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**Lucca, Italy**

**A Performative Space: Socio-Spatial Practices in Tahrir  
Square during the Egyptian Revolution of 2011**

**PhD Program in Management and Development of Cultural Heritage  
XXVI Cycle**

**By  
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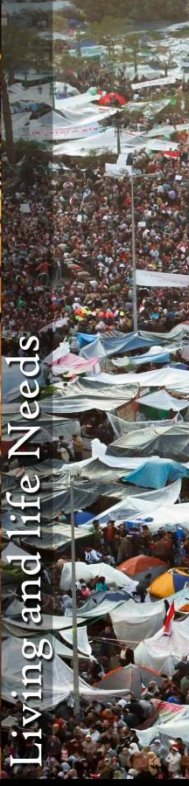
Offense and Defense



Art and Freedom of Expression



Living and life Needs



Media and News Display



Prayers and Ritual Practices



*To my Dad's soul,  
Who sacrificed so much so that I could achieve my goals,  
who taught me how to smile always,  
and whose infinite energy I will carry all my life,  
as his proud daughter.*



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# Vita

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2010	Attended the International Summer School in Conservation of Historical Monumental and Archaeological Sites, University of Rome "Tor Vergata", Faculty of Engineering, Department of Civil Engineering, Rome.
2009	Internship at the Italian National Commission for UNESCO, Rome, Intangible Cultural Heritage Department.
2008	Full time Teaching Assistant in Misr International University, Architectural Engineering Department, Cairo, Egypt.
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## Publications and Presentations

Abou el Fadl, B., Abd el Moneim, G. (2014). *Art and Freedom of Expression as Socio-Spatial Practices in Tahrir Square during the Egyptian Revolution*. CAUMME II: Contemporary Architecture & Urbanism in the Mediterranean & the Middle East, Girne American University. (Paper accepted. presented)

Abou el Fadl, B. (2013) *The Discursive Moments of Movement of Ramses II Colossal to Ramses Square: new identity, new political manifestation and new symbolic meanings*. The Italian Association of Urban History, Catania, Italy, Conference “Visible Invisible”: Telling the modernization of urban conflicts, and rhetorical strategies discursive. (Presented and published VI congress of AISU)

Abou el Fadl, B. (2012) *An Interactive E-Cultural Hub for Practicing Democracy*. “Heritage 2012” Vol. 2. Green Lines Institute – 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Heritage and Sustainable Development, Porto, Portugal. (Presented and published)

Abou el Fadl, B. (2010). *Implementation of intangible cultural heritage to achieve sustainable development strategy: in autonomous cultural district*. “Heritage 2010”, Vol. 2. Green Lines Institute – 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Heritage and Sustainable Development, Évora, Portugal. (Published)

**2014**

Seminar in IMT Institute for Advanced Studies Lucca, “A Performative Space: Socio-Spatial Practices in Tahrir Square during the Egyptian Revolution”

**2013**

Session in the VI congress of AISU, The Italian Association of Urban History, Catania, Italy, Conference “Visible Invisible”: Telling the modernization of urban conflicts, and rhetorical Strategies discursive

**2010**

Presentation in CULTANT in Cairo (the Centre for Documentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage) about “The Pivotal role of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Sustainable Development Strategy for Autonomous Cultural District.”

# Abstract

The occupation of public squares during the Arab Spring in 2011 across the Middle East and North Africa have revealed new layers of complex practices of liberation used to counter the strategies of the regime's security apparatus. There emerged a need to critically detect and analyse the spatial practices of the liberated spaces as forms of sustained resistance that facilitated political gains. During the 18 days of the Egyptian Revolution of 2011, public space, long neglected, again became a political domain that witnessed unusual spatial practices and a contested terrain for society, in sum, a space for protest and resistance for the entire population of Cairo. This research shall focus on Tahrir Square in Cairo as 'space of politics' during the eighteen days long Egyptian Revolution, i.e., from Jan 25 till Feb 11 2011. The aim of the research is to investigate how socio-spatial practices transformed public space from being a congested traffic hub into an active and animated space for resistance that was equally accessible to different factions, social strata, media outlets, and urban social groupings, as determined by popular cultures and social responsibilities. It advances our knowledge on the way social movements manipulate, manage and occupy vast urban spaces with great flexibility and autonomous spatial tactics. Tahrir Square was reproduced, in a process of "space adaptation,"<sup>1</sup> to accommodate forms of social organization and administration. This adaptation of space embedded spatial patterns of activities and practices from the earliest days, all of which shall be described and classified by the research through a frame structure.

This research investigates the physical appearance of democratic performance in public space through acts of resistance over a delineated space from three-years of socio-spatial fieldwork and spatio-political research. The thesis employs an inter-disciplinary case study methodology comprising of two phases – descriptive explanatory and exploratory – to investigate the change in socio-spatial practices and dynamics of urban space. In this research, an interactive representation of narratives will be presented in order to address the complexity of the problem, i.e., the integration of architectural, social, political, historical, and spatial materials to construct a multi-layered analysis and significant account. Diverse research methods are utilized, such as: the collection of historical background data of space, contemporary reports, unstructured interviews with 50 involved actors, documented narratives, and direct observations. Through undertaking analytical surveys and decoding of information of the events, a systematic classification of socio-spatial patterns and distribution of activities of daily intervals through the five main themes was generated. This research presents a matrix of analytical maps tracing the five main themes: hospitalization and emergency support, living and life needs supplies, media and news display, prayers and ritual practices, and art and freedom of expression. This matrix is a tool with which to display conflict over space, and explicitly, how Tahrir Square was re-conceptualized. In doing so, this thesis deploys innovative ways to highlight social practices that spatially occupied a significant part of downtown Cairo and how changes occurred over the time. Studying the evidence of each theme separately, the dynamics and changing location of activities and rational processes of management can be systematically analyzed and the complexity of the performative space understood. The physical space, hence, became a socio-spatial sphere that is adjustable, flexible domain of human praxis rather than a rigid physical container of human actors.

Thus, this approach proposes a new perspective for looking at the recent uprisings and revolts in public squares through tracing their dynamics and socio-spatial practices. This can be useful in understanding similar cases of uprisings and suggests the value of further research into the process of re-conceptualization of public space. The research presented here, and it is supporting methodology, developed as a way to capture the values and capacities that are in play during such particular 'spatial of revolt'. The thesis is a valuable addition to literature on the understanding of qualities of, human interaction with urban spaces, and their political role in the contemporary city. It has potential application for activists, public space occupiers, planners, architects, anthropologists, theorists and dictators or governments seeking to control urban unrest.

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<sup>1</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1992). *The production of space*. Wiley-Blackwell; 1 edition .p 73



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Problem Identification

Recent occupations of public spaces have witnessed extensive pro-democratic revolts and remarkable political changes, not only emerging from the North African and Middle Eastern cities during the Arab Spring, but also occupied public spaces in the U.S.A. and Europe. These democratic practices represent a conflict and dissatisfaction that can be described as consequences of a 'democracy deficit', in which people struggled to use urban squares as a space to practice democracy and receive attention for their causes. In sum, it was a way to encounter the governing system and its failings. These consequences of democratic deficit entailed political activism and demands for a greater democratization of state and society which required physical arenas to perform democratic rights. Therefore, physical public spaces appeared as decisive elements within the political discourse on how to practice a democratic society. In recent political science literature, John Parkinson takes this initiative one step further by claiming that physical spaces become even more important to political action thus even in a society where politics and communications tend to become virtual, political communications require, "a physical event to focus on the thing that is transmitted."<sup>2</sup> Thus, physical public space matters to democracy and consequently, to neglect the physical space in which urban society inhabits can be detrimental for the health of that democratic society. Public spaces during recent democratic performances have introduced a corresponding new 'space for politics'. The significance of this effective democratic performance and attracting the attention of the world was due to highly organized spatial tactics used by protesters to manipulate the State's opposition and allow them to occupy a key space for several days during which it was creatively adapted in order to reuse it and some of its surrounding buildings.

Tahrir Square in Cairo as one of these public spaces that is more than 100 years old represents Egypt's secular history since 40s and has already its significant meaning, use and complex layers of qualities: historical, social, political, cultural and spatial one. Tahrir Square is a product of diverse and distinct spatial traditions intertwined in the space. As such, this particular public space has witnessed critical moments of protests in the history of Egypt during the British colonization until the recent mass 'rage' over former president Mubarak in 2011. Despite the conflicting spatial traditions that manipulated the space over the time, embedding it with particular spatial order and physical characteristics, Tahrir Square reclaimed its function as a public space for all people, regardless of their individual differences and diversities on 25 January 2011. It was a process towards the re-production of 'lived space' with new experiences through; "right to voice, the right to difference, and the right to human flourishing."<sup>3</sup> According to Lefebvre, this is, "space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users'..."<sup>4</sup> Tahrir Square was this dominated space which the imagination sought to change and appropriate. Its particular physical characteristics and spatial qualities reinforced and undermined effective spatial practices during the revolution to imbue a space with new roles and new spatial order. Tahrir Square was theatre of events and actions which helped make a community of resistance that nurtures, as well as justifies and normalizes taking part in direct action.

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<sup>2</sup> Parkinson, J. (2012). *Democracy and public space: the physical sites of democratic performance*. Oxford University Press.

<sup>3</sup> McCann, E. (2002). *Space, Citizenship, and the Rights to the City: A Brief Overview*. *GeoJournal*, 58, pp.77-79

<sup>4</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991).

This re-conceptualization of public space that implied spatial tactics and strategies during the eighteen days of the Egyptian Revolution – which will be explored in detail further on – highlights a successful democracy and urban space design use strategies. Using Henri Lefebvre's terms of an astonishing form of social organization and administration,<sup>5</sup> which accordingly, let spatial practice emerge during the revolution as a space of tension between pre-revolution spatial traditions and new spatial order. The politics of occupation through tactics and acts of resistance worked for claiming the right to the city and politics of space. People occupied the Square and took to practicing its use for themselves, adjusting its urban and socio-political structure and changing its master plan into an interactive evolution plan in the most explicit way and so challenge the state and in order to allow people to live in the space. They claimed their own space where people were really developing their own living style as a kind of coherent community that responded to their needs and in response to each other and the communal status through partial organization and a new horizontal hierarchal structure of society. The new spatial order was 'grass-roots occupation order' that privileged the protestors from submission to the old but potent spatial order of oppression and control. This new spatial order and physical characteristics – imbued during revolution's spatial practices – are viable to re-conceptualize post revolution Tahrir Square as a space and emphasize its role in the social, historical and political context of the revolution and beyond.

Over the past two decades, many researches have been particularly interested in the way in which urban conditions influence contentious politics such as mass demonstrations.<sup>6</sup> Discussions about the concept of urban occupation are captured in ideas and terms such as 'open spaces'<sup>7</sup> and 'temporary autonomous zones'<sup>8</sup> as suggested by Hakim Bey when describing revolutionary spaces free from state control, 'convergence spaces',<sup>9</sup> and urban social centres.<sup>10</sup> These discussions capture the material form of space, which physically manifests itself in an occupation, direct action, or protest camp without previously dominant social limitations and restrictions. Jeffrey S. Juris, Associate Professor of Anthropology describes the convergence centre as a, 'small, self-managed city, a 'heterotopic space' of exchange and innovation.<sup>11</sup> Yet in order to demonstrate the significance of the spatiality of Tahrir Square being re-conceptualized during the eighteen days of revolution, we first need to understand the physicality and dynamics of the space within its heterogeneous communities and investigate their socio-spatial tactics in the social production of the campsite space that cannot be defined as a single homogenous space. The protesters' occupation of public space, then, is not simply an appropriation and re-organization of physical space, conceived as an instrumental resource for the purposes of mobilization and publicity. It is also an intervention unto itself in the very process of the production and reproduction of space. Specifically, they challenged the established normative system by producing an alternative form of public space through which society can intervene politically. From the above it is clear that studying socio-spatial practices in Tahrir Square during eighteen days of the Egyptian revolution is highly important. These socio-spatial practices were made up through a whole society and by their acts of resistance transformed Tahrir Square into an immensely vibrant and energetic space of activism, a spectacle space performing a political message through its utopian society. There is thus an urgent need for research into how civic life was sustained (even created), and how people acted in order to sustain this complex spatial system. Moreover, we must learn how socio-spatial practices have contributed to the re-conceptualization of Tahrir Square through social process in order to challenge a deeply rooted regime.

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<sup>5</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991).

<sup>6</sup> Tilly, C (2008).

<sup>7</sup> Shukaitis, S., D., Graeber and E. Biddle (eds) (2007).

<sup>8</sup> Bey, H. (1991).

<sup>9</sup> Routledge, P. (2000).

<sup>10</sup> Montagna, N. (2006). pp. 295-30

<sup>11</sup> Juris, J.S. (2008). P129

## 1.2. Research Purpose and Objectives

The research shall focus on Tahrir Square in Cairo as a space of revolt during the eighteen days of the Egyptian Revolution from January 25 till February 11 2011. The research aims at exploring socio-spatial patterns and tactics of resistance through spatial practices and activities. It shall clarify how the most important aspects of the uprising have not been simply the destruction of the entire regime only, but rather the emergence of a repertoire of mass movements in urban spaces following such unique socio-spatial orders. It builds on the notion of the 'politics of space'; as a space of resistance as a relational domain that reads interaction within particular spatial setting during particular moments of time. Looking at mass occupation of public space as a societal phenomenon, the research presented here shall provide a deeper understanding of the social implications of everyday ways of living for locals and the use of urban spaces for political activism. Through focusing on these social patterns articulated in space, the research can contribute to theories of 'self-managed city'<sup>12</sup>, such as that was activated through self-dependent society in Tahrir Square. Tracing these spatial activities and strategies that appeared in such a short period of time and by mapping spatial patterns, social behaviors, and the use of space in Tahrir Square during the eighteen days of the revolution, this research aims also to highlight that the active socio-spatial practices were ingrained in the memory and culture of individuals who drew upon these cultural assets to successfully deploy urban strategies during the revolution.

The analysis of this decoded information and maps will reveal the dynamics of the Square through its transformation and adaptation processes which enabled protesters to efficiently practice democracy and gain attention. The research shall focus on the notion of how 'lived space' is produced by tackling the socio-political role that enabled the awakening of the people's political voice. Lived space is not just a passive stage on which social life unfolds, but represents a constituent element of social life.<sup>13</sup> The production of urban space therefore entails much more than just planning the material space of the city; it involves producing and reproducing all aspects of urban life. By investigating the historic forms of uprisings and revolutions that were based on political change together with the recent urban setting that embodies political and social changes, the thesis forms a theory that differentiates recent deployment of performative public squares based on socio-cultural grounds, while the historic model instead followed spatial practices to enable space to function as a political hub, not as a space for political urban society.

### 1.2.1. Research Questions

*This thesis addresses the following main question:*

- Did socio-spatial practices and acts of resistance result in the re-conceptualization of Tahrir Square during the 18 days that shaped the success of the Egyptian Revolution?

*Further sub-questions are asked to understand the reconceptualization and reproduction of Tahrir Square process during the eighteen days:*

- What is the significance of contemporary democracy practices and of acts of resistance in physical urban space in recent urban uprisings? Why was the public space in Egypt recently re-claimed and re-conceptualized? How did people seek to use this urban square, with its roots as a bureaucratic hub, within democratic action?

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<sup>12</sup> Juris, J.S. (2008). p129

<sup>13</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p36.

- What are the factors affecting spatial practices in urban squares during old uprisings?
- How to gain access to socio-spatial narratives of the Egyptian Revolution and to develop analytical maps?
- What did Tahrir Square symbolize before the eighteen days of the Egyptian revolution? What are the qualities and characteristics of Tahrir Square? Why did it appear as a tool for dissidence during the eighteen days of Egyptian revolution?
- What are the preceding new tactics required in order to let reactive revolutionaries and acts of resistance to come out physically? What are the diverse shifts through re-conceptualization process for such a particular space –Tahrir Square- to become a site for resistance – a so-called ‘performative space’?
- What are the new socio-spatial practices and activities of mass occupation undertaken in Tahrir Square during recent democratic performance? What are the dynamics of each theme –as classified in the thesis- separately and the changing location of strategic spots and routes from one moment to another based on the political situation and public reaction? What are the influences of each pattern of activities on spatial and social orders?
- What can the findings and new knowledge on the dynamics and socio-spatial practice of public protests in the urban space add to theories of Democracy and politics of space? How the new knowledge about the mechanisms of protests are crucial in order to reflect on how the State have learned to deal or prevent the accumulation of acts of dissidence in Tahrir Square recently and its policing tactics based on what happened in January 2011?

### 1.3. The Context of the Study

Recently, we have been through different cases of political changes like political reforms and resignation of presidents due to changes in political actions, new urban tactics and new acts of resistance. And therefore, the States as well have been changing their policing strategies and urban tactics to prevent the accumulation of acts of dissidence in public squares and in dealing with the public. We didn’t know yet the mechanisms of protests and the dynamics of urban space that ousted these political changes. It is isolated area of research that is important to be explored. The research shall be looking at protests and recent uprisings as political actions and democratic practices of social patterns in public space. It offers a comprehensive and in depth analytical study in the socio-spatial patterns of everyday activities, challenges, acts of resistance and to large extent a discovery of the way with which Egyptian social movements and youth activists had succeeded to defy State pressure and managed to occupy, revitalize and reproduce the huge Square to accommodate thousands tents of protesters in the same space for several days. In doing so, the research is undertaking interdisciplinary approach to bridge cross disciplines of architecture, politics and culture.

Some architecture studies looked at socio-spatial practices on building scale and investigated the practice of home as an everyday system for sustainable living in Old Cairo. Dr Mohamed Gamal Abdelmonem, School of Planning, Architecture & Civil Engineering Queens' University Belfast, in *The Practice of Home in Old Cairo towards Socio-spatial Models of Sustainable living* argued that that architects working in this context must understand the dynamics of this complex traditional system if they are to develop locally informed, genuine designs that build on everyday spatial practices. His research thus sought to link social and anthropological analysis to an understanding of the spatial order of *hawari* communities. The fieldwork underlying, therefore,

conceived of the practice of home in Old Cairo as involving an interactive combination of three elements: human action and behavior, spatial order, and temporal arrangement. Also, Douglas Porteous, Professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Victoria in *home: the territorial core* argued that home cannot be understood except in terms of journeys and daily trips to and from it and in terms of being a point of reference for everyday life.<sup>14</sup> In general, these studies argued that observing complex patterns of space use throughout looking closely at the pattern of daily activities; architects may discover the practice of contemporary home. Present professional knowledge is lacking in terms of looking deeply in the dynamics of everyday life dealing with public spaces that experienced recent uprisings. A new architecture and urban design of public spaces, thus needs to embrace a collaborative socio-spatial practice and in which architects can learn the dynamics and mechanisms of protests in public space and help provide effective responses to daily needs. In this sense, creativity and innovation in architecture and urban design might be more strategic and more responsive.

Moreover, the situations in which private and public activities become interconnected and overlapped in space can be grounded on Richard Sennett's analysis of the workspace as a place where people act out of a psychology of privacy in reaction to the predominantly public patterns of the modern world.<sup>15</sup> In general, the presence of the private within public life affects both the perception and organization of social space.<sup>16</sup> Yet, social studies didn't look at this situation in urban space during the uprisings that can give better understanding to the social pattern emerged in the space. The social theorist Max Weber has asserted that it is only in praxis (action, and interaction) that it is possible to trace the essence and stratification of a community, group or society.<sup>17</sup> Michel De Certeau has also written of the association between spatial practices and the quality of space.<sup>18</sup> Yet there was no interest in studying spatial practices and investigating simple activities in revolting public space, and the way space was organized to accommodate its new community. It is possible to trace the way the public space was utilized to suit basic social needs and the essence of community appeared in the public space during occupation and revolt in order to know more about this society.

