncensored and honest communication from one citizen to another. *YouTube* videos posted by angry youths who rebelled against policy brutality and state corruption were seen as authentic communication, aiming to raise awareness and challenge the former regime which had

had complete control of state-owned media, and has practiced harsh censorship against private media. Young people would also use social media to arrange protests, even small-scale events; in fact, a popular television series broadcast during *Ramadan* 2013, called 'The Preacher', tells the story of a female activist who used *Facebook* to arrange street protests, inviting friends on her *Facebook* page to join such protests; on the other hand, as Mohammed (39, male) says, social media can also be accessed by police and state forces to track and monitor protest movements: 'Some people who you don't know can ask you to go somewhere for a fake protest arranged by the police to track protestors.' To address such risks, protestors would usually verify news about protests from trusted sources and other activists, which shows that strong ties and trust still play a pivotal role in authoritarian states such as Egypt.

6.5 Decentralised politics

There is no doubt that the internet has facilitated a public debate that reaches out to geographically dispersed citizens. It has, therefore, contributed to decentralising political movements, which, at least in the case of Egypt, had usually been confined to the capital, Cairo. Citizens, particularly the politically marginalised, are therefore not bound to the top-down communication previously monopolised by mainstream media such as television and radio (Chadwick, 2006; Mitra, 2001). Communication in new media, as mentioned in Chapter Three, is based on trust, but this does not mean there is a necessity for strong ties among participants for such communication: that they all know each other very well. McAdam *et al.* (2001) argue that social ties can act as brokerage in linking different groups, but information is actually communicated faster through weak and broad ties than via strong ones: weak ties can help create social bridges between different groups, while strong ties are based on insular relationships; in times of protest, such as during the eruption of the 2011 revolution, people are exposed to information about dissident movements, and such information is quickly diffused amongst groups characterised by their weak ties.

The internet and social media in Egypt could also be used to reach out to citizens who were previously politically marginalised in the villages and provinces. Sherine (43, female) for instance, stated that her party used *Facebook* to communicate more quickly with people in villages - a task which could have proved difficult and even dangerous if it had been performed face-to-face:

> In my party, we use *Facebook* to recruit and communicate with people across the country. This is one huge advantage of *Facebook*: it is the decentralisation of communication which was once confined to Cairo and Alexandria. All new members, whether to the east or west of Cairo, can have a *Facebook* page for their neighbourhood or town. They also use *Facebook* to communicate with us, and we get new recruits and enquiries from there.

Karim (28, male) shared this view, citing many examples of how social media helped people in Cairo make contact with other cities and villages. Social media, Karim argued, helped people living in wealthy neighbourhoods become aware of the disadvantaged citizens of living in their areas. Dar Essalaam is a case in point: some residents there set up a *Facebook* page to exchange information about local news.

Amr (28, male) highlighted the fact that *Facebook* allowed the set-up of many groups, all fighting for the same cause, such as sexual harassment, which was the theme of many Egyptian groups on the social media page. This proves the decentralisation of national politics, although it could also entail the risk of disorder, which may confuse ordinary citizens who wish to engage in debates about such themes as sexual harassment.

Social and new media complement, rather than totally replace the role played by traditional media; if traditional mass communication media, such as newspapers and broadcasting, helped spread information to citizens and link urban with rural residents, the new media enhanced this communication by rapidly diffusing information to different segments of the population, both inside and outside of Egypt. Communication can therefore help create social movements which in turn are able to contribute to the formation of a vibrant public space (Tarrow, 1998). This trend began

with the mass communication which shifted the previously localised repertoire of collective action (Rucht, 2004).

The internet, on the other hand, accelerates this trend by providing a much cheaper form of communication; although communicators have to pay for internet access, they do not need to finance the costly production of printed matter, thereby creating new opportunity structures for dissident movements (Chadwick, 2006). The internet in authoritarian states such as Egypt also plays a pivotal role in not only helping these movements circumvent state control which hinders collective physical action (Howard, 2010, p. 146), but also involve other like-minded protestors who use the internet to express their views and needs without fear of retribution by state security institutions.

Not all the interviewees saw the internet as a means of achieving real mobilisation; instead, they pointed to the need for more organised offline action, particularly the mature interviewees (above the age of 50) who shared this view. Ibrahim (56, male) for instance, saw social media as not being able to successfully initiate political mobilisation because it was not an organised space, especially if there were many groups set up, almost on a daily basis, to discuss a single issue such as sexual harassment, for example, instead of these sites joining forces to launch a single, organised and nationwide campaign. Yasser (58, male) also stated that social media needed to be used more efficiently, in order to mobilise support for offline activities, otherwise the internet would remain a space 'for screams and shouts'. He also believed that it was very easy to create a FB group about any cause, but it was more difficult to sustain the group and turn it into an effective organisation. Ibrahim (56, male) related the problem to the lack of experience with democracy in Egypt, therefore people had no idea of how to practice 'proper activism', as he called it. He pointed to the sheer volume of those people who expressed support online (via 'like' or 'share') but who never actually showed up in offline meetings. Eyad (58, male) asserted that only a fraction of those online would take to the street to turn their online protest into real action. He saw the street as the real place to practice politics and activism, rather than online action which should be only for disseminating information and news.

6.6. Chapter summary

The interviewees introduced in this chapter agreed on one thing: the days of January 25 2011 were like a dream' in that there was a great sense of solidarity, which they now missed, amongst all protestors, regardless of their ideological beliefs. The majority of the informants spoke fervently about the 18 days in the Square when they were happy to go to Tahrir every morning, if they were not already sleeping in one of the tents erected there. Young women reported about how they, for the first time, did not feel subject to sexual harassment, and the fact that men and women would sit in the same tent and just talk about politics. Manal (28, female), for instance, said: 'There were bearded men sitting in the same tent like us [socialists and liberals] and they did not comment on us girls sitting with them. I loved the atmosphere, and I loved being Egyptian'. Hosam (34, male) likewise said that he felt empowered by the overwhelming feeling of solidarity which he had thought did not exist:

> Everyone was helping, and everyone one was respecting the other. I could not believe that we could be like this [helpful] in times of crisis, it felt so great, and I felt that we were capable of doing anything. I did not expect any change to happen, but I wanted to show solidarity and do my part. The police were very brutal and they were acting like thugs. They could have killed me and my friends, but at least we would have died for our rights.

Hosam was proud to recount how he went to the Square every day, joining other young men from the neighbourhood (he lived relatively near Tahrir) and how they agreed on every day's chores between them. It was like a job he did every day, for him, and he did not seem to complain about the financial sacrifice he must have made for not going to work every day during the 18-day revolution. Ahmed (27, male), on the other hand, highlighted the difficulty in joining the protest for more than 48 hours, because he could not survive longer than that without a daily income, even as a street vendor serving the protestors. The difference between these two informants indicates the need to include socio-economic factors in the political analysis, and the financial restrictions on certain sections of the population when they joined street protests. Ahmed (27, male) also said that people from the lower classes would be called 'populists' rather than Islamists or leftist or liberal.

To conclude, the internet can contribute to fostering dissident mobilisation in that it offers a relatively safe space for citizens to deliberate; it spreads information amongst groups characterised by their weak ties that can join in an action if they share similar interests; more importantly, it can facilitate interaction amongst citizens which could translate into offline action. The internet not only allows protesters to communicate relatively cheaply and instantaneously over great distances, but also allows them to avoid state control. It encourages dialogue and debate, although more or less centralised, in that there are still information gatekeepers (particularly known activists such as Wael Ghonim and celebrities – see Chapter Eight). There is still doubt, however, about whether social media allows citizens to launch organised action that translates into effective offline activities.

It is worth noting how activists originally regarded the role of mainstream media as more influential than social media, especially in the lives of the socially disadvantaged groups. The dispute in not with this view, however, (as shall be seen in the discussion in Chapter Eight), in which it will be shown how ordinary young people denounced the role of mainstream media, claiming that they had stopped following the news television and newspapers, for example, preferring instead to obtain their information from updates via social media sites.

Chapter Seven

The rise of the independents - the virtue of independent political movements

7.1 Introduction

The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) took over from the ousted president Mubarak, in the wake of the January 25 revolution, which began with reviewing the framework of political life in Egypt, after 30 years of the dominance of Mubarak's National Democratic Party (NDP). SCAF introduced a number of political reforms governing the establishment of political parties. Law decree No. 12 of 2011 amended the laws governing political parties, introduced in 1977. The appointment of a special judicial committee would be responsible for examining notifications about new political parties, and would ensure that they would be set up according to the law; once approved by the committee, new parties could practice their work. Parties must secure support from at least ten governorates and ideally, should not be based on religious or sectarian principles which would breach the principles of the constitution. The reforms aimed at simplifying the process of establishing political parties, in order to satisfy the growing appetite for political participation, following the revolution. The law also aimed to increase the accountability of political parties, making it possible for the state to dissolve a party if it violated the terms of the law. It was during that time that the Muslim Brotherhood set up its 'Freedom and Justice' party, but that period also witnessed a deluge of political parties and movements which amounted to more than 40, as shown in the following diagram:

Source: the blog 'Arabist' (http://arabist.net/archives/)
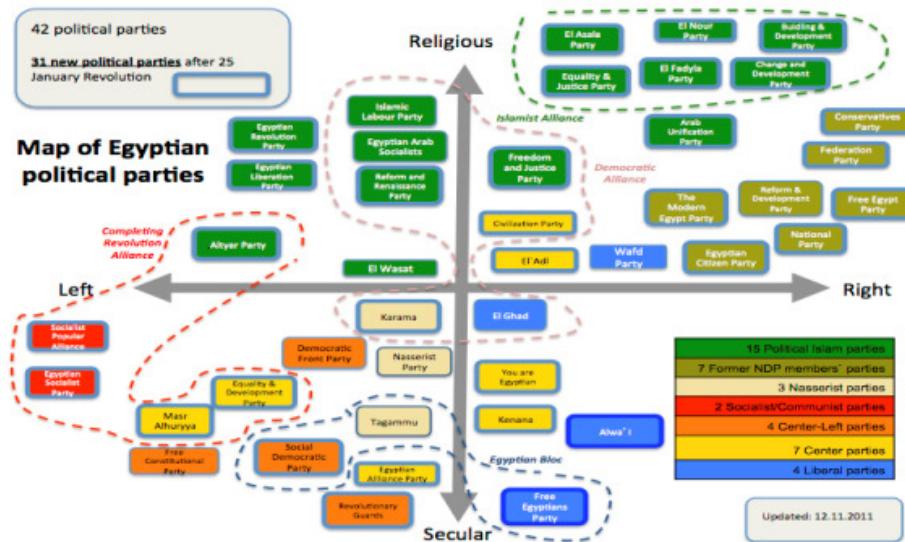
The diagram illustrates the polarisation of political groups, roughly divided into four main blocs: religiously-oriented, secular, rightist and leftist parties. Bearing in mind this sudden diversity in the Egyptian political arena, this chapter aims to continue the discussion of the sampled activists' views on this diverse political scene post-2011. The main theme elaborated in this chapter is the rise of so-called 'independent political participants', or, as shall be seen below, the emergence of a cohort of activists who actually preferred to remain independent of any political party and free to debate political matters by using new and social media, as one medium.

7.2 Political 'currents' versus 'parties'

Several parties were banned, such as the Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party, after the overthrow of Mohamed Morsi's rule on 3 July 2013, while others were created during that period. What is notable is the grouping of several parties into large alliances. The following is a list of known political alliances in Egypt, of which some were unregistered:

160

- National Front Coalition, which included the National Progressive Unionist Party, Future Party, Conference Party, Republican People's Party, Egyptian Patriotic Movement, My Homeland Egypt Party

- Coalition of Social Justice and Democracy, which included the *Tamarod* movement, Egyptian Popular Current, Dignity Party, Arab Democratic Nasserist [Nasserite] Party, Socialist Popular Alliance Party

- Anti-Coup Alliance (formed in June 2013 combating the military's role in overthrowing Mohamed Morsi), included Building and Development Party, Freedom and Justice Party, New Labour Party, Virtue Party, Egyptian Reform Party, Arab Unification Party, Homeland Party, *Al-Wasat* Party, Authenticity Party, People's Party

- National Salvation Front, which included the Social Democratic Party, New *Wafd* Party, Farmers General Syndicate Constitution Party, Egyptian Popular Current, Socialist Popular Alliance Party, National Association for Change, National Progressive Unionist Party, Conference Party, Reform and Development *Misruna* Party, Socialist Party of Egypt, Egypt's Future Party, Democratic Generation Party, Social Peace Party, Freedom Party, Freedom Egypt Party, United Nasserist [Nasserite] Party, Egyptian Communist Party, Free Egyptians Party

- Coalition for the Defence of Shari'a (Islamist party formed after the overthrow of Morsi) included Freedom and Justice Party, Building and Development Party, Safety and Development Party, Authenticity Party, People's Party, Egyptian Reform Party

- Civil Democratic Movement, includes Secular Arab Democratic Nasserist [Nasserite] Party, Democratic Front Party, Egyptian Communist Party, Free Egyptians Party, Freedom Egypt Party, Egyptian Green Party, Life of the Egyptians Party, Liberal Constitutional Party, Liberals Party, New Wafd Party, Socialist Popular Alliance Party, Young Egypt Party

- Egyptian Nation Alliance, which included Social Liberalism, Conference Party, New *Wafd* Party, Free Egyptians Party, Socialist Party of Egypt, Egyptian Communist Party, Socialist Popular Alliance Party, Socialist Revolutionary Movement (January), *Tagammu* Party, Workers Democratic Party, Workers and Peasants Party, Egyptian Popular Current Reform and Development Party, Egyptian Social Democratic Party, Egyptian Renaissance Party, Victory Party, Egyptian Liberation Party, Dignity Party

- Social Justice Coalition (secular), included Egyptian Social Democratic Party, Socialist Party of Egypt, Constitution Party, Popular Coalition

- Democratic Alliance for Egypt, (mainly Islamic), included Democratic Generation Party, Egyptian Arab Socialist Party, *Ghad El-Thawra* Party, Dignity Party, Labour Party, *Ahrar* Party, Egyptian Reform Party, Reform and Renaissance Party, Freedom and Justice Party, Freedom and Development Party

Young Egyptians were not systematically targeted by traditional parties, and therefore they had not shown any appetite to join the political process in the past. The Generation in Waiting (Dhillon & Yousef, 2009) project, for instance, documented the frustration of young people, under the age of 29, with the education services in their countries. Young people were not interested in building their nation, according to a survey by the Egyptian Population Council in 2010, and many of them wished to emigrate, especially to the Gulf countries; moreover, recent surveys among young Egyptians showed that the majority were politically inactive (Sika, 2012), being unable to name the correct number of political parties in Egypt. It is worth noting that around 21 per cent of people aged between 10 and 29 years had received limited or no education (IDSC, 2013). A survey conducted after the revolution of 2011, among a sample of 3,500 Egyptians who had participated in the revolution, showed that the majority of them belonged to a higher socio-economic stratum, and were avid users of the internet and other media (Moaddel, 2012).

Traditional parties did not put much effort into integrating young people into dedicated youth wings, and perhaps therefore, they embraced the opportunities provided by the 2011 revolution, in order to set up their own political movements and a few parties such as the Egyptian Current Party (*Tayyar Masry* party). The Current Party was set up in June 2011 by young people from the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) who chose to leave the group and form their own movement, with about 1,500 members in Cairo and Alexandria and in some governorates in Upper Egypt. The founding members split from the MB, after nearly 10 years of working for it, and contributed to the 2011 revolution; however, they decided to split from the movement, due to disagreement with the MB's policy after it came to power. It was particularly parties moulded after intellectual ideologies such as liberalism and leftism which were abandoned by young people, compared to the religious parties such as the Salafist *Nour* or the Muslim Brotherhood. Influential Islamic preacher, Amr Khaled, set up Egypt's 'Future Party' in September 2012, aiming to focus on social development rather than a specific political ideology. Following the toppling of Morsi's rule in July 2013, however, Khaled announced his permanent resignation from the leadership of the party, on the grounds that his preaching did not fit in with a political life.

7.3 Moving between parties

Several research informants either joined different political parties and movements, or moved from one to the other, particularly to the 'Popular Current' party (*Tayyar Shaabi*), led by the leftist, Hamdeen Sabahi (also a presidential candidate), the Egyptian Current (*Tayyar Masry*), the *Dustour* Party, the *Oreed* movement, and the 'April 6' movement. The Popular Current party included many former members of the *Karama* Party and Al-Baradei's campaign, and later, Al-Baradei's *Dostour* Party, prior to Al-Baradei leaving it in 2013. The *Dostour* Party was founded in 2012 by Hamdeen Sabahi, who came third in the presidential elections in 2012. The Party declared itself as a movement that did not represent any particular political party but rather amalgamated different ideologies to create a current trend; similar to many movements formed post-2011, the Popular Current party thrived on repeating the

2011 revolution slogans such as social justice, the end of military trials and the arrest of activists.

Oreed (literally 'I want') was another movement which engaged in outreach activities such as workshops to inform and educate people about citizenship rights. It derived its funding from several Egyptian commercial corporations and publicised its aim to foster social entrepreneurship. It had agreements with different universities to offer training sessions to students that focused on interactive citizenship workshops. One of its key projects was called the *Nahdat el Mahrousa* (Innovative Social Enterprise), which trained social entrepreneurs to integrate their leadership skills and develop their potential in business and development (http://nahdetelmahrousa.org/social-enterprises/oreed). Such movements tended to target young people who were keen to join the political process but did not know how to begin, and it was one of many initiatives that surfaced post-2011, to educate and inform people about democracy and citizenship. Many such initiatives ceased to exist, however, either due to changes in their management or organisation, or due to the end of their funding, or a host of other reasons. This aim should be seen in contrast to the views expressed by some youths, including some of the research informants, who denounced the objective of 'educating the public' as their mission, preferring, instead, to raise awareness of political rights.

Al-Dustour party (literally 'Constitution Party') was a liberal party founded in 2012 by Mohamed Al-Baradei, former Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (AEA). The party managed to attract a large cohort of young activists and many others of different age groups. Several of the research informants were former members or supporters of *Al-Dustour*. One of them, Eyad (58, male) joined the party in its first year of inception, before resigning in 2013 because he felt that the party no longer spoke for his interests. He saw the problem with this particular party as being one of those inclusive movements in which the members were undecided about their aims and objectives: one group wanted *Al-Dustour* to be a popular 'current' party and

another group wanted it to be an official political party. The problem, according to him, was that the members could neither agree on the structure of the party nor on one ideological framework:

> People [members] managed to push for the set-up of a party, which was launched as *Al-Dustour* party; however, I expected this party to fail, because I thought it was better to support the idea of popular alliance with Al-Baradei as our leader, exactly like Hamdeen Sabahi did in his Popular Alliance. There are many movements, such as the Al-Baradei campaign, *Haqenna* [Our Right], Youth for Justice and Freedom (leftist movement), *Lazem* movement. They all met and wanted to form an alliance, and I thought we should have formed a popular alliance of all these diverse groups, not one political party. Each group wanted to dominate the party, but we ended up with a political party and all groups fought together about the manifesto. *Al-Dustour* had initially 20,000 members but many of them left and did not join any party later. Among the supporters we had some Salafist groups. This number is small though, if you know that more than 120,000 people expressed their interest in joining us, and filled out the joining form on the internet; however, when it was time to hold our first general assembly, only 3,000 showed up.

Eyad (58, male) commented on why many of the supporters left *Al-Dustour*:

> Originally, we wanted to revive the old *Wafd* experience, without its ideological liberalism. We wanted a party that could gather people of all walks of life around one political manifesto, devoid of ideologies but centring on social justice, such as solving the housing problem, ensuring good education for all. We need a mix of ideas but not necessarily liberal ideology like the *Wafd*'s; in fact, *Al-Wafd* used to be called *Omma* Party [Nation Party] and in 1919, it used to include Copts, Bedouins, workers, etc. why can't we have a party like that?

Eyad joined an alliance of socialists which included the Popular Current, Revolutionary Socialists, and the Bread and Freedom movement. Egyptian activists generally seemed to join and leave movements and parties for arbitrary reasons, which, for Eyad, was a sign of 'chaos and immaturity when it comes to the public and political sphere. The ordinary citizen now does not vote for a manifesto but for [high profile] individuals'.

It is worth noting that *Al-Dustour* had recently elected a leader: the first Egyptian female party leader, Hala Shukrallah, and also the first Christian female to lead a party

in Egypt. Shukrallah told the British newspaper, *The Observer*, that being a woman and Christian was irrelevant to the political process:

> What we're seeing here is that something truly on-the-ground is happening […] I think it's a reflection of the changes in the people's psyche since 25 January. They do not really see these elements as significant – being a woman, being a Copt, or whatever. These elements are no longer significant in comparison to a much bigger thing that they are aspiring to […]. Our parties have always been a one-man show – both in the way that it's been ruled by one personality, and that it's usually been men who've been in the position (cited in Kingsley, 2014).

Shukrallah is a veteran activist who was jailed for her political views in the 1970s and 1980s, and she earned her Ph.D. from University College London. She thinks weak opposition, including her party, is an inevitable result of the past 40 years of military rule, during which opposition was suppressed:

> How can we expect there to be replacement of power within the ruling parties when the opposition parties don't [either]? […]. The only organised force that had been allowed to evolve was the Muslim Brotherhood. This is something the West does not see: from the '70s, '80s, '90s and 2000s, the democratic movement was being smashed. You couldn't rally anywhere without getting arrested – meetings between middle-class intellectuals and social movements were not allowed […] whereas the Muslim Brotherhood was allowed to infiltrate the slum areas, through the mosques. What has happened in the *Al-Dustour* party is a reflection of these residues – of these real, deep changes in the psyche of the Egyptian people, and the Egyptian youth (cited in Kingsley, 2014).

Karim (28, male) was one of those who left *Al-Dustour* in its early years who saw a virtue in being 'politically independent' with no affiliation to any party:

> I am in the National Association for Change and Reform. I used to be in Al-Baradei's campaign, then the Salvation Front. It is true that political participation has increased, but the number of the independents has also increased, because people mistrust political parties. *Al-Dustour* party should not have any ideology - there should not be ideologies.

Khaled (28, male) was also another of those who shifted from one movement or party to another. He used to belong to the Socialist Popular Alliance but was currently affiliated with the Revolutionary Road Front. He was also working on founding a new party (with a socialist ideology), but admitted that the future was not for political parties but for political debate among 'politically independent individuals':

> I really think there is a decrease in the idea of setting up new parties, because, in my view, the real freedom lies on the internet. We can use the internet to debate our ideas. There are new opportunities for people to present themselves freely on the internet. You will find all sorts of ideas online: there are crazy pages against atheism and other pages which support it, and so on. This *is* freedom: people choose what they want to debate and choose their own battles, online.

Yasser (56, male) had a different interpretation of the upsurge of political parties and movements: for him, the political scene in Egypt was largely manipulated by the military council and state security:

> After SCAF [the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces] took over, we have seen the mushrooming of all movements and parties. I think the force behind them was the military intelligence which helped form 180 movements and revolutionary councils in 2011 and 2012 alone - *Tamarod* was one of them. They [the army] wanted to make sure that people would not follow one particular trend. They succeeded in this. If you scrutinise these movements, you will see that all of them use the same rhetoric but for different goals. I do not think this can last long. Ordinary citizens watch the whole matter as a surreal scene. They watch and even clap while others are being killed - this reminds me of the Roman times.

Yasser had a unique background: he was largely seen by some activists as a supporter of the Muslim Brotherhood, although he categorically denied this. The security forces, led by the military council (SCAF), raided several NGO offices in 2011, as part of its investigation into illegal foreign funding, including those funded by the U.S.A., established to promote democracy. SCAF announced that the investigation aimed to unravel the hidden agenda behind some foreign-funded NGOs. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation announced three important issues: (i) that 14 US NGOs were operating in Egypt and had received more than US$47 million; (ii) that

all funding had to be registered and monitored; and (iii) according to Law 84/2002 NGOs would be required to seek the ministry's approval before accepting foreign funds.

Yasser was arrested on the charge of threatening the system. The trial ended in December 2011, and he was sentenced to a term in prison. This researcher asked him about that charge:

> They [the army] accused me of being part of a Zionist plot, and SCAF wanted to arrest someone, during the NGO battle. I was a suitable target. I was sentenced a few days before Morsi's toppling [on 3 July 2013]. Everyone else who was arrested was released, except me. Everyone else had suspended sentences. I was sure I would be released too, because there was not a single piece of evidence and all witnesses against me withdrew their statements.

Yasser managed to leave Egypt in order to participate in a conference abroad, a few days before the sentence was imposed; when he heard from friends and family about the sentence, he cancelled his trip back to Cairo, and decided to remain abroad (up to the time of writing this thesis, he was still there). He refused to admit any links with the Muslim Brotherhood:

> I used to support the end of SCAF rule, and I was not against the Muslim Brotherhood; I was simply with everyone, as long as they provided a better programme. I did not see the Muslim Brotherhood [commit] crimes, only mistakes. The Muslim Brotherhood could never stand in front of these established institutions; besides, Israel thought that the Muslim Brotherhood was a disaster for its own security. Many movements agreed on protesting against the Muslim Brotherhood. If those who went to the street were really 30 million people, or even 10 million people, then why were they [SCAF] afraid of the Muslim Brotherhood? If they [SCAF] can mobilise this kind of mass, they should not fear the Muslim Brotherhood. The whole thing was an illusion. I support the army, as long as they stay in their barracks. I am against the coup [of 30 June 2013], but those who are corrupt are part of the regime, and they all sided with SCAF. I did not see many of those who now pretend to have been in Tahrir on 25 January, and even this '6 April' movement often shifted its allegiance. The first days were difficult. I never expected Mubarak to leave until 2 February.

The view that the army and intelligence services maintained new parties and movements was recently repeated in the mainstream media by supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood. One of those people was the Egyptian security expert, Sameh Al-Yazel, who claimed that the Egyptian army funded many Egyptian political parties and youth coalition groups, in order to present a strong opposition against the Muslim Brotherhood in the elections. The aim, claimed Al-Yazel, was to persuade the public to accept the extension of the transitional period of the SCAF in power, which would give the army and the former regime's supporters a chance to 'organise or reorganise' themselves, after seeing that the Muslim Brotherhood was the only well-organised party (*Middle East Monitor*, 2014).

It was not only activists who saw the virtue of being 'politically independent: artists and media professionals were also keen to mark their independence from any structured state organisation.

7.4 Independent media

It is notable that all the informants in this research were suspicious of the neutrality of Egyptian media, whether state-owned or privately-owned; several even claimed that both private and state media received instructions, directly from the security forces, about what to publish or broadcast. Yasser (56, male) was one of those informants who was adamant that the security 'held regular meetings with talk show hosts, such as Mona Al-Shadly [who subsequently joined *MBC Egypt* channel, at the time of writing] in order to decide what topics would be discussed every day'. He continued:

> Our media used to take instructions and guidance from the army. I know some of these movements were recommended by SCAF which would then ask media professionals to invite youth behind such movements - they get their 15 minutes of fame […] to give them some attention […] and you'd think, as a viewer, that these groups [had] already mobilised thousands, and their FB group [was] so successful with thousands of 'likes', only to find out that each movement may only have 6 or 7 supporters.

Hala (43, female) on the other hand, stressed the role of the so-called independent artists who, in her view, fought as hard as independent activists in order to make the

January 25 revolution a reality. She considered the contribution of artists such as the writer and documentary-maker, Wahid Hamid, whose films about terrorism

> …used to attack Islamist groups, in their works, but mainly the corrupt Mubarak regime […]. Artists wanted to become independent and not to be like him; for instance, I know of theatre groups who performed in the streets because they could not rent an expensive theatre, or the censors would not allow their plays [to be performed]. We were like this for at least 10 years before the revolution. The regime used to control everything, as if it was [sic] a movie: they created their own media, art, opposition. Everyone who refused to work for them was either blacklisted from receiving public funding or was accused of treason. The alternative media or parallel media grew in parallel with the state and private media, and the latter was also part of the conspiracy. This alternative media included blogs and FB groups and independent artistic movements. The youth did not want to take part, or did not know how to take part, in Mubarak's game; they left opposition, state and private media and resorted to social media, and talked together there, creating new forums. The government accused them of apathy and of living in a virtual reality. It turned out that this virtual reality was the only accepted reality.

One such alternative media outlet was *Mosireen* ('We Are Determined'), a non-profit activism group, offering training and workshops on film-making and documenting the situation in Egypt during and after the 2011 revolution. The organisation also provided public screenings and launched the Tahrir Cinema initiative for mass public screenings, across the whole of Egypt. It had a dedicated *YouTube* channel, screening over 200 documentaries about the 2011 revolution. Some of the films were played as part of the *Kazeboon* ('Liars') initiative which was critical of SCAF. *Kazeboon* was started in 2011 by young people who wanted to reveal the lies of SCAF, using video screening and social media as their main media tools. Videos would usually be projected against the walls of buildings and screening would be held in public spaces to ensure the participation of as many people as possible. The campaign screened hours of footage, held and archived by *Mosireen*, and several of these were also uploaded to *YouTube*. The campaign originally began as a response to the incident of 17 December 2011 in Cairo, when a young woman was dragged along the ground by Egyptian soldiers,

exposing her blue brassiere. A picture, showing this incident, was circulated by global media outlets such as the American *CNN*. The campaign continued as a counter-state narrative under the Muslim Brotherhood's rule, exposing the MB's lies. Sally Toma, one of the campaign's founders, once said that public screenings were used, because uploading clips on social media had not proved effective in reaching people or changing public opinion: 'We had to bring the revolution back to the people', she declared, and public screenings were deliberately planned (cited in Eskandar, 2013). The challenge, however, was to find good spots for screenings in the street, and also to secure a good source of electricity for the running of equipment. Another challenge was to stand up to 'thugs' sent by the police or the regime. The number of screenings was reduced in 2013, after mainstream media became much more open in its criticism of the Brotherhood's rule (Eskandar, 2013).

A cartoon featuring two characters, one representing security forces (on the right), and *another Mosireen* (on the left). The security forces are pointing guns at the heads of *Mosireen,* calling them 'thugs', while *Mosireen* are pointing their camera towards the police calling them 'Liars' (*Kazeboon*).

Mosireen and *Kazeboon* consequently served as citizen journalism platforms and alternative media, as well as a collective memory archive of the revolution by recording and archiving personal stories regarding activists and victims of the past three years. One of the members of *Mosireen*, Sherif Gaber, argued that the purpose

of the initiative was not only to capture images of the revolution and conflicts in the street, but also to take control of the memory of the revolution, referring to Walter Benjamin's words that 'to articulate what is past does not mean to recognise how it really was'. It intends to 'take control of a memory, as it flashes in a moment of danger' (cited in *Jadaliyaa*, 2014). *Mosireen,* in the same vein, denied that it focused on one single historical narrative of the revolution, but insisted on diverse perspectives, by seeing the revolution through different camera lenses and different authors' angles.   This type of diversity is one important weapon in fighting the dominance of state media and its supporters, which offer 'oversimplified, sanitised narratives that attempt to erase not only the crimes and violence committed by the state […] but also the individual experiences,' argued Gaber, who also hoped that this energy would continue 'to render Egypt ungovernable' (cited in *Jadaliyya*, 2014). This citizen journalism work is also important in light of the dangerous and hazardous environment for professional journalists reporting on protests in Egypt, and citizen journalism here complements professional journalism.

The 2011 revolution and the rise of independent media (and independent activism) has also provided a thriving milieu for local media to flourish. Mainstream media hardly moved beyond the capital, Cairo, before 2011, apart from reporting on major events or clashes in places like Port Said. A new wave of community media thrived after 2011, however, in an attempt to break the cycle of Cairo-centric media. One influential initiative here was *Welad Al-Balad* Media Services, a company established in 2011 to encourage localised and community media. Its founder, Fatema Farag, said:

> There are so many stories to be told that are not told because of the centralised
> method with which we produce news in Egypt […]. I think that the problem with
> local news in Egypt is not that people don't want it, it's just that it's been [in the
> past] really bad. That's what people don't want (cited in Berger, 2013).

The company, which received its funding from overseas organisations such as the Open Society, had, at the time of writing, helped produce weekly newspapers in provinces such as Dishna, Mansoura, Fayoum, Nagaa Hammadi, Assiut and Marsa Matrouh. These newspapers ran stories relevant to their communities; copies of local

newspapers were printed in Cairo and distributed to respective governorates on the same day. *Welad Al-Balad* also helped local newspapers to set up their own websites, in order to ensure as broad an audience as possible for their stories, and also to keep those in Cairo informed about what was happening in the governorates. 'Launching the websites is as much about developing the skills of local journalists in different media as it is about the target audiences', Farag said (cited in Berger, 2013). Local newspapers were advertised on its website as a project aiming to:

> support the core values of the Egyptian Revolution, including democracy, human rights, equality, government accountability, and freedom of belief and expression. The battle for democracy must incorporate the local level and take root outside of Cairo, the traditional focus of political and professional media work. Despite its enormity and diversity, Egypt has yet to develop a local media model (http://www.weladelbalad.com/).

It is worth noting that established newspapers tried to issue localised supplements in the past, but they were usually closed down after a short while for lack of funding or lack of enough subscribers. The internet, however, provided a new platform for local media to flourish, and Farag argues that it had become difficult to discern the dividing line between professional journalism and media activism: 'Activists have a point of view, but journalists are supposed to provide [only] the facts [...] and it's up to the people to come up with their own opinion,' (cited in Berger, 2013). *Welad Al-Balad* therefore emerged as one initiative that had challenged the current media ownership and regulation laws since the revolution.

The leaders behind the local media were young volunteers like Ahmed Abdel Ghani, one of the founders of the Alexandria-based online radio station, *Radio Tram*, who justified the aims of the station: 'After the revolution, we wanted to make a radio [station] for underground music and issues specific to Alexandria, we felt that we needed our own platform for our voices to be heard […] people want interaction.' He continued: 'They want to be part of the media. They want to trust it. Our listeners like what we do. We present in a new way so they can understand it differently' (cited in Berger, 2013). *Radio Tram* (www.radiotram.com) is defined on its website as 'the underground voice of Alexandria', and also has a *Facebook* group (https://www.facebook.com/radiotram/info). The station had an average of 17,000 visitors a day and its main focus was issues of local concern to Alexandria.

The rise of local media also highlights the historic marginalisation of people in rural areas and Upper Egypt, in the national media; although constituting over half of the Egyptian population, inhabitants of the countryside have rarely been represented in the national Egyptian media, except in typecast depictions in films and television series, or colourful television commercials for homecare products (Aly, 2011). Their depiction on television soaps and films are usually confined to the stereotype of violent and honour-driven characters. It is unthinkable to watch a television presenter speaking in a rural or Upper Egyptian (sai'di) accent, as everything rural is subordinate to Cairene 'manners' (Aly, 2011). The same applies to minorities such as the Bedouin of Sinai, deserts-dwellers and Nubians in Aswan, who only feature in the national news if conflict or violence has erupted in their areas. The recent focus on local media, therefore, is a welcome break from the dominance of Cairene affairs and the centralisation of the media in the capital and big cities.

7.5 Chapter summary

The heated debate surrounding the most recent constitution which was endorsed by the majority of Egyptians in January 2014 reflected an important problem in the Egyptian political scene: whether to base the electoral systems on an individual or a list-based system. The decision was to allow a mixed electoral system, allocating 80 per cent of the seats to single winners and the remaining to the list-based system. Mohamed Aboul Ghar, head of the Egyptian Social Democratic Party, argued that the single-member plurality system was nothing but a disaster for the revolution, because it could end up becoming a war between wealthy people, who were able to secure a parliamentary seat as a result of their position in society, and the possible exclusion of minorities such as Copts and women (Ashraf, 2013).

A recent poll suggested that the majority of respondents (around 32 per cent) had no confidence in any of the existing political parties (Sabry, 2013). Many of the existing organisations are an alliance of several parties such as the National Salvation Front, which is an umbrella for secular parties formed in 2012, in opposition to Morsi's government. One of the oldest parties is the liberal *Al-Wafd*, which managed to unite

the nation in the early 20th century, during the 1919 revolution against the British occupation. *Al-Wafd* no longer had such weight in Egypt, and it failed to appeal to young Egyptians who opted for newer parties and movements such as *Tamarod* and the ' April 6' movements. *Al-Wafd* was led by the millionaire, Al-Said Al-Badawi, and his leadership was criticised by internal dissenters calling for his resignation, and for reforming the party post-2011. One of the newer parties was 'Free Egyptians', founded by the billionaire Copt, Naguib Sawiris, and featured as a pro-Copt and pro-business party, with limited popular appeal (Sabry, 2013). Islamist parties, on the other hand, had been challenged since the massive uprisings of 30 June, due to the hostile environment in the streets, particularly towards the Muslim Brotherhood. If the latter were to return to politics under new alliances, (it is officially banned in Egypt), it would have to make a concerted effort to repair its damaged image and appeal to independent voters.

What has become apparent to all parties and movements in the past three years is that appealing to rural areas is now a matter of survival: they need to have direct contact with their voters instead of relying solely on media campaigns (Sabry, 2013). Local media have therefore become more and more important, not only as a political tool but also as a platform to engage and address rural and Upper Egyptians. One advantage of the 2011 revolution is that it helped direct the attention of politicians, activists and journalists towards marginalised areas, such as the rural zones, after many decades of centralised politics focusing on Cairo and the large cities. Time will show how sustainable such localised media projects will be, and how much they can impact on citizens' awareness of, and participation in, the political process in Egypt.

Chapter Eight

Analysis of focus groups

8.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion about the findings of the focus groups. There were three groups in total, as previously mentioned in the methodology section, each with six participants. Two of the groups had female participants and one had only males. The reason for having separate gender groups was the initial concern that female participants may not have felt comfortable entering into discussions with male participants. It was surprising to discover, however, that the female groups were far more outspoken and eloquent than their male counterparts; besides, many males approached in Cairo were reluctant to join the research. The choice to have two groups of females, therefore seemed to be the right one, as they would probably provide more information. The female participants, moreover, were not sceptical of this research and welcomed the opportunity to participate. A female academic from Cairo assisted this researcher as co-moderator of the focus groups with female participants. This was to create a comfortable atmosphere, especially since the interviews were conducted in a private club in Cairo. All participants, male and female, were aged between 18 and 25, and the majority were university or college students.

Three different themes emerged during the discussions: (i) the role of social versus traditional mainstream media; (ii) the 2011 revolution as a turning point in the political perception of the informants' and (iii) online versus offline political deliberation. These themes are related to those extracted from the literature review and used as pointers for the interviews with activists. Each theme is discussed below, with quotes from the informants.

8.2 Revolution as a turning point in political knowledge

Facebook was celebrated as a safe political haven for young Egyptians (Mansour, 2008) who may have known no other ruler than Mubarak, but were still determined to change the political scene, especially as Mubarak planned to groom his son, Gamal, to succeed him, thereby excluding other candidates from competing in any presidential elections. The security forces arrested many young people who called for a strike on *Facebook* in 2008. Many activists protested, such as the 20-year-old college student, Belal Diab, who interrupted one of the former prime minister's speeches in 2008 to protest against the arrest of *Facebook* activists (Mansour, 2008). Mabrouk (2010) similarly regards the new media as important in the political development of Egypt, illustrating this case with examples of bloggers who seemed to have attracted a great deal of attention from the international media; although many of these bloggers were arrested, and new legislation issued to curb such activities, Mabrouk (2010) argues that the state should have realised that it was simply not possible to restrict free expression on the internet. The new media therefore allowed citizens to ask questions about the efficacy and efficiency of their government, and the corruption that was endemic in Egypt, at that time. Political dialogue and deliberation would continue on social media sites, he adds, even if the state refused to listen.

Social media sites such as *Facebook* facilitate the communication and exchange of views between like-minded people, and in this case, they operate similarly to traditional interpersonal communication (Bode, 2008). Users are naturally exposed to different or opposing views, and are able to accept this diversity. Online deliberation, however, does not necessarily lead to positive offline participation (Bode, 2008). It is inevitable that engaging in a political discussion or even passively reading through posts and comments will encourage deliberation and an understanding of the political process, because users are able to learn more about that process:

Radwa: My internet use after 2013 is different than it was in 2011. After 25 January [2011], everyone heard in the media that internet youth were behind the revolution, so everyone started using the internet and social media.

Yara: Yes, even my mother and aunties are now reading news on the internet.

Nourhan: I think everything that is forbidden is desirable [an Egyptian saying], so when the internet was blacked out in January 2011, people used their Android to know what was going on. But after 2012, people realised that there were as many rumours on the internet as there were on TV.

Dina: Yes, if you want to circulate any piece of news, correct or not, you can do so online.

One example of online activists who had become 'celebrity activists', following 2011, was Esraa Abdel Fattah, a 29-year-old woman who was arrested and detained for two weeks, for organising a *Facebook* group in 2008, calling for a strike on 6 April, in sympathy with workers in Mahalla Al-Kobra, in the Delta sub-region. It is worth noting that the April 6 movement was set up to commemorate that date in 2008. Abdel Fattah was part of the group which attracted 60,000 members in two weeks, and the strike was actually successful, as many people abstained from going to work. It was not easy for the Egyptian security forces to arrest thousands of people, especially if they came from well-connected families, merely because they had chosen to stay at home; however, they were made aware of the power of new media in disseminating information and mobilising action (Faris, 2008); needless to say, the regime attempted to organise campaigns against the dangers of social media, particularly *Facebook*, for the young generation; furthermore, people like Abdel Fattah were reflected as heroes, and as victims of the authoritarian state in international media. *Addostour* newspaper (2014) carried out a survey among young Egyptians, confirming that they were attracted to the *Facebook* campaign, managed by Mohamed Al-Baradei to run for

presidential elections, which also attracted members from the Muslim Brotherhood. The newspaper reported that although the vast majority of respondents (around 75 per cent) did not participate in any political activities offline, they were ready to take part in the coming elections, if Al-Baradei decided to nominate himself. The conclusion was that social media, particularly *Facebook*, were powerful tools in the Egyptian political process, providing an alternative sphere for young people's participation and their ability to connect with like-minded people. Social media facilitate noticeability and visibility and can make users feel that their voice is being heard. Users can, for instance, react to Facebook posts, either by adding their own comments or sharing the post:

Nevine: We knew about 25 January from the internet and maybe also *Al-Jazeera.*

Enjy: I knew about demonstrations from the internet and from my friends.