In another area of research, recent political science literature by John R Parkinson in *Democracy and public space: the physical sites of democratic performance* brought together two literatures - liberal political theory and urban theory. Parkinson is one of those who followed the deliberative turn while talking about democracy theory from an actual formation of democracy in public spaces. For Paula Backscheider and John Hopkins, one of the primary means used by the powerful to legitimate their rules and practices was the public spectacle.<sup>19</sup> Physical public spaces are decisive to democratic debates and practices, John Parkinson took this initiative one step further by claiming that physical spaces become even more important to political action in times or virtual and digital public space thus even in a society where politics and communication tend to become virtual, political communications required "a physical event to focus on the thing that is transmitted."<sup>20</sup> Parkinson introduced the roles required for guaranteeing public democracy practice. It was evident by recent uprisings that the stage with interchangeable and dynamic spatial practices is the most resonating that requires more study and research as their democracy practices. Yet, the research shall add to how and what takes democracy to work in practice. A gap of research on how some of countries in the Arab world succeeded in making the transition to democracy can be emphasized through recent democratic practices in Tahrir Square. Throughout the remarkable occupation of space, many people became engaged in building democratic networks and spatial practices in the public space, challenging the regime power. These activities involving thousands of people and

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<sup>14</sup> Porteous, J.D. (1976). pp 383-390.

<sup>15</sup> Sennett, R. (1977).

<sup>16</sup> Tonkiss, F. (2005). pp.25-26.

<sup>17</sup> Eldridge, J. E.T. (ed.) (1971).

<sup>18</sup> De Certeau, M. (1984).

<sup>19</sup> Backscheider, P. (1993). Barker, R. S. (2001).

<sup>20</sup> Parkinson, J. (2012).

their families and relatives were the largest arena for democratic practice in Egypt that needs to be integrated as part of democracy in theory and practice.

Many scholars, poets and journalists as Hussam Hussein Salama in *Tahrir Square, A Narrative of a Public Space* or Nabil Kamel, in *Tahrir Square, The Production of Insurgent Space and Eighteen Days of Utopia* or Abdel-Monem Ramadan in *Ahramonline journal*, see Tahrir Square as Utopia: a place of community engagement, collective projects, social discourse, and most importantly, freedom of expression, full of dancing, and singing. Many theoretical positions as in *Protest camps* by Anna Feigenbaum, Fabian Frenzel and Patrick McCurdy, provided a model that commensurate with evidence that the 2011 Egyptian uprising avoided the trap of hierarchical thinking and practice, pursuing the goal of political liberation and democratisation along non-hierarchical, 'leaderless', complex, communicational networks. All these studies avoided thinking of Tahrir Square as a space with its own society living there on the one hand, in relation to the radical democratic practice displayed in Tahrir Square, on the other. What Egyptians have experienced and lived during the 18 days in Tahrir Square superseded their imagined utopia through social reconfiguration. The research shall demonstrate that, in Tahrir Square there was a significant desire of democratic society that was evoked in the horizontal social relations of community control which framed the uprising operation and no leadership. Accordingly the research shall propose the notion of seeking first for contesting social relations as missing part in the production of public space, democracy and reclaiming the right to the city theories that should be considered while studying uprisings in public spaces.

Many sociologists and Geographers as Routledge in *Our resistance will be as transnational as capital: convergence space and strategy in globalising resistance*, Miller in *Geography and Social Movements: Comparing Anti-Nuclear Activism in the Boston Area* and Harvey in *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* have long been exploring social activists and protest movements, however spatiality and its link between protests and social movements has increasingly become an interest for scholars across different disciplines like Wilton and Cranford in *Toward an Understanding of the Spatiality of Social Movements: Labor Organizing at a Private University in Los Angeles*<sup>21</sup>, Tilly in *Contentious Performances*, Juris in *Networking Futures: the Movements against. Corporate Globalization* and Castells in *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age*. Castells in *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age*<sup>22</sup> explored the new forms of social movements and protests that are erupting in the world today, from the Arab uprisings to the indignadas movement in Spain, and the Occupy Wall Street movement in the US. He highlighted that there is one thing they share in common: they are all interwoven inextricably with the creation of autonomous communication networks supported by the Internet and wireless communication. However, these spatialities weren't linked to its urban spaces and their practices according to social and political changes.

Moreover, Jeffrey C. Alexander in *Performative revolution in Egypt: an essay in cultural power* provides a sociological analysis of competing symbols and narratives in a chronicle of the uprising in Egypt through the lens of media reports and activist-generated accounts. Ahdaf Soueif as political and cultural analyst looked at the Egyptian uprising in *Cairo My city, Our revolution* has produced a chronicle of the 18 days that launched Egypt's revolution and post revolution. She provides: first hand documentation of feelings rather than events but in whole Cairo. Same, in Mona Prince's memoir of the 25 January Uprising, *Revolution is My Name* (Ismi Thawra) she tells the story of revolution as it unfolds over eighteen days. It expresses the lived day to day experience of protesting and illuminates class divides in Cairene society. The number of scholarly examples or literatures was limited to look and deploy different methods. These events and narrations are not spatially defined or mapped within their urban spaces.

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<sup>21</sup> Wilton, R. and Cranford C. (2002). pp. 374-394.

<sup>22</sup> Castells, M. (2012).

In Urban studies, William Whyte's extensive fieldwork in public space was sufficient with one of the most perceptive observers of public space in urban areas to understand how people used them. Seminal work in the study of human behaviour in urban settings and its dynamics, achieved through assembled rich body of data through the use of interviews as well as cameras for observation. Conducting observations and film analysis of corporate plaza, the conclusions appeared in the form of publication of *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* and its companion film in 1980.<sup>23</sup> Another active experience is by Setha Low, in anthropological excursion *On the Plaza*. Low's fieldwork methods involve a high degree of interaction, visibility, and reflexivity.<sup>24</sup> Observational experience of Low, because of her concern that participant observation in a public space might not capture all the on-going activities, she utilized different observational strategies: plaza was observed by sector, and everything that occurred in that sector was recorded for a designated period of time.<sup>25</sup> Some of the conclusions that arise from her observational data were in the form of series of behavioural maps, locating activities and counts of people by locations, sex, and age were also created. The idea of recording and mapping activities and changes are crucial for understanding the dynamics of the revolutions and occupation of public space. For instance Jessica Heizelman<sup>26</sup> in 2011 won the Tufts GIS Poster Expo by identifying strategic protest routes for civil resistance, an analysis of optimal approaches of Tahrir Square in Cairo. With spatial information and GIS data, her analysis was identification of three critical strategic elements for a successful protest route: first gathering points second: two types of route: and third convergence points through maps. (See Fig. 1.1) The research stresses on mapping spatial narratives in order to understand the mechanisms of these liberated public spaces.

Despite occupations of public space and acts of resistances increasing role as an organizational form of uprising, there has thus far been only sporadic research on the practices found dotted across a range of disciplines including social movement studies, media and communication studies, sociology and political science. In *Protest camps* by Anna Feigenbaum, Fabian Frenzel and Patrick McCurdy is one of the most recent books about political actions, taking a closer look at protest camps. *Protest Camps* discusses a variety of examples of camps, across different cultural, political and geographical landscapes of protest. This book argues that protest camps are unique spaces in which activists form collective political identities and enact experimental and experiential forms of democratic politics. It mentioned that protest camps enable all their participants to experience political processes as they recreate life by developing alternative ways of housing, feeding entertaining and living together, alongside innovations in political action as intervention and democratic process. The limited research that does exist often views occupying public space as either merely functional to the specific movements in which they were created, or sees them as momentary spaces that leave little legacy. In either case, the occupied space is regarded as just one site amongst many in the context of studying a specific social movement. They are often grouped together with other strategies such as street parties, demonstrations, and direct actions. As such, scholars have failed to consider the structural similarities and differences between spatial actions in occupied spaces across movements and locations in recent uprisings. There is significant lack of knowledge in the mechanisms of political protests and occupying each public space individually first. Consequently, there is lack of comparative research that links historic and contemporary political actions together, while conceptually developing the importance of occupying public space through acts of resistance as a distinct entity.

The research responds to these shortcomings, providing an original and timely look at Tahrir Square case as a unique organizational form, lighting new area of research on the dynamics and socio-spatial practices of public protests in the urban spaces. The research tries to add valuable addition to the literature on the understanding of

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<sup>23</sup> <http://www.pps.org/store/books/the-social-life-of-small-urban-spaces/>

<sup>24</sup> Miriam E. Wells review fo Low, S. (2000).

<sup>25</sup> Low, S. (2000).

<sup>26</sup> Heizelman, J. (2011, May 7).

qualities of human interaction with urban spaces, and their political role in the contemporary city. It shall advance people's knowledge on the way social movements manipulate, manage and occupy vast urban spaces with great flexibility and autonomous spatial tactics. By reading the public protests in the urban spaces in this way, the research is able to capture and share stories of how and what movements and protesters learn from each other, of how failures are felt across the globe, and acts of resistance can build alternative worlds. By drawing on and connecting existing interdisciplinary insights, as well as presenting original case study, this research will provide evidences on the mechanisms of protests and a set of conceptual tools to assist scholars in the future study of political protests, as well as contribute significant insights to existing research on social movements, radical democracy and political actions more broadly.

## 1.4. Spatial Actions in the Arab Public Spaces during the Arab Spring

The potential public spaces of political expression in Arab cities, the plaza or square, lost their burgeoning civic role between thirty and fifty years of despotic rule across the Arab world depending on the country. Violent revolts sometimes managed to stage their protests in one or the other for a short moment, but the regime reaction was usually swift and brutal like the 1977 "Bread Riots" in Egypt and elsewhere, the 1964 and 1982 religious uprisings in Syria and the 2000 Shi'ite revolt in southern Iraq. It was thus a surprise when the Arab revolutions of 2011 managed to reclaim both the spaces and their functions to service a new form of civil protest and to succeed against the hegemonic power. The public squares were their favorite arena. The longstanding structural problems afflicting the Arab world came to a head prior to 2011 through a combination of persistently high unemployment, especially among youth (and educated youth at that), rampant corruption, internal regional and social inequalities, and a further deterioration of economic conditions because of the global 2008 financial crisis and food price increases.<sup>27</sup> Arabs across national boundaries united in their opposition to social injustice and political authoritarianism. Taking ownership of public space, symbols of liberation from colonial rule, Arabs from different ideological persuasions, imaginations, and sensibilities 'performed the nation' as united citizens, in a quest for political emancipation and civil and economic empowerment.<sup>28</sup> A democratic uprising that arose independently and spread across the Arab world in 2011, originated in Tunisia in December 2010. It quickly took hold in Egypt in Tahrir Square. Later on, four countries where protests continued and expanded in size to the point where they threatened the regime: Bahrain (Pearl Roundabout), Libya (Green Square), Syria (Merjeh Square), and Yemen (Tahrir Square).

Demonstrations by the Arab revolutions shared some spatialities while small rallies were meeting at the mosques and churches as gathering places and converged on single public space. The urban spaces in cities have been the main stage of the revolutions performed by protesters coming from both urban and rural areas. This revolutionary spectacle had its own times, on Friday, a day off in the Arab world and after the noon prayer. Similarly the security forces block the way to the public space, and the demonstrators confronted them. In some cases they managed to penetrate the security cordon and reach the square where other demonstrations succeeded to break the cordons as well to meet in the urban space, such as the ones we witnessed in Tunis, Cairo, Alexandria, Benghazi, and Manama. Protesters converge on main central squares, in order to occupy a public space that has been for a long time confiscated. By occupying the urban space, revolutionaries want to establish a new public space, freed from the authoritarian regime, coming through phases of destruction and re-appropriation. They celebrated together chanting their slogans demanding the departure of the corrupt regimes. The square physically became their operation base and home-place, and virtually an avenue and a window for

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<sup>27</sup> Noland, M., Howard Pack, H. (2007). Arab economies in a changing world. Washington DC: Peterson Institute for International Economics. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and World Bank. (2007). The road not traveled: education reform in the Middle East and North Africa, MENA Development Report, Washington DC.

<sup>28</sup> Gerges, F. (ed). (2014). The new Middle East: protest and revolution in the Arab world. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p3



all the world on each revolution. They sometimes transformed it into places where they can live, pray, socialize, sleep, perform art and freely express. All these urban spaces in Arab countries witnessed number of martyrs while trying to protect and defend their squares against the security forces' attacks and thugs. They have come to frame the Arab revolutions and represent their grief and pride at the same time.

The unprecedentedly widespread use of social media and other means of communication made the rebellions possible and increased their strength and inclusiveness. Al-Jazeera satellite channel continued to air reports on protests in Egypt and Tunisia despite the regimes' please to the Qatari government to stop it.<sup>29</sup> Social media and cell phones were widely used to organize the revolts and link the protesters to each other and the outside world. Perhaps more crucially, media played a role in preparing for the rebellions over a number of years and even decades, by facilitating the circulation of ideas in national and global spaces and challenging state monopolies of information.<sup>30</sup> Considering the radical transformation of social media as the facilitator of the recent Arab revolutions, involved activists conducted their communication, enrollment, and organization online from Tunisia to Egypt and from Yemen to Bahrain to Libya and Syria. Yet the physical occupation and actual protests that toppled the regimes in few countries and are still challenging new regimes after many months of brutal crackdown and changing policing tactics. In this context, the Arab revolutions of 2011 represent the culmination of the process of 'conquest of visibility' which had become the central objective of the urban protest movements of the 2000s.<sup>31</sup>

The new revolutionary tactics and acts of resistance on the path to Arab liberation has introduced new civil order, an order in which square, with what it represents, is neither the contrast of the claimed square nor its substitute. It is the space of conflicts and continuous production of new tactics by the people and the State to police it. The youth across the region were not only claiming citizen rights and dignity but reclaiming the public spaces of their countries. Public Squares in the Arab world have been transformed from denied spaces to active political public spaces. Public Squares throughout the Arab world have either emerged as central spaces to launch uprisings or have been transformed into symbols of the regime to markers of the uprisings.<sup>32</sup> A brief description of the most prominent uprisings around the region and how their Public Squares have been spatially utilized:

#### **1.4.1. Tunisia: Mohammad Bouazizi Square, Tunis**

In Tunisia the protests began in medium-sized towns inland Sidi Bouzid, Kasserine, which are mainly poor and rural, suffering from high unemployment rates and neglected by planning policies in favor of the useful coastal cities, the only competitive sector at the heart of globalized networks.<sup>33</sup> Mohammad Bouazizi's self-immolation in 17 December 2010 provoked large protests against the Ben Ali regime outraged at his suicide. Later on the spark of the Arab uprisings in Tunisia did not occur in a public square but in the middle of a street. Avenues, rather than Public Squares, were the epicenter of protests in Tunisia. In Tunis protestors utilized the central avenue Habib Bourguiba to launch their uprising. It is aligned in an east west direction, lined with trees and facades of shops, and fronted with street cafes on both sides. Its width is 60 m. (See Fig1.2) Its proximity to the Interior Ministry made it an important public space for the protesters during the big demonstration on January 14, 2011. (See Fig1.4) The land area is 163,61 Km<sup>2</sup> that can occupy 10,732,900 people.<sup>34</sup> However Avenue

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<sup>29</sup> Al-Sharekh, A. (2011) Reform and rebirth in the Middle East, *Survival* 53: 2, April–May 2011, p. 57.

<sup>30</sup> See Axford, B. (2011). Talk about a revolution: social media and the MENA uprisings, *Globalizations*, 8: 5. pp. 681–6.

<sup>31</sup> Bozarslan, H. (2011). p 70.

<sup>32</sup> Sharp, D. (2013). Public Squares and the Arab uprising, *Your Middle East*. Retrieved from: [www.yourmiddleeast.com/columns/article/public-squares-and-the-arab-uprising\\_6667](http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/columns/article/public-squares-and-the-arab-uprising_6667)

<sup>33</sup> Daoud A. (2011). " La révolution tunisienne de janvier 2011 : une lecture par les déséquilibres du territoire ", *EchoGéo* [En ligne], Sur le vif 2011, mis en ligne le 23 septembre 2011, consulté le 27 octobre 2011. URL : <http://echogeo.revues.org/12612>

<sup>34</sup> Africa Internet usage stats, Retrieved from : [internetworldstats/africa.com](http://internetworldstats/africa.com).

Habib Bourguiba has hosted all events, the main public square in Tunis has now become the official marker of the revolution. Previously named November 7 Square, the day Ben Ali took power, it has now been renamed Mohammad Bouazizi Square.

### 1.4.2. Egypt: Tahrir Square in Cairo

The overthrow of Ben Ali in Tunisia galvanized popular political action in Egypt. Demonstrations organized for 25 January -was National Policy Day, a national holiday- by civil society and opposition groups unexpectedly brought out around 20,000 participants.<sup>35</sup> Protests spread in Cairo and throughout the country. They gradually snowballed, gathering speed after calls for a 'day of rage' on 28 January. Contrary to what happened in Tunisia, the Egyptian revolution did not begin in the peripheral regions of the governorates of Egypt, which are poor and less developed. The revolution started with clear National scope. Demonstrations were in many governorate cities. In Cairo, thousands marched to Tahrir Square, the heart of the revolution. One of the most remarkable aspects of the gathering of the hundreds and thousands of people in Tahrir Square was that the march to Tahrir Square was not planned. Protests also staged in Alexandria, Suez and several other cities.<sup>36</sup>

Tahrir Square became the political space where new claims were invented, represented, and translated into political actions. The space was no longer perceived as the space of authority but rather as the space of the people. Tahrir Square is described as the major public town square in Downtown Cairo, Egypt, and is the southern entrance to the city center, large and busy traffic circle. The area that has been at the heart of the political transformations that Cairo has seen since its accession to the status of a modern capital.<sup>37</sup> It is surrounded by important monuments: Egyptian Museum, NDP headquarters building, Mogamma government building, Headquarters of the Arab League building, Nile Hotel, Kasr El Dobara Evangelical Church, original downtown campus of the American University in Cairo. (See Fig. 1.5) Tahrir Square land area is 1,001,450 km<sup>2</sup> that can occupy 83,688,164 people.<sup>38</sup> Tahrir Square played more than one role in the period preceded January 25, 2011. It had been a site of protest and congregation since the British colonial era, and was the site of the murder of thirty protesters at Qasr al-Nil, prior to the British troops' withdrawal from Qasr al-Nil and the handover of the barracks to the Egyptian authorities between 1946 and 1947.<sup>39</sup> Although the expansion of the city provided several alternatives for the popular protest movements to gather in,<sup>40</sup> Tahrir Square maintained its status as a symbol of gatherings and protests. Perhaps the accessibility, the location and role of the square aided it in maintaining its vitality as a vibrant, dynamic place, rather than merely a static, historical district.