Nermine: The internet tells you about events well before they happen and you'd know when the demonstration would be held, but television tells you about it after it's happened and over.

Studies such as that of Feezell, Conroy and Guerrero (2009), on the other hand, argue that social media participation may lead to increased levels of offline political involvement, although not necessarily a similar increase in political knowledge. This was not the case in Egypt, as young Egyptians had notably increased their political awareness, and developed an appetite for more information regarding how the country was run, through their engagement in social media commentaries. This deliberation did not necessarily translate into offline activities, however, and one explanation was the lack of opportunities for these young people to become involved in the political process in their lives, offline; unlike the situation in Western democracies, young Egyptians cannot easily access political parties or movements, which seemed to be monopolised by a certain generation or certain key public figures.

There were no party youth committees to accommodate these young people, who often felt frustrated by not being able to take on leading roles within these parties. Another important reason, which echoes what has been discussed in the previous chapters, was the apparent suspicion of the motivations and intentions of political parties, which inspired young people to form new movements instead of joining established ones. These movements, however, often ended up being dissolved, or split into sub-movements such as the 'April 6' movement, indicating the difficulty in leading sustainable offline political action.

Social media sites such as *Facebook* groups, in principle enable users to link to other related sites and view audio-visual material, in addition to exchanging comments. Such fora provide new platforms for young Egyptians to deliberate and trade views 'virtually', in a way that is not available offline, due to censorship or state control. It is also important to recall that, unlike mainstream media, social media sites draw on 'street' language or the vernacular, and not standard modern Arabic. Pan-Arab media outlets such as *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiyya* pride themselves on using this higher register of Arabic in their talk shows and news bulletins. Social media sites are inclusive, on the other hand, and many consumers are able to freely converse in a common dialect, understood by a large number of users.

> Enjy: The internet, and especially *Facebook*, increased people's political understanding.

> Nevine: It is enough to share or like a post to ensure it is spread to many users.

It is noticeable that the majority of focus group participants emphasised that their enthusiasm in following political posts on social media sites faded considerably after the 30 June uprising. It is argued here that this could have been the result of the overwhelming campaign embarked on by traditional media, supporting the military on one hand and demonising the MB on the other, which probably overshadowed

individual voices and made individual contributors feel that the social media fora were ineffective (Opp, 2009):

> Nermine: I started to care about politics after 25 January [2011] and I followed the news on *Facebook* and also in *Youm 7* [newspaper] online. I started to read more, but since Morsi has gone, I am not so eager to do so. I started to join demonstrations after 25 January.

> Wafaa: I think many of us started to use the internet more after Morsi went. All TV channels were against him and the internet was the only venue to show stuff which was not available on mainstream television which had only one opinion [against Morsi] but through the internet, I can read about different views.

Social media can therefore function as alternative media by encouraging citizens to practise a form of decentralised communication, independent from the hegemony of mainstream media and journalism (Bennett, 2003). It is especially the interactive nature of social and new media that help citizens co-operate and discuss political decisions, rather than being passive recipients of messages from the mainstream media, which challenge the power of those citizens (Dahlgren, 2009, p. 190).

Social media can indeed provide adequate information and infinite opportunities to engage with as many like-minded citizens as desired; it can also afford opportunities for activists to participate who are not able to meet offline, for various reasons. Social media sites also constitute a low-cost platform compared to arranging offline meetings, hiring rooms, publishing pamphlets, and so on. Social media sites are able, to a certain degree, to provide some anonymity which may encourage many participants to contribute to online discussions, without the fear of a security

crackdown. The State issued Law No. 10 of 2003, in that year, known as the Telecommunications Regulations Act, for example, which criminalised some telecommunication facilities, but not online publishing. The State did not attempt to black out the internet - except during the 2011 revolution - although it did close opposition newspapers and TV stations, for instance. The internet remained relatively accessible; even though the internet was not completely obstructed, the government was able to block certain websites without giving any legal reasons for doing so (Mehanna, 2008).

It is also worth noting that the growth of the independent press in recent years, as well as the mushrooming of more outlets since the 2011 revolution, provided an invaluable link between social media users and independent media (Faris, 2010, p. 7). This is also evident in the informants' assertions that they preferred television (albeit briefly during 2012 and 2013), especially when following live events such as Mubarak's trial:

> Wafaa: People abandoned the internet in 2012 when life [under the Brotherhood rule] was different, and they watched TV, but some have kept following news online to evaluate the accuracy of news. You know there are matters which do not appear online, like the 'Trial of the Century' [Mubarak's trial] or Morsi's trial.

The following section reviews the way informants compared and contrasted traditional and social media, and how their use may have been contingent with the type of event they wanted to follow, Morsi's trial, for instance. They also expressed their concern regarding inaccurate information circulating in both forms of media.

8.3 Traditional *versus* new media

Recent surveys (such as the Broadcasting Board of Governors, 2014) confirm that television viewing in Egypt is ubiquitous, and is regarded as the most common source of information - nearly 99 per cent of Egyptians have television in their homes, and nearly 94 per cent of Egyptians use the TV as their source of news, at least once a

week, compared to only 20 per cent who use the internet for news, on a weekly basis. That survey also found that Egyptians' appetite for news was increasing - more than 76 per cent of Egyptians accessed the news at least once a day, especially news about Egyptian affairs.

There are studies, on the other hand, that see audiences' scepticism as a negative factor that can lead to people's loss of confidence in the political process (Capella and Jamieson, 1997). Scepticism therefore, can isolate people from collective action as they doubt its usefulness. The scepticism of what young citizens such as those in Egypt hear and watch on mainstream media, and sometimes what is posted on social media sites, may actually increase their engagement, in that they find themselves exposed to different viewpoints and are more willing to assess the views that match their own. The concept of the audience as powerful decoders of media began with Hall's seminal work (1980) and continued with John Fiske's (1989) argument against a passive audience, defined as an easy target for propaganda. Fiske also asserts audiences' ability to read media messages, thereby emphasising their subjectivity in the act of decoding and the presence of polysemy and interpretations, rather than one preferred meaning. With the myriad of media messages available to young Egyptians, one can argue that they are engaged in 'semiotic warfare', to borrow Fiske's term (1987, p. 313), in that they are constantly interpreting media messages.

> Radwa: All talk shows are the same. Even the same hosts and guests sometimes move from one programme to another. It is the same style. Surely no one watches this study. The internet can replace television, because you can always watch television programmes on *YouTube* later.
>
> Farida: I used to like Mona Shadly [TV host] in her programme '10 o'clock' [used to broadcast before the 2011 revolution] although they [talk show hosts] are all hypocrites.
>
> Mona: Yes, they all lack credibility, but I used to like Bassem Youssef's show.

<blockquote>

Dina: The internet also is not so credible, there are fake pictures on the net, and people also use insulting words more often, online. The television channels were used to announce the 30/6 [30 June 30] protests.

Radwa: I remember the television publicising the *Tamarod* campaign, and there were many clubs where *Tamarod* forms were [being] distributed. I even took some forms, copied them, and distributed them to collect signatures from everywhere I went.

</blockquote>

It is worth noting that there were more than 500 newspapers and publications in Egypt (at the time of writing), of which the majority were in the hands of the State, under Mubarak's rule; however, following the 2011 revolution, the media sector witnessed a major shake-up, with new outlets emerging that represented different ideologies, particularly Islamic movements. All terrestrial channels were owned and run by the State under Mubarak, except four private satellite channels which were owned by businessmen close to the government. The State had allowed media liberalisation during the past decade, but investors were mainly attracted to the broadcasting sector. Many businessmen, known for their close ties to Mubarak's regime, set up private TV networks such as 'Dream TV 9' (2001), owned by Ahmed Bahgat, *Al-Mehar* TV (2005) owned by Hassan Rateb, Cairo Broadcasting Channel (CBC), owned by Mohammed Al-Amin, who also owned *Al-Watan* and *Al-Youm Sabei* newspapers, and *Al-Hayat* TV, owned by Al-Sayed Badai, who was also the *Al-Wafd* party leader.

The ousting of Mubarak also witnessed many more outlets emerging, such as the *Tahrir* newspaper and the *Tahrir* TV channel, founded by Ibrahim Eissa, the famous journalist known for his anti-Mubarak stance, but was later sold to a group of investors. The Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafist groups set up several TV channels such as *Misr* 25 TV and *Al-Nas* TV, owned by the Brotherhood and Salafists, respectively (both outlets were shut down, following the coup in 2013) (Al-Issawi,

2013, p. 56). Scores of new private channels emerged after the revolution, but their ownership and sources of funding were not always monitored or under state scrutiny.

The post-2011 governments seemed to have exercised some form of scrutiny on privately-owned media - it was claimed that the Morsi government put pressure on the English-language edition of *Masry Youm* ('Egypt Independent'), forcing it to shut down due to its critical political views (Freedom House, 2014).

Decisions regarding permission to publish or broadcast were usually overseen by the Ministry of Information (which had recently been dissolved), the Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU), and the Shura Council (Upper House of Parliament). The Morsi government, however, had the power to withdraw the licenses issued to stations or publications which were deemed to violate cultural codes, including religious ones, and impose penalties for agitating violence or sectarianism. Mainstream state and private media were caught up in an adversarial ideological battle with the Islamists, on the one hand, and opposition voices on the other, for using their media as platforms to attack each other. That was indeed a period in which many viewers questioned the integrity of those outlets and the ethical code of objectivity. Morsi also allowed the Shura Council, largely ruled by Islamist parties, to appoint heads of state media organisations, usually Brotherhood supporters. The toppling of Morsi's government, and the arrest of leading figures from the Brotherhood movement, prompted the interim government to create the Supreme Press Council to oversee media functions, and, similar to Morsi, selected heads of state media outlets. Many outlets failed to objectively report on the military's crackdown on the Islamists during that period, which led to the killing of hundreds of Brotherhood supporters and the arrest of hundreds of others. No media outlet wanted to be accused of sympathising with the Brotherhood and therefore, many journalists either practised self-censorship or exaggerated their support for the military council (Freedom House, 2014). The very few critical voices in the mainstream media were forced to withdraw their shows, of which arguably the most important voice was the political satirist, Bassem Youssef, who started broadcasting on *YouTube* during the 2011 revolution, and his popularity secured him a slot on *ONTV*, and on the CBC

network. His show was suspended in November 2013, after he openly criticised and mocked the military and the current president, Al-Sisi. There was a crackdown on all outlets siding with Morsi and the Brotherhood, following the military's takeover on 3 July 2013, consequently, five Islamist channels were shut down, equipment was confiscated, and many journalists were arrested. Three pan-Arab outlets were blocked by the state-owned *Nilesat*, the telecommunications satellite operator: *Al Quds* and *Al-Aqsa* stations, supported by Hamas, which in turn, showed allegiance to the Brotherhood movement, and *Al-Yarmouk* station, based in Jordan. *Al-Jazeera*'s *Mubasher Misr* was also among the channels forced to close following the fall of Morsi; their offices were raided and many journalists were arrested; some later fled to Qatar, while a few announced in mainstream media that they were disappointed with *Al-Jazeera*'s policies, and had resigned in protest. One of those who renounced her post was Nouran Sallam, one of the main anchors in *Al-Jazeera*, happened to be presenting a live show on *Al-Jazeera, Mubasher Misr,* when the security forces raided the building. Sallam resigned and later joined the private outlet, *Al Hayat* TV. *Al-Jazeera*'s *Mubasher Misr* was later declared an illegal network and was banned from operating in Egypt (Freedom House, 2014). Polarisation considerably increased, after the interim government decided to declare the Brotherhood a 'terrorist' organisation in December 2013, and later shut down its newspaper, *Freedom and Justice*.

> Amr: After 30/6, Brotherhood supporters started using social media extensively to upload photos of police beating them up, so I've followed all of this. Before 25 January, I did not care about politics.

> Mohammed: Media in general lacks credibility - did you even see how Bassem Youssef poked fun at many talk show hosts? Egyptian media have an agenda. Like the story about the 'Virus C' invention and how the media exaggerated this device.

Ahmed: During Morsi, the media made a big deal out of the issue of electricity cuts, but you know what, yesterday the electricity was cut [off] 6 times where I lived, and all the TV is saying is that we should put up with the situation at the moment. Why did they not say the same during Morsi's rule? There are many talk show hosts who have not even studied Media, and they lack professionalism.

Another group also expressed similar views about traditional media, whether state-owned or private outlets:

Ann: There has not been any real improvement or reform. Look at the police stations: they still have the same problems. No reform happened.

Nermine: I don't believe TV, it lacks credibility, and no presenter is honest. They are all hypocrites.

Wafaa: I do not watch any show at home, only if my family asked me to watch something with them.

Enjy: I used to watch Bassem Youssef.

Television talk show hosts were at times opinionated about several national and international policies. The controversial TV host and owner of *Al-Faraeen* channel, Tawfiq Oukasha, challenged the Syrian refugees in Egypt to withdraw their support for the Brotherhood, following the 3 July coup, or else, he said, their property would be destroyed:

in the name of the Egyptian people, I give all Syrians living in Egypt, a 48-hour ultimatum, the Egyptian people have all the addresses where you live: those who rent flats and those who live in New Damietta City [...] and those who live in Sadat City, those who live in 6 October City. All the addresses, the Egyptian

people have them, and give you a 48-hour ultimatum. If you sit with the Muslim Brotherhood after 48 hours, the people will come out to destroy your houses. Your addresses are all there. The people will come out to destroy your houses' (quoted in *Amnesty International*, 2013, p. 2).

The ultimatum came after several public figures accused the Syrians of being supporters of Morsi and the Brotherhood. Youssef Al-Husseini, another talk show host on *ONTV*, threated Syrians with violence if they continued with their allegiance to the Brotherhood: 'If you interfere in Egyptian affairs, you will take 30 shoes [be beaten up] in the middle of the street' (*Amnesty International*, p. 3). Some media outlets charged the Syrians with participating in the *Raba'a al-Adawiyya* and *Al-Nahda* sit-ins which were broken up in August 2013. Syrian refugees were also accused of carrying weapons and attacking security officials, as were supporters of the Palestinian group, Hamas. One Syrian refugee expressed the difficulty of life in Egypt since 2013: 'My kids can't play outside anymore. They are cursed by the other kids, told really bad words […]. There were 1,700 [refugees] living in the area, but now there are no more than 500 (*Amnesty Internatonal,* p. 3).

State and private media adopted a rather propagandist style, following the 2011 uprising, in order to demonise opposing voices; according to a BBC monitoring officer: Egyptian 'state media and the private media instantly moved to supporting the army [following the coup on 30 June 2013]. They reacted on the spot to the military council statement, they supported it, they cheered it, and [they] adopted an ultra-nationalist tone […]. I haven't seen or heard any pro-Muslim Brotherhood voice on any of these channels since 3 July' (quoted in Al-Issawi, 2013, p. 48).

The above discussion shows that young Egyptians sought to reclaim their power in decoding the news in the way they wished. They stressed their power in deciphering messages, whether in mainstream or social media and their distrust of anything they heard or read via these media: although they were avid consumers of new and social media, they were still sceptical of news posted on these sites. This scepticism, it is argued here, is a positive attitude in that it reflects their desire and ability to verify the news they receive as active rather than passive consumers. This does not discourage

them from following social media sites; in fact, people do so for cognition, because they want to be involved, to be able to access different viewpoints and engage in informed arguments. The more sceptical people are, the more they consume news, according to Tsfati and Capella (2005).

8.4 Online versus offline political deliberation

Activists are able, in principle, to use social media sites to disseminate information about their movements, to mobilise audiences, and to garner support from like-minded citizens; however, as discussed in Chapter Seven, this is not always the case. *Facebook* groups still strongly profile 'star activists' who are usually the central figures of the movements, rather than being members of an open platform for all participants. These sites do not always mobilise in a systematic manner by urging supporters to join the movements; the main aim is rather to ensure visibility for the movement and its central figures. The power of social media may be limited in its translation of online campaigns into offline tangible action, and in this regard, it cannot really provide a substitute for on-the-ground political parties and movements (Faris, 2010).

The majority of focus group participants in this study did not join offline movements or parties, except one female activist, who began her activism immediately after the January 25 revolution. This is despite the fact that all participants read live discussions on social media sites and sometimes added or shared some comments:

> Radwa: I am an activist with links to a human rights organisation which began working right after 25 January. I felt then that I wanted to know about the political system. Before 25 January, I did not care at all.

> Dina: I express my views on FB, and sometimes even enter an argument with friends and family about my views.

Nourhan: I have used FB since 2011. I read posts to know what is happening but do not necessarily post my own views.

The majority were also unhappy with the situation in Egypt, reverting largely to the apathetic attitude recorded before 2011 - many of them expressed a renewed desire to leave Egypt for good:

Farida: We started a revolution to remove a president, and it was debatable whether to call 30/6 [June 30] a coup, now people think of it as a coup.

Nourhan: I am not happy with the situation in Egypt. Many things have changed and look at the sexual harassment, and no one helps a girl who is harassed.

Radwa: I disagree, I think now is better than right after 25 January, when there were many problems in the street. There used to be gun fire and crimes. Now it is a bit better.

Nourhan: Things get a bit better then turn bad again. I wish I could move abroad and continue my life there. Our education system is bad and there are no job prospects. So when we marry and have kids, what would their future look like, if our future is bleak?

Radwa: I am optimistic that life will get better. During Morsi's rule, I was pessimistic, but now I am a bit optimistic.

It is difficult to infer that just because those young Egyptians followed social media sites about planned demonstrations, they developed a sense of identification with certain movements or even parties. Offline participation plays a major role in developing this sense of identification (Della Porta & Mosca, 2005), however, young people may adopt certain views via new and social media, but these views do not necessarily create new identities (van Laer, 2010). The use of the internet does not therefore turn non-activists into activists, as the focus group participants explained:

Farida: I have a lot of friends, and they will make a lot of comments and make arguments, so if they discuss an issue a lot without too much argument, then I share it.

Nourhan: I need to know if what others write is true or not and how they think, I only share what I really think is good.

Yara: Because I have a lot of friends and they […] comment a lot on the issue and I […] worry that expressing our opinions would become a fight later.

Dina: I don't talk about my political views, I only read or listen. I talk with the close ones only. I listen from [*sic*] the TV but don't believe them much, and I don't talk with friends as everyone has a point of view and sticks to it.

That group was cautious in even sharing or posting new comments, may 'share' with their closest circle of friends. The second group also expressed their disinterest in joining traditional parties:

Ann: I am not a member of any party.

Nevine: I wanted to join *Al-Dostor* then I did not because those in charge of the party were so young.

Enjy: We all joined *Tamarod* and contributed to circulating their forms. I knew about them from a website called 'Al-Haq Wal-Dalal' and through *Al-Youm 7* [newspaper], I used to photocopy the forms and distribute to everyone I know.

Nermine: I also got some copies to distribute everywhere and then I took the signed papers and sent them to *Al-Masreyeen Al-Ahrar* party.

<div style="margin-left: 2em;">

Wafaa: As for me I did not join anything because of my mother and husband they worry about me a lot, I only watch from afar. I am [a member of the] 'Hezb al-Kanaba '[Couch Party].

</div>

The final group also expressed similar disinterest in joining political parties:

<div style="margin-left: 2em;">

Amr: I did not want to join any political party.

Ahmed: No I am not a member, but I have friends who joined political groups like the Muslim brotherhood, *Nahda*, 'Molhed [atheist] group, or *Foloul* [Mubarak's followers].

</div>

Social media have facilitated the fast exchange of information amongst young Egyptians, thereby reducing the cost and enhancing the speed of communication. This is especially true if compared to traditional media such as leaflets or even word-of-mouth. Social media, and digital media in general such as smartphones, have therefore helped people organise themselves in innovative ways to overcome problems of space and time, and to deliver messages that could not otherwise be disseminated via traditional means of communication.

Meetings arranged via social media, on the other hand, may include participants who do not necessarily share the same political views or collective identities of other participants; for instance, an MB supporter can participate in a demonstration against the Egyptian military together with a supporter of a leftist or liberal movement; although these participants share the same goal, such as expressing their discontent with the army, the demonstration may not necessarily be a reflection of the efficiency of political networking unless this group somehow manages to create and maintain a sense of collective identity with all participants.