Tahrir Square became a place and a symbol of all the meanings it has now acquired, and become the site of a struggle between political, social and cultural forces. This struggle should not be cause for despair, as is the case for many Arab public spaces; but in fact, it is this struggle over Tahrir Square and who best represents it that makes it a true political symbol. In Egypt, Tahrir Square became the focal point and symbol of the revolution with more than 1 Million people filling the square on February 1<sup>st</sup>.<sup>41</sup> Tahrir Square was performing the autonomous and celebrating its national unity where people of all age, of all geographical and social origin, of all political and religious belonging, met together. (See Fig. 1.6) A virtual Tahrir Square was established on

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<sup>35</sup> Dalacoura, K. (2012). *The 2011 uprisings in the Arab Middle East: political change and geopolitical implications*, International Affairs 88: (1).

<sup>36</sup> Amnesty international (2011). *Egypt rises killings, detentions and torture in the 25 January rEvolutIon*. London: amnesty international. [www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE12/027/2011/en/b33cf2ea-e057-4a34-905b-46a897c4fe6d/mde120272011en.pdf](http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE12/027/2011/en/b33cf2ea-e057-4a34-905b-46a897c4fe6d/mde120272011en.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> Nasser, A. (2011). *The symbolism of Tahrir Square*, Arab center for research & policy studies. Doha Institute, Doha.

<sup>38</sup> Africa Internet usage stats, Retrieved from : [internetworldstats/africa.com](http://internetworldstats/africa.com).

<sup>39</sup> ElShahed, M. (2007).

<sup>40</sup> André Raymond, (2007). p. 312.

<sup>41</sup> Augustin, E. (2011).

Facebook and became an information hub for all supports that could not physically be present in the square.<sup>42</sup> Tahrir Square has become the global model of the revolution and its symbol was utilized in other Arab countries and rest of the world. Mid February the Pearl Roundabout in Manama, the capital of Bahrain became the center of protest. The protesters quickly erected a tent city and renamed the square into “Tahrir”. The same thing happened for the Clock Square in Benghazi, or the Courthouse Square in Homs. The symbol was raised to the Pantheon of squares of Revolution worldwide, next to the Place de la Bastille, the Tiananmen Square in Beijing and the Azadi Square in Tehran. The Indignados movement in Spain and the protestors of Occupy Wall Street were referring directly as the spirit of Tahrir Square and its legacy. All these movements have something in common: they claim for more social and spatial justice.

### 1.4.3. Bahrain: Pearl Roundabout, Manama

The power of people gathering and transforming public space into a constituent common space manifested itself in other places throughout the Arab world. In Bahrain, which faced longstanding political conflict between the Sunni monarchy and a Shi'i majority, protests erupted on 14 February resulting, a few days later, in the police storming Manama's Pearl Square, which was occupied by protesters, and killing seven of them, some asleep in tents.<sup>43</sup> Pearl Roundabout served originally as a major traffic intersection for routes into the capital city. It was located in the heart of the capital Manama and was surrounded by the Bahrain Central Market, Marina, Pearl and City Center Roundabout, Abraj Al Lulu apartment complex. Its land area is 694 km<sup>2</sup> that can occupy 1,248,348 people.<sup>44</sup> The activation of the Pearl Roundabout occurred on February 16 when people began assembling around the Pearl Roundabout transforming them into political arenas. It became a vital assembly capable of undermining the political regime. (See Fig. 1.10) Protest expanded to a call for the removal of the Prime Minister and then to end the monarchy of King Hamad following a deadly night raid on 17 February 2011 against protesters at the Pearl Roundabout in Manama. But protesters remained collectively fixated on Pearl Roundabout and tried to retake it. They finally did so on February 19, when security forces withdrew, and reestablished their camp. The size of the crowds grew over the following days in ways consistent with the Tahrir Square model: committed activists remained day-and-night, and enormous crowds of tens or even hundreds of thousands joined them during highly organized protests.<sup>45</sup> Demonstrations restarted on 21 February, but were met by even bigger pro-government events. Repression radicalized the movement, which called for a republic and a march on the royal palace on 11 March. King Hamad invited Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) forces, led by Saudi Arabia, into the country on 14 March to help suppress the uprising and declared a state of emergency.<sup>46</sup>

On March 18, local authorities brutally intervened, completely destroying the roundabout. It was part of a crackdown on protesters during the Bahraini uprising.<sup>47</sup> (See Fig. 1.11) The authorities decided immediately to demolish the monumental statue located at the center of the square which had become the symbol of demands for democracy. Since that time, the area around Pearl Roundabout has become a maze of checkpoints and barriers that prevent pedestrian access to the area.<sup>48</sup> After demolishing the Pearl Monument, the government announced that the roundabout would be replaced with traffic lights, in order to ease congestion in the financial district.<sup>49</sup> Even when this intervention affects in the balance of power and causes the defeat of the rebellion place remains central, since the authorities have decided to destroy the monumental statue in Manama's Pearl Square arguing that the statue had been raped by demonstrators and it had to be removed. (See Fig. 1.12) The brutality

<sup>42</sup> Augustin, E. (2011).

<sup>43</sup> Dalacoura, K. (2012).

<sup>44</sup> Africa Internet usage stats, Retrieved from : [internetworldstats.com/africa.com](http://internetworldstats.com/africa.com)

<sup>45</sup> Patel, D. (2013).

<sup>46</sup> ICG. (2011). Popular protest in the Middle East and North Africa (III): The Bahrain revolt, Middle East report 105. Brussels: ICG, ), pp. 2–9.

<sup>47</sup> [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Pithybray/sandbox](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Pithybray/sandbox)

<sup>48</sup> Patel, D. (2013).

<sup>49</sup> Alwasatnews.com. 2011-03-19. Retrieved 2011-06-16.

of the regime's response is embodied in the images of the broken tusk like arches of the Pearl Monument collapsed on piles of rubble.

#### 1.4.4. Yemen: Change Square, Sana'a

In Yemen, following Ben Ali's ouster from Tunisia on 14 January, small-scale demonstrations demanded President Ali Saleh's removal.<sup>50</sup> After Mubarak's fall a month later, protests grew, now being led by a new group of youth and civil society activists. In Yemen, when the contestation started in February 11, the opponents to president Saleh have tried to occupy Tahrir Square in Sanaa which has the same central and symbolic function as its counterpart in Egypt. Yet, revolutionaries have failed to occupy the place and chose to invest another place, 2 km far from Tahrir Square. Sana'a protesters do not convene on a central plaza but in the spider web of narrow alleys and streets around the walls of Sana University.<sup>51</sup> Freedom Square outside Sana'a University emerged as the focal point of protests against Ali Abdallah Saleh.<sup>52</sup> (See Fig. 1.14) It was renamed Taghyir, 'Change' Square. On 18 March the killing by snipers of 60 protesters alienated many Yemenis.<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, Saleh used a combination of repression, counter-mobilization, economic enticements, and promises of political compromise and reform to hang on to power.<sup>54</sup> Protestors remained in their tents in Change Square despite the removal of Saleh as they continue in their calls for change and not stability.

Through this reading of the Arab revolutions, we learned from these models is that one condition for the success of the revolution being that they become national, eliminating for a while, both social and spatial divisions. Arab uprisings have mainly taken place within national boundaries. They have unfolded according to processes which are specific for each of the countries concerned, with their own time and space. Yet, at the same time and that is what makes the analysis so complex, the revolutions have also generated the appearance or reappearance of similar centrifugal forces and patterns of practices. The revolt is to have encouraged the emergence of new forms of local organization. After the disappearance of the police, many inhabitants in Tunisia and in Egypt created revolutionary neighborhood forces to police the reclaimed public space, their own neighborhood areas and public building like museums. Moreover the public space re-appropriation in Tunisia and Egypt, right after the ouster of the autocrats has witnessed different tactics. Calls and awareness to respect the new Tunisia and Egypt and its cleanliness were sent by messages on mobile. Many maintenance and clean-up initiatives by young people were launched in Tahrir Square and other parts of Cairo and Tunis. Owning the space protestors sought to clean it.

Spatial dynamics and scales of the uprisings have highlighted the great diversity of situations and the real complexity of the revolutionary processes. The revolution in Egypt, and the demonstrations in Tahrir Square, is an inspiring backdrop to a critical look at socio-spatial practices and space dynamics approaches to development in autocratic regimes. The use of public space and events in Tunisia and Egypt transmitted via satellite television and the internet undoubtedly had a psychological effect throughout the Arab world by showing citizens what was possible. But the Egyptian example in Tahrir Square also provided a specific set of tactics about where and how to protest to publics elsewhere in a highest visibility. Moreover the Egyptian example particularities were in how Tahrir Square was the converging point in a capital that has diverse squares and public spaces. The occupation of Tahrir Square was so effective at overcoming the constraints on collective action and growing the size of the opposition. The continuous occupation of Tahrir Square made it easier for Egyptians to see and know that others saw how many other Egyptians had defected from the regime; it made this information common

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<sup>50</sup> Dalacoura, K. (2012).

<sup>51</sup> Augustin, E. (2011).

<sup>52</sup> Sharp, D. (2013).

<sup>53</sup> Dalacoura, K. (2012).

<sup>54</sup> ICG, (2011). pp. 1-9.

knowledge to the world. Media crews and social media bloggers were reporting directly from Tahrir Square, and some satellite stations were streaming live almost constant events. The constant presence of the media, particularly al-Jazeera, in Tahrir provided a sense of protection as well. The high visibility and access to Tahrir Square made it possible for Cairene and all audiences to measure how much larger the crowds were from earlier protests they had seen or heard about. Locals could tell that the number of protesters was increasing, and they knew that others would know if it was as well. The festive atmosphere in Tahrir Square attracted many families in the last days. The location, layout and accessibility of Tahrir Square made it easy for visitors and reporters to visit and report back to friends and family with pictures and accounts of who was there and what was being said. There are 23 streets leading to different parts of Tahrir Square and two metro lines meet at Sadat station. It is a difficult space for the regime to isolate.

The continual occupation of Tahrir Square solved a tacit coordination problem for Egyptian opposition groups of where and how to demonstrate for change, and who is the leader. A sudden change in the balance of resources between rulers and ruled that occurred during this period was mentioned by Mona El-Ghobashy: "The diffusion of protests on January 25-27 shattered both the mental and material divisions between Egypt's three protest sectors, forcing the regime to confront them simultaneously, when for 30 years it had done so serially."<sup>55</sup> The unplanned and sudden coordination in one place was responsible for solving it. Even after the regime shut down the internet and cell phone communication, groups could coordinate on Tahrir Square and people continued to gather because the event of January 25<sup>th</sup> in Tahrir Square had given it a focal quality. The particular characteristics of Tahrir Square model of protest allowed Egyptians to overcome local constraints to collective action and for that it can be example to be transnationally transported. The challenge for Arab citizens watching events in Cairo's Tahrir Square on al-Jazeera was thinking about how others in the same city and country would think about how and where the model should be applied locally. The Egyptian example suggested that only in a single place and in a continuous fashion could demonstrations organize the opposition into a mass capable of standing up to the applied coercive power of the state.<sup>56</sup>

## 1.5. Disposition of the Chapters

Following the Introductory chapter, chapter two introduces a literature review in order to gain an overview of the subject: democracy as theory, democratic practices, and the consequences of democracy deficits. First, it includes a study for defining democracy and what it is in theory and in practice. The aim was to understand and reflect on the theory behind this democratic performance and practice. The main features and characteristics of democracy were compiled from different democratic theories and practices. The main sources used were: *Thinking about democracy: power sharing and majority rule in the theory and practice* by Arend Lijphart, *A preface to democratic theory* by Robert Dahl, and *Democratization* by Christian Haerpfer, Patrick Bernhagen, Ronald F Inglehart, and Christian Welzel W. Haerpfer. The research shall introduce the democratic deficit concept. What concerns the research here is the effect and consequences of this phenomenon on democratic performance. The main sources used were: *The Democracy Deficit: Taming Globalization Through Law Reform* by Alfred C. Aman, and *The Democratic Deficit* by Noam Chomsky, and *Democratic Deficit: Critical Citizens Revisited*, by Pippa Norris. While moving to democratic performance and its practices, the main sources were *The politics of accommodations; pluralism and democracy in the Netherlands*, by Arend Lijphart, *Patterns of democracy: government forms and performance in thirty six countries* by Arend Lijphart, and *Democracy and Public Space: the Physical Sites of Democratic Performance* by John R Parkinson. Principally, this research follows the theoretical framework proposed in the recent political science literature of John R. Parkinson whose work brings together two literatures - liberal

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<sup>55</sup> El-Ghobashy, M. (2011). Politics by Other Means. Boston Review Nov/Dec. pp. 39-43

<sup>56</sup> Patel, D. (2013).

political theory and urban theory. Parkinson is one of those who followed the deliberative turn while talking about democratic theory from an actual formation of democracy in public spaces. This can support the theoretical foundation of this thesis which approaches democracy to work in practice.

Chapter three reviews politics of space and spatial practices as acts of resistance. The everyday practices and the structure of contemporary society shall be introduced through Richard Sennett's and De Certeau's theories. Then the politics of Occupation: tactics and acts of resistance theories shall be discussed. The main focus is on the 'Production of Space', by Henri Lefebvre, as the main source for understanding politics of space. Drawing on Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space will allow us to understand how occupations may enable the emergence of new social spaces. The significance of public space as a site of resistance is clear when viewed through the lens of Lefebvre's theory of the 'production of space'.<sup>57</sup> Thus, an exploration of the meaning of socio-spatial practices can be guided by Lefebvre's social space term, and an individual's relationship to that space, which together implies a certain level of 'competence' and 'performance' from that individual. While, *The practice of everyday life*, by De Certeau will be useful to introduce concepts of strategy and tactics and how making use of the elements of the terrain. As these acts of resistance changed the space in terms of spatial practices, we must attempt to understand the fluctuating network of active relations. De Certeau offers a way of approaching this problem by considering the urban not as an essential category of spatiality, but rather, as a fully contingent and embedded site that modulates subjectivity and produces new relations. This can help the research to clarify the spatial practices due to act of resistance during occupation and transformation of space.

In chapter four the search is narrowed down to studies on historic mass occupations of public space and factors affecting their spatial practices in different parts of the world. The first case study is the 1989 student movement in Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China. The main source for this case is a book *1989 Almost a Revolution: The Story of a Chinese Student's Journey* by Shen Tong who was one of the Chinese student activists and one of the leaders as well as writing his autobiographical narrative. The second case study is The Azadi Square in Iran: a space of national symbolic value since and Iranian Revolution as a result of the protests in 1979. This case is studied through diverse books, articles, documented interviews with old protestors, and with the architect of the project, Hossein Amanat, who spoke to the BBC, and available documents available online from National Library and Archive of Iran (NLAI) <http://www.nlai.ir/>. *Iran between Two Revolutions*, by Ervand Abrahamian, *The Dynamics of the Iranian Revolution*, by Jahangir Amuzegar, *The Iranian Revolution of 1979*, by Peter Fitzgerald, *The Role of Tehran's Freedom Square In Protests of 1979 and 2009*, by Lotfi Bakhtyar. The third case is in Prague, the Velvet Revolution in Wenceslas Square in late November 1989. The sources for this case are mainly the study, *Prague 1989: Theater of revolution: A study in humanistic political geography*, by Michael Andrew Kukral, and Radio Prague's online news and archives <http://www.radio.c>.

Chapter five introduces the methodological backbone of the research. It describes the case study methodology in detail, starting from the reasons for choosing a case study approach and then taking up the applicability of this choice for dealing with the main research questions. The research shall explain the methodology comprising two phases: exploratory and explanatory. Research activities and methods of analyzing the data gathered from different research tools shall be also discussed in this chapter. The main source is *Applications of case study research*, by Robert K. Yin.

Chapter six aims to shed light on the background of the principal case study of 'Tahrir Square' –in the past and the present- and its context. In order to trace the re-conceptualization of Tahrir Square during the eighteen days of political manifestations, the research shall talk first about the production of Tahrir Square and its historical background which endowed the site with political symbolic values and multiple spatial configurations. The chapter shall trace the urban History of Tahrir Square through its political shifts. Some of the

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<sup>57</sup> Lefebvre, (1992). *The production of space*, , Wiley-Blackwell; 1 edition

sources are: *Centre of the centre* by Fatemah Farag Al-Ahram Weekly, *Midan Al-Tahrir*, by Samir Raafat, Cairo Times, *The Haussmanization approach from a counter revolution* by Yehia Serag. Then a section is devoted to exploring recent acts of resistance and how it started to come out physically in public space. Following section discusses the shift marked by the reactive revolutionaries and alternative tactics towards public space. This will highlight, first, the streams of contemporary public protests in Egypt through youth-led political opposition evolution, second, the role of cyber space, and third the new initiatives and tactics for obtaining unusual spatial order in the city, such as: silently standing as new spatial order; and mobilizing demonstrations from popular neighborhoods in Cairo. The last section demonstrates the challenge when acts of resistance became part of Tahrir Square's own spatial order. Following from this, the re-conceptualization process through diverse resistance shifts shall be outlined then. Some of the sources used are: *Egypt and Tunisia: Regime Failure and the "Gymnasiums" of Civic Empowerment* by Larbi Sadiki, *Tahrir Square, The Production of Insurgent Space and Eighteen Days of Utopia* by Nabil Kamel, *Revolution 2.0: The Power of the People Is Greater Than the People in Power: A Memoir*, by Wael Ghoneim, *Mediterranean geographies of protest* by Sara Fregonese.

Chapter seven presents the investigation and analysis of the first theme of socio-spatial patterns through performances of popular arts during the Egyptian Revolution. Among the spatial patterns of activities detected and analyzed, this chapter focuses on particular forms of mass practices of art and freedom of expression that succeeded in transforming Tahrir Square into a performative space and in commemorating its spatial events. Some of the resources are: *Introduction to the cultural scene in Egypt before the revolution* by Peter Fares, *Art of the Uprisings in the Middle East* by Charles Tripp, *Street Art and the Egyptian Revolution*, Lina Khatib, *Walls, Segregating Downtown Cairo and the Mohammed Mahmud Street Graffiti*, by Mona Abaza.

Chapter eight presents the investigation and analysis of the second theme of socio-spatial patterns: media coverage and display. This chapter offers insight into the ways protesters lent their skills to cause and performance of resistance to become journalists' citizen the unfolding spatial events. The chapter shall present how the inter-relationary role of media has shifted significantly as citizen-led media and mainstream media took new spatial modes to act through collective spatial pattern. Some of the resources are: *Connecting the national and the virtual: can Facebook activism remain relevant after Egypt's January 25 uprising* by Elizabeth Iskander, *From spectacle to spectacular: How physical space, social media and mainstream broadcast amplified the public sphere in Egypt's 'Revolution'* by Mohamed Nanabhay & Roxane Farmanfarmaian, *Modern Egyptian media: Transformations, paradoxes, debates and comparative perspectives*, by Sahar Khamis, *Arab citizen journalism in action: Challenging mainstream media, authorities and media laws*, by Naila Hamdy, *Cracks widening in Egypt's internet wall* by Ashraf Khalil, *The Egyptian Revolution against Mubarak's Regime in 2011 The making of new public spaces in Tahrir Square* by Mona el Kouedi.

Chapter nine presents the investigation and analysis of the third theme of socio-spatial patterns: hospitalization and emergency support. This chapter contributes a study for spatiality of medical and hospitalization through different spatial reconfigurations, organizational reconfigurations, and the reconfiguration of process of ordering and routines. The chapter does this by exploring the role of the medical colony as an alternative medical treatment space, offering a unique manageable variation of process and spatial configuration. Some of the resources are: *Mass Casualties in Tahrir Square at the Climax of the Egyptian Uprising: Evidence of an Emerging Pattern of Regime's Organized Escalating Violence During 10 Hours on the Night of January 28*, by Mohamed D Sarhan, Ashraf A Dahaba, Michael Marco, Ayman Salah, *Introduction: Real and imagined spaces* by Alice Street and Simon Coleman.

Chapter ten presents an investigation and analysis of the fourth theme of socio-spatial patterns as praying and ritual practices. These practices shall be conceived of as specific modes of sacred place-making that needs to be understood in their semantic and contextual complexity. Analyzing these narratives introduces to the project

the important sacred dimensions of Tahrir Square. This section concentrates on the religious practices and social expressions of urban everyday life that spatially transformed a secular space into a sacred space. Some of the sources are: *The Location of Religion: A Spatial Analysis* by Kim Knott, *Religious Politics and Secular States*, Scott Hibbard, *Friday Protests in the Arab World more than Religious Symbolisms* by Mustafa Fetouri, *Agents of Revolution Young women and men in Cairo: gender, religion and change* by Catherine Bogert, and *Zawiya, Zikr and the Authority of Shaykh 'Al-Pepsi'* by Karin Willemse.

Chapter eleven presents the investigation and analysis of the last theme of socio-spatial patterns through living and life needs. This chapter will first discuss first 'informality' in Cairo as spatial phenomena of daily life. From this, the research shall divide living and life needs into a set of spatial practices, such as: food and subsistence supplies, housing and campsite, utilities and sanitation, cleaning and maintenance, and demonstrate how complex inhabitants' tactics and strategies were developed and adapted in the space. Some of the sources are: *Emancipating spatial practices in struggle against the urban "state of exception": Towards the "city of thresholds"* Stavros Stavrides, *Protest Camps* by Anna Feigenbaum, Fabian Frenze and McCurdy, *Advantages of living in informal areas* by Dina Shehayeb, *Walking and Camping in Middle Eastern Cities* by Ipek Tureli, *The Production of Housing*, by Christopher Alexander, *Remaking the Modern: space, Relocation, and the Politics of Identity in a Global Cairo* by Farha, Ghanam.

Chapter twelve, findings and conclusion, addresses the research questions and propositions with a comprehensive approach, considering the literature review, spatial narrative findings, analytical maps, and descriptive analysis to form a critical and theoretical perspective.

## 1.6. Methodology

A case study methodology was chosen for this thesis. Robert K. Yin defines the case study research method as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used."<sup>58</sup> This research will deploy a dual approach comprising both descriptive explanatory and exploratory phases. The first phase in the present research will be the explanatory descriptive phase, which focuses on:

### A. Scoping research and theoretical framework

1. Identification of a pertinent research question, to investigate of the political, social and spatial layering of Tahrir Square and its symbolism for revolting groups.
2. Survey of online social media accounts, video recording, archived accounts and interviews, documentaries, online press and blogs, and archives for independent initiatives and NGOs.
3. Identifying factors and activities that influenced spatial patterns of Tahrir Square during the occupation and political actions of all actors within a shared framework.
4. Classifying types of activities and spatial practices that can be decoded and developed into schematic maps during the eighteen days intervals (testing a research methodology: to draw spatial practices from visual accounts).

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<sup>58</sup> Yin, R. (1984). *Case Study Research*. Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, p. 23.



The explanatory descriptive phase consisted of a theoretical research involving a literature review and virtual observations through videos and other media in order to investigate the dynamics and complexity of spatial patterns and activities emerged during the eighteen days of revolutionary activity: identifying factors and activities that influenced spatial patterns of Tahrir Square during the occupation and framework of political actions. Testing a research methodology for decoding and mapping information shall be obtained through schematic maps in order to enhance a suitable research methodology that can be efficient for decoding visual narratives, accounts, video recordings, and online social media resources, to provide a factual basis for the second phase.

The second phase will be the exploratory phase which focuses on:

*B. Narrations, Observations and Scrutinizing*

1. Exploring documented narratives about the eighteen days in Tahrir Square and site observation.
2. Implementing unstructured interviews and tracing influencing activities in space from one day to another.
3. A systematic classification of socio-spatial patterns and distribution of activities on daily intervals through the five main themes.
4. Developing a visual narration of the development of the spatial setting: mapping and decoding information chronologically.
5. Generating a matrix of analytical maps according to five main themes: hospitalization and emergency support, living and life needs supplies, media and news display, prayers and ritual practices, and art and freedom of expression.
6. Analyzing the evidence found in each theme separately and the dynamics and changing location of activities due to spatial and political influences.

*C. Findings*

1. Developing the research findings.

The main tools used in this second phase for exploring narratives was unstructured interviews and other walking interviews on site, as well as collecting personal archives from interviewees. Site observations, field notes and survey investigations are important as well in this phase. According to Yin, direct observations serve as a source of data collection activities and a multiple source of evidence in a case study.<sup>59</sup> These tools facilitate the work on a systematic classification of socio-spatial patterns and the daily distribution of activities through the five main themes: hospitalization and emergency support; living and life needs supplies; media and news display; prayers and ritual practices; and art and freedom of expression. Developing a visual narration for the development of the spatial setting can help in generating maps and decoding information chronologically. Analyzing the evidence of each theme separately within the dynamics of the changing location of activities due to spatial and political influences further augment research findings.

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<sup>59</sup> Yin, R.K. (1984).

This research methodology will be customized to draw together spatial practices from diverse sources: narrations, visual accounts, video recordings, and online social media resources. The methodology to be implemented aims to translate visual and verbal accounts into understandings of spatial practice. Decoding information through maps will facilitate the tracing and analyzing of spatial transformation due to acts of resistance that entailed new spatial patterns and political changes. The two phases were implemented through using the three main steps recommended by Yin and Feagin based on an understanding on the nature of the research, defining and designing the work plan for the case study, preparing and collecting data and conducting an action plan for the case study and: analyzing the work results achieved and establishing recommendations for future work.<sup>60</sup> In addition to that, principles of data collection are considered throughout the multiple sources of evidence, which together, create a database of case studies, and maintain a chain of thought and analysis.

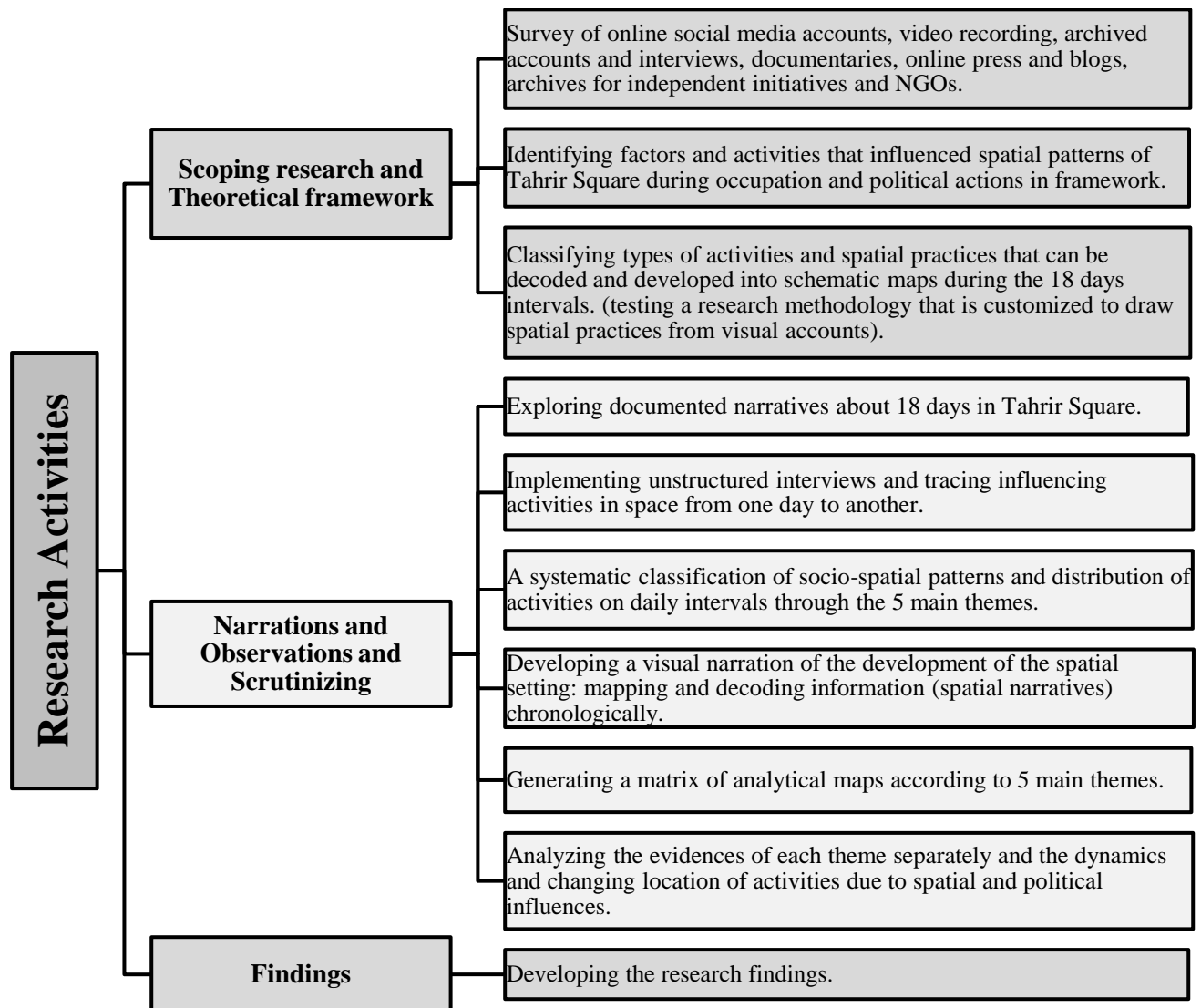


Figure 1.15: Research Activities (Source: By the Researcher)

<sup>60</sup> Yin, R.K. (1984) and Feagin, Joe R., Orum, Anthony M. & Sjoberg, Gideon (red.) (1991). *A Case for the case study*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

## **1.7. Scope and Limitation**

The study mainly encompassed layers of complexity within the production of significant urban revolts in public space during uprising. It examines the quick pace by which public space was reshaped and reproduced as spaces for resistance and confronting the traditional State power and control. These processes and patterns have yet to be empirically and systematically investigated. The work in this thesis will not go beyond: studying and analysing the dynamics of activities and changes of Tahrir Square while adapting to its role as space for politics and resistances through five themes; implementating theoretical dynamic model for reconceptualization of public space by tracing spatial practices that appeared in sudden and short period of time; and showing the feasibility of decoding by mapping and analysing these patterns of interaction, social behaviours and use of the space within the spatial order and physical characteristics during Egyptian revolution in Tahrir Square during eighteen days. The research will be developed without getting deep in religious politics field or political objectives of the regime during the time. No social theories about the new society will be introduced by the research.

# Identifying Strategic Protest Routes for Civil Resistance

## An Analysis of Optimal Approaches to Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt

### Project Description

A recent surge in civil resistance, or strategic non-violence, has shown the power of large-scale protests to challenge legitimacy of governments and catalyze political change. On February 11, 2011, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak stepped down from power after three decades of rule. His resignation was a result of widespread protests which included the occupation of Tahrir Square.

Many previous efforts to occupy the square had failed. The Egyptian police were expert at breaking up groups of protesters. "We had to find a way to prevent security from making their cordon and stopping us," said 41-year-old Basem Kamel. Basem and approximately a dozen other protest organizers spent two weeks strategizing, planning a strategic approach to Tahrir Square.

This project builds upon techniques used in the Egyptian protest and examines how GIS tools can be used to identify strategic gathering points and protest routes based on spatial information.

Protest collection areas of high population density through which protesters walk to collect additional supporters and protest approach routes on major streets that accommodate large groups that are more difficult to disperse; and 3) convergence points where smaller groups of protesters merge to increase strength in order to approach the destination.

Publicly available data was used to the extent possible to simulate the resources available to protest organizers. Each of the three strategic elements were assigned criteria based on the strategy employed in Egypt.

### 1. Gathering Points

Many of the Egyptian protest routes met at mosques. Optimal mosques were selected based on:

- Far distance from police stations to reduce likelihood of police action
- High road density area (as a proxy for population density)



### 2. Protest Routes

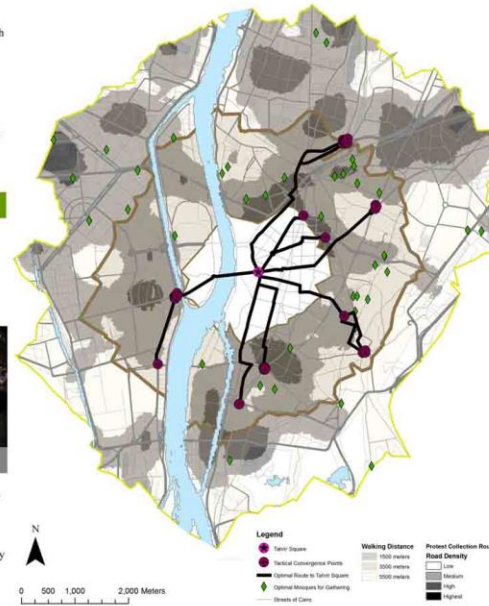
Protest route collection areas are densely populated and encourage residents to join, increasing participation. Protest approach routes link convergence points to Tahrir Square. Optimal protest route criteria was:

- Protest collection area: High road density area (as a proxy for population)
- Protest approach: Most direct route to Tahrir Square using major roads



### Methodology

This analysis starts by identifying three critical strategic elements for a successful protest route: 1) gathering points where demonstrators initiate protests; 2) two types of routes—



### 3. Convergence Points

Smaller groups of protesters converge at major roads and continue to Tahrir Square on approach routes. The criteria used for convergence points in this analysis were:

- Between 1.5 and 3 km walking distance from Tahrir Square
- High density of road junctions
- In or buffering open space to allow for large group movement



Criteria for each strategic element were overlaid on one another to determine the optimal sites. Each point was given a score based on its proximity to a defined criterion each worth 9 points. For instance, a mosque located in a "medium" road density area would have a score of 5. If it were located within 250 meters of a police station, it would get a score of 1. The total score would be added to give the gathering point a score of 6, falling short of the optimal gathering point score of 9 or higher. The same methodology was used to determine optimal convergence points.

while the protest routes used the size, distance and density of roads to determine optimal areas and routes.

Lastly, the optimal gathering points, routes and convergence points were combined on a single map to provide guidance for protest organizers.

### Results

The results of this project demonstrate that GIS tools can be used for plotting strategic routes for protest using criteria that can change based on the unique geospatial environment.

In Cairo, the optimal gathering points, strategic routes and convergence points are not always located in an obvious path (i.e. optimal mosques located in areas with low road density or convergence points without gathering points in the close proximity). The map does, however, provide protest organizers with some basic instruction on where to start, what direction to head and where to converge for the final approach.

### Limitations

Procuring data presents the biggest challenge for using GIS to identify strategic protest routes for civil resistance. In this analysis, for instance, a complete listing of mosques or police stations was not available. Population was not available at the desired scale — road density had to be used as a proxy. Open space and road data that could be analyzed as a network had to be acquired from private sources at cost.

Cartography: Jessica Henzelman  
Project Date: May 2011  
Data Sources: Open Street Map retrieved 2011 (Roads, Police Stations, Mosques), Land Info (Roads, Open Space), Digital Map of Egypt 2009 (Mosques)  
Projection: Coordinate System: WGS 1984, UTM, Zone 38N  
Kernell quote: NYT, Feb 13, 2011  
Photo Sources: The Atlantic (Translation of Protest Flyer), Washington Post, SaudiGulfBlog.com, Reuters/Corbis Outlines.com

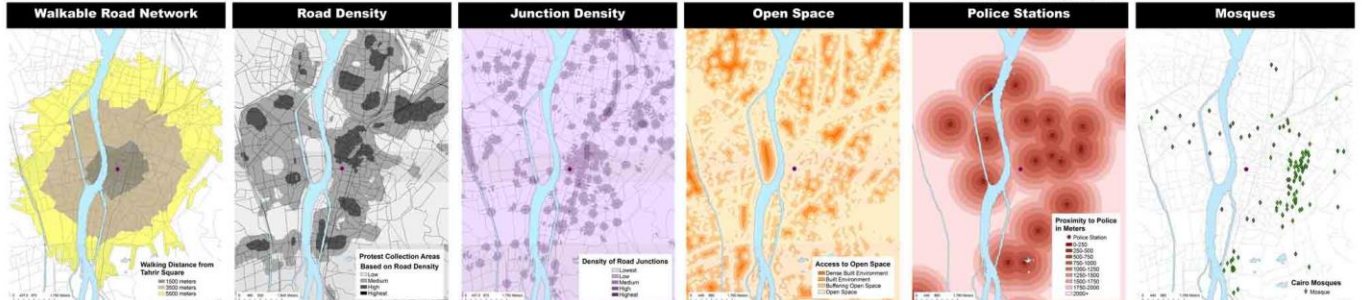


Figure 1.1: Mapping and Identifying Strategic Protest Routes for Civil Resistance An Analysis of Optimal Approaches to Tahrir Square. (Source:

<https://wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/download/attachments/44798842/HeinzelmanPosterFINAL.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1304954223000>)





Figure 1.2: Avenue Habib Bourguiba in Tunisia, Tunis. (Source: Google earth)



Figure 1.3: Avenue Habib Bourguiba Bird's view. (Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avenue\\_Habib\\_Bourguiba#mediaviewer/File:TunisAveHabibBourguiba.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avenue_Habib_Bourguiba#mediaviewer/File:TunisAveHabibBourguiba.jpg))



Figure 1.4: Tunisia Unrest 14 Jan 2011 in Avenue Habib Bourguiba in downtown Tunis. (Source: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avenue\\_Habib\\_Bourguiba#mediaviewer/File:Tunisia\\_Unrest\\_-\\_VOA\\_-\\_Tunis\\_14\\_Jan\\_2011\\_\(2\).jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avenue_Habib_Bourguiba#mediaviewer/File:Tunisia_Unrest_-_VOA_-_Tunis_14_Jan_2011_(2).jpg))





Figure 1.5: Tahrir Square in Egypt, Cairo. (Source: Google earth)



Figure 1.6: Tahrir Square during the Egyptian revolution February 11, 2011. (Source: taken by Ahmed Haymen)



Figure 1.7: Bahrain: Pearl Roundabout, Manam. (Source: Google Earth)