It is also worth noting that although social media sites are available, whether on smartphones or in internet cafes, to a large segment of Egyptians across all social classes, the use of such sites does not necessarily mean parity for all: poorer participants may not be able to exercise some form of power here (Myers, 2002). The findings of these focus groups show that social media users tend to follow celebrities

such as Bassem Youssef, or the young preacher, Moustafa Hosni. A few of them indicated that they followed ordinary people, but the participants emphasised that they could 'follow' a stranger but would not 'add' him (or her) as a 'friend':

Radwa: We follow celebrities like Moustafa Hosni and Tamer Ashour. Sometimes I follow someone I do not know because he expresses similar political views to mine. I […] follow him [but do] not 'add' him as I do not know him.

Farida: There are people of our generation who have very strong political views. There is someone at our university who has 5,000 followers and he posts such strong political comments on his FB.

Nourhan: If there is someone expressing bold views like Bassem Yousef, then I follow him.

Yara: There is a poet who writes very powerful posts about life in Egypt, like lately, he wrote about the electricity problem and why the media talk about it differently now, compared to what they said during Morsi's rule. I am not a Brotherhood supporter by the way.

The use of social media does not necessarily translate into direct offline activism, it has to be noted that this virtual environment has enhanced participants' political knowledge and provided information about the political process in Egypt. This is so despite the mixed messages they receive from mainstream media, which they automatically compare to what is circulating on *Facebook*:

Nevine: SM [social media] has been the common thing we've had since 2011, except that now people are not afraid of expressing their views online - before 2011, they used to fear that.

Ann: Even the net lacks credibility. We do not believe anything now. I have to form my own opinion, but I think in social media no one is taking sides, and everyone is expressing their own view.

Nermine: Yes, but the net shows you loads of different opinions, unlike the TV, even *Al-Jazeera*, where each channel has its own agenda. The TV focuses on Al-Sisi and his achievements, and there is no criticism whatsoever.

Wafaa: I did not vote [for Sisi]

Ann: Me neither.

What the above discussion illustrates is the role of trust in forming online networks, and how this is dependent on the specific cultural context; in the case of Egypt, strong ties contribute to trust, and this may explain why some of the above informants do not 'add' a stranger to their social media groups. They can, however, still 'follow' these strangers if they find their views resonate with their own, even if they share weak ties with those strangers. It is the diffusion of weak ties that diminishes the role of traditional leaders, as their followers are exposed to other viewpoints; however, in Egypt, young people still want to relate to a reliable source of information, and their choice rests unanimously on a strong critical voice, such as the political satirist, Bassem Youssef. The latter's unfavourable comments against the Brotherhood, and later the military leaders, attracted young followers who saw Bassem as an example of a defiant leader, who was not afraid of expressing and sharing his views (Knocke and Wisely 1993; Fukuyama, 2001). Youssef therefore serves as a broker of information, able to create a crucial constituency (Kulikova and Perlmutter 2007): his status then becomes more important in disseminating views and information.

Many informants also expressed their reluctance to share comments or even offer comments on social media sites. This can be explained by their frustration which ends

in 'the spiral of violence' (Noelle-Neumann, 1993; Hayes 2007), meaning that they perceive their own opinion as unpopular, which makes them less willing to voice their views, lest they are negatively evaluated by their peers. This, on the one hand, can eventually lead to isolation from one's community as one resorts to silencing oneself after being discouraged from voicing one's views, and on the other, this can also keep disagreements at bay in order to maintain social links (Hayes, 2007), as some informants argued.

8.5 Conclusion

Young Egyptians were hailed as the '*Facebook* generation', but what the above discussion shows is that they did not really use social media for 'revolutionary purposes'; in fact, none of them, except one, engaged in activism. They used social media for deliberation in the form of arguments, discussions and exchange of comments, however, social media sites cannot be applauded here for causing radical political change in terms of mobilisation on the ground. Social media can serve to facilitate the forging of strong ties amongst citizens which hopefully can result in offline activities in the future, given citizens' sustained civic engagement efforts offline. Without offline organisation and activism, social media sites will only remain as fora for dialogue, like *IslamOnline* website or the like, but will not necessarily be a catalyst for changing the political process. Using *Facebook* groups, for instance, to 'like', 'comment' or 'share' does not necessarily mean that users would also engage in political parties or demonstrations offline. Many of the informants cited above confined their political activities to passive acts of sharing and re-posting. The change brought about by social media is therefore notable at the individual level, where more young people and other generations, now consider themselves more informed about what is happening in Egypt, thanks to the abundance of information on social media sites. Any significant change at the collective level in terms of mobilisation, however, is still rather limited and sporadic and may be subject to the nature of events such as those that occurred on 25 January 2011 or 30 June 2013.

Internet access does not in itself guarantee openness, especially within an authoritarian and conservative society such as Egypt; however, Egypt stands in a much better position that some ultra-conservative societies with a much more limited history of deliberation such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia (Wheeler, 2006), where the authorities can still enforce restrictions on any critical activities against the regime: they usually do this via mainstream media, whether state-owned or privately-owned (Kalathil and Boas 2003). It can be concluded, therefore, that the efficacy of the internet as a mobilisation tool depends on the particular cultural and social norms which beget trust.

The above sections have shown that informants expressed their complete mistrust of traditional media, although some of them still followed these media, particularly certain programmes that 'must' be viewed on television, such as Mubarak's trial, rather than read in a commentary. They also expressed similar distrust of some of the information circulated via social media sites. The irony is that some talk show hosts accused social media sites of spreading rumours and lies. These views may have an impact on young people's views about what is circulated. None of this research's informants confirmed that they made any effort to verify what was circulated online, by checking foreign news sites, for example.

The role of traditional media remains strong in reaching out to certain social strata (see Chapter 6) and also to the older generations. A few of the interviewees (cited in the previous two chapters) claimed that those who protested (in 2011) were from the lower classes, although the success of January 25 was credited to two 'middle-class' movements, Ayman Nour's party and the Muslim Brotherhood:

> Those who went to the street on 25/1 were [the] lower classes, but they were much more organised and knew which street to go to. The leaders were Ayman Nour and MB, especially the latter, because they have an online presence, unusual for our Egyptian political life, even before 25/1. Many of the youth behind 25/1 are now in the '50-committee'. There are rumours about many of them such as Asmaa or Israa, but I think these are lies. Israa still leads the same lifestyle, but Asmaa came all of a sudden in a '4 x 4' car, and the youth in Tahrir mocked her and the signs of wealth she was displaying (Sherine, 43**)**.

Another respondent asserted that mobilisation for 25 January was never expected to reach that scale, but Al-Baradei's return to Egypt had an impact, especially on the middle-class young people:

 Anyone who tells you that they anticipated 25/1 is a liar. We thought it would be a normal protest, but on 14 January, when Ben Ali fled to Saudi Arabia, a huge leap happened. There was another protest on 25 January 2010 but no one reported on it; at that time, there was a call to protest signed by thousands but in 2011 the participation was enormous compared to the year before, especially after Baradei's return to Egypt [...] There are no revolutions without leaders' (Khaled, 28).

Chapter Nine

Discussion

9.1 introduction

The aim of this study was to analyse and explain the uses of social media in political activism, focusing on Egypt as a representative case, especially since 25 January 2011. The opinions of political activists and non-activists were sought, mainly those of Cairene students from various socio-economic groups using social media. A selection of prominent social media sites that promoted political activism was presented, as well as those that played a marked role in the uprisings of 2011 and 2013. The analyses presented in previous chapters endeavoured to illustrate the strategies that activists adopted through social media, online or offline, in order to achieve their political activism and mobilisation objectives.

The study is based on the following research questions:

1. To what extent has the internet changed the political sphere in Egypt allowing a more democratic environment?

2. To what extent has the use of social media led to more collective action in Egypt?

3. Have social media facilitated the transformation of online activities into offline activism?

4. How have social media contributed to attract the socially or politically marginalised groups in Egyptian society?

The following is a discussion of the main arguments presented in Chapters Five, Six , Seven and Eight, and the themes that have emerged from the scrutiny of the arguments.

9.2 Social media and cyber activism

New and social media have become an important platform in the Arab region as a whole and specifically in Egypt, during the past few years. A recent study by Northwestern University in Doha (2014) shows that *Facebook* and *Twitter* (followed to some extent by *Google+*) have become the leading tools in several Arab states, including Egypt, where 90 per cent of people use *Facebook*. This is why the internet and the new communication technologies have been regarded as important mobilisation tools in the region (Shehata, 2008) and the bedrock for media activism (Arvizu, 2009, p. 388). The past decade saw a surge in the number of street demonstrations and protests during Mubarak's rule which have escalated since 2011. It is here that this research makes a contribution to the field of studying media activism against the corruption and deteriorating political and economic conditions, focusing not on the motivations behind such activism but on its impact and patterns of use (Shah *et al.*, 2001).

The interviewees and focus group participants saw a new forum in social media for dialogue and conversation about real political concerns. New and social media provided a less costly and convenient alternative to 'offline' activism (demonstrations, for example) as well as a relatively safe space to operate, and arguably, free from state intervention. These media can indeed facilitate interaction amongst citizens which could, in theory, translate into offline action. The dialogue sparked on social media is still, to a great extent, monopolised by 'star activists' such as Wael Ghonim and Esraa Abdel Fattah, among others. Doubt remains, however, whether social media actually allows citizens to launch organised action that translates into effective offline activities; although activists can use social media to mobilise for action, social media sites do not always serve as an open platform for all citizens, if discussions continue to be centred on a handful of celebrity activists; not all such sites end up mobilising citizens in a systematic manner, for instance to join a certain movement (see Chapter Five); rather, the main aim is to ensure visibility of the campaign or movement and perhaps even, of its central figures. The power of social media may be limited in

converting online action or campaigns into offline tangible engagement, and as such, social media do not provide a substitute for offline political action. Chapter Eight also showed that, except for one, all the focus group participants (aged 18 to 25) had not joined offline movements or parties, although they did access myriad of live debates on *Facebook.* It is also difficult to argue that young people's knowledge about campaigns or demonstrations from *Facebook* would entice them to identify with the aims of any particular campaign or demonstration: it is offline participation that helps to foster this sense of identification. It is true that they shared one aim in 2011: to oust Mubarak, and later, to express their discontent with the rule of the military council or with the Brotherhood, but their participation in demonstrations is not necessarily a reflection of the efficiency of political networking, unless their groups managed to create a sense of collective identity for all participants. The fact that Egyptians have been ideologically polarised by many different political parties and movements since 2011, and the frequent movement of active youth between these parties, is a sign that this collective identity has not been sufficiently nurtured to allow for a more sustained political action that involves as many young citizens as possible, in enduring political organisations.

Online action may not have been translated into offline activism, but perhaps the most important benefit of using social media is that they have helped enhance people's knowledge and proffered information about the political situation, not only in Egypt, but in other countries, as well; however, as shown in Chapter Eight, many of the participants in this research confined their political activities to passive acts of 'share', 'like' or 'post' on social media; although some did not 'post' any comments, they did follow and read 'posts' by various other users. The significant change at the collective level, in terms of mobilisation, is generally rather limited and sporadic, and may be subject to the nature of the event such as 25 January 2011 or 30 June 2013. There remains, therefore, a strong need for offline organisation and activism by using social media as a communication avenue, not as a catalyst for changing the political process.

9.3 Traditional versus social media

The participants also emphasised the role of traditional media (particularly television) in influencing public opinion, with some of them highlighting the symbiotic relationship between traditional and social media. Many of them also expressed their mistrust of traditional media, even though they still followed it. They agreed that social media supplement, rather than replace, traditional media . This researcher also argues that users' scepticism of mainstream media and what is occasionally 'posted' on social media sites, may paradoxically increase their engagement in the political process rather than remain passive participants, in as much as they are constantly exposed to different viewpoints which provide the chance to assess them; as such, they are constantly interpreting the messages available on either mainstream or social media. These young people reinforce their power in decoding media messages and in their ability to unravel any propagandist element in such messages, by emphasising their mistrust of either medium. Seen in this light, it is argued here that their scepticism reflects their role as active users in that they still follow both forms of media (especially social media sites). They may be doing so for ontological and epistemological reasons in order to make sense of the world around them.

The abundance of information, on social media sites, satellite television or independent press, moreover, has provided an invaluable link between social media users and independent media. Many participants, for instance, assert their preference for following television for certain issues, such as Mubarak's trial, and social media for other purposes. It is also a positive development that independent media have started appealing to local areas such as rural and Upper Egypt, albeit still modest. Social media groups, such as *Tamarod* and '6 April' movements, have realised the need to appeal to these regional areas, rather than confining their efforts to the capital and large cities.

The preceding chapters have demonstrated the role of trust in forming online networks, and how strong ties can play a pivotal role in spreading messages via social media sites. Some of the focus group participants, for example, said that they would not 'add' a stranger to their network, and yet would still follow that stranger if they found their views resonated with their own. People still wanted to relate to a reliable

202

source of information, notably, the majority of the participants agreed on following the political satirist, Bassem Youssef, on social media sites, given that his critical comments about the government and the Brotherhood generally echoed their own sentiments.

It is also notable how social media sites have been used since 2011, in order to launch campaigns to discredit other parties: since the toppling of Morsi, for instance, Brotherhood supporters launched a series of social media campaigns ridiculing the newly-appointed president, Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, among which was a very famous campaign on *Twitter* - '#vote for the pimp' - referring to Al-Sisi. The Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) reported on it, after the 'hashtag' went viral on social media, not only in Egypt but across the Arab region. Al-Sisi's supporters, including several Egyptian journalists and media commentators, called for the government to block *Twitter*, while others asserted that social media discussions cannot be controlled by the state (Ajbaili, 2014). These campaigns prove that social media can make headlines in traditional newsrooms, and therefore, their relationship may indeed be symbiotic and complementary.

Social media functioned as new avenues for communication and to connect Egyptian citizens, which in itself, was a challenge to the authoritarian rule in Egypt. These media, however, cannot change the political structure or process in Egypt on their own as such changes require a greater investment of time and effort directed towards offline campaigning; social media, therefore, served as one factor amongst others, which facilitated the success of the 2011-revoltion, but did not create it.

9.4 social media as a virtual civil society?

The argument here is that activists relied on social media as a visibility medium; for those who had not been active in the political sphere, social media were instrumental in raising their awareness about diverse political movements, and also in educating them about the political process, after decades of political apathy under Mubarak's regime; for them, however, social media did not necessarily help in mobilisation

activities, such as motivating large numbers of citizens to join a movement, party or even a demonstration; parallel with virtual campaigns, it is vital to develop offline activities in order to cultivate trust and a sense of commitment amongst participants (Della Porta & Mosca, 2005).

The diagram on p. 42 illustrates the lifecycle of a social movement, here, it is now possible to factor in the role of social media as a facilitator in the processes of campaigning and networking, even though its influence is still limited in the process of organisation and massive mobilisation
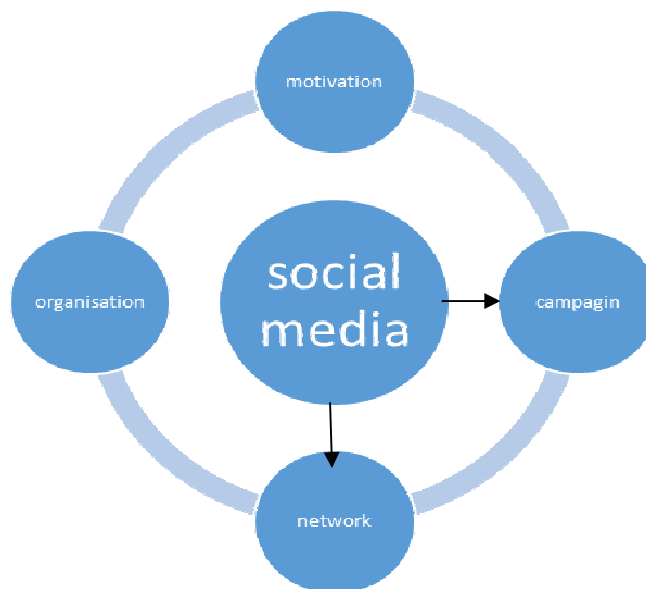
Figure 9.1 social media in the lifetime of social movement

Young activists use social media to disseminate information about their activities, and some of them use these media as a means of raising political awareness among non-activists. Activists did not regard social media as an effective mobilising tool for mass protests across the country, prior to 2011, as their main ambition was to reach like-minded protestors. Proof that the 2011 uprising did not solely rely on social media activity is the fact that activists called for a similar protest on 25 January 2010, a year before, but that was a small-scale protest which the security forces managed to curb. The 2011 uprising was successful because of the ability to translate virtual calls into

offline action: when social media activists took to the streets and spoke to ordinary Egyptians which motivated them to join the protests. The role of the Brotherhood was also instrumental in mobilising the masses to join the protesters in Tahrir Square. It is evident, therefore, that maintaining the power of interpersonal communication in mobilising social movements can have offline success. Social media platforms are able to provide a form of interpersonal communication in which users engage in dialogue with each other, although the conversation is still initiated and managed by a select group of activists. Social media were used, prior to the uprising of 2011, as an alternative form of communication, asserts one of the activists; reading blogs was like reading an opposition newspaper, criticising the government's performance and attacking police oppression. These new media are also cheaper in use than printing pamphlets or hiring venues, as they provided new possibilities to disseminate information about public dissatisfaction with Mubarak's regime. Non-politicised citizens can still be informed about campaigns and social movements by following such groups on social media and reading about coming events, even if they do not actively participate in these activities. This knowledge may be passed on to others in their social circles, who may not have access to social media sites, but become interested and are consequently influenced to support the government or opposition parties.

Activists used social media to disseminate information about the regime's brutality, particularly the security forces. This was evident in the 'Khaled Said' group on *Facebook* which used images, appealing to ordinary citizens to help them identify with victims like Khaled Said. Social media therefore created an alternative media platform, other than the mainstream media, which were significantly under the control of the regime. The interview respondents indicated that those social media users who regularly visited activists' pages on *Facebook*, for example, could not be regarded as 'politically active' unless they were able to translate that virtual activity into offline action. What is notable was the call by some of those activists to centralise the online activity by having a ministry or public body responsible for organising online and social media. The risk seen by those activists was a polarisation in the online debate between pro- and anti-Islamic movements. Social media, according to many activists, can be

used to sow the seeds of activism, by disseminating information about the constitution, political debates, polls, parties, and elections, and citizens should build on these virtual activities by participating in offline action. Social media, therefore, can be said to have an educational role in raising awareness about the political process in Egypt.

Social media alone cannot trigger and sustain a social movement, nor can they drive and sustain a revolution on the scale of that recorded in 2011, or the upheaval of 2013; for this to happen, other important factors need to be present, such as the participants' mutual interests in the motivation to take part in such a massive protests, for example. The success of such massive protests is also bound to previous political action; in the case of Egypt, this was evident in the protests, labour strikes and sit-ins recorded since 2005, when Gamal Mubarak entered the political scene, thereby agitating many political groups as well as ordinary citizens, who feared that Mubarak's rule would be extended for yet another thirty years if his son took over the presidency of Egypt.

This researcher has argued that social media have reinforced existing offline networks of activists and their supporters, and have not necessarily managed to create new networks. Eyad (56), for instance, confirms that when they engaged in disseminating information about *Al-Doustor* party on social media, particularly on *Facebook*, thousands showed interest in joining the party; at the first general meeting, however, only a few hundred showed up. Group identity and collective empathy is instrumental in offline activities (Chen & Lee, 2008), which can be further supported by social media, as a facilitators of existing networks, but not necessarily as originators of new ones. It is true that social media have created new opportunities for both activists and non-politicised actors, but the impact may vary across socio-economic groups. Well-educated middle-class activists, for instance, may have more resources, in terms of time to plan, orchestrate and disseminate activities and using social media, compared to the less privileged groups. One example is of the interviewee Ahmed (26), who said that he joined the protestors in Tahrir Square in January 2011, but only for two days,

as he soon realised that protesting was a costly affair, and was forced to return to his work.

There are a number of problems associated with the use of such media in the political deliberation regarding Egypt, notwithstanding the positive effects of social media on the political socialisation of young Egyptians. These problems question Western-centric theories that may see that technology can be the driving force for modernisation and change in the developing world. The use of this technology must first be analysed in its unique socio-cultural context such as Egypt. One of the problems identified in this study is the lack of sustainability of online campaigns which should ideally convert into offline collective action. The descriptive analysis of web features (Chapter Five) illustrated the differences in websites, in terms of frequent updating and calls for campaigning, illustrating the difficulty in sustaining online presence over a long period. Very few groups such as *Tamarod* and April 6 movements were able to sustain their online campaigns, owing to a constant stream of funding, available to both movements, and the co-operation with mainstream media, particularly with *Tamarod*, in order to broadcast the movement's goals and publicise the movement's campaign to oust Morsi. It is to be noted, however, that neither group managed to continue its activities, once their ultimate goals were reached (ousting Mubarak and Morsi); instead, they both suffered internal division with their leading figures, moving out of the groups to form separate movements, even under the same name (such as April 6 movement). The interviews (Chapters 6 & 7), moreover, illustrate activists' dilemmas in recruiting citizens in their offline activities, not to mention that some of these activists kept switching from one movement or party to another. It can be argued that a sustainable civil society and a truly diverse public sphere rest on a more sustainable, offline action, which can indeed bring about significant changes in the Egyptian political sphere. Activists have so far used social media to ensure visibility of their actions, not only nationally, but also regionally and internationally. Citizens, on the other hand, have been using social media sites to orient themselves around different views, to follow celebrities such as Bassem

Youssef, renowned for his sharp critique of the Brotherhood and the military, and to share views. Social media in this case, have served as an alternative media platform on which citizens can exchange views, however, this has not translated into a functional public sphere either, mainly because of youth's reluctance (see Chapter Eight) in adding strangers to their networks, although they were happy to follow them. Chapter Eight demonstrated that the majority of participants in this study were reluctant to initiate discussions on social media sites, preferring instead to remain passive by following the posts of others, without posting their own. It is noteworthy, however, that the online space provides an array of different opinions, perhaps not readily available in mainstream media, which helps youth to acquaint themselves with opposing views other than those expressed in state and private broadcasting media. Power relations on online space remain with those who seem to direct the debates such as celebrities (Bassem Youssef) and leading activists such as Wael Ghonim.

9.5 Chapter summary

The 2011-revolution began with a huge surge in optimism, and what new media could do and how civil society could flourish, but it ended with apprehension, caution, and suspicion of one another and of those living abroad. Treason had become high on the agenda, with accusations accumulating from all directions, targeting activists, Islamists, and any party opposing the current regime, accusing them of masterminding the 2011 revolution, for the benefit of foreign nations. Wael Ghonim, once celebrated as one of the heroes of social media and architects of the 2011 revolution, was condemned on television shows for being a spy and agent for foreign organisations (Youssef, 2014).

Media scholars (Curran, 1991; Castells, 2009) have long argued that media institutions can play a pivotal role in ensuring diverse and pluralist debates, thereby enhancing citizens' deliberations and participation in the political process. The rise of social media has triggered similar hopes in its role of pushing for political and social reforms, based on genuine political participation. What the above discussion aimed to show is that social media do indeed help in disseminating information and trickling it down via

large networks of citizens with 'weak ties'. This process, however, does not guarantee offline political action, nor can it drive deep structural changes in the Egyptian political system, on its own. Those who have a strong profile in social media groups represent a handful of citizens, and although they can attract thousands of followers, they do not necessarily engage in campaigning for a new party to join the traditional political process in the country. One such group is the *6 April* movement, which later split into at least two sub-groups; they had thousands of followers but only a handful of its leading figures were visible and active online (Faris, 2010). What is notable, however, is that some of the famous social media activists also had links to global organisations, thus creating a process of diffusion across political protest networks across the world (Abdel Rahman, 2011), which also enhanced their visibility outside of Egypt. The challenge is how to integrate citizens from disadvantaged groups (such as peasants and the lower classes) into the political process in Egypt, and perhaps many other developing nations, rather than confining this political practice to the well-educated, English-fluent middle-class.

If young people seem less politically active in traditional political institutions, such as joining parties or voting in general elections, nonetheless, they can still identify with, and show interest in, the political process (Henn *et al.* 2002). Some scholars argue (Van der Eijk & Franklin, 2009) that at a young age, citizens may be less interested in such political participation but this attitude changes with maturity. Others (Norris, 2004) argue that young people's seeming disinterest in politics does not prove their disengagement, because they can still be active in other institutions such as NGOs or voluntary institutions. This may be the case in Egypt, where young people, whether activists or those opting out of traditional politics, show interest in tackling social problems such as poverty or helping slum-dwellers. This could indeed prove previous scholars' argument (see particularly Marsh *et al.*, 2007) that young people may have a different understanding of politics, which is not seen as confined to formal institutions but as lived experience. Future studies should therefore seek a broader definition of politics (Bang, 2011) by illustrating how young people perceive and implement their understanding of the political process in their daily lives.

Chapter Ten

Conclusions

10.1 Introduction

This study's aims were to examine the power of social media in serving as a virtual civil society in Egypt, as a topical case study, and particularly how social media could facilitate the change in the political sphere in Egypt. It was essential here to examine how activists, across the generations, used social media in their cyber activism, but also how those under the age of 35, who constituted around 50 per cent of the population, responded to this kind of activism. The study demonstrates the activists' perception of the role of social media, their uses of these media since 2011, and their ability to utilise social media to convert online activities into offline collective action. The objectives, therefore, were to identify the uses of social media in political activism, drawing on the fieldwork conducted amongst Egyptian activists, to assess users' views of this type of activism, and whether they felt encouraged and motivated to engage in civic action and were able to assess the role of social media versus mainstream media in mobilisation.

This final chapter has two specific aims:

     (i) to summarise the overall findings; and

     (ii) to provide pointers for future research.

The first objective is to re-consider some methodological considerations which helped position this study, vis-à-vis previous studies in this field.

10.2 Methodological issues

This project relied on triangulated data retrieved from a descriptive web feature analysis, combined with semi-structured interviews with activists and focus groups

with ordinary Egyptian youth (non-activists). In the review of previous studies, three important themes were identified, which were explored from a plethora of angles in those studies. The themes are: the role of social media in fostering cyber activism, the role of these media as a virtual public sphere, and how they compete with traditional mainstream media. Several previous studies supported the positive role of social media in enabling a collective action in Egypt, although they also highlighted that new and social media alone are not enough to activate a revolution on the scale demonstrated in Egypt in 2011. The underlying conditions and grievances against Mubarak's regime helped ignite the uprising against him. Some other studies focused on documenting, in quantitative terms, the rise of using social media such as *Twitter*, during the uprising, but this approach does not take enough account of the activists' subjective views, and finally, a number of studies argued that mainstream media still played a pivotal role in the Arab region as a whole (see Chapter Two). The contribution of this study lies in its close examination of the actors behind the collective action, as well as other social media users who may have been influenced to join a political action or group through social or mainstream media campaigns.

The assessment of the role and function of social media as a virtual civil society, the concept of civil society was defined, not only as reviewed in Western literature but also, more importantly, as it is understood and practiced in a Muslim and developing country like Egypt (see Chapter Three). What is notable in the context of Egypt, is the prevalence of civil society organisations that are characterised as charity associations, offering welfare services to the less privileged social groups. Civil society associations are generally barred from expressing a political view, and even the minority of such organisations that deal with human rights issues are usually closely monitored by the government. It is here that many movements in Egypt, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, saw a means to mobilise citizens through charitable organisations, while avoiding state censorship. It is noteworthy that the Egyptian state needed such charity organisations to compensate for the deteriorating state services; although literature review regarding civil society in Egypt showed a preference for the so-called

'alternative' definition of civil society as a realm for organised associations and deliberation, the choice was made to adopt the alternative approach as the realm of deliberation, not only as a formal organised subject, but also as any form of deliberations amongst individuals and groups which aim to empower citizens and achieve civic engagement. Chapter three explains how this researcher sees social media as providing a created space for discussions away from state control and monitoring, which calls for a closer examination of all forms of engagement, not necessarily formal, as is the case with charity organisations, trade unions or human rights associations in Egypt.

This study adopted an integrative approach of inductive and deductive research, in that it began with pre-defined themes (or constructs) to guide the qualitative research; however, the methods adopted allowed for some flexibility to incorporate new emerging themes from the interviews and focus groups. This integrative approach was inspired by Duneier (2002) who does not see a research approach as being strictly inductive or deductive.

10.3 virtual deliberation

Based on web feature analysis, selected *Facebook* group sites were examined that focused on the following features, which, in this researcher's view, are amongst the characteristics of an efficient virtual deliberation:

- The focus of campaigning, whether it is national (across Egypt) or local (confined to a certain neighbourhood or a city in Egypt)
- The frequency of updating the site - this can show the extent of resources available to the selected *Facebook* group
- Characters and activists often referred to within the discussion (and whether these are confined to 'star' activists like Wael Ghoniem)
- Links made to other sites, particularly mainstream versus alternative media, or to civil society associations
- Mobilisation activities such as the call to join a protest.

The analysis in Chapter Six shows the prominence of key activists and founders of those sites (and groups). It also shows that there was hardly a call to set up offline political parties; moreover, some of these movements, such as April 6 and *Tamarod* have seen internal splits amongst its members with some of them forming competing movements sometimes even under the same name (such as April 6 movement); although these sites did include some mobilisation activities, they were often linked to large issues such as police reforms or rationalising prices, thereby seeking to improve state services rather than creating new political parties with clear manifestos. These groups generally seemed to use *Facebook* as a tool of visibility and immediate impact, rather than as a tool to create a sustainable political movement or an offline civil society association. A few of these groups such as *Tamarod* and 'I am Khaled Said', ceased to update their postings, and the April 6 movement was later banned by the Egyptian courts. The only selected group with a local focus, *Dar Essalam and Maadi*, also ceased to update its site, which is regrettable, given the acute need for such groups working on engaging citizens in local communities.

These *Facebook* groups managed to create a space for debate and interaction, albeit for a short period, but they also managed to decentralise political debate in Egypt which was always confined to the capital, Cairo, or big cities like Alexandria. Many of these groups, such as *Tamarod*, were competing with each other to reach out to communities in distant governorates, although the *Facebook* sites of these communities still drew on the same news and events posted in the Cairo branch site. This shows the potential of social media in providing a new avenue for deliberation in local communities, which is acutely needed to support the democratic reforms in Egypt. It is also noteworthy that several local media outlets mushroomed in the wake of the 2011 uprising (although many of them did not last) which shows the attention media and politicians alike gave to the role of local media as a new avenue for political participation, and arguably, even propaganda. This was particularly clear with the sweeping victory of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Parliamentary elections in 2012, which was credited to their outreach in local and rural areas.

To summarise, social media can contribute to providing a virtual haven for citizens to deliberate and access information relatively fast and cheaply. It can also facilitate interaction amongst citizens, which should, ideally, translate into offline action; above all, it secured the visibility of citizens' demands in global media which dubbed this uprising the '*Facebook* revolution'. Groups and individuals, however, should aim at decentralising that virtual debate, rather than confining it to known activists.

10.4 Activists' and non-activists reflections on the role of (social) media

Chapter Seven and Eight reflected on the fieldwork conducted from a sample of activists and non-activists. The latter group comprised youth, where the majority were well under the age of 35. They were included in the three focus groups, each with six participants, from each gender and various social classes. It was noteworthy how the activists (across age and gender) regarded mainstream media, particularly privately-owned television channels, as more influential in swaying public opinion in Egypt, including the youth. The non-activists group, on the other hand, were almost unanimous in rejecting this role of mainstream media, declaring that they did not follow television channels and relied instead on obtaining news updates from social media. Young non-activists, moreover, stressed their ability to decode underlying propaganda, whether in mainstream or social media, and their ability to verify the information on the social media platforms. The opinion held here, is that their scepticism of what they read or accessed via mainstream or social media could be a reflection of their role as active interpreters of information, rather than merely passive recipients of political propaganda. Such scepticism can also, it is argued, motivate them to seek information from various, and even competing, sources which can foster a healthy public debate.

The previous chapter also illustrated the role of trust in forming online networks, which may explain why non-activists tended to follow known activists and artists, such as the political satirist, Bassem Youseef. They were still content to follow *Facebook* accounts of strangers, but they did so with caution, carefully considering the

consequences before 'adding' or seeking to 'join' new groups or individuals, with whom they had had no previous interaction. It was also regrettable that this cohort of non-activists felt reluctant to share their views on *Facebook*, fearing that such views might have made them unpopular with their peers or relatives, which risked silencing such a cohort. It is difficult to overestimate the role of social media, according to youth's reluctance to engage in social media, being used for 'revolutionary purposes' or causing radical political changes. What is needed is the translation of online deliberation into a sustained offline action, otherwise social media would remain a communication forum to 'share', 'join' and 'post', without necessarily causing radical action on the ground. The above chapters have argued that any significant change at the collective level, in terms of mobilisation, is limited, and is very much subject to the nature of events.

The internet in Egypt cannot be said to guarantee openness and the end of authoritarian rule, Egypt still stands in a better position than other Arab societies such as Saudi Arabia, where online debate can be curbed on moral and religious grounds. One television programme, for example, which was launched in the wake of the 2011 revolution, was about debating the legacy of past clerics and *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). The programme, *Ma'a Islam*, ('With Islam'), (Islam here refers to the programmes's host, Islam Al-Beherie) who is educated in Islamic jurisprudence. The efficacy of social and new media as a mobilisation tool, as previously stated, may profoundly depend on the particular cultural and social norms.

10.5 Future studies

Future studies, as previously mentioned, can closely examine Egyptian youth's understanding and definition of the political sphere, as recent years have shown the engagement of this cohort in charitable projects, such as those initiated by Islamic tele-evangelists such as Amr Khaled. The adoption by youth of a different understanding of politics, and the parameters of their political engagements, which

may not necessarily be confined to traditional political party work and campaigning, could be a subject for further investigation.

It is important, moreover, to remember that the internet is never utilised in isolation: other (traditional) media such as television, radio and print or even mobile phones also have a role. It is the synergy and convergence of these media forms that can bring about radical changes to the communication sphere in Egypt, and indeed, the rest of the region. The impact of these changes on the political space has been assessed in this study, but will need to be continuously assessed in future studies, in light of the rapid regional political changes, and the threat of Islamic fundamentalist groups, such as ISIS, and how these groups have used social media as one of their media strategies.

One important role that social media played in the Egyptian uprising, and indeed in the so-called 'Arab Spring' as a whole, is that it managed to bring global attention to the conflict. These media also helped Egyptians convert their ideas into organised action - albeit short-lived - such as arranging *ad hoc* protests against various issues, including local problems, sexual harassment, and so on. They also helped to break the barrier of fear, as users were able to freely search for and retrieve information through these media, while making them feel that they were not alone in suffering hardships such as torture, censorship or arbitrary arrests; in this respect, social media users can serve as 'whistle-blowers' by uncovering corruption and any forms of state abuse and violence. It would still prudent, however, not to overestimate the role of social media in triggering such an uprising, as they can only be effective if there is wider public support; in the Egyptian case, the uprising was the result of many years of protests, civic engagement and grievances against Mubarak's long-lasting regime.

References

Abaza, Mona (2001) Shopping Malls, Consumer Culture and the Reshaping of Public Space in Egypt. Theoy, Culture & Society, Vol. 18(5): 97-122.

Abaza, Mona (2006) The Changing Consumer Cultures of Modern Egypt: Cairo Urban Reshaping. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press.

Abdel Ghany, M. (2004) 'Youth and Politics…and the Half Full Glass' (Alshabab We Alsyasah…We Nesf Alka's), Al Ahram, 26 January, <http://www.ahram.org.eg/Archive/2004/1/26/WRIT3.HTM>.

Abdel Hamid, Enji M (2009) Social Capital and the Civil Society. Cairo: the Egyptian Centre for Economic and Social Rights (www.ecesr.com)

Abdel Razek, Magda (2012) The Prisoner who served the former President in Tora – ubrak and his sons live in their second presidential palace. *Al Watan*. 12 November 2012.

Abdel-Baky, Mohamed (2012) Pray for the proper flag. *Al Ahram Weekly*, issue no. 1114, 13-19 September 2012.

Abdelnabi, Mohamed I (2000) Youth and social mobility. A cross-generational study. In Al Kurdi, Mahmoud (ed.) Youth and the Future of Egypt. Proceedings of the 7th Annual Symposium of the Faculty of Arts, Dept. of Sociology, Cairo University, 29-30 April 2000, pp. 105-134 (in Arabic).

Abdelrahman, Maha (2004) The Leftist and Islamists in Egypt. ISIM newsletter, issue 14, June 2004.

Abdelrahman, Maha (2009) 'With the Islamists? – Sometimes. With the State? – Never!' Cooperation between the Left and Islamists in Egypt. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 36(1): 37-54.

Abdelrahman, Maha (2011) The Transnational and the Local: Egyptian Activists and Transnational Protest Networks. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 38(3): 407-424.

Abdel-Razek, Sherine (2011) Living in Poverty. *Al Ahram Weekly*, issue no. 1084, 9 - 15 February 2011.

Abdo, Geneive (2000) No God but God. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Abdulla, Rasha (2007) The Internet in the Arab World: Egypt and Beyond. NY: Peter Lang.

Aboulghar, Mohamed (2006) Egyptian educational decline: is there a way out? *Al Ahram Weekly*, 2 - 8 February 2006, Issue No. 780.

Abu-el-Hasan, Mohamed (2013) From Treason to Dancing with the Wolves. *Al Ahram*. Vol. 138, issue 46274, 16 August, 2013.

Aburish, Said K. (2004), *Nasser, the Last Arab*, New York City: St. Martin's Press

Achy, Lahcen (2010) Concerns of Egyptian Youth: A Forgotten Majority. Commentary on Carnegie Middle East program, December 20, 2010; available at: http://carnegie-mec.org/publications/?fa=42160

Addestour (2014) "AUC study: Members of the National Democratic Party are members of El Baradei for Presidency." (2010, May). http://dostor.org/politics/egypt/10/may/23/17128

Afayia, Mohamed Noureddine (2013) Intellectuals' performance during recent events. A working paper, presented at the symposium held at *Al Moustaqbal Al Arabi*, Beirut, 29 May 2013.

Agre, Philip 2004. Growing a democratic culture: John Commons on the wiring of civil society. *In* Democracy and new media. H. Jenkins and D. Thorburneds. Pp. 61-67. Cambridge: The MIT Press

Ahram Weekly (2008) Home truths. 11 - 17 September 2008. Issue No. 914. http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2008/914/pr1.htm

Ajbaili, Mustapha (2014) Egypt TV presenters tout Twitter ban over anti-Sisi hashtag. Al Arabiya News, Monday, 31 March 2014: http://english.alarabiya.net/en/media/television-and-radio/2014/03/31/Egypt-TV-presenters-tout-twitter-ban-over-anti-Sisi-hashtag.html

Al Aswani, Alaa (2011) On the State of Egypt. Cairo & NY: The American University in Cairo Press.

Al Mirghani et al (2009*) Egypt's Workers*. Cairo: the Egyptian Centre for Economic and Social Rights.

Al Mogez (2014) Won't believe that Ghonim was a traitor and spy. *Al Mogez*, 11 August 2014, http://almogaz.com/news/politics/2014/08/11/1601267

Al Sayyid, Mustapha (1993) 'A civil society in Egypt?' *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 47(2): 228-242.

Al Shelby, Gamal (2004) Defining Democracy in Nasser's Speeches. In Ibtisam Al Katby et al. (eds.) Democracy and Development in the Arab World. Beirut: Centre of Arab Unity Studies.

Al Tayyeb, Ibrahim (2012) Attention...number of mentally ill patients doubled since the revolution. *Al Masry al Youm,* 1 November 2012. www.almasryalyoum.com/node/1212681

Al Youm Sabei (2011) 28 detainees escape from Al Mountazah station in Alexandria after setting it on fire. *Al Youm Sabei* newspaper, 27 May 2011.

Al-Azemi, Bader Hamad (2002) *The Role of the Society of the Muslim Brothers in the Development of Modern Islamic Educational Thought in Egypt (1928-1988).* Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Birmingham.

Aled, J and Bugge, C. (2006). Improving understanding and rigour through triangulation: an exemplar based on patient participation in interaction. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. 55, (5), pp. 612-621.

Alexander, Barbara Cochrane (2000) Law No. 153: Its Impact on Egyptian Non-Governmental Organizations. *The Human Rights Brief*, Volume 7, Issue 2.

Allam, Mai (2012) The Role and Impact of Social Media Networks on Arab Spring: A Case Study on the Egyptian Revolution. Unpublished MA thesis, American University in Cairo.

Almond Gabriel, and Sidney Verba. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963.

Al-Rai (2011) The trend: Books on 2011-revolution sell well in 2012. Issue 11986, 25 April 2012. http://www.alraimedia.com/ArticlePrint.aspx?id=346146 31/

al-Said, Aya (2008) Why do not Egyptian revolt against the police abuse as they did in Greece? *Youm Sabei,* 21 December 2008.

Altayeb, Alhadi Khogali (2007) *Evaluating the Urban Policy-Making Process in Egypt: Informal Settlements, Poverty and Urban Management the Case of Cairo*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, School of Public Policy, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies.

Aly, Ramy (2011) Rebuilding Egyptian Media for a Democratic Future. *Arab Media and Society*, Issue 14, Summer 2011, http://www.arabmediasociety.com/?article=771

Amin, Galal (2000) *Whatever Happened to the Egyptians?* Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.

Amnesty International (2013) 'WE CANNOT LIVE HERE ANY MORE' REFUGEES FROM SYRIA IN EGYPT, 17 October 2013. http://www.amnesty.org/ar/library/asset/MDE12/060/2013/en/a864e9fc-76c5-44ea-ab96-bd9e96843fc2/mde120602013en.pdf

An Overview of Civil Society in Egypt, Civil Society Index Report for the Arab Republic of Egypt Cairo 2005

Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism.* London:Verso.