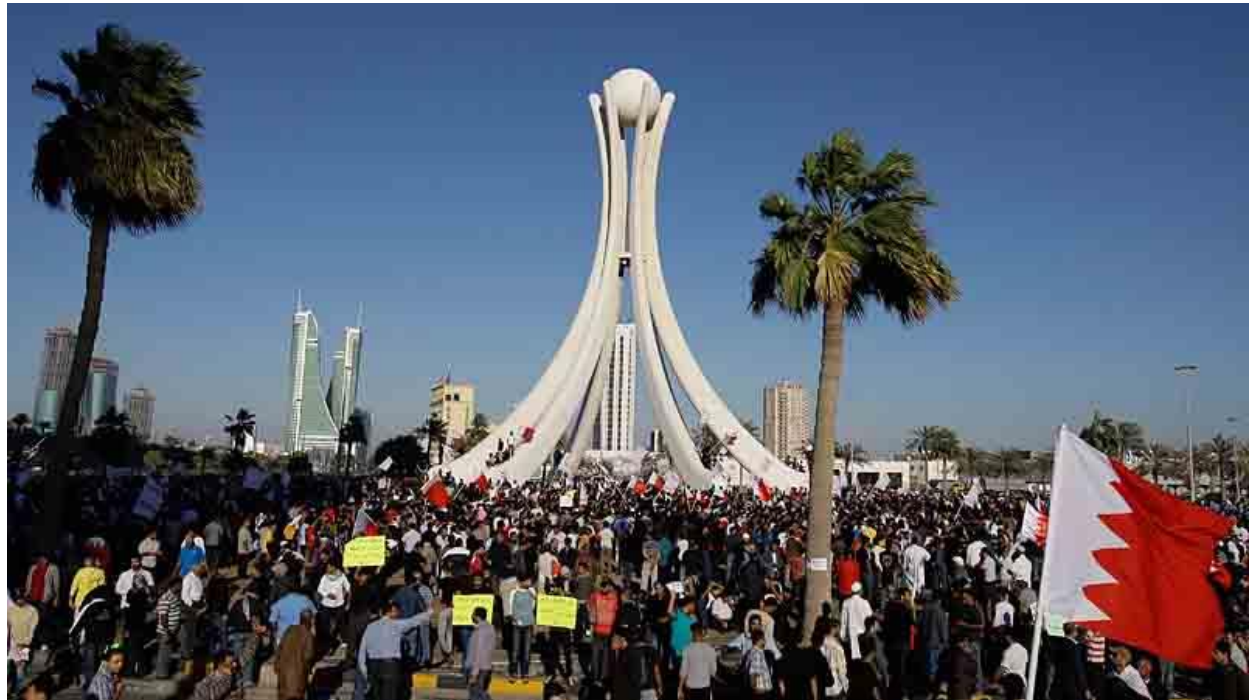


Figure 1.8: Demonstrators gathered at Pearl Roundabout. (Source: [www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/956/pearl-no-more\\_demolishing-the-infrastructure-of-re](http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/956/pearl-no-more_demolishing-the-infrastructure-of-re))





Figure 1.9: Pearl Roundabout before 2011 demonstration. (Source: <http://wikimapia.org/18988094/Martyrs-Square-Pearl-Monument-site>)



Figure 1.10: Pearl Roundabout, Bahrain during demonstration, March 2011. (Source: [regionalgeography.org/101blog/?p=2601](http://regionalgeography.org/101blog/?p=2601))





Figure 1.11: Pro-democracy protests in Manama centered around the now demolished Pearl roundabout monument. (Source: [www.opednews.com/article/Bahrain-Activists-to-Go-on-by-Press-Release-110508-994.html](http://www.opednews.com/article/Bahrain-Activists-to-Go-on-by-Press-Release-110508-994.html))



Figure 1.12: After the monument in the center of the Pearl Roundabout was demolished by the Bahraini government, they converted the roundabout into a traffic junction 29 March 2011. (Source: <http://bahrain.viewbook.com/album/exclusivephotosfrommarch?p=1&s=UA-22319045-1#299>)



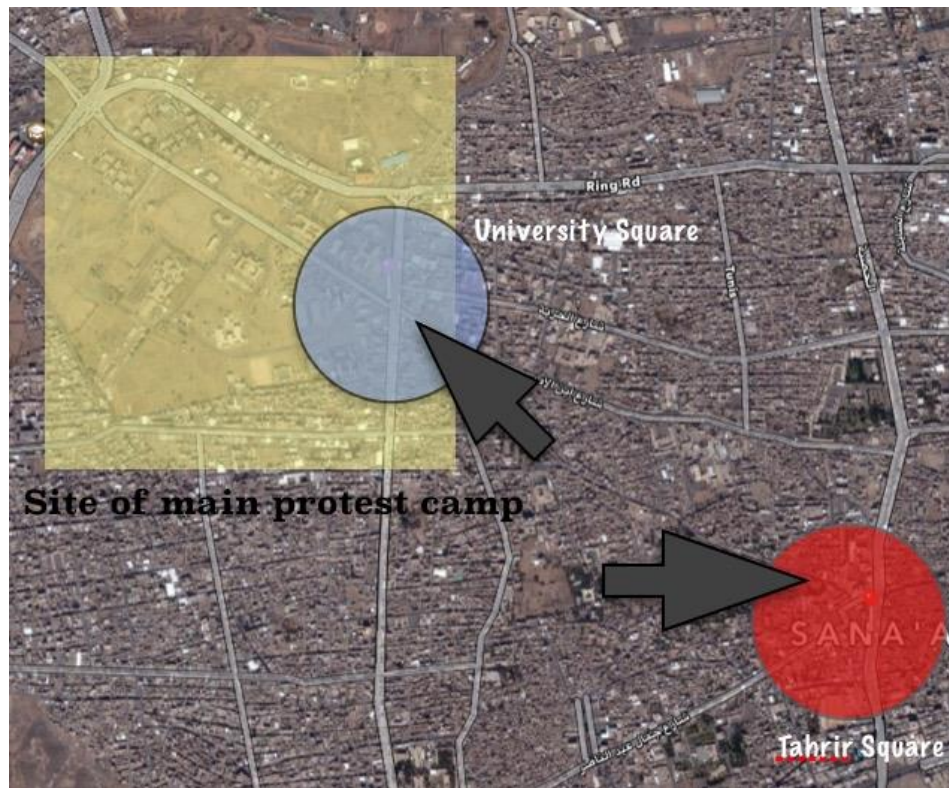


Figure 1.13: Main Protest camp at University Square. (Source: Google Earth)



Figure 1.14: Yemen's 'Friday of Warning' Brings Hundreds of Thousands Into Streets 2011-03-04. (Source: [wlcenral.org/node/1422](http://wlcenral.org/node/1422))

## 2. Democracy and Democracy Deficit: In Theory and in Practice

### 2.1. Introduction

The recent occupation of public spaces has witnessed extensive democratic practices of revolts and remarkable political changes that not only emerged in the Arab cities during the Arab Spring but also occupied public spaces in Europe and US. Political power has been reshaped and reconfigured especially in the last years. The conception of the model of democracy is evolving, as it is often assumed that more democratic procedures will help bring about a more sustainable organization of society.<sup>61</sup> These contemporary democratic practices represent a conflict and dissatisfaction that can be described as consequences of democracy deficit, in which people sought to use urban Square as a space to practice democracy and gaze attention. It was a way to encounter the governing system and its deficits. These consequences of democracy deficit entailed political activism and democratization demands that required physical arenas to perform and appear. Similar tactics and symbols of occupation of public spaces with diverse causes showed how democracy has become the dominant ideology of modern political life. Yet the gaps between ideology and practice are now so obvious that it requires some introduction first of the main features and characteristics of democracy compiled from democratic theories and practices.

This chapter provides an overview of the subject: democracy and democracy deficits as theory through literature study till it arrives to its democratic practices, democratic public space, and the consequences of democracy deficits. The aim is to understand and reflect on the theory behind this democratic performance and their practices in public space. It is a way to be able to understand the ideologies behind democracy and the origins of democracy deficit in Egypt. They shall introduce some of the main features and characteristics of democracy compiled from democratic theories and practices. It is also intended to provide better understanding of the democracy performances as spatial practices and their effect on urban public space that can be useful for introducing the politics of space and its spatial practices in the following chapter. This can support my theoretical part about what it takes for democracy to work in practice that defines people by making decisions and making individual into public citizens, with diverse kinds of stages. Then this chapter is concluded with the argument that Tahrir Square was a democratic public space during the 18 days of The Egyptian Revolution that helped in shaping a collective decision making mechanism that required some roles from the public to perform to reach the level of citizen participation in the political process.

### 2.2. Definition of Democracy

Democracy as a classical definition is “a political system in which the rulers are accountable to citizens through regular electoral participation,”<sup>62</sup> while this definition refers to a single dimension; accountability. Robert Dahl was one of the theorists who started thinking about democracy as a multi-dimensional phenomenon; he identified two dimensions of democratic government: citizens’ participation in the political process, and

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<sup>61</sup> Majer, M., Kesselring, S. (1999). Environmental politics, Frank Cass: London, Vol. 8 No.3. pp 1-23. Retrieved from: <http://www.maartenhajer.nl/upload/democracy%20in%20the%20risk%20society.pdf>

<sup>62</sup> Haerpfer, W., Bernhagen, P. Inglehart, F. and Welzel, C. (2009).

competition among political groups for office.<sup>63</sup> Adam Przeworski, as well in his definition of democracy focused on citizens' participation in the political process that it is about sorting out common issues without dictatorship, domination or shooting at each other.<sup>64</sup> Democracy is legitimate in the sense that people are ready to accept decisions of as yet undetermined content, as long as they can participate in the making of these decisions.<sup>65</sup> Then, democracy here shows more dynamic features with high interaction and dependency on public participation and space for their opinion.

This deliberative democracy literature is based on the ideal of consensual decision making. Anthony McGann's mode to arrive to a clear illustration for the deliberative democracy strove to illustrate the trilemma between political equality, deliberation and direct participation and related it to various democratic alternatives; representative democracy, plebiscitarian democracy and self-selected participatory democracy. Representative democracy can satisfy the political equality and deliberation, but it is not particularly participatory.<sup>66</sup> Instead of bargains negotiated by representatives, decisions are taken by direct votes by the people. Accordingly, it is the antithesis of deliberative democracy. Self-selected participatory democracy requires that decision makers participate more fully.<sup>67</sup> This shows that the values of deliberation, direct participation and political equality form a trilemma. McGann argued from a normative point of view that the direct participation is the value that is most dispensable in politics. Yet, direct participation is as being active in social movements, interest groups or political parties. Moreover, political equality is the heart of what democracy means. Finally, deliberation is necessary to make reasonable political decisions.

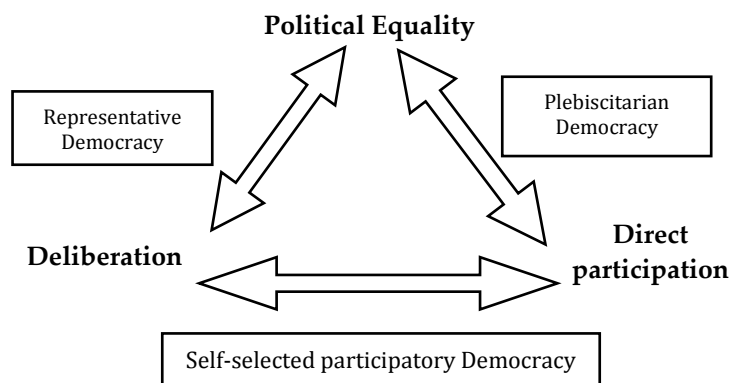


Figure 2.1: The Trilemma of Deliberative Democracy by McGann

Finally, after all these variant concepts of democracy in theory, John Parkinson is one of those who followed the deliberative turn while talking about the theory of democracy from its actual formation in public spaces. For him, democracy is not merely the interplay of arguments and reasons in some abstract public sphere but is performed by people, with aims, on stages.<sup>68</sup> This gives great attention to the processes of opinion formation and narration in the public sphere and the way in which public claims are transmitted to formal institutions for action. Instead, contemporary public actions emerge with the vision of more expansive range of democracy that

<sup>63</sup> Haerpfer, W., Bernhagen, P., Inglehart, F. and Welzel, C. (2009).

<sup>64</sup> Adam, P. (1999).

<sup>65</sup> Adam, P. (1999).

<sup>66</sup> McGann, A. (2006).

<sup>67</sup> McGann, A. (2006).

<sup>68</sup> Parkinson, J. R. (2012).

is concerned with developing the full potential of citizens, space and its spatiality. Parkinson's definition of democracy as decisive public reasoning on common issues among all affected interests is the track to these public potentials to achieve. Adding to this, Parkinson said that those decisions are primarily about three things; how to distribute scarce resources; the interests and power relations that structure this distribution; and the normative issues of who should get what, and how to structure society so that they get it.<sup>69</sup>

## 2.3. Democracy Deficit and its Consequences

### 2.3.1. Definition of Democracy Deficit

The term 'democratic deficit' originated in discussions about the political integration of the European Union (EU).<sup>70</sup> There is little worry that the EU might become an illegitimate tyranny: its structure is relatively 'safe' in that it is well checked by national governments, judicial review, and elections.<sup>71</sup> The fear here is whether the EU finds the democratic legitimacy. That is, it lacks the responsive flexibility that a confident and connected people will give its government.<sup>72</sup> The 1975 predictions of the Trilateral Commission's *Crisis of Democracy*, which expressed the fear that an excess of political demand would cause democratic institutions to revert to authoritarianism.<sup>73</sup> However, the original idea of deficits judged the legitimacy of decision making processes within the European Union against the democratic standards of European nation states. Nevertheless, Pippa Norris believes that is not enough; it can be applied more widely to any object where the perceived democratic performance fails to meet public expectations whether concerning a specific public sector agency or institution, the collective regime or constitutional arrangements governing the nation-state, or the agencies of global governance and multilateral organizations, including the United Nations.<sup>74</sup> According to Norris, evidence highlights that this gap between aspirations and satisfaction can be captured by the concept of democratic deficits.<sup>75</sup>

The 'deficit' concept suggests that we think about democratic malaise structurally, as a misalignment between citizen capacities and demands, and in terms of the capacities of political institutions to aggregate citizen demands and integrate them into legitimate and effective governance.<sup>76</sup> Since last half century, governing has become more technical and complex where citizens can know a tiny fraction of the business of government. The result, of course, is that government is very much a matter for experts, who at best attempt to uphold the public trust, and at worst govern as disconnected technocrats.<sup>77</sup> From a normative perspective, governments are in democratic deficit when political arrangements fail the expectation that participation should elicit government responsiveness. From an empirical perspective, governments are in democratic deficit when their citizens come to believe that they cannot use their participatory opportunities and resources to achieve responsiveness. From a functional perspective, governments are in democratic deficit when they are unable to generate the legitimacy from democratic sources they need to govern.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Raz, J. (1986).

<sup>70</sup> Bellamy, R. and D. Castiglione (2000). pp. 65–84.

<sup>71</sup> Moravcsik, A. (2002).

<sup>72</sup> Follesdal, A. and S. Hix (2006).

<sup>73</sup> Mark E., W. (2009).

<sup>74</sup> Bekkers, V., Dijkstra, G., Edwards, A., and Fenger, M. Eds. (2007).

<sup>75</sup> Pippa, N. (2011).

<sup>76</sup> Warren, M. E. (2009).

<sup>77</sup> Warren, M. E. (2009).

<sup>78</sup> Warren, M. E. (2009).

In Norris, the claim is that the most plausible potential explanations for the democratic deficit suggest that this phenomenon arises from some combination of growing public expectations, negative news and / or failing government performance.<sup>79</sup> Norris's general model of democratic deficit is crucial as it indicates the consequences of the democratic deficit: for political activism, compliance with government and democratization. She integrated recent studies in different countries explaining the satisfaction with democracy, trust in government and the list of potential causes, into more comprehensive and coherent general theory to explain why satisfaction with the perceived democratic performance of any regime diverges from public aspirations.<sup>80</sup> (See Fig. 2.2) "Process accounts emphasize that rational citizens have the capacity to judge how democracy works in their own country; it follows that public satisfaction should reflect the quality of democratic governance existing in different countries."<sup>81</sup> This efficient integrated sequential process reflects a clear message; democratic deficits may arise from complex interactions involving rising democratic hopes, negative political news, and perceptions of failing performance that leads to political activism. (See Fig.2.2) Leonardo Morlino while explaining that in Italy we can see democracy deficit, and violating the quality of democracy, he introduced the rule of law as one dimension. While the second procedural dimension of democratic quality is concerned with the relationship between input and output and regards the 'accountability.'<sup>82</sup> We can see democracy deficit violating the quality of democracy through 'Responsiveness.'<sup>83</sup> The final two dimensions are substantive in nature: 'Freedom and equality.'<sup>84</sup> They are the two main democratic ideals and according to Morlino, they are central to a normative definition of quality democracy. They can be violated through limited social rights, limited political rights, monopolized information by a signal media, lack of free fair elections, and lack of freedom of speech or thought.

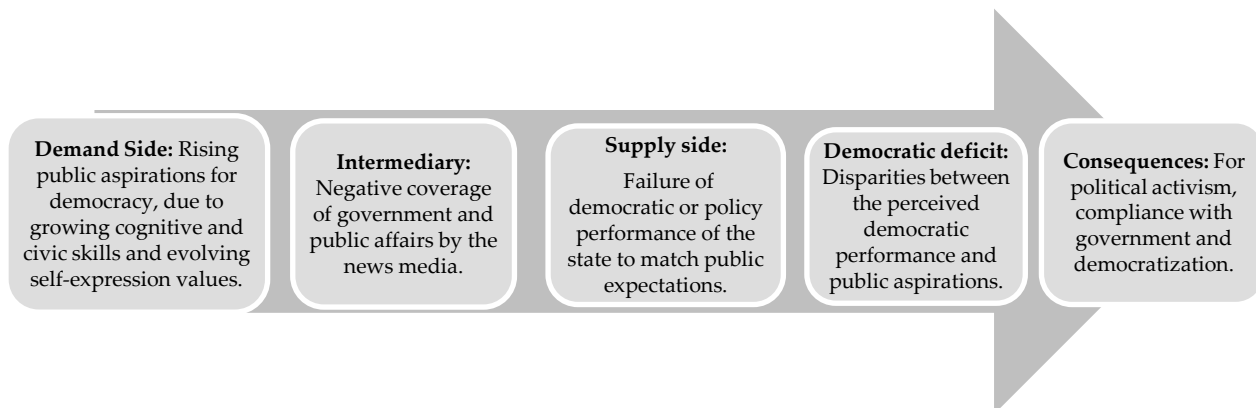


Figure 2.2: Democratic Deficit General Model<sup>85</sup>

### 2.3.2. Democracy and The Democratic Deficit in Egypt and Arab Countries

Arab public opinion was no different from those of other societies in its definition of democracy and citizenship, providing answers comparable to responses in the United States and Japan.<sup>86</sup> Authoritarian regimes,

<sup>79</sup> Norris, P. (2011).

<sup>80</sup> Norris, P. (2011).

<sup>81</sup> Norris, P. (2011).

<sup>82</sup> Morlino, L. (2002)

<sup>83</sup> Morlino, M. (2002)

<sup>84</sup> Morlino, L. (2002)

<sup>85</sup> Norris, P. (2011).

<sup>86</sup> Braizat. F. (2011).

which were the case in Arab countries, are regimes that do not provide democracy's requirements, such as political participation, pluralism, and peaceful alternation of power through free, transparent, and competitive elections. Egypt has become very salient in the media by being portrayed as one of the most debated political scenes. It reflected a crisis of legitimacy, with people out on the streets demanding for change and progress in the democratic field. Glenn notes that the AHDR has placed Egypt in the second lowest rank in the freedom deficit rank which sends concerning messages about its lack of democracy.<sup>87</sup> Mubarak's regime and extent of seriousness about democratization and political reform shifted to authoritarianism with political de-liberalization.<sup>88</sup> Democracy in contemporary Egypt can be qualified through Egyptian regime which remains determined to cling to the state of emergency and the use of the security apparatus as a means of manipulation.