Aouragh, Miriyam & Anne Alexander (2011) The Egyptian Experience: Sense and Nonsense of the Internet Revolution. International Journal of Communication, Vol. 5: 1344-1358.

Arab Opinion Index (2011) Measurement of Arab Public Opinion Project. Doha: Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies.

Ashraf, Fady (2013) Single Member Electoral System is a disaster: ESDP head. *Daily News Egypt.* 4 September, 2013. Link: http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2013/09/04/single-member-electoral-system-is-a-disaster-esdp-head/#sthash.fnjHiJN6.dpuf

Assaad, R. and G. Barsoum (2007) 'Youth Exclusion in Egypt: In Search of "Second Chances" ', Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper, Wolfenshon Center for Development and Dubai School of Government.

Attia, Ashraf, Nergis Aziz, Barry Friedman & Mahdy Elhusseiny (2011) 'Commentary: The impact of social networking tools on political change in Egypt's "Revolution 2.0"'. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, doi: 10.1016/j.elerap.2011.05.003.

Aulas, Marie-Christine (1982) 'Sadat's Egypt: A Balance Sheet'. MERIP reports, no. 107, Egypt in the New Middle East (July-August, 1982): pp. 6-18+30-31.

Baabood, Abdullah (2011) GCC States' Economic Ascendance – an Opportunity. *EXCHANGE*: The Magazine for International Business and Diplomacy, No. 3 March 2011. Available at: http://www.ibde.org/component/content/article/93-gcc-states-economic-ascendance--an-opportunity.html (accessed on 3 October 2012).

Baker, Randall (ed) (2002) Transitions from Authoritarianism: The Role of the Bureaucracy. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.

BANG, H. P. 2011. The politics of threats: late-modern politics in the shadow of neoliberalism. *Critical Policy Studies,* 5**,** 434-448.

Baraka, Pakinaz E. "Citizenship Education in Egyptian Public Schools: What Values to Teach and in which Administrative and Political Contexts?" *Journal of Education for International Development* 3:3 (2008): 1-18.

Barbour, R and Kitzinger, J. (1999). The challenge and promise of focus groups. In: Barbour, R. and Kitzinger, J. (eds). *Developing focus group research: Politics, theory and practice*, London: Publications, pp. 1–20.

Barraclough, Steven (1998). Al-Azhar: Between the Government and the Islamists. *Middle East Journal* 52(2): 236-249.

Bayat, Asef (2003) The "Street" and the Politics of Dissent in the Arab World. *Merip Middle East Report*, 226: 10-17.

Bayat, Asef (2010) *Life as Politics. How Ordinary People Change the Middle East*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Beinin, Joel & Frédéric Vairel (eds.) (2011) *Social Movements, Mobilization, and Contestation in the Middle East and North Africa.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Beinin, Joel (1981) Formation of the Egyptian Working Class. MERIP Reports, No. 94, Class in the Middle East (Feb.,1981), pp. 14-23

Beinin, Joel (2011) A Workers' Social Movement on the Margin of the Global Neoliberal Order, Egypt 2004-2009. In Beinin, Joel & Frédéric Vairel (eds.) *Social Movements, Mobilization, and Contestation in the Middle East and North Africa.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Bennett, W., Wells, L., Wells, C., & Rank, A. (2009). Young citizens and civic learning: Two paradigms of citizenship in the digital age. *Citizenship Studies*, *13*(2), 105–120.

Bentz, V. M., & Shapiro, J. J. (1998). *Mindful inquiry in social research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Berger A A 1997 *Narratives in popular culture, media, and everyday life* Sage, Thousand Oaks

Berger, Miriam (2013) Breaking the news mold: Egypt's community media gains a much-needed voice. Egypt Independent. 17 March 2013. url: www.egyptindependent.com/node/1573031

Berman, Sheri (2003) *Islamism, Revolution, and Civil Society*. Carnegie report**,** June 2003 Vol. 1/No. 2: http://carnegieendowment.org/pdf/files/berman.pdf

Bernd, S. & Klandermans, B. (2001) "Politicized collective identity: A social psychological analysis". *American Psychologist*, Vol. 50(4): 319-331.

Bibars, Iman (1998) Street children in Egypt: from the home to the street to inappropriate corrective institutions. *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol. 10(1): 201-216.

Bode, Leticia (2008). "Social networking sites, social capital, and political participation" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the MPSA Annual National Conference, Chicago, IL, Apr 03

Bohman, James (2004). "Expanding dialogue: The Internet, the public sphere and prospects for transnational democracy." In Nick Crossley and John Michael Roberts (eds.) *After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere,* pp 131-155. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Bolak, Hale (1996). 'Studying One's Own in the Middle East: Negotiating Gender and Self-Other Dynamics in the field'. *Qualitative Sociology*, Vol. 12(1): 107-130.

Bond, Ross. 2006. "Belonging and Becoming: National Identity and Exclusion," *Sociology*, 40(4): 609-626.

Booz & Co (2012) The Bedrock of Society. Understanding and Growing the MENA Region's Middle Class. Ideation Centre Insight. Link: http://www.strategyand.pwc.com/global/home/what-we-think/reports-white-papers/article-display/bedrock-society-understanding-growing-mena

Boutaleb, Assia. 2002. The Parliamentary Elections of Year 2000 in Egypt: A Lesson in Political Participation. Elections in the Middle East: What do They Mean? Editor, Iman A. Hamdy. Cairo Papers in Social Science. 12(1/2)

Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13*, 210-230.

Bratton, Michael (1994) Civil Society and Political Transition in Africa. Institute for Development Research (IDR Reports), Vol. 11(6): 1-21.

Broadcasting Board of Governors (2014) Contemporary Media Use in Egypt. http://www.bbg.gov/blog/2014/02/24/bbg-research-series-contemporary-media-use-in-egypt/

Browne, Heather K (2011), Education reform in Egypt: reinforcement & resistance. An unpublished PhD thesis, Northeastern University, *Political Science Dissertations.* Paper 7. http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d20002068

Bruce, Etling et al (2009) Mapping the Arabic Blogosphere: Politcs, Culture and Dssent. Berkamn Center Research Publication no. 06, Harvard University.

Bruns, A. (2008). *Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life and beyond: From production to produsage*. New York: Peter Lang.

Bruns, Axel. (2008). *Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life, and Beyond: From Production to Produsage*. New York: Peter Lang.

Bruns, N and Grove, S. (2001). *The practice of nursing research: Conduct, critique and utilization*. (4th ed). Toronto: W.B Saunders Company.

Brunsting, Suzanne, and Tom Postmes. "Social Movement Participation in the Digital Age: Predicting Offline and Online Collective Action." *Small Group Research* 33, no. 5 (2002): 525-54.

Bunt, Gary (2009*) iMuslims: Rewiring the House of Islam*. London: C. Hurst & Co.

Busha, C. and Harter, S. (1980), *Research Methods in Librarianship Technique and Interr,retation.* New York: Academic Press.

Busha, C. and Harter, S. (1980), *Research Methods in Librarianship Technique and Interr,retation.* New York: Academic Press.

Calhoun, Craig (1993) Civil Society and the Public Sphere. Public Culture, Vol. 5: 267-280.

Cammaerts, Bart & Leo Audenhove (2005) "Online Political Debate, Unbounded Citizenship, and the Problematic Nature of a Transnational Public Sphere," *Political Communication* 22(2).

Campbell, David. 1992. *Writing Security. United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University Press.

Carothers, Thomas (2000) Think Again: Civil Society," *Foreign Policy*, no. 117 (Winter 1999/ 2000): 18–29.

Carr, Sarah & Basil el-Dabh (2013) Tawfik Okasha: Egypt's Glenn Beck. Middle East Institute, http://www.mei.edu/content/tawfik-okasha-fringe-mainstream

Castells, M. (2001). *The Internet Galaxy: Reflections on the Internet, Business, and Society.* Oxford : Oxford University Press .

Castells, M. (2009). *Communication power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Castells, Manuel (2008) 'The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 616: 78-93.

Chadwick, Andrew. *Internet Politics: Sates, Citizens, and New Communications Technologies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Chebib, Nadine K & Rabia M Sohail (2011) 'The Reasons Social Media Contributed to the 2011 Egyptian Revolution'. *International Journal of Business Research and Management*, Vol. 2(3): 139-162.

Clandinin DJ & Connelly FM 1994. Personal experience methods. In: NK Denzin & YS Lincoln (eds). *Handbook of qualitative research*. 2nd edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Clark, Janine (2006). "Field Research Methods in the Middle East". : Political Science & Politics, Vol. 39(3):417-424.

Clifford J & G Marcus (eds.) (1986). *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cohen JL and Arato A (1992) *Civil Society and Political Theory*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Coleman, S. (2005). New mediation and direct representation: Reconceptualizing representation in the digital age. *New Media and Society*, *7*(2), 197–214.

Coleman, S., & Blumler, J. (2009). *The Internet and democratic citizenship: Theory, practice and policy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Collins, R. (2004). 'Ises' and 'Oughts': Public Service Broadcasting in Europe. In R. C. Allen & A, Hill (Eds.), *The Television Studies Reader* (pp. 33–51). London: Routledge.

Comninos, Alex (2011) *Twitter revolutions and cyber crackdowns. User-generated content and social networking in the Arab spring and beyond.* Association for Progressive Communications (APC), June 2011.

Cook, Bradley J (2000) Egypt's National Education Debate. Comparative Education, Vol. 36(4): 477-490.

Cortazzi M 1993 *Narrative analysis* The Falmer Press, London

Crabbs, Jack (1975) Politics, History, and Culture in Nasser's Egypt. International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 6(4): 386-420.

Creswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Creswell, J.W., & Plano Clark, V.L. (2007). Designing and conducting mixed methods research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Curran, J. (1991). Mass media and democracy: A reappraisal. In J. Curran & M. Gurevitch (Eds.), *Mass Media and Society* (pp. 87–114). London: Edward Arnold.

Dahlgren, P. (2006). Doing citizenship: The cultural origins of civic agency in the public sphere. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *9*(3), 267–286.

Dahlgren, Peter. "The Internet, Public Spheres, and Political Communication: Dispersion and Deliberation." *Political Communication* 22, no. 2 (2005): 147-62.

Dahlgren, Peter (2000) *Television and the Public Sphere: citizenship, democracy and the media*. London: Sage.

Dalton, Russell, and Hans-Dieter Klingemann. "Citizens and Political Behavior." In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, edited by Russell Dalton and Hans-Dieter Klingemann, 3-26. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Daragahi, Borzou (2013) Egyptians become victims of soaring crime rate. Financial Times, 1 May 2013, http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/7ffac226-adab-11e2-a2c7-00144feabdc0.html#axzz34icm6Z2g

Dartnell, Michael (2003). "Weapons of Mass Instruction: Web Activism and the Transformation of Global Security. *Millennium - Journal of International Studies*, vol. 32(3): 477-499.

Deibert, Ronald. "Black Code: Censorship, Surveillance, and the Militarisation of Cyberspace." *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 32, no. 3 (2003): 501-30.

Della Porta, D & Diani, M (2006) Social Movements: an Introduction. Malden: MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Denzin, N and Lincoln, Y. (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research*. (2nd ed). New York: Thousand Oakes: Sage.

Denzin, N. K. (1994). The art and politics of interpretation. In Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Deuze, Mark 2003. The Web and its journalisms: Considering the consequences of different types of news media online. New Media & Society 5(2): 203-230.Haas, Tanni 2007. The pursuit of public journalism: Theory, practice, and criticism. New York: Taylor and Francis.

Dhillon, Navtej, Paul Dyer and Tarik Yousef.(2009) "Generation in Waiting: An Overview of School to Work and Family Formation Transitions" in Generation in Waiting: The Unfulfilled Promise of Young People in the Middle East. Brookings Institution Press, 11-38.

Diamond, Larry (1999) Developing Democracy: Towards consolidation. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Diamond, Larry. 1992. "Introduction: Civil Society and the Struggle for Democracy." In The Democratic Revolution: Struggles for Freedom and Pluralism in the Developing World, edited by Larry Diamond. London: Freedom House.

Diani, Mario. "Networks and Social Movements: A Research Programme." In *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*, edited by Mario Diani and Douglas McAdam, 299-319. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Dorman, W. Judson (2009) 'Informal Cairo: Between Islamist Insurgency and the Neglectful State?' *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 40(4-5): 419-441.

Downey, J., & Fenton, N. (2003). New media, counter publicity and the public sphere. *New Media & Society*, 5(2), 185–202.

Dubai School of Government (2011) Arab Social Media Report, Vol. 1(2). May 2011.

Duneier, Mitchell (2002) 'What Kind of Combat Sport Is Sociology?' *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 107(6):1551-76.

Dutta, Soumitra, Zeinab Karake Shaloub, & Geoff rey Samuels (2007). "Promoting technology and innovation: Recommendations to improve Arab ICT competitiveness." *Th e Arab World Competitiveness Report 2007*. Geneva: World Economic Forum. Available at: http://www.weforum.org/en/initiatives/gcp/Arab%20World%20Competitiveness%20Report/index.htm Accessed on 16 December 2007.

el Issawi, Fatima (2013) *Egyptian Media Under Transition: In the Name of the Regime...In the Name of the People?* London: LSE.

El Sharnouby, Dina (2012) Youth and the 25th Revolution in Egypt: Agents of change and its multiple meanings. Unpublished MA thesis, American University of Cairo.

Eleiba, Ahmed (2013) Three corners for Morsi to paint. *Al Ahram Weekly*, 09-04-2013, http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/Print/2217.aspx

El-Gawhary, Krista M (2000) Egyptian Advocacy NGOs: Catalysts for Social and Political Change? Middle East Report, No. 214, Critiquing NGOs: Assessing the Last Decade, pp. 38-41.

Ellison, N., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. (2006). Spatially Bounded Online Social Networks and Social Capital: The Role of Facebook. *The Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA)*, (pp. 1-37). Dresden, Germany.

El-Mikaway, Noha. 1999. The Building of Consensus in Egypt's Transition Process. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.

Elsayyad, May & Shima'a Hanafy (2012) Voting Islamist or Voting secular? An empirical analysis of Voting Outcomes in "Arab Spring" Egypt. Joint Discussion Paper Series in Economics. The universities of Aachen · Gießen · Göttingen. http://www.uni-marburg.de/fb02/makro/forschung/magkspapers/index_html%28magks%29

Elshahed, Mohamed (2012) Pageantry, Military Myths, and Egypt's "Daddy Complex". *Jadaliyya*, 24 April 2012, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/5185/pageantry-military-myths-and-egypts-%E2%80%9Cdaddy-complex

Elshamy, Mosaab (2012) In pictures: Cairo's rich-poor standoff. *Al Jazeera English*, 25 September 2012, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/2012/09/2012924143455660450.html

El-Tablawy, Tarek (2011) Swan Lake vs slums: Egypt faces housing challenge. The Seattle Times, 30 April 2011. http://bx.businessweek.com/land-auctions-need-to-get-better/view?url=http%3A%2F%2Fc.moreover.com%2Fclick%2Fhere.pl%3Fr4571233524%26f%3D9791

Emara, Mohamed (2013) Faithful Muslim Egypt will never become secular. *Al Lewaa' Al Islami*, Vol. 2, issue 72, 15 August 2013, p. 3 (in Arabic).

Escobar, Arturo. (1995). "Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World." The Problematization of Poverty: The Tale of Three Worlds and Development Princeton: Princeton University Press, 39-47.

Eskandar, Wael (2013) Egypt's Kazeboon: Countering State Narrative. Middle East Institute, 12 JULY, 2013, http://www.mei.edu/content/egypts-kazeboon-countering-state-narrative

Essam El-Din, Gamal (2013) Morsi accused of treason? *Ahram Weekly*, Issue No.1156, 11 July, 2013

Ezzat, Amr (2011) Against "Poor First". *Al Masry Al Youm*, 27 June 2011.

Ezzelarab, Abdel Aziz (1990) The Political Economy of Coercion. Cairo: Dar Al Mustaqbal Al Arabi (in Arabic).

Fahmy, Khaled (2012) To curb extremism Egypt must revamp university curricula. *Ahram Online*, 27 Oct 2012. http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentPrint/4/0/56524/Opinion/0/To-curb-extremism-Egypt-must-revamp-university-cur.aspx

Fahmy, Ninette S. (1998) The Performance of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Egyptian Syndicates: An Alternative Formula for Reform*? Middle East Journal*, Vol. 52(4): 551-562.

Fahmy, Ninette. 2002. The Politics of Egypt. London: RoutledgeCurzon.

Faksh, Mahmud A. (1976) Education and Elite Recruitment: An Analysis of Egypt's Post-1952 Political Elite. Comparative Education Review, Vol. 20(2): 140-150.

Farag, Fatemah (1999) Conquering the beast. *Al Ahram Weekly*, 2-8 December, 1999, No. 458 (http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/1999/458/focus.htm)

Faris, David (2008). Revolutions without revolutionaries? network, theory, facebook, and the Egyptian blogosphere. *Arab Media and Society.* The American University in Cairo

Faris, David (2010) *Revolutions without Revolutionaries@ Social Media Networks and Regime Response in Egypt*. An unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, USA.

Farsoun, Samih (1988) Class Structure and Social Change in the Arab World. In Hisham Sharabi (ed.) The Next Arab Decade. Boulder: Westview Press, pp 221-238.

Feezell, Jessica; Meredith Conroy & Mario Guerrero (2009). Facebook is Fostering Political Engagement: A Study of Online Social Networking Groups and Offline Participation. Paper prepared for the American Political Science Association, Toronto, 2009.

Feintuck, M. (2004). *The public interest in regulation*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. Freedman, D. (2008). *The politics of media policy*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Fenech, AM and Kiger A (2005) The Use of Triangulation for Completeness Purposes. *Nurse Researcher*, 12(4), pp. 19-26.

Feteha, Ahmed (2012) Egypt's growth means importing gas, Qatar and Iraq probable sellers, *Ahram Online*, 2 Oct 2012.

Foley, Michael W. & Bob Edwards (1996) The Paradox of Civil Society. *Journal of Democracy,* Vol.7(3): 38-52.

Foss, C and Ellefsen, B (2002). The value of combining qualitative and quantitative approaches in nursing research by means of method triangulation. *Journal of Advanced Nursing.* 40,(2), pp. 242-248.

Foundation for the Future (2011) *A Survey of Civil Society Perception on the Transition, the Constitution and the New Democratic Institutions*. Amman: Foundation for the Future.

Freedom House (2014) Country report: Egypt. http://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/Egypt%20FOTP2014%20draft.pdf

Fuchs, Dieter. "The Political Culture Paradigm." In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, edited by Russell Dalton and Hans-Dieter Klingemann, 161-84. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Fukuyama, Francis (2001). "Social Capital, Civil Society and Development." *Third World Quarterly* 22, no. 1: 7-20.

Gadi Wolfsfeld, Elad Segev, and Tamir Sheafer (2013) Social Media and the Arab Spring: Politics Comes First. International Journal of Press/Politics, Vol. 18(2).

Garnham, N. (1990). *Capitalism and communication*. London: SAGE Publications.

Gaventa, J. (2003) *Towards Participatory Local Governance: Assessing the Transformative Possibilities*. Paper prepared for conference 'Participation: From Tyranny to Transformation' Manchester, 27-28 February 2003.

Gerhards, Jürgen & Mike S. Schäfer (2010) "Is the internet a better public sphere? Comparing old and new media in the USA and Germany," *New Media and Society* 12(1).

Gerodimos, Roman (2008) 'Mobilising Young Citizens in the UK. A content analysis of youth and issue websites. *Information, Communication & Society*, Vol. 11(7): 964-988.

Ghannam, Farha (2003) Remaking the Modern. Space, Relocation, and the Politics of Identity in a Global Cairo. University of California Press.

Ghannam, Jeffrey (2011) *Social Media in the Arab World: Leading up to the Uprisings of 2011.* Washington: the Center for International Media Assistance.

Giffen, Janice, Lucy Earle & Charles Buxton (2005) *The Development of Civil Society in Central Asia*. Oxford: The International NGO Training and Research Centre.

Gibson, Rachel & Stephen ward (2000) A Proposed Methodology for Studying the Function and Effectiveness of Party and Candidate Web Sites. *Social Science Computer Review*, Vol. 18(3): 301-319.

Gideon Rachman, "Reflections on the Revolution in Egypt," *Financial Times*, 14 February 2011.

Gillis, A and Jackson, W. (2002). *Research for nurses: Methods and interpretation.* Philadelphia: F.A Davis Company

Gillmor, D. (2004). *We the media: Grassroots journalism by the people, for the people*. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly Media.

Giugni, M. (1998). Introduction. In M. Giugni, D. McAdam, & C. Tilly (Eds.), *From Contention to Democracy* (pp. ix–xxiv). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Gladwell, Malcom (2010). Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted. *The New Yorker*, October 4, 2010

Goldberg, Ellis (1992) 'Peasants in Revolt - Egypt 1919'. International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 24(2): 261-280.

Goldberg, Vicki (1995) Photography view; looking at the poor in a gilded frame. The New York Times, April 9, 1995.

Golding, P., & Murdock, G. (1989). Information poverty and political inequality: Citizenship in the age of privatized communication. *Journal of Communication*, *39*(3), 180–195.

Gomaa, Mahmoud (2010) Critiquing the change of history curriculum in Egypt. Al Jazeera.net, 25 September 2010, http://www.aljazeera.net/news/pages/37d05344-1c11-4ce8-9c21-d3ae19eafa58

Gomhouria Online (2012) the *constitution* referendum supreme *committee* listens to workers' representatives. 20 November 2012.

Goode, Luke (2005) *Jürgen Habermas: Democracy and the Public Sphere*. Pluto Press: London.

Granovetter, Mark S. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 6 (1973): 1360-80.

Grills, S. (Ed.). (1998). *Doing Ethnographic Research: Fieldwork Settings*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gumuscu, Sebnem (2010) Class, Status, and Party: The Changing Face of Political Islam in Turkey and Egypt. *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 43(7) 835–861.

Habermas, Jurgen. *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990.

Habermas, Jürgen (2006) *Time of Transitions.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hadenius, Axel (1992) Democracy and development. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hall, Scott (2006). The blog ahead: How citizen-generated media is radically tilting the communications balance. New York: Morgan James Publishing.

Halpren, Manfred (1963) *The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa.* Rand Corporation.

Hammersley, M. (1992). *What's wrong with ethnography: Methodological explorations*. London: Routledge.

Hanson, Elizabeth C. *The Information Revolution and World Politics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008.

Harby, M. K. & M. El-Hadi Affifi (1958) Education in Modern Egypt. *International Review of Education*, Vol. 4(4): 423-439.

Hardt, Michael (1995) The Withering of Civil Society. Social Tezt, No. 45: 27-44.

Harmsen, Egbert (2008). *Islam, civil society and social work Muslim Voluntary Welfare Associations in Jordan between Patronage and Empowerment*. PhD thesis, ISIM, Amsterdam University Press.

Hassan, Hamdy (2010) 'State versus society in Egypt: Consolidating democracy or upgrading autocracy'. African Journal of Political Science and International Relations, Vol. 4(9): 319-229.

Hassan, Hamdy A (2011) Civil society in Egypt under the Mubarak regime. Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences, Vol. 2(2) 2 quarter II, 2011.

Hassan, Mansour M (2013) Proceeding of a seminar about drug addiction among children in rural Egypt. Cairo: National center for Social and Criminological Research.

Hayes, Andrew F. (2007) "Exploring the Forms of Self-Censorship: On the Spiral of Silence and the Use of Opinion Expression Avoidance Strategies." *Journal of Communication* 57, no. 4: 785-802.

Hazem Kandil (2012b): Why did the Egyptian Middle Class March to Tahrir Square? *Mediterranean Politics*, 17:2, 197-215

Hegazy, Ezzat (1985) Arab Youth and their problems. Kuwait: National Council of Arts, Humanities and Culture.

Henry, Marsha G (2003). "'Where are you really from?'- representation, identity and power in the fieldwork experiences of a South Asian diasporic". Qualitative Research, Vol. 3(2): 229-242.

Hermida, Alfred et al. (2012) "Sourcing the Arab Spring: A Case Study of Andy Carvin's Sources During the Tunisian and Egyptian Revolutions," paper presented at the International Symposium on Online Journalism in Austin, TX, April, 2012.

Herrera, Linda & Carlos Alberto Torres (2006) *Cultures of Arab Schooling: Critical Ethnographies from Egypt*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Herrera, Linda (2011) "Generation Rev and the Struggle for Democracy: Interview with Aly El-

Herrera, Linda. (2009) "Is Youth Being Addressed in Important and Distinctive Ways in Middle East Studies? (posed by Fida Adely)." International Journal of Middle East Studies 41.03: 368-371.

Herrera, Linda. (2011) "Egypt's Revolution 2.0:The Facebook Factor." *Jadaliyya*. <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/612/egypts-revolution-2.0_the-facebook-factor>.

Heydemann, Steven (2007), *Upgrading Authoritarianism in the Arab World*, Number 13, October, The Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution.

Hinnebusch, Raymond Jr. 1988. Egyptian Politics under Sadat: The Post-Populist Development of an Authoritarian-Modernizing State. Boulder: Lynne Rienner

Hjelm, K, Bard, K and Nyberg, P. (2005). Beliefs about health and diabetic in men of different within origin. *Journal of Advanced Nursing.* 50,(1), pp. 47-59.

Holstein, J.A and Gubrium J.F . (1995). *The active interview.* CA: Sage: Thousand Oasks.

Howard, Philip (2010) The Digital Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy. Information Technology and Political Islam. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Howard, Philp (2011) *The digital Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Information Technology and Political Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Howeidy, Amira (2013) The State of the State. *Ahram Online*, 30 January 2013.

Howell, J. and Pearce, J. (2001) *Civil society and development: A critical exploration*, Boulder: Lynne Reinner.

Human Rights Watch (2005) *Egypt: Margins of Repression: State Limits on Nongovernmental Organization Activism*, 4 July 2005, E1708, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/45cc48122.html [accessed 3 October 2012]

Hunt, Scott & Robert Benford (2004) Collective identity, Solidarity, and Commitment. In David Snow, Sarah Soule & Hanspeter Kriesi (eds.) *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Hussein, Taha, Mohamed el-Tabei, Ali Amin, Kamel el Shennawi, Galal el-Din el-Hamamsi and Naser el-Din el-Nashashebi (1955) Them, the Brotherhood. n.p.

Ibrahim, Ekram (2012) Egypt's poor suffer most from ongoing water crisis. *Ahram Online*, 16 Aug 2012.

Ibrahim, Saad Eddin (1982) Egypt's Islamic Militants. MERIP Reports, No. 103, The Politics of Religion (Feb., 1982): 5-14.

Ibrahim, Saad Eddine (1985) Social or Class Crisis? A Study on the New Middle Class Crisis. Al Manar, Issue 6, June 1985 (in Arabic).

Idle, N & A Nunns (eds.) (2011) *Tweets from Tahrir: Egypt's Revolution as it Unfolded, in the Words of the People who Made it*. NY: Or Books.

IDSC (2012) Social and Economic Status of the Egyptian Family after 25 January 2011. Vol. 16(66), September 2012.

IDSC (2013) State of Education in Egypt. Information and Decision Support Centre/IDSC bulletin, Vol. 7, issue 68, March 2013. www.idsc.gov.eg

IDSC, Information & Decision Support Centre (2011) *Egyptians' Political Participations*. Cairo: The Egyptian Cabinet, June 2011.

Inglehart, Ronald, and Christian Welzel. "Changing Mass Priorities: The Link between Modernization and Democracy." *Perspectives on Politics* 8, no. 02 (2010): 551-67.

Inglehart, Ronald. *Modernization and Post-Modernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.

International Organization for Migration (2011) factsheet: Street children in Egypt: Key findings of a study conducted by the National Center for Social and Criminological Research. **http://www.egypt.iom.int/Doc/Street%20children%20profile.pdf**

Iskandar, A. (2013, July). *Egypt's Revolution Hones it's Skills: Tamarod Demonstrates the Ability to Converge Technological Innovations and Maintain the Public's Trust and Attention*. Retrieved July 7, 2013, from Aljazeera: http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/07/201372121622650964.html

Iskandar, Adel (2013) Tamarod: Egypt's Revolution Hones its Skills. *Jadaliyya*, 30 June 2013, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/12516/tamarod_egypts-revolution-hones-its-skills

Ismail, Salwa (2000) The Popular Movement Dimensions of Contemporary Militant Islamism: Socio-Spatial Determinants in the Cairo Urban Setting. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 42 (2). pp. 263-293

Ismail, Salwa (2006) *Political Life in Cairo's New Quarters: Encountering the Everyday State*. University of Minnesota Press.

Jadaliyya (2014) Mosireen and the Battle for Political Memory. 24 February 2014. http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/16616/mosireen-and-the-battle-for-political-memory

Jasem Mohamed, Afrah (2013) The picture of the Arab intellectual. A reading in the sociology of an oppressive reality. *Idafat*, Vol. 20/21, 2013, pp 32-49 (in Arabic).

Jenkins, Richard. 2004. *Social Identity*. London: Routledge.

Joel Beinin (2012) The rise of Egypt's workers. Washington DC: Carnegie endowment for International Peace, June 2012.

Joffe, George (2011) 'The Arab Spring in North Africa: origins and prospects'. *The Journal of North African Studies,* Vol. 16(4): 507-532.

Johnson, Peter (1972) Egypt under Nasser. *MERIP Reports*, no. 10, July 1972, pp. 3-14.

Joseph, John E. 2004. *Language and Identity: National, Ethnic, Religious.* Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Juergensmeyer, Mark (1993) *The New Cold War?: Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kalathil, Shanthi and Taylor C. Boas (2003) *Open Networks, Closed Regimes: The Impact of the Internet on Government Rule*. Washington, D.C.: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Kaldor, Mary (2003) 'Civil Society and Accountability'. Journal of Human Development, Vol. 4(1): 5-27.

Kandil, Hazem (2012) Soldiers, Spies and Statesmen. Egypt's Road to Revolt. London: Verso.

Kanil, Amani (2010). A critical review of the literature about the Arab civil society. Foundationforfuture.org/files/Amani_Kanil_English.pdf

Kaplan, Seth (2009) Identity in Fragile States: Social cohesion and state building. *Development*, Vol. 52(4): 466-472.

Katz, Hagai (2003) Gramsci, Hegemony, and Global Civil Society Networks. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*. Volume 17(4): 332-347.

Kaveney, Roz (2011) It's OK to call your baby 'Facebook'. *The Guardian*, 21 February 2011. http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/feb/21/facebook-baby-egyptian

Keane, J. (1988). *Democracy and civil society*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Keane, J. (2009). *The life and death of democracy*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

Kellner, Douglas. "Globalization from Below? Toward a Radical Democratic Technopolitics." *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 4, no. 2 (1999): 101-12.

Khaled, Ashraf (2008), "Egypt: Academics Struggle with No Pay Rise for 25 Years", *University World News*, 27 April 2008, *www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20080424151856999*.

Khalifa, Badawi (2014) A Maze of Political Parties. *Masry Youm*, 16 March 2014. available at: http://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/411845

Khamis, Sahar & Katherine Vaughn (2011) Cyberactivism in the Egyptian Revolution: How Civic Engagement and Citizen Journalism Tilted the Balance. Arab Media and Society, Issue 14, 2011.

Khoury, Rami (2011) A Generation on the Move: Insights into the conditions, aspirations and activism of Arab youth. Beirut: Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy & International Affairs, American University of Beirut.

Kifner, John (1986) Egypt's army praised in quelling riots, but for Mubarak, crisis is not over. *The New York Times*, 8 March 1986.

Kingsley, Patrick (2014) First woman to head a political party in Egypt says it proves the revolution has changed attitudes. *The Observer*, 2 March 2014.

Kiousis, S., & Dimitrova, D. (2006). Differential impact of Web site content: Exploring the influence of source (public relations versus news), modality, and participation on college students' perceptions. Public Relations Review, 32(2), 177–179.

Kirkpatrick, David D. & Mayy El Sheikh (2014) Video of Mass Sexual Assault Taints Egypt Inauguration, *New York Times*, June 9, 2014. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/10/world/middleeast/video-of-mass-sexual-assault-taints-egypt-inauguration.html

Knoke, David and Nancy Wisely (1993) "Social Movements." In *Political Networks: The Structural Perspective*, edited by David Knocke, 57-84. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kreuger, R. A., 1998. Focus groups: a practical guidefor applied research. London:

Kulikova, Svetlana V., and David D. Perlmutter (2007) "Blogging Down the Dictator? The Kyrgyz Revolution and Samizdat Websites." *International Communication Gazette* 69, no. 1: 29-50.

Kumaraswamy, P. R. (2006), 'Who am I? The identity crisis in the Middle East', *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 10: 1, pp. 63–73.

Kuppinger, Petra (2005) Globalization and Exterritoriality in Metropolitan Cairo. Geographical Review, Vol. 95(3): New Geographies of the Middle East: 348-372.

Kuran, Timur (1989) 'Sparks and Prairie Fires: A Theory of Unanticipated Political Revolution'. *Public Choice*, Vol. 61(1): 41-74.

Lachine, Nadime (1977) Class Roots of the Sadat Regime: Reflections of an Egyptian Leftist. MERIP Reports, No. 56 (Apr., 1977), pp. 3-7.

Lachine, Nadime (1977) Class Roots of the Sadat Regime: Reflections of an Egyptian Leftist. *MERIP Reports*, No. 56 (Apr., 1977), pp. 3-7.

Lane, Sandra (1997) Television Minidramas: Social Marketing and Evaluation in Egypt. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. 11 (2): 164-182.

Langohr, Vickie (2004) Too Much Civil Society, Too Little Politics: Egypt and Liberalizing Arab Regimes. Comparative Politics, Vol. 36(2): 181-204.

Larry Diamond, *Development Democracy: Toward Consolidation,* Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.

Lei Sparre, Sara & Marie Juul Petersen (2007) *Islam and Civil Society. Case Studies from Jordan and Egypt*. Diis Report 2007:13. Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies.

Leonard, Thomas (1999). Making readers into citizens - The-old fashioned way. *In* The idea of public journalism. Glasser, T. ed. Pp. 85-96. New York: The Guilford Press

Lerner, Melissa (2010). "Connecting the Actual with the Virtual: The Internet and Social Movement Theory in the Muslim World—The Cases of Iran and Egypt." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 30(4).

Lewiński, Marcin and Mohammed, Dima (2012) "Deliberate Design or Unintended Consequences: The Argumentative Uses of Facebook During the Arab Spring," *Journal of Public Deliberation*: Vol. 8: Iss. 1, Article 11. Available at: http://www.publicdeliberation.net/jpd/vol8/iss1/art11

Lievrouw, Leah A. *Alternative and Activist New Media*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011.

Lim, Merlyna (2012) "Clicks, Cabs, and Coffee Houses: Social Media and Oppositional Movements in Egypt, 2004 – 2011," *Journal of Communication, Vol.* 62.

Liu, Y.P., & Shrum, L.J. (2002). What is interactivity and is it always such a good thing? Implications of definition, person, and situation for the influence of interactivity on advertising effectiveness. Journal of Advertising, 31(4), 53–64.

Loveluck, Louisa (2012) *Education in Egypt: Key Challenges*. London: Middle East and North Africa Programme, Chatham House.

Mabrouk, Mirette (2010). Changing the channel: Egypt"s evolving media landscape and its role in domestic politics. The Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World.

Mackay, H., & Gillespie, G. (1992). Extending the social shaping of technology approach: Ideology and appropriation. *Social Studies of Science*, 22(4), 685–716.

MacKinnon, Rebecca (2008) 'Flatter world and thicker walls? Blogs, censorship and civic discourse in China'. *Public Choice*, Vol. 134: 31-46.

Maidwell, A. (1996). The role of the surgical nurse as a health promoter. *British Journal of Nursing.* 5, (15), pp. 898-904.

Mäkinen, M., and Kuira, M. W., 2008, 'Social Media and Post-election Crisis in Kenya', The International Journal of Press/Politics, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 328-335 http://hij.sagepub.com/content/13/3/328.abstract

Mansour, Hoda (2012) The anger of the slums. *Rosa-al-Yousef magazine*, 4 November 2012.

Mansour, Muhammad (2013) Illegal Immigration to Germany: Chasing a fading dream. *Egypt Independent*, 9 September 2013, http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/illegal-immigration-germany-chasing-fading-dream

Mansour, Sherif (2008). "Egypt's Facebook showdown." Freedom House in the news. http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=72&release=667

Maqbool, Aleem (2013) Resentment still felt beneath calm in Port Said. *BBC News,* 17 March 2013.

Marafi, Safaa (2011) *The Neoliberal Dream of Segregation Rethinking Gated Communities in Greater Cairo. A Case Study Al-Rehab City Gated Community*. An Unpublished MA Thesis, The American University In Cairo

MARSH, D., O'TOOLE, T. & JONES, S. 2007. *Young People and Politics in the UK: Apathy or Alienation?* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillian.

Mayfield, Thomas (2011) 'A Commander's Strategy for Social Media'. *Joint Force Quarterly*, issue 60: 79-128.

McAdam, Doug, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly. *Dynamics of Contention.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

McAdam, Douglas and Ronnelle Paulsen (1993). "Specifying the Relationship Between Social Ties and Activism." *American Journal of Sociology* 99, no. 3.

McAdam, Douglas, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly (2008). "Methods for Measuring Mechanisms of Contention." *Qualitative Sociology* 31(4).

McCarthy, John & Mary Zald (1977) Resource mobilization and social movements: a partial theory." American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 82: 1212-41.

MCIT (2011) *ICT Indicators in Brief.* December 2011. Cairo: Egyptian Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, www.mcit.gov.eg.

McLafferty I. (2004).Focus group interviews as a data collecting strategy. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 48(2), pp. 187-194

McPherson, K and Leydon, G .(2002). Quantitative and qualitative methods in UK health research, *European Journal of Cancer Care*. 11,pp. 225-231.

Mehanna,Omnia (2008). Internet and the Egyptian public sphere. Cairo University, 12th General Assembly, Governing the African Public Sphere.

Meier, P., 'The Impact of the Information Revolution on Protest Frequency in Repressive Contexts', Paper presented at the 50th International Studies Association Conference New York City, 15-17 February, New York City http://irevolution.files.wordpress.com/2009/02/meier-isa-2009-final.pdf

Mellor, Noha et al. 2011. Arab Media. Cambridge: Polity.

Mellor, Noha. 2007. Modern Arab Journalism. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Mellor, Noha (2013) Who Represents the Revolutionaries? Examples from the Egyptian Revolution 2011, *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 19(1): 82-98.

Midan Masr (2012) How to Become a Political Activist in Egypt. *Midan Masr*, February 2012, p. 15.

Middle East Monitor (2014) Egyptian army funds parties to stand against Muslim Brotherhood. 12 February 2014. link: https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/news/africa/9716-egyptian-army-funds-parties-to-stand-against-muslim-brotherhood

Miladi, Noureddine (2011) Tunisia: A media led revolution? Al Jazeera English,
http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/01/2011116142317498666.html

Miles and Huberman, (1994). Qualitative data analysis. CA: Sag Publication, Beverly Hills.

Miles, Hugh. 2005. Al Jazeera: How Arab TV News Challenges America. Grove Press.

Miraftab, Faranak (2004)."Can You Belly Dance? Methodological questions in the era of transnational feminist research". *Gender, Place and Culture*, Vol. 11(4): 595-604).

Misagh Parsa, *States, Ideologies, and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of Iran*, *Nicaragua, and the Philippines*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000

Mitra, Ananda. "Marginal Voices in Cyberspace." *New Media & Society* 3, no. 1 (2001): 29-48.

Moaadel, Mansoor (2012) The Arab Spring and Egyptian Revolution Makers: Predictors of Participation. Report 12-775, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan, Institute of Social research.

Moaddel, Mansoor (2012) What do the Arab people Want? *Project Syndicate*, http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/what-do-arabs-want-

Mohamed, Ali Sayed (2011) The Political Discourse of Egyptian Blogs: A Case Study of *Egyptian Awareness. Seachange,* McGill University, pp. 40-113. http://www.seachangejournal.ca/pdf/CHOICE%202011.pdf

Mohammed El-Nawawy and Sahar Khamis (2012) Cyberactivists Paving the Way for the Arab Spring: Voices from Egypt, Tunisia and Libya. CyberOrient, Vol. 6, Iss. 2, 2012. http://www.cyberorient.net/article.do?articleId=7994

Mohieldin, Khaled (2012) Nasser, myself and Muslim Brotherhood*. Al Ahram Online*, 23 July 2012.

Mokbel, Rehab (2014) Egypt's Tamarod plagued by division. Al Monitor, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/03/tamarod-movement-egypt-divisions-elections.html##ixzz35NO1juSP

Mona Abaza (2010) The Trafficking with *Tanwir* (Enlightenment), Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East, Vol. 30, No. 1: 32-46.

Morgan, D. (1997). *The focus group guideline book*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Morgan, D. L., 1988. Focus groups as qualitative research. London: Sage.

Morsi, Ahmed (2012) Attacks on the sick. *Al Ahram Weekly*, 30 August - 5 September 2012, Issue No. 1112.

Mulgan, G. (1990). *The question of quality*. London: BFI Publishing.

Munoz, Gema Martin. (2000). "Arab Youth Today: the Generation Gap, Identity Crisis and Democratic Deficit" in Alienation or Integration of Arab Youth. Routledge, 161-188.

Murdock, G. (1992). Citizens, consumers and public culture. In K. C. Schroder (Ed.), *Media cultures: Reappraising transnational media* (pp. 17–41). London: Routledge.

Murphy, Emma (2012) 'Problematizing Arab Youth: Generational Narratives of Systemic Failure'. *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 17(1): 5-22.