Following Deegan's idea of democracy that, it can be understood as being the government of the whole people, by the whole people, equally represented,' the research can explore the ways in which the development of democracy failed due to the very principles of the establishment of democracy being ineffectively applied in Egypt. In the era of post-independence and especially during the Mubarak era, Egypt suffered many hardships in establishing and sustaining the democratic project. Despite the liberalization reforms it undertook in the 1970's and 1980's, democracy and freedom did not go in hand with this economic progress.<sup>89</sup> Arguments by academics that these reforms were taken in order to increase the regimes' legitimacy at a time of political change.<sup>90</sup> In addition to that, the economic crises that had appeared later on negatively affected the political sphere, hindering any progress in this field. However, Magarou argues that economic development was not so much the problem.<sup>91</sup> Instead, Egypt borrowed ideas of Western democracy and liberalism without adapting it to its environment. This in turn led to a false sense of democracy and leading neither to its proper adoption or adaptation.<sup>92</sup> It entailed to weak political structures which were unsuccessful in forming liberal democratic institutions.<sup>93</sup> This argument demonstrates a cultural explanation for the failure of the democratic project in Egypt. On the other hand, the concept of civil society has been used by many political scientists as an analytical tool for the explanation of the lack of democracy in the Arab world. Many analysts, for example, attribute the durability of authoritarianism in the Arab world to the absence of a strong or 'genuine' civil society, the emergence of which has been regarded as an 'early step towards full democratization of Arab political systems.'<sup>94</sup> It has been strongly argued that the modernization projects carried out by Arab regimes have been selectively unfavorable to democratization, because they did not facilitate the emergence of 'modern' civil societies that effectively engage 'in real democratic games'<sup>95</sup> Since democracy involves a synergetic or interactive 'relationship between state and civil society', where an effective and productive civil society can flourish, the Arab authoritarian nature of 'civil associations [is] in little position to inculcate values of democratic participation.'<sup>96</sup> This is how, as most scholars of Arab politics would agree, the weakness of civil society is closely linked to the authoritarian nature of political systems in the Arab world,<sup>97</sup> which directly affects the democracy deficit of the country.

One of the most salient features of Egyptian politics under President Hosni Mubarak's regime is the 'creative', albeit paradoxical, mixture of democratic and authoritarian elements.<sup>98</sup> The persistence of the state of

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<sup>87</sup> Glenn, E. (2004). pp 91-107.

<sup>88</sup> Abdalbaki, L. (2008).

<sup>89</sup> Milton-Edwards, B. (2006).

<sup>90</sup> Anderson, L. (1995).

<sup>91</sup> Maghraoui, M. (2006).

<sup>92</sup> Sadiki, L. (1988).

<sup>93</sup> Milton-Edwards, B. (2006).

<sup>94</sup> Al-Sayyid-Marsot, A. (2014). p142.

<sup>95</sup> Kamali, M. (2001).

<sup>96</sup> Brynen, R., Korany, B. and Noble, P., (1998). p. 275.

<sup>97</sup> Kassem, M. (2004).

<sup>98</sup> Abdalbaki, L. (2008).



emergency, which allows the regime to control and contain political opposition, has been the main insurmountable obstacle to any meaningful democratic reforms. The state of emergency does not only empower the regime to prohibit demonstrations, censor newspapers and curb 'the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly', but it also provides for the trial of civilians by military courts and allows suspects to be detained without trial.<sup>99</sup> Mubarak's limited political openness, which has always been marked by ostensible commitment to multi-party politics and inconsistent tolerance of political dissent, presents a facade of democratization characterized by a non-competitive multi-party system and elections with a pre-determined outcome.<sup>100</sup> In addition to that, the regime has not been showing many positive signs that it may yield its absolute control over the political process, especially with regard to the absolute domination of parliament by the ruling NDP.<sup>101</sup>

After introducing all these arguments, it appears that not only does the deficiency lie in the agent but also in the structure. The research marked specifically how Mubarak's regime did not seem to be serious about political reform and democratization. The overwhelming evidence clearly shows that, rather than democratizing, Egypt appears to be sticking to more authoritarianism, with political de-liberalization becoming the norm. Accordingly, the democratic deficit in Egypt poses a lot of problems as it influences the social stability, security and prosperity of the country. Egypt is in a condition that good economics for bad politics is no longer sustaining. Surveys conducted before the Tunisian revolt – and its spread to Egypt and other Arab countries – revealed that participation in governance and demands of oversight and combating corruption were a growing popular Arab demand, with some variations in some regions witnessing an increase in sectarian tensions.<sup>102</sup> Consequently, the demand for transitioning from authoritarianism to democracy is related to the level of economic development and the level of political and social crises. In Egypt, political and economic grievances were closely linked in attempts to address complex problems of corruption and injustice. Democratic transition from authoritarianism also depends on the solidarity that dominates society, the nature of authoritarian relations on the family level, cultural variables, the level of education, and the degree of the edification of authority.<sup>103</sup> Due to the availability of positive indicators, Egyptians demanded democratic transition.

The persistence of authoritarian rule has caused dissent amongst the population and the lack of an effective democratic mechanism to channel this has caused violence and mass demonstrations. In the 25 of January 2011, the Egyptian people took to the streets with clear demands for "Bread, freedom, social justice and human dignity." This important achievement comes as a result of long struggle for democracy that was at its highest intensity as the people took to the streets on that day. This directly affects the stability of the country, causing it to become more polarized and violent and thus having deep implications for its security.<sup>104</sup> Winston Churchill's famous saying "I never worry about action, but only about inaction" springs to mind when reflecting on the state techniques of demobilizing civic struggle and societal instruments for civic engagement in their quest to resist authoritarianism.<sup>105</sup> It is not the action of the authoritarian structures in Egypt and Tunisia that matter in the context of the "Arab Spring;" rather, it is their inaction. The type of action invoked here specifically refers to civic resistance — that is, in the case of Egypt and Tunisia, action making use of a range of civic acts, including performing disobedience, protest, boycott, strikes, marches, and sustained occupation of public space. All of these techniques describe peaceful or nonviolent activities all of which, however, are democratic practices.

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<sup>99</sup> Amnesty International. (2007).

<sup>100</sup> Abdulbaki, L. (2008).

<sup>101</sup> Abdulbaki, L. (2008).

<sup>102</sup> Braizat. F. (2011).

<sup>103</sup> Braizat. F. (2011). pp. 4-5.

<sup>104</sup> Lewis, B. (2005). pp.36-51.

<sup>105</sup> Sadiki, L. (2011).

## 2.4. Democratic Performance and its Stages of Practice

### 2.4.1. Definition for Democratic Practice

Democratic practice in politics refers to both formal and informal institutional arrangements for collective decision making and a wide variety of deliberative decision-making processes that incorporate core values of democracy in efforts to build and sustain peace.<sup>106</sup> The concept includes both traditionally conceived institutional arrangements of power sharing and process options aimed at creating and strengthening democratic values and behaviour and promoting positive outcomes.<sup>107</sup> Democratic practice can be the link between peoples and their governments: in turn contribute to the more effective realization of human development and human security. Clearly, the account of democracy here is a great deal thicker than that minimal, electoral one. Using the language of narrative and performance, it draws on quite a different tradition of democratic thought that focuses on the public sphere, and the myriad ways in which experiences are shared in public and claims are made on the public. It takes the sites of formal, binding, collective decision-making seriously: where single public stage required on which decisions are made, tested, and justified. But it goes well beyond those formal sites to include the broader fields in which citizens meet each other as citizens as performers of democratic roles. It is in this perspective, people working for more democracy form part of a century-long and remarkably successful practical tradition that focuses on more participation, more transparency, and more civic reciprocity in public decision making.<sup>108</sup> What takes democracy to work in practice? It is in this emphasizing on the dynamic rather than the static characters of democracy. Democratic practices are all about how citizens can interact and act together to solve shared responsibilities and problems. This defines people by making decisions and acting. Carrying on these democracy practices makes individual into public citizens. Similarly, Parkinson draws attention to the roles that democracy requires citizen to perform while being involved doing democratic actions from the public and high level of interaction and sustain social communication to keep up civic momentum. This shows that democratic practices increase the control that people have over their future.

#### *Roles Required for Democracy Practice*

Democracy is a collective decision making mechanism according to Parkinson require some roles from public to perform on diverse stages. They occupy narration as an essential initial action in any democracy practice and followed by performance. Parkinson classified them: first, by *narrating interests and experience*; this should help to form public opinion. This role can take place in all sorts of setting either at the informal deliberative system, in homes, in the street or wherever people interact.<sup>109</sup> It happens virtually as well in magazines, or blogs and other social media. These points present a decisive relationship between the public action, which is the narration and the range of possible stages, and how the subject matters to the extent that it limits its physical appearance. The uprising in Egypt can be a significant case for the integration between the physical and the virtual stages in order to achieve the role of narration. Cyber public space was alternative public sphere for promoting the cause. New technologies and social media acted as alternative press, giving the access to uncensored information, which allowed denouncing the misdeeds of the Egyptian regime. It helped to raise collective awareness. "Social media is the postal service of the age. It is an efficient method of

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<sup>106</sup> Democracy, Conflict and Human Security Policy Summary: Key Findings and Recommendations International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2006). Retrieved from: [www.idea.int/publications/dchs/upload/Inlaga.pdf](http://www.idea.int/publications/dchs/upload/Inlaga.pdf)

<sup>107</sup> IDEA. (2006). International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. Stockholm Sweden: International IDEA. Retrieved from [www.idea.int/publications/dchs/upload/Inlaga.pdf](http://www.idea.int/publications/dchs/upload/Inlaga.pdf)

<sup>108</sup> Flyvbjerg, B. (1998).

<sup>109</sup> Mansdbridge, J. (1999). pp 211-23.

communication. It still fits within a general modern theory of mass communication."<sup>110</sup> As Facebook page "Kullena Khaled Said" exposed the story to vibrant public debate. This Facebook page with its proposed activities and solidarity were vividly trans-nationalized not only the Arab world but across the large spectrum of the countries extended including more members.

Here it is important to note how effective narrating experience in virtual form appeared by public recently, how people did not worry about expressing themselves as when they are physically present. In addition to that, it was an opportunity to lose fear while freely expressing themselves. Parkinson admitted that the limits of the scene-act ratio, when it comes to the narration of experience, depend on whether the experience being narrated conflict with others present at the same time, which in turns depends on local norms about what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable topics of normal or unmediated interaction. When it is safe topics, the range of possible stages is extremely broad while when it is unsafe topics, the range is narrower, more private, less in the street because of the risk of causing conflict with others nearby. When it is unsafe topics with strangers present, it is narrower still. These points present a decisive relationship between the public action which is the narration and the range of possible stages and how the subject matters to the extent that it limits its physical appearance. This will be clarified in chapter 5 how the virtual stage enhanced the physical and the spatial stage in 18 days of the Egyptian uprising.

Second by *making public claims*; according to Parkinson this can be either through defining collective problems or defending existing arrangements or requesting action and interaction on collective problems or expressing, setting and defending norms or making claims on public resources. Political actors and institutions across the world nationally and internationally have identified social media technologies as tools that can powerfully interact with other modes of organizing and building networks for making public claims. In recent revolutions it was clear that virtual media provided a space to youth to express and interact together and it enabled them to discover that they share same demands and needs that were developed to movements with one vision. Specifically in the phase preceding the 18 days of the Egyptian uprising; Egypt's political opposition grew in strength and diversity. This shifting pace installed stream of contemporary public protests in Egypt gathering reactive revolutionaries. They reflected a shifting point for protest movements composition and tactics, with establishment of the potency of horizontal network through social media. The emergence of youth Movements (e.g. 6 April Youth movements) had an influence on improving civil resistance awareness and response to police brutality.

Third, *deciding about those claims*: this role requires from the public to think of what to do or what not to do, to address public claims, including weighing up options and the role of audiences. This role of the audience can; occur in "commonplace observation" as in dramatic studies that no theatrical event can exist without the audiences.<sup>111</sup> In this case, claim making is directed at an audience, persuading others to think or do something. In this large scale of democracy performance, the audience might be physically or virtually present and here Parkinson noted that the imperative of reaching them determines the choice of stage: it must be highly visible, or made so by attracting media attention. Actions preceding the Egyptian revolution had significant evidence of the transformative roles of participants: from mere observers to play actors who performed and caused change. Facebook account and social media were communication method and platform for coordinating events and debates about alternative tactics towards public space and police brutality. The Facebook page Kullena khaled Said acted as an instant sphere of communication and one of the links between citizens. It helped to coordinate street mobilization as it will be explored in the following chapters.

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<sup>110</sup> Gharbeia, A. and Khoury, D. (2011). Social Media and the Revolutions How the Internet Revived the Arab Public Sphere and Digitalized Activism Heinrich Böll Foundation,, Germany. Retrieved from: [http://lb.boell.org/downloads/Perspectives\\_0212\\_Doreen\\_Khoury.pdf](http://lb.boell.org/downloads/Perspectives_0212_Doreen_Khoury.pdf)

<sup>111</sup> Willmar, S. (2000)..

Fourth, *Scrutinizing and giving account for public action and inaction*; the scrutinizing role of democracy is a significant advantage which has a single, readily identifiable and prominent stage on which the powerful must perform.<sup>112</sup> It sustains the powerful and therefore the existence of informal political actors which is always considered a threat. They cannot be located in a physical sense and thus have the light of publicity shone on their words and actions.<sup>113</sup> The revolution in Egypt had significant evidences of the transformative roles of participants through the transformation of people from mere observers to play actors who performed and affected change, with Tahrir Square being the stage for this transformation and subsequent performance.

## 2.5. Democratic Public Space

Taking up the mission of democracy as a way of making collective decisions, theories proved that for reasons of democratic authenticity and action, it is preferable that those spaces be relatively open, not just to the public as onlookers but as active participants as well.<sup>114</sup> Democracy practice then is all about how citizens can interact and act together to solve shared problems and responsibilities. Accordingly, public space matters because of the functional necessity of the physical arena for democratic action.<sup>115</sup> The physical public space matters to democracy and neglecting it can have detrimental consequences for a democratic society's health.<sup>116</sup> Therefore, physical public spaces are detrimental to democratic debates and practices. The physical dimension of democracy is vital considering recent public sphere that encompasses social movements and social media with communications and mobilization of their public actions. According to Hannah Arendt, there could be no exercise of freedom without the creation of a 'space of appearance', even 'a right to appear' and act. Arendt sees that public spaces are momentarily gaining new values and uses which imbeds actions of democratic practice and stands for as the space of appearance, where I appear to others as others appear to me.<sup>117</sup> Such public spaces of appearance can always be reproduced with new meanings wherever individuals gather for a political cause, being a sign of dynamic active citizenship and collective deliberation. In *The Human Condition*, Arendt stresses repeatedly that action is primarily symbolic in character and that the web of human relationships is sustained by communicative interaction in physical space. This space of appearance "comes into being wherever men are together in the manner of speech and action."<sup>118</sup> Furthermore, it is only in this public space that action can exist since action is "never possible in isolation; to be isolated is to be deprived of the capacity to act."<sup>119</sup> This is demonstrated by the fact that brutal regimes seek to prevent gatherings because their control on power is really threatened by such public gatherings and their actions.

Generally, action transforms individuals into collective force that is amplified by their similarity and unity. Not only is power a factor, but also the deep bonds within the group creates a major threat to ruling power and a primary catalyst for successful action.<sup>120</sup> Parkinson takes this initiative one step further by claiming that physical spaces become even more important to political action in times of virtual and digital public space.<sup>121</sup> Even in a society where politics and communication tend to become virtual, political communications require "a physical event to focus on the thing that is transmitted."<sup>122</sup> Therefore, physical public space matters to democracy

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<sup>112</sup> Parkinson, J. R. (2012).

<sup>113</sup> Parkinson, J. R. (2012).

<sup>114</sup> Parkinson, J. R. (2006). pp. 1-17.

<sup>115</sup> Parkinson, J. R. (2006).

<sup>116</sup> Parkinson, J. R. (2006).

<sup>117</sup> Arendt, H. (1958). P.199.

<sup>118</sup> Arendt, H. (1998).

<sup>119</sup> Arendt, H. (1998), p.188.

<sup>120</sup> Arendt, H. (1970). P.67.

<sup>121</sup> Parkinson, J. R. (2012).

<sup>122</sup> Parkinson, J. R. (2012).

and that neglecting the physical can be a threat for a democratic society's health. Instead, theoretical approach points out that the holistic and stabilizing force of physical spaces is diminishing as a consequence of the rise of information, communication, and transportation networks; Verschaffel noting that democracy is not intrinsically tied to a specific spatial typology.<sup>123</sup> Instead, it is about reinvention of political relations in "changing situations in different geopolitical contexts." Verschaffel mentioned that although physical space and engagement are necessary for democracy and democratic action, their impact and meaning are diminishing.<sup>124</sup> Thus communicative dimension of democracy is vital considering the recent public sphere that encompassed social movements and social media with communications and mobilization of their public actions that required reaching corporations, states, and intergovernmental organizations. But this cannot diminish or replace the power of physical spaces, since it is just a "method of organized intelligence" according to John Dewey, a way of using information spread across the populace in order to make better informed decisions on matters of public interest, and to link this to the difficulty that undemocratic institutions often have in being truthful.<sup>125</sup> Therefore, this is an abstract theme in democracy theory defining democracy possessing epistemic powers that is useful in deliberation. For Parkinson public debate still involves real people who "can take up, occupy, share and contest physical space." The internet civil society still requires physical anchor points for the purposes of political dramatization and communication.

The public space that requires mentioning here is the one freely accessible space, particularly space in which we encounter strangers. Public space as physical subset of the public sphere, according to Parkinson can be 'public' in four major ways. It is space that: is openly accessible; and/or uses common resources; and/or has common effects; and/or is used for the performance of public roles.<sup>126</sup> In this public space, demonstrations appear as a crucial action showing decision-makers the real scale of public displeasure, while people still go on to act, and publicize physical events and actions aimed at mobilizing large numbers of participants and media coverage. Accordingly, a physical distinguished setting is necessary for impressing on participants and the fact that the decisions affect millions helps participants to take what they are doing seriously. Therefore, having a single location helps with the scrutiny role. As political activists have understood for years, it is not the issue per se that gets coverage, it is the dramatization of the issue, and that often requires physical action, creating pictures and a story, in physical.<sup>127</sup>

### **2.5.1. Tahrir Square as a Democratic Public Space**

The emergence of Tahrir Square as a focal point for this uprising is an evidence of how virtual, physical and spatial stages came together in an unexpected way for the purposes of democratic performances. These democracy practices roles do not require that the stages of performance to be separated, instead it is required in some particular settings to involve all the role player. It was evident by recent revolutions that the stage with multi- roles is the most resonating. Spatial appropriation as a form of manifest protest in public space should be seen by all participants and identifiable by outsiders.<sup>128</sup> Similarly, the occupation of Tahrir Square has become the focus for acts of resistance bearing dramatic witnesses. The way that this urban revolt was spontaneously ordered and organized showed that what capitalism and authoritarianism were doing to urban life materially, virtually and culturally, is finding a powerful global in city- based resistance. This exactly confirms Hannah Arendt's discussion of political action as what she called the 'space of appearance' a location cannot be separated from actions. The appearance of people in the Square was not only the significance for resistance and

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<sup>123</sup> Verschaffel, B. (2008).

<sup>124</sup> Verschaffel, B. (2008).

<sup>125</sup> Dewey, J. (1987).

<sup>126</sup> Parkinson, J. R. (2012).

<sup>127</sup> Parkinson, J. R. (2012).