Mustapha, Al Sayed K (2000) Helping out is hard to do. *Foreign Policy*, n117, 1999-2000.

Myers, Michael D. 1999. "Investigating Information Systems with Ethnographic Research," *Communication of the AIS,* Vol. 2, Article 23, pp. 1-20.

Nagui, Ahmed (2012) Restructure the Ministry of Interior or Send them to Rehabilitation. *Al Masry al Youm*, 27 October 2012.

Nanabhay, Mohamed & Roxane Farmanfarmaian (2011) 'From spectacle to spectacular: How physical space, social media and mainstream broadcast amplified the public sphere in Egypt's 'Revolution''. *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 16(4): 573-603.

Neuman, W. Russell, Bruce Bimber, and Matthew Hindman. "The Internet and Four Dimensions of Citizenship." In *The Oxford Handbook of American Public Opinion and the Media*, edited by Lawrence R. Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, 22- 42. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Newton, Kenneth (2001) 'Trust, Social Capital, Civil Society, and Democracy.' *International Political Science/Review*, Vol. 22(2): 201-214.

Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth (1993). The Spiral of Silence: Public Opinion-Our Social Skin. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Norman, W. J., 2006. *Negotiating Nationalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Norris, P. (2001*). Digital Divide: Civic engagement, Information Poverty, and the Internet Worldwide*. Cambridge, UK and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

NORRIS, P. 2004. Young People and Political Activism: From the Politics of Loyalties to the Politics of Choice? *Civic engagement in the 21st century: Toward a Scholarly and Practical Agenda.* California.

Norton, Augustus Richard (ed.) (1995) Civil Society in the Middle East, Vol. 1. Leiden: EJ Brill.

Ochs, E. (1993) "Constructing social identity: A language socialization perspective". *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, Vol. 26(3): 287-306.

OECD (2010) *Reviews of National Policies for Education Higher Education in Egypt*. OECD Publishing.

Ortiz, A. M. Ethnographic interviews (2003). In F. Stage, & K. Manning (Eds.) *Diverse Research Approaches and Methods Applied to the College Environment*. Publisher: Brunner-Routledge

Osman, Tarek (2010) *Egypt on the Brink: From Nasser to Mubarak.* Yale University Press.

Ottaway, Marina (2003) Democracy Challenged: The challenge of semi-authoritarianism, Carnegie Endowment for International peace, Washington DC.

Ouellette, L., & Lewis, J. (2000). Moving beyond the "Vast wasteland": Cultural policy and television in the United States, *Television and New Media*, *1*(1), 95–115.

Papic, M. and Noona, S., 2011, 'Social Media as a Tool for Protest', Stratfor Global Intelligence, 3 February http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20110202-social-media-tool-protest

Papacharissi, Zizi (2010) *A Private Sphere: Democracy in a digital age*. Cambridge: Polity.

Paulussen, Steve 2008. User Generated Content in the Newsroom: Professional and Organizational Constraints on Participatory Journalism. Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture 5(2): 24-41.

Perez, Oren (2004). Global Governance and Electronic Democracy: E-Politics as a Multidimensional Experience. *In* Democracy online: The prospects for political renewal through the Internet. P. Shane ed. Pp. 83-94. London: Routledge.

Philip N. Howard, *The Digital Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Information Technology and Political Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 12.

Pollard, Lisa (2000) The Family Politics of Colonizing and Liberating Egypt, 1882-1919. *Social Politics,* Vol. 7(1): 47-79.

Polletta, Francesca and Jasper, James M. 2001. "Collective Identity and Social Movements," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27: 283-305.

Population Council (2010) Survey of Young People in Egypt. February 2010. Cairo: Population Council West Asia and North Africa.

Posusney, Marsha P (1993) Irrational Workers: The Moral Economy of Labor Protest in Egypt. World Politics, Vol. 46(1): 83-120.

Pratt, Nicola (2001) Globalization and the Post-colonial State: Human Rights NGOs and the Prospects for Democratic Governance in Egypt. Unpublished PhD thesis, the University of Exeter.

Priest, S.H. (1996). *Doing media research: an introduction.* Sage, London

Putnam, Robert D (1993) Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Radsch, Courtney (2008) Core to Commonplace: the evolution of Egypt's blogosphere. *Arab Media and Society,* Issue 6, Fall 2008.

Raggal." *Jadaliyya.* <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/2869/generation-rev-and-thestruggle-for-democracy_inte>

Rahimi, Babk (2003) 'Cyberdissent: the Internet in Revolutionary Iran'. *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 7(3).

RAMADAN, AYMAN (2014) Tamarod Facebook page was "stolen". Cairo Post, 9 Feb. 2014. http://thecairopost.com/news/87114/news/mahmoud-badr-tamarod-facebook-page-was-stolen

Rashwan, Nada Hussein (2011) first week in Egyptian universities sees professors strike for reform. *Al Ahram Online*, 6 October 2011.

Riffe, Daniel, Stephen Lacy & Frederick Fico (2005) *Analyzing Media Messages: Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research*. Routledge.

Rizk, Hanna (1955) Social Services Available for Families in Egypt. Marriage and Family Living, Vol. 17(3): 212-216.

Rosenstone, S. J a Hansen, J. M. 2003. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America.* New York: Longman

Ross, Marc Howard. 1997. "Culture and Identity in Comparative Political Analysis," in Lichbach, M.I. and Zuckerman, A.S., (eds). 1997. *Comparative Politics.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Rubin, R. Rubin, A, & Piele, L. 2005, *Communication Research: Strategies and Sources,* 6th edn, Thomson Wadsworth, Belmont, CA.

Rucht, D. (2004). The Quadruple 'A': Media Strategies of Protest Movements Since the 1960s. In W. van de Donk, B. D. Loader, P. G. Nixon, & D. Rucht, *Cyberprotest: New Media, Citizens and Social Movements* (pp. 29-56). London: Routledge.

Russel, Mona (2001) Competing, Overlapping, and Contradictory Agendas: Egyptian Education under British Occupation, 1882-1922. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East,* Vol. XXI (1&2): 50-60.

Saco, Diana (2002) Cybering Democracy: Public Space and the Internet. University of Minnesota Press.

Salamon, Lester, Helmut Anheir, Regina List, Stefan Toepler, S Wojciech Sokolowski (1999) Global Civil Society. Dimensions of the Nonprofit Sector. The John Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies.

Salem, Mohamed (2013) Rape under the name of children marriage. Laha Magazine, 11 August, 2013, pp. 124-127 (in Arabic).

Sallam, Hesham (2012) Striking Back at Egyptian Workers. *Midan Masr*, 25 October 2012, link: http://www.midanmasr.com/en/printerfriendly.aspx?ArticleID=137

Sajoo, A. (2002) (ed.) *Civil Society in the Muslim World*, London: IB Tauris.

Samih, Mai (2013) My flag, my love. Al Ahram Weekly, Issue No.1160, 15 August, 2013

Samir, Ahmed (2012) Defending a filthy criminal with no page on Facebook. *Al Masry al Youm*, 28 October 2012.

Sanders, Lewis & Mark Visona (2012) The Soul of Tahrir: Poetics of a Revolution. In Samia Mehrez (ed.) *Translating Egypt's Revolution. The Language of Tahrir*. Cairo: American University Press in Cairo.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, H. *(1997), Research Methods for Business Studies. UK:* Pitman Pub1ishin.

Schenker, David (2011) *Egypt's Enduring Challenges Shaping the Post-Mubarak Environment*. *Policy Focus #110, April 2011, The Washington Institute for Near Eastern Policy:* http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/PolicyFocus110.pdf.

Schneider, S., & Foot, K. (2004). The Web as an object of study. *New Media & Society*, 6(1), 114–122.

Scholz, Trebor. —The Web 2.0 Ideology‖ Collectivate.net. Published on <http://www.collectivate.net/journalisms/2007/10/3/the-web-20-ideology.html>

Schroeder, R. (2007). *Rethinking science, technology, and social change*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

Sedra, Paul (2011) The Long Shadow of the 1952 Revolution. *Jadaliyya*, 13 Feb. 2011.

Sekaran, U. *(1992). Research Methods for Business.* USA: John Wiley & Sons.

Shaarawi, Fatima and Mousa Hussein (2014) Experts: Media play a role in regaining state's dignity and building the new Egypt. *Ahram newspaper*, 12 June 2014 (in Arabic).

Sharabi, Hisham (1988) Neopatriarchy. A Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Societies. NY: OUP.

Shehata, Dina et al. (2012) MAPPING ISLAMIC ACTORS IN EGYPT. Cairo: the Netherlands-Flemish Institute in Cairo & Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies.

Sherif, Bahia (2001). "The Ambiguity of Boundaries in the Fieldwork Experience: Establishing Rapport and Negotiating Insider/Outsider Status". *Qualitative inquiry*, Vol. 7(4): 436-447.

Shirky, C. (2011) 'The Political Power of Social Media', *Foreign Affairs* 90(1): 28.

Siebert, Lauren Marie (2002)."All the Things that Portray Us as Individuals and as a Nation": Read Troupe and Egyptian National Identity in the Twentieth Century. *Text, Practice, Performance*, Vol. IV(2002): 51-63

Sika, Nadine (2012): Youth Political Engagement in Egypt: From Abstention to Uprising, British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, 39:2, 181-199

Silverman, D. (2001). *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analyzing Talk, Text and Interaction*. (2nd ed). London: Sage.

Skocpol. 1979. *States and social revolutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Slevin, James (2000) *The Internet and Society*. Cambridge: Polity.

Snow, David, Louis Zurcher & Sheldon Ekland-Olson (1980) 'Social Networks and Social Movements: A Microstructural Approach to Differential Recruitment'. *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 45(5): 787-801.

Sobhy, Hania. (2009). "Amr Khaled and Young Muslim Elites Islamization and the Consolidation of Mainstream Muslim Piety in Egypt" in Cairo Contested. American University in Cairo Press, 415-454.

Soliman, Samer (2011) *The Autumn of Dictatorship. Fiscal Crisis and Political Chane in Egypt under Mubarak*. California: Stanford University Press.

Sparre, Sara Lei (2008) Muslim youth organisations in Egypt: actors of reform and development? DIIS Brief, Danish Institute for International Studies.

SPIEGEL (2005) Interview with Egyptian Presidential Candidate Numan Gumaa. 9 May 2005.

Spier, S. (2011) 'CollectiveAction2.0: The Impact of ICT-Based Social Media on Collective Action – Difference in Degree or Difference in Kind?' Research Paper, Humboldt University, Berlin. http://ssrn.com/abstract=1979312.

Stack, Liam. "In Egypt, Sexual Harassment Grows." *The Christian Science Monitor*, September 23, 2008: http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2008/0923/p07s02-wome.html

Stacks, D. W. (2011). *Primer of public relations research*, 2nd Ed. New York: Guilford

Starrett G (1998) *Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press.

Stewart, D. & Shamdasani, P., 1990. Focus groups: theory and practice .London:Sage.

Stolle, D. & Rochon, D. (1998) Are all associations alike? Member diversity, associational type and the creation of social capital, American Behavioral Scientist, 42(1), pp. 47–65.

Stromer-Galley, J. (2000). On-Line Interaction and Why Candidates Avoid It. Journal of Communication, 50(4), 111.

Stromer-Galley, J. (2004). Interactivity-as-Product and Interactivity-as-Process. Information Society, 20(5), 391–394.

Stromer-Galley, Jennifer (2004) Interactivity-as-Product and Interactivity-as-Process. *The Information Society*, Volume 20(5): 391-394.

Suleiman, Yasir & Paul Anderson (2008). "'Conducting Fieldwork in the Middle East': Report of a Workshop held t the University of Edinburgh on 12 February 2007". *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies,* Vol. 35(2): 151-171.

Sundar, S., Kalyanaraman, S., & Brown, J. (2003). Explicating Web Site Interactivity: Impression Formation Effects in Political Campaign Sites. Communication Research, 30(1), 30–59.

Sundar, S.S., Hesser, K.M., Kalyanaraman, S., & Brown, J. (1998). The effect of interactivity on political persuasion, paper presented at the Sociology & Social Psychology section at the 21st General Assembly & Scientific Conference of the International Association for Media and Communication Research, Glasgow, UK.

Szyliowicz, Joseph S. (1969) Education and Political Development in Turkey, Egypt, and Iran. *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 13(2):150-166.

Tadros, Mariz (2009) Advocacy in the Age of Authoritarianism: Adjustments of all Sorts in Egypt. ID S Working Paper 337, October 2009, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex.

Tarek, Sherif (2012), Al Arahm Online, 28 August 2012, http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/51429/Egypt/Politics-/Sabri-Nakhnoukh-Key-thug-lifts-lid-on-Mubarakera-p.aspx

Tarrow, Sidney. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Tashakkori, A. & Teddlie, C. (2003). *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Taylor Dewey, Juliane Kaden, Miriam Marks, Shun Matsushima, and Beijing Zhu (2012) *The Impact of Social Media on Social Unrest in the Arab Spring.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University.

The Washington Post (2012) Beset by years of woes as they pick a new leader, Egyptians search for a superman. 24 May 2012.

Thompson, J. (1995). *The Media and modernity*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Tilly, Charles (2011). "Describing, Measuring, and Explaining Struggle." *Qualitative Sociology* 31(1).

Totah, Faedah M (2012) Ultras Uprising or Boys Just Wanna Have Fun? *Anthropology News*. http://www.anthropology-news.org/index.php/2012/06/08/ultras-uprising-or-boys-just-wanna-have-fun/

Tracey, M. (1998). *The rise and fall of public service broadcasting*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Trochim, W.M.K. (2006). *Research methods knowledge base.*

http://www.socialresearchmethods.net

Tufekci, Zeynep & Christopher Wilson (2012) Social Media and the decision to participate in political protest: observations from Tahrir Square. *Journal of Communication*, Vol. 62: 363-379.

Umaña-Taylor, A and Bámaca, M (2004). Conducting Focus Groups with Latino Populations: Lessons from the Field. *Family Relations*. 53, pp. 261-272.

UNICEF (2010) *Child Poverty and disparities in Egypt Building the Social Infrastructure for Egypt's Future Global Study on child poverty and disparities*. Cairo: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), February 2010.

Unicef (2011) Egypt Programme Profile: Social Policy, Monitoring and Evaluation. Understanding and Confronting Child Poverty. Link: http://www.unicef.org/egypt/SPME.pdf

Urdal, Henrik (2006) 'A Clash of Generations? Youth Bulges and Political Violence'. *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 50: 607-629.

Vairel, Frédéric (2011) Protesting in Authoritarian Situations: Egypt and Morocco in Comparative Perspective. In Beinin, Joel & Frédéric Vairel (eds.) *Social Movements, Mobilization, and Contestation in the Middle East and North Africa.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

VAN DER EIJK, C. & FRANKLIN, M. N. 2009. *Elections and Voters,* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan

Vedel, T. (2003). Political communication in the age of the Internet. In P.J. Maarek & G. Wolfsfeld (Eds.), *Political Communication in a New Era: A Cross-national Perspective* (pp. 41–59). London, UK and New York, NY: Routledge.

Verba, S., Scholzman, K. L. and H. Brady. 1995. Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American politics. Cambridge: Harvard University Press

Wallace-Wells, Benjamin (2012) The Lonely Battle of Wael Ghonim. *New York Magazine*, Jan 22, 2012.

Waterbury, John (1985) The "Soft State" and the Open Door: Egypt's Experience with Economic Liberalization, 1974-1984. *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 18(1): 65-83.

Watson, Ivan (2011) Wael Ghonim: Negotiation days with Mubarak are over. *CNN*, 10 Feb. 2011: http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/02/09/egypt.protests.google.exec/

Welzel, Christian & Ronald Inglehart (2008) The role of ordinary people in democratization. *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 19(1): 126-140.

Welzel, Christian, and Ronald Inglehart. "Political Culture, Mass Beliefs, and Value Change." In *Democratization*, edited by Christian W. Haerpfer, Patrick Bernhagen, Ronald F. Inglehart, Christian Welzel, 126-44. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

West, Darell M. *The Next Wave: Using Digital Technology to Further Social and Political Innovation*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2011

Wheeler, Deborah L. (2006). *The Internet in the Middle East: Global Expectations and Local Imaginations in Kuwait*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Wiktorowicz, Quintan (2000) 'Civil Society as Social Control: State Power in Jordan'. *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 33(1): 43-61.

Wimmer, R. D., & Dominick, J. R. (2006). *Mass media research* (8th ed.). Holly J. Allen

Witschge, Tamara 2004. Online deliberation: Possibilities of the Internet for deliberative democracy. *In* Democracy online: The prospects for political renewal through the Internet, P. Shane ed. Pp. 109-122. London: Routledge.

Yerkes (2012) Egypt's Civil Society Crackdown: a Test for US-Egyptian Relations. 3 February 2012, LSE blogs, available at: http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/ideas/2012/02/egypts-civil-society-crackdown-a-test-for-us-egyptian-relations/ (accessed on 3 October 2012).

Yom, Sean L (2005) 'Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World. The Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA), Vol. 9(4).

Youm7 (2013) Housing Minister in Mansoura: MB are the enemies of Egypt. Youm7, 24 December 2013.

Young, Robert (2003) *Postcolonialism. A very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press.

Youssef, Bassem (2014) The chic Jahiliyya. el Shorouk newspaper, 18 Feb. 2014 (in Arabic).

ZAHRAN, AHMED (2012) Post-Revolution Political Parties*. Midan Masr magazine*, http://www.midanmasr.com/en/Article.aspx?ArticleID=99

Zahran, Farid (2007) New Social Movements. Cairo: Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (in Arabic).

Zuckerman, Ethan (2013) Beyond the Crisis in Civic Engagement. http://www.ethanzuckerman.com/blog/2013/03/26/beyond-the-crisis-in-civics-notes-from-my-2013-dml-talk/#sthash.Ext8C2n4.dpuf

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Participant Information Sheet

A. **About this project**

Title of Project: Social Media: a new virtual civil society in Egypt?

The aim of my research is to trace the power of social media in serving as a virtual civil society in the Arab world, focusing on Egypt as a topical case study.

The research will shed new light on the significant role that social media is expected to play in the future particularly with the declining credibility of traditional mainstream media in the Arab world, which is usually run by political parties.

B. Your Participation in the Research Project

Why you have been asked?

The project is based on the following data sources:

1)   Interviews with activists
2)   Focus groups

You have been asked as an activist, or a voter to participate.

What happens if you want to change your mind?

If you decide to join the study you can change your mind and stop at any time. I will completely respect your decision. There are absolutely no penalties for stopping.

What would happen if you join the study?

If you agree to join the study, I will need to carry out an interview with you for around 1 hour where you will be asked specific questions about your evaluation of the use of social media in mobilising Egyptian youth.

Are there any risks?

I do not think there are any significant risks due to the study. If you did feel that there was any stress involved you can stop at any time.

What happens to the questionnaire and interview results?

I will collect the data to use as a basis for my analysis. I intend to use quotes from the interviews after translating them into English along with interviewers' names, when possible, in order to support my argument. However, interviewers who wish to be anonymised to protect their identities would be respected.

Are there any benefits from taking part?

There are no direct benefits to you for taking part; however I hope this research may help provide new insights to Arab and western scholarships.

I also hope that my research will be of interest to media institutions and media students in the UK and Middle East.

How I protect your privacy

All the information I get from you is strictly confidential. I will not use any identifiers and will keep your identity anonymous unless otherwise agreed - in the case of in-depth interviews.

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS SHEET TO KEEP, TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF YOUR CONSENT FORM

Contact Details:
Abdul Aziz Sharbatly

Email: sharbatlya@gmail.com

Appendix 2 - CONSENT FORM

Title of the project: Social Media: a new virtual civil society in Egypt?

Abdulaziz Sharbatly

Email: sharbatlya@gmail.com

Please initial box

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason. ☐

3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

Please tick box

Yes   **No**

4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded ☐ ☐

I agree to be quoted in publications with my position, title and name identified ☐ ☐

If you don't agree with 6, please answer 7.

I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications ☐ ☐

_____   _____   _____
Name of Participant   Date
     Signature

_____   _____   _____
Name of Researcher   Date
     Signature

Appendix 3 - Focus group participants

Group 1

Name	Age	Education	Occupation
Osama	18	University student	Not Working
Mohamed	18	High School student	Not Working
Ahmed	18	High School student	Not Working
Youssef	18	High School student	Not Working
Amr	19	University student	Not Working
Mohamed	18	High School student	Not Working

Group 2:

Name	Age	Education	Occupation
Samira	32	University	Not Working
Engy	35	University	Not Working
Nivin	35	University	Administration
Wafaa	33	University	Not Working
Ann	26	University	Not Working
Nermin	29	University	Not Working

Group 3:

Name	Age	Education	Occupation
Yara	18	High School student	Not Working
Radwa	18	University student	Not Working
Mona	19	University student	Not Working
Dina	19	University student	Not Working
Farida	18	High School student	Not Working
Nourhan	21	University student	Not Working