<sup>128</sup> Low, S., (2000).

political right that had been denied to ordinary people: not only the right to gather freely but also the performance of a new spatiality through which people seize upon an already established space controlled by existing power, seeking to dissolve the relation between the public space, and the existing regime. Moreover, Tahrir Square became the evocation of what Doreen Massey once called 'a global sense of place' an intricate and intrinsically mobile constellation of the local and the global.<sup>129</sup> These spatial performances were not only at once performed but also mediated. Images of the Square were extensively aired and broadcasted all over the world through international media as BBC, CNN etc., and how it has been embedded in the minds of people in way that a space in Middle East that everybody knows brought the Middle East, and Egypt in particular, to the fore of discussions about democracy. These actions via social media and satellite television ensured that what took place in Tahrir Square was transmitted around the world, and with the distant responses the people there found their way back into the performance of the Square as a physical performative space. Yet, the spatiality remained and made it localized in a way that could not be relocated.

One has to do with the way a new socio-spatiality was established within the Square as a division of labour marked the revolutionary demonstrations in Tahrir Square that underscore its performative condition. It broke down gender and sex difference. In short, these performances that emerged due to horizontal relations among the protestors, formed easily and methodically, and quickly. It seemed that relations of equality became part of the very resistance to Mubarak's regime and its entrenched hierarchies. These socio-spatial forms of the resistance began to incorporate principles of equality that organized not only how and when people acted, spoke and performed for the media and against the regime, but also how people acted and cared for their various zones within the Square through complex themes: lodging, living supplies, the makeshift medical stations, the places where people pray, places where art and freedom of expression appear, places where media display and capture, and the places where people were exposed to violence from the outside. These actions were all political since they were breaking down a conventional distinction between the public and private in order to establish relations of equality; in this sense, they were incorporating into the very social form of resistance the principles for which they were struggling on the street. This gives great attention to the way in which spatial practices of public space are interchangeable with the vision of more expansive range of democracy that is concerned with developing full potential of heterogeneous communities to perform and live together.

## 2.6. Conclusion

After all these variant concepts of democracy in theory and practice, democracy appears as a significant collective decision making mechanism that requires some roles from the public to perform to reach citizens' participation in the political process and completion among mass mobilization. The research introduced direct participation, political equality and deliberation are introduced as the heart of what democracy entails. Democratic procedures have to be understood as rules that structure deliberation, rather than social choice functions that directly translate preferences into outcomes.<sup>130</sup> This chapter looked at the definition of democracy, signalled what precedes decision making, covered the generation of narratives in the informal public sphere, the impact of public decisions and all other kind of discourses as explained before.

This chapter introduced the democratic deficit concept and its appearance when there are enormous problems with the way the democratic system functions. It also sought to discuss how it shows the lack of democracy and inaccessibility to the ordinary citizen due to the complexity of method of operating shall be introduced in the theoretical part. What concerns the chapter here is the effect and consequences of this

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<sup>129</sup> Massey, D. (1994). PP.146-156.

<sup>130</sup> McGann, A. (2006).

phenomenon on democratic performance: for political activism, compliance with government and democratization and particularly in Egypt. Egypt had suffered a democratic deficit for many years and the process of political evolution is considered to be a challenging and an ambiguous task to undertake in a country plagued by a history of turmoil and authoritarianism. The chapter went through the roles required for democracy practice and its underlying concepts for the creation of Democratic public space. Here we conclude that democracy is a collective decision making mechanism that require some roles from public to perform on diverse stages; that occupy narration as an essential initial action in any democracy practice and followed by performance that is necessary to bring narratives to the attention of fellow citizens. Followed by how people communicate, and the conditions of democratic communications. On this account we should think of what matters for democracy practice to appear physically. And that this democratic practice requires a space to proceed: virtual, physical and spatial stage. By understanding all these particularities one can better understand the democratic public space spatiality and the necessity of exploring its new spatial practices that can reconceptualise the use of urban space as space for urban politics during occupation. Accordingly, this chapter endeavours to define new forms of public space that no longer represent the hegemony power of the regime, but becomes the venue for everyday democratic practices of resistance, spatial and virtual communications, cultural exchange and negotiation of ideology and political context. It is this Tahrir Square that tracing its spatial practices can allow us to discover new model of democracy formed by heterogeneous communities performing and living together for 18 days.

### 3. Politics of Space and Spatial Practices as Acts of Resistance

‘To change life . . . we must first change space.’ (Henri Lefebvre)

#### 3.1. Introduction

There has recently been growing resistance in response to the current crisis of neo-liberal capitalism, democracy deficit or authoritarianism from the Arab uprisings to European mobilizations against austerity measures and the global spread of ‘Occupy’ movements. Many of them organized collective action -democratic performances. The occupation of Tahrir Square and many other public spaces across the countries was a statement of rejection of state domination. It provided a huge urban uprising with political and spatial system that operates to challenge the regime and liberate the space from the State oppression. It was reclamation of people’s right to the city and to the public realm. They make use of the occupation of public space to claim their rights to the process of re-conceptualization of space in order to obtain a space for politics. It was a process of space adaptation using Henri Lefebvre’s term, which featured astonishing forms of social organization and administration.<sup>131</sup> Tahrir Square became an urban utopia for protesters, a place of community participation, collective actions, social discourse and freedom of speech and expression. The occupation of public space, and subversion of the normal political order within those spaces, is a key strategy for protesters to articulate an alternative political future. The Square appeared as a battlefield between public and old system with all its tactics, and the demands for democracy creation. In order to ground this uprising, it is necessary to understand first the right to the city and the two principal rights involved: the right to participation, and the right to appropriation. In addition to that, this chapter has looked at how the politics of occupation through tactics and acts of resistance worked for claiming the right to the city and politics of space. It can help in further analysis of the significance of the space where it unfolded and map out the spatial characteristics of acts of resistance inherent to its context, and particular spatial order that allows better understanding of the Egyptian uprising.

The chapter discusses and offers a theoretical review of the ‘Production of Space’, by Henri Lefebvre, as the main source for understanding politics of space and allows us to understand the potential of this politics of space and how acts of resistance during occupations may enable the emergence of new Scio-spatial practices in democratic form. In order to be able to trace the forms of spatial adaptation and the patterns of social organization and discourse that emerged in the Square during that period. Building on Henri Lefebvre’s interpretation of space and his three dimensional conceptualization: the perceived, the conceived, and the lived, the research first outlines how space is produced and re-produced; second emphasizes Lefebvre’s distinction between the ‘abstract space’ that exists under capitalism or authoritarianism, and the ‘differential space’ that could potentially arise from the occupation of public space. Later on, the chapter emphasizes the importance of reproduction of space as a means of transforming social relations; and third it elaborates the way in which the reconceptualization of space –through new spatial practices- and transformation of social relations in such spaces may contribute to the broader contestation of the existing hegemonic social and political order. The findings of this chapter can be useful for further chapters while investigating the extent of dynamicity and interchangeability of spatial practices in response to changing situations and degrees of their flexibility on daily bases in the 18 days of the sit-in in the Square.

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<sup>131</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1992). P. 73



### 3.2. The Everyday Practices

Since the 1960s, urban studies and planning literature have addressed the urban public space ideally as a place of framing a vision of social life in the city, a vision for those who interact there every day, a common place and a social staging ground.<sup>132</sup> As used interchangeably, the public space is considered to be at the core of the urban experience; the parts of the city in which everybody can come together to meet, to communicate, and to conduct business, or just to enjoy the sound and sight of urban area, be anonymous in the crowd.<sup>133</sup> Yet, this idealization of urban public space increasingly has been overshadowed by the narrative of loss or the end of public space.<sup>134</sup> The changing structure of cities and urban areas, economic, demographic and technological developments have had significant effects on urban public space, from organization and design to use and experience, from function to maintenance and administration.<sup>135</sup> Specifically, they are claimed to be losing their traditional political and social functions with the growth of the service economy and globalization. The loss of accessibility and openness as main characteristics of the urban public space was part of the story.

The growing consumer society with its high levels of protection and privatization of all levels of social life is argued to be alienating people from public life and public experience in the city.<sup>136</sup> Here, the sphere between private and public tends to be superficial. Sennett looks at the problem of the devaluation of urban public space and the deformation of public life by pointing out a general withdrawal from public life by the members of contemporary society.<sup>137</sup> For Sennett, the public and private spheres of social life are critical for sustaining each other. 'The Fall of Public Man', Sennett argues that the withdrawal from public space is related closely to the changes in the social patterns in public spaces, weakening the participation of citizens in public life and their taking part in mere formal duties, only when necessary and doing so only passively. This increased privatization of society witnessed in everyday practice through the loss of public life is related to the deformation in comprehensive relationship between the public and private spheres. Sennett remarks 'sealed communities', as modern citizens maintain their network of personal relations within physically and visibly segregated social worlds in their efforts to cope with the modern way of life.<sup>138</sup> David Harvey brings forth the challenge in our urban areas over privatization of public space that leaves no place for citizens to congregate for political or social discussion as a commons. Clearly, the common space of openness, collectivity, participation and access are declining as spaces of appearance are privatized.<sup>139</sup> Public spaces, in this outline become more than ever important for everyday practices as sites representing differences and diversities, places of gathering and contestations.

Daily activities and practices have been approached from various perspectives.<sup>140</sup> In this part it is crucial to focus on daily life from the perspective of routines and the ways they can be constructed to structure daily life while recognizing its inherent complexity. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century a more structural society evolved and routine had been developed. Routine and habits became part of everyday practices. Everything is well planned and structured from home system to work, transportation, meals, sport, washing and dressing etc.: "daily routines have long been characterized as the epitome of that which is grey, bland and stifling. These are the black holes of joy, spontaneity and inspirations from which scholars have all too often presumed we need to escape."<sup>141</sup> This

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<sup>132</sup> Yücesoy Ü. E. (2006).

<sup>133</sup> Jacobs, J. (1961). pp. 111-129. Sennett, R. (1970), Sennett, R. (1977), Lofland, L.H. (1973).

<sup>134</sup> Yücesoy Ü. E. (2006)

<sup>135</sup> Burgers, J. (2000). pp. 145-164.

<sup>136</sup> Davis, M. (1990).

<sup>137</sup> Sennett, R (1977).

<sup>138</sup> Sennett, R (1990).

<sup>139</sup> karimi, Z. (2013).

<sup>140</sup> Bateson, G. (1973), Shove, E. and Pantzar, M. (2005), De Certeau, M. (1984), Highmore, B. (2004).

<sup>141</sup> Cohen, S. and Taylor, L. (1992) p.47.

intensive daily routine makes people go into a system where people start to struggle and especially if the needs of the individuals are not satisfied or they start to feel the suffering of problems specifically economy. Then people start to be unhappy and go to the streets asking for their rights and claiming the city back. The very structure system of contemporary society works when people are happy but when people started to suffer they start to negotiate and force their territory back to the city as a result of deterioration of personality and dominance of the structured patterns and life style. Through elaborate techniques, ruling authorities, planning agencies and media outlets, criminalize the groups they identify with as threats to the political, social, urban and moral orders of the affluent, and legitimize the urgency to secure, fortify, control and restrict public spaces to their own use.<sup>142</sup> Streets and Squares become under strict and permanent surveillance, and controlled with regard to action and behaviour. Public spaces and Squares turn into places of consumption and aesthetic zones. Local authorities make sure to further assert them as such, cleaning and beautifying them as well as consolidating their visual and formal features.<sup>143</sup> Then possibilities for diverse and multiple spatial practices and experiences within such spaces become constrained and contingent as well.

### 3.3. The Right to the City and The Politics of Space

The right to the city is frequently discussed.<sup>144</sup> The rights to occupy, or citizens' rights of the city, are reflected in three claims as according to Cities for Citizens:<sup>145</sup> first the right to voice, where citizens can claim presence in urban space, second the right to difference, where citizens can participate in the development process of the use, function and meaning of space, and third, the right to human flourishing, where citizens have the ability to live life fully. The absence of these rights suggests the existence of power over citizenship. It therefore suggests that achieving spatial democracy is dependent on the capacity of citizens to use and adapt public spaces for their needs. Lefebvre is a good starting place for a more detailed and critical analysis of the right to the city and its utility for urban democracy. Lefebvre's notion of the right to the city is at once complex and fluid. His right to the city is not a suggestion for reform, instead a call for a radical restructuring of social, political, and economic relations, both in the city and beyond.<sup>146</sup> In Purcell's interpretation the radical nature of the right to the city lies precisely in this reorientation of decision-making, 'away from the state and toward the production of urban space.'<sup>147</sup> He continues: instead of democratic deliberation being limited to just state decisions, Lefebvre imagines it to apply to all decisions that contribute to the production of urban space. The right to the city stresses the need to restructure the power relations that underlie the production of urban space, fundamentally shifting control away from capital and the state and toward urban inhabitants.<sup>148</sup> Moreover, David Harvey builds on Lefebvre's theory of the right to the city, the freedom to rethink and reshape our cities as was seen even for a fleeting moment in the social uprisings of 2011. Harvey believes in the commons as public<sup>149</sup> and the power of collective bodies in revolt to gain power as played out historically "by the sensibility that arises out of the streets around us [...] coupled with the exhilaration of street demonstrations."<sup>150</sup> Harvey supports Lefebvre's view of anti-capitalist struggles as a continuation of the right to the city.

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<sup>142</sup> Caldeira, T. (2000). Pp201-211.

<sup>143</sup> Yücesoy, E. Ü. (2006).

<sup>144</sup> Soja E. (2000).

<sup>145</sup> McCann, E. (2002). pp. 77-79.

<sup>146</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1992). P. 73

<sup>147</sup> Purcell, M. (2002). Pp99-108.

<sup>148</sup> Purcell, M. (2002).

<sup>149</sup> Habermas, J. (1991). p 6.

<sup>150</sup> Harvey, D. (2012).

According to Lefebvre, the right to the city involves two principal rights for urban inhabitants: the right to participation, and the right to appropriation.<sup>151</sup> For him the right to participation insists that inhabitants participate centrally and directly in decision-making. In place of the current regime in which capital and state elites control the decisions that produce urban space, Lefebvre imagines inhabitants as the majority and hegemonic voice. While in the right to appropriation, appropriation includes the right of inhabitants to physically access, occupy, and use urban space, and so this notion has been the primary focus of those who advocate the right of people to be physically present in the space of the city.<sup>152</sup> Not only is appropriation the right to occupy already-produced urban space, it is also the right to produce urban space so that it meets the needs of inhabitants. Because appropriation gives inhabitants the right to 'full and complete usage' of urban space in the course of everyday life,<sup>153</sup> space must be produced in a way that makes full and complete usage possible. The right to appropriation constitutes a clear and direct challenge to the social relations of capitalism especially against conception of urban space as private property. Appropriation's control over urban space works on resisting the current hegemony of property rights and stressing the priority of the use-rights of inhabitants.

Lefebvre's critique of space, where he refers to the space as something that exists in tension with social practices, or as he puts it "at once both work and product - a materialization of "social being.""<sup>154</sup> Interpreting this through the Marxist tradition of social relations, urban space is an expression of the dominant power structure drawn out through conflict.<sup>155</sup> Also it is the process by which space as a 'human product' is continually produced and transformed through political spatial practice.<sup>156</sup> Politics of space drives us away from thinking of space as static and passive, or space is simply given, which is not the case. Discovering the 'multidisciplinary meaning'<sup>157</sup> of place and tackling these approaches can be the way to look through space as more dynamic concept; the site of the dialectics, it is the potential for change and transformation and space that is not given but produced. It is a socially produced space, spatiality, not inert and static but is it constitutive of social relations.<sup>158</sup> Accordingly, this mingling in the notions and critiques about space and social practices, gives impression of how complex their interaction is. This explains how in terms of their actual location, evolves a place of conflicts and opposition.

The significance of public space as a site of resistance and struggle can be clear when viewed through the lens of Lefebvre's theory of the 'production of space'. Lefebvre argues that social space "is not a thing among other things, or a product among other products: rather, it subsumes things produced and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity"<sup>159</sup> That is, space is not a "pre-existing, empty or neutral space or a space determined solely by geography, climate, or anthropology."<sup>160</sup> Rather, space is an ongoing production of relations between diverse objects, both natural and social, including the networks that facilitate their exchange and transformation. Production of new space by activists through their creative and reactive intervention to Lefebvre, it is essential that activists and artists who would be "revolutionary" produce new spaces, which is inseparable from new everyday lives and new languages: "A revolution that does not produce a new space has not realized its full potential; indeed it has failed in that it has not changed life itself, but has merely changed ideological superstructures, institutions or political apparatuses. A social transformation, to be

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<sup>151</sup> Lefebvre H. (1996).

<sup>152</sup> Capron G. (2002), Lamb M. (2002), May. Isin E. and Wood, P. (1999), Salmon S. (2001), Mitchell D. and Staeheli L. (2002).

<sup>153</sup> Lefebvre H. (1996). p179.

<sup>154</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p225.

<sup>155</sup> Spatial Politics reclaiming the right to the city Blog Dec '11 Tiananmen Square archinect.com/blog/article/22801467/tiananmen-Square

<sup>156</sup> Linda.H (1993). PP.395-420.

<sup>157</sup> Mayo, J. M. (1988).

<sup>158</sup> James, F. (1991).

<sup>159</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1992). p 73.

<sup>160</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1992).

truly revolutionary in character, must manifest a creative capacity in its effects on daily life, on language and on space." Activists and artists must also take care to select appropriate spaces for their interventions and/or be prepared to make extensive alterations in the spaces they've chosen to divert, appropriate and/or occupy.<sup>161</sup>

### 3.3.1. The Politics of Occupation: Tactics and Acts of Resistance

Starting with the description of resistance by Afuape, "People always resist experiences of oppression and abuse, and ....has the potential to be liberating."<sup>162</sup> Resistance is also liberating, life affirming and generous in its potential to inspire hope. Resistance connects us to our values and identity, but is 'no absolute for a life of equality and respect.'<sup>163</sup> When resistance generates acts in space, the whole nature of resistance changes. When ways of resisting are invited to work on the space, the social relationship might take on a depth and spatiality that is liberating. From this perspective, the revolution and uprising should go on against whoever abuses power: it is an ongoing movement of resistance and contestation that deploys an oppositional set of popular and civilian tactics against strategies of dominance and politics of despair.<sup>164</sup> When exploring the occupation of Tahrir Square through the lenses of power, resistance and liberation, it may not be helpful to frame progress as evolving to a higher level of political consciousness only. Resistance should not be judged as effective only if it stops oppression and abuse from the powerful: "Acts of resistance that might appear inconsequential have the potential to provide foundation for further action"<sup>165</sup> that can be not only political change but also near to social and urban transformation. These acts or individual acts are often unarticulated protests that yield even more power if given the space to be told and heard.

De Certeau was introducing concepts of strategy and tactics and how to make use of the elements of the terrain in the practice of everyday life, offering a way of approaching this by considering the urban not as an essential category of spatiality, but rather as a fully contingent and embedded site that modulates subjectivity and produces new relations. This type of spatial practices that resist and defend to establish a power base depends according to de Certeau, on the tactical use on the very territory carved out by the holder of power: "a tactic is calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus. The space of a tactic is the space of the other. Thus it must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power...it is a maneuvered with the enemy's field of vision...and within enemy territory. In short, a tactic is an art of the weak."<sup>166</sup> As de Certeau stated that opposed to strategies, tactics were developed by those under control to traverse the uses, manipulate these spaces without losing sight of the strategies or abandoning the system.<sup>167</sup> Therefore, occupation of the space, through their tactical uses of it, can transform the place according to their own political, social and urban vision into a space of freedom, resistance and liberation, a space beyond the control of the state and outside the normal political order, in which a more progressive politics was forged and made real. Hence, these acts of resistance that changed the space in terms of spatial practices were due to fluctuating network of active relations between protesters.

Exploring the acts of resistance and their spatiality that influence the spatial patterns of the public space, the research mirror Doreen Massey's view, she writes: "clearly, places do not have single, unique 'identities'; they are full of internal conflicts,"<sup>168</sup> this can be clear for Tahrir Square at the time of the 18 days of the Revolution.

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<sup>161</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1992).

<sup>162</sup> Afuape, T. (2011).

<sup>163</sup> Wade, A. (1997). p31.

<sup>164</sup> Telmissany, M. (2014). p. 36-46

<sup>165</sup> Afuape, T. (2011).

<sup>166</sup> Certeau, M. (1984). pp36-37

<sup>167</sup> Certeau, M. (1984).

<sup>168</sup> Massey, D. (1994).

David Harvey argues that urban-based social movements can become the vehicle to join up the struggles.<sup>169</sup> As in Tahrir Square, through inflamed feeling of collectivity by protesters, they felt strong enough to resist the regime of Mubarak, although protesting was -and still is- a very dangerous endeavour. In this regards, new socio spatial patterns articulated through occupation and uprisings as Egyptian revolution. These protesters embody non-violent resistance. These acts of civil resistance are based on a very long tradition of non-cooperation and non-violence, two techniques that have often proved to be very powerful. Leo Tolstoy and Mohandas Gandhi are the most iconic spokespersons of these forms of resistance.<sup>170</sup> Revolutions and upspring through acts of resistance were never the call of one particular social group; rather it embraced the totality of the population and sought perfection and reconciliation as a basic component of the revolutionary vision. Resistance tactics during the 18 days of the Egyptian revolution were peaceful in nature. They were basically developed around three ideas: the silmiyah (pacifist) rule preaching no or very little violence in retaliation to police brutality; free movement in and out of the Square (centre and periphery) and the call to other Squares of Egypt to take part in the revolution; de-territorialization of the struggle in cyberspace, using different tools of communication (cell phones, internet, video cameras, interviews with non-Egyptian media representatives, etc.).<sup>171</sup>

The acts of resistance through occupation were crucial tactics of recent uprisings. In light of these transnational events, the acts of resistance through occupation of public space deserve attention as a vehicle for political change. They emerged through unusual practices that not only evoke political change but also social ones. The act of occupation, of course, has a long heritage in political protest and uprisings, from the student protests movement in Tiananmen Square in China in 1989, student protests of the 1960s, through the anti-nuclear activists at Greenham Common, to Brian Haw's long anti-war encampment in Parliament Square, London, the protest camps that filled central Beirut for months in 2005 and 2006–2007 and demonstrations, riots, civil disobedience in Iran 2010. Few have captured the imagination as much and had such dramatic political impact as the camp at Tahrir Square. The occupation of urban space, and subversion of the normal political and social order within those spaces, was a key strategy for the Egyptian protesters to articulate an alternative political future. The occupation of Tahrir Square was an enclave of another spatial order, an assemblage of people, politics and technologies set apart from its surroundings and embodying its own value system. The vast majority of mass demonstrators continue to offer peaceful resistance, devising new strategies on a daily basis to help them fight off the oppressive and immoral authorities, and ability to live. The occupation of public Squares is an act of resistance with a number of motivating factors, most notably the intense desire to reclaim public space, thereby reclaiming rights both practical and symbolic.

Judith Butler put it in direct reference to Tahrir: 'The collective actions of the crowd collect the space itself, gather the pavement, and animate and organize the architecture.'<sup>172</sup> To occupy this space, the protesters had to camp, to create a spatial anchoring of opposition and resistance by constructing an enduring infrastructure for survival and political opposition. These new socio-spatial patterns and tactics immersed in Tahrir Square; created from it a city by itself were all social, ritual, cultural, social and political performances appeared to sustain resistance. The sit-in was ordered and organized that the research captured through diverse themes: hospitalization and emergency support: living and life needs supplies: media and news display: prayers and ritual practices: art and freedom of expression: and offense and defence. For 18 days, Tahrir Square camp was the focus for oppositional mobilization and organization. This captures the sense of experimentation, of improvisation and of fluidity that characterized the Arab uprisings. It was a new politics of space, and this is captured in Adam Ramadan's description of Tahrir Square as an encampment, turning it into at once a space

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<sup>169</sup> Harvey, D. (2012).

<sup>170</sup> Mende, D. (2011).

<sup>171</sup> Telmissany, M. (2014). p. 36-46.

<sup>172</sup> Butler, J. (2011). Bodies in alliance and the politics of the street, <http://eipcp.net/transversal/1011/butler/en.>: retrieved Jan 2014.

and an act: a space-in-process.<sup>173</sup> Therefore urban space has faced a new spatial order which shall have post-impact and everlasting effect on the morphology of public space and on the anti-riot control strategies. The camp at Tahrir Square was a temporary and tactical practice of territoriality, controlling and ordering space. It was the doing and making of an alternative political order that undermined the very order of the state that sought to suppress it. Claiming that acts of resistance are part of the socio- spatial practices of the space, can be guided by, Lefebvre's social space term, and an individual's relationship to that space, then implies a certain level of 'competence' and 'performance' from that individual.<sup>174</sup> Tahrir Square was an alternative world\ home-place as a community of and for resistance. It was the convergence centre as a small self-managed city, of exchange and innovation.

### 3.3.2. The Production of Space

The importance of public space as a site of resistance is clear when viewed through the lens of Lefebvre's theory of the 'production of space' Lefebvre argues that social space "is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products: rather, it subsumes things produced and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity."<sup>175</sup> According to Lefebvre, space is a process of continuous production not an end product. During the 18 days of the revolution protesters through occupation of Tahrir Square, has engaged in a 'politics of space', by which public space is taken as the focus of resistance. The Square hosted multiple layers of public organization, social interaction, and public discourse. In this part the chapter analyse the nature of Tahrir Square during this period using Henri Lefebvre's interpretation of space needs illustration of his three dimensional conceptualization: the perceived, the conceived, and the lived.<sup>176</sup> Lefebvre suggests a 'three-way dialectics' for understanding space which examines the interrelation of spatial practice, representations of space and spaces of representation.<sup>177</sup> Spatial practice is introduced and described by Lefebvre as a wider conception of practice superordinate to and including any form of social practice, revolutionary or reformist. According to his definition, spatial practice denotes any practice that challenges and modifies existing configurations of space, based on the assumption that space is a product – shaped by conflicting forces that act upon it. This applies to any of the three categories of space interpreted by Lefebvre on three levels.

#### *Perceived Space*

Lefebvre refers to this as perceived space, meaning that space is always an aspect of our experiences of the world but, most of the time; it is apprehended without conscious attention. There are three different levels of space, from very abstract, natural space (absolute space) to more complex spatialities whose significance is socially produced. Spatial practice is what we do that is considerably different to how space is conceived by architects, and planners. Instead of seeing spatial practice as an activity that creates space, it is seen as producing space. It is the appropriated social space created by spatial practice. Dominant spatial relations under capitalism are, for Lefebvre, characterized by abstraction. This 'abstract space' signifies homogeneity, hierarchy and social fragmentation.<sup>178</sup> Everyday life in the city, with its shops and factories, neighbourhoods and houses, parks and places of worship, walls and fences, etc., exemplify perceived space. This is a tangible form of space that provides a degree of continuity and cohesion to each social formation. It is also captured through power relations, as many aspects of social control and contention depend on the ability to control the spaces of specific

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<sup>173</sup> Ramadan, A. (2013). p145-9.

<sup>174</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991).

<sup>175</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p73

<sup>176</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991).

<sup>177</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). pp. 33, 38–46

<sup>178</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p. 52

social activities. As Lefebvre marks, "...the ultimate foundation of social space is prohibition."<sup>179</sup> For example, the efficiency of private property as a basis for allocating and controlling resources rests upon the ability to exclude others from the occupation and use of property they do not own.

Lefebvre defines the perceived as that "which embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation"<sup>180</sup> For example, streets, cities, and towns, many things are expressed in spatial terms, from nature's physical space to manmade spaces, even mental space and social space. A multitude of things are expressed in spatial terms, from nature's physical space to manmade spaces, even mental space and social space. As described by Lefebvre, space is produced by social interaction, imposes itself on its users and in turn shapes society. Space encourages and discourages certain forms of behavior and interaction and gives form to social structures and ideologies.<sup>181</sup> In the context of Tahrir Square, its physical characteristics, its urban history through political shifts and particularities that will be deeply investigated in Chapter 6, are the reasons that made that place a very convenient meeting point for all protests. In the condensed urban fabric of Cairo, this action and scene are nearly impossible in any other place than Tahrir Square. Tahrir Square offered protestors a dramatic stage for media exposure due to its form, name and location. The patterns of mass within the Square featured an interesting dialogue between socio-political practices and space.

### *Conceived Space*

Representations of space or conceived space refers to the ways in which space is represented, reduced and rendered measurable when it is the focus of conscious attention, such as in maps, plans and verbal accounts of spaces. Representation of Space is conceptualized space without life, simply an abstraction. It is the formal conceptualized space of planners, scientists, urbanists, architects etc. A space of calculations, geometric and the visual, although abstract, is the language of architects and designers; tied to the production of those spaces and the order in which the production occurs. According to Lefebvre, representations of space are about the history of ideologies.<sup>182</sup> These histories can be studied by looking at how plans of a space changed over time. Other representations emphasize rather than ignore what are constructed as unique aspects of a place. Either way, all representations of space are reductive in that they determine which aspects of space should and should not be articulated.

In the context of Tahrir Square, before the 18 days of the Egyptian revolution, it was an abstract space, a generic and socially fragmented realm. The Square was heavily controlled by the State and lacked even the smallest feature of social fiber. These dominant representations of space are "tied to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose."<sup>183</sup> It was designed and organized to function as a vehicular circulation open space rather than a place of public discourse. The Square was "continuously monitored by secret police and security cameras" and the area was void of any cafes or restaurants and groups of more than five people were not allowed to form.<sup>184</sup> For Egyptians, Tahrir Square was not anymore a recreational place. Its sidewalks were rarely used for any activities other than circulation. Contrary to the trend in commercialization of public spaces,<sup>185</sup> apparently there was a mindful effort by planners and controllers to exclude any commercial or recreational activity from Tahrir Square so that there would be no excuse to disrupt the flow of people through the Square. If there was a distraction in the movement of crossers then the fear was that people may

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<sup>179</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p. 35

<sup>180</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p. 33

<sup>181</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p. 33

<sup>182</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p. 116

<sup>183</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p. 33

<sup>184</sup> Salama, H. (2013). (128-138)

<sup>185</sup> Sorkin, M. (Ed.) (1994).

gather and collectively act, which was considered dangerous by the regime. Foucault states "if one governed too much one did not govern at all—that one provoked results contrary to those one desired,"<sup>186</sup> it was an approach tackled by the Egyptian security services that was one of main causes of the revolution.

During the 18 days of the Egyptian revolution the Square was completely transformed into a pure urban utopia, an ideal city of public discourse. It was pure representation of its community and their needs. It was that social space and sphere where people were free to organize and protest. There was a remarkable sense of self-governing and ownership of their newly liberated social realm. This process of reproduction and the patterns of change reflect the imagined public space in the people's minds. This self-organisation of symbolic and unified solidarity evolved through popular actions among protesters spontaneously within sit-in terrain and perhaps through the realm of Lefebvre's conceived. The protesters conceived this space in Lefebvre's terms as a place of protest, liberation and freedom.

### *Lived Space*

Lived space encompasses the coexistence and interaction of the first two types of space. According to Lefebvre, this is "space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users'. This is the dominated—and hence passively experienced—space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays the physical space, making symbolic use of its objects."<sup>187</sup> Spaces of representation or lived space refers to the ways that space is experienced directly, bodily and outside of verbal systems of representation. Lived space avoids verbal description but holds the potential for new ways of experiencing the social and material world. Lived spaces may be instances which defy official representations of space or when events occur in ways which fail to be reflected in routine practices or representations of space. Representational space is produced and contains spatial codes that change over time. Space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols and therefore the space of users but also of artists and writers and philosophers. As the space of actually lived material and symbolic experience, it can be "terrain for the generation of 'counter-spaces,' spaces of resistance to the dominant order...",<sup>188</sup> where alternative orders of material and symbolic space are imagined and struggled over. Social actors in lived space may consume space according to spatial practices and representations of space, or they may defy their catalogue and thus alter the way in which spaces are consumed. Accordingly, the above mentioned 'abstract space' may give way to a new kind of space. This process occurs through the rupture of old spatial relations and the generation of new spatial relations. Lefebvre calls this 'differentiated space' to emphasize that the hitherto subordinated differences and peculiarities of human social life may now be accentuated and affirmed.<sup>189</sup>

The experience in Tahrir Square during the 18 days of the revolution featured dramatic actions, courage, and lived situations. The Square was transformed from a profane space to a sacred and differential one.<sup>190</sup> For the first time, social and political discourses were generated between diverse religious, political and social groups. Tahrir Square had moved from the state to the people. Consolidating this transformation is a rejection of the subordination of public space to the representations of space, as conceived by dominant group. People were in charge of their own space. Tahrir Square witnessed unusual forms of public organization and administration that were not common in Egypt public sphere. Committees were formed and makeshift system was enforced for securing, serving, hospitalizing, maintaining and administrating the Square continuously. It was a process of space adaptation that featured astonishing forms of social organization and administration. Tahrir Square was

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<sup>186</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p. 242

<sup>187</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p. 39

<sup>188</sup> Soja, E. W. (1996). p68

<sup>189</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p. 52

<sup>190</sup> Soja, E. W. (1996).



transformed into space of collective actions, community participation, freedom of expression practices and social discourse. It was a space where people exercised their rights in the city while freely shaping the urban context. The Square has never witnessed leadership and groups of people were equally represented in the process of decision-making and actions. It experienced unity of representation and collective actions. What Egyptians have experienced and lived during the 18 days in Tahrir Square superseded their imagined utopia through social reconfiguration.

### 3.3.3. Contesting Social Relations

After exploring the production and reproduction of space there remains a question of how the emergence of new spaces was sustained through the practices of the 18 days of the Egyptian Revolution. The key can be, for Lefebvre, is the development of new social relations alongside the production of new space. He explained that, “‘Change life!’ ‘Change society!’ These precepts mean nothing without the production of an appropriate space. A lesson to be learned from Soviet constructivists of 1920–1930, and from their failure, is that new social relations call for a new space, and vice-versa.”<sup>191</sup> This mutually relation between space and its social relation is an essential aspect of a radical politics of space. The production of space is an ongoing process that takes place through the interactive relation between social groups embedded in a particular space. Starting with the 1970s, a number of scholars<sup>192</sup> have challenged the way the relationship between space and society are conceptualized. Sennett’s account of devalued public space is based on conceiving space as a social entity, constructed socially rather than as a sole container of social activities.<sup>193</sup> Lefebvre was the first to acknowledge the social construction of space, discussing elaborately the production of space through the analysis of social relations. He says ‘space is political and strategic’, pointing out both the complexity and contradictory nature of space, imbued with social relations and the social production of space, where groups appropriated it in order to manage and exploit it. Acknowledging space as a social construct took the view of space/spatiality as not an objective or subjective structure, but rather a social experience.<sup>194</sup> The experiences of space, according to Harvey were not static properties, but active practices:<sup>195</sup> “Spatial practices derive their efficacy in social life only through the structure of social relations within which they come into play...they take on their meaning under specific social relations of class, gender, community, ethnicity, or race and ‘get up’ or ‘worked over’ in the course of social action.”<sup>196</sup> Space was a conception constructed by way of people’s social practices in their involvement with the world.<sup>197</sup> This conception is important for the analysis of public space because people as social actors construct and reconstruct spaces based on their own meanings and experiences. Therefore, the responsibility of dissident movement while revolting is thinking of how their new political system can help to re-conceptualize the old regime space and create new spatial order that build upon the old one and charging it with new meanings.

People were really developing their own living style in a kind of evolution as a type of coherent communities that come out of their needs and response to each other and communal status. There was a significant desire of democratic society is ‘prefigured’<sup>198</sup> in the horizontal social relations of community control that frames the uprising operation and no leadership. Movements guided by pre-figurative politics do not seek totalizing effects across all aspects of the social order by taking state power; nor do they seek change on selected axes by reforming state power.<sup>199</sup> In fact, during the days of protesting it was a new scene for Cairenes to see the

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<sup>191</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p. 59

<sup>192</sup> Harvey, D. (1969). Pred, A. (1982). pp. 157-186. Massey, D. (1994).

<sup>193</sup> Sennett, R. (1970).

<sup>194</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p. 83

<sup>195</sup> Harvey, D. (1991).

<sup>196</sup> Harvey, D. (1991). p. 222-3

<sup>197</sup> Simonsen, K. & J.O. Bærenholdt (eds) (2004).

<sup>198</sup> Breines, W. (1980). P.421.

<sup>199</sup> Day, R. (2005).

merge of social classes all unified for one cause. For protestors, Tahrir Square became a place of community engagement, collective projects, social discourse and most importantly freedom of speech. It was a place of collective expression that needs investigation. Jane Jacobs highlights that “cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when they are created by everybody.”<sup>200</sup>

### 3.3.4. Contesting Spatial Hegemony

Egyptian Revolution is kind of revolution, not political one that may replace the government or alter the form of government, and the underlying capitalist social relations will remain intact, instead a social revolution that changes the social, political, and economic foundation of society. A key part of this is the need for social revolution to be prepared “in the sense of furthering the evolutionary process, of enlightening the people about the evils of present-day society and convincing them of the desirability and possibility, of the justice and practicability of a social life based on liberty”<sup>201</sup> Yet, even if Tahrir Square as a new social space was able to sustain through the emergence of new social relations, this politics of space was ultimately effective in contesting the existing hegemonic power and order, and bringing about an alternative social order. The occupation of Tahrir Square appeared with the transformation of spatial and social relations were developed into what Lefebvre termed a ‘counter-space’ – alternative spatial arrangements and practices that function as a point of possible rupture in the existing system.<sup>202</sup> Contesting spatial and social relations was clearly a necessary aspect of radical social change. Contesting spatial hegemony and social relations, then, plays an important part in preparing such social transformation mentally and physically.

## 3.4. Conclusion

Acts of resistance during the occupation of public space can be a way for protestors to confront the regime and their hegemony traditions. Even in the face of a high degree of social control from authorities, protestors continue to appropriate public space for self-representation and cultural expression, and claim their right to the city. The ways protestors used public space reveal something about their reproduction of space that contains protestors’ unique demands, resistance, and social relations. A space, in other words, that embodies their perceptions and lived experiences. This chapter has looked at how the politics of occupation can appear through tactics and acts of resistance for claiming the right to the city and politics of space. The Egyptian revolution has reintroduced the notion of public space occupation to the forefront of discussions on contemporary urbanism. This chapter offered Lefebvre’s interpretation of space and his three dimensional conceptualization: perceived, conceived and lived space conceptualization as an analytical approach to analyse the nature of occupied squares during uprisings specifically Tahrir Square. In relation to acts of resistance, an analysis of spatial practices reveals some potentials, attending to lived space allows us to identify the moments when conventions of moving through or knowing space are disrupted and new spatial practices and experiences of space become possible.

As Rob Shields suggests that lived space subverts both everyday spatial practices and representations of space and that an understanding of these three aspects of space as they are simultaneously played out can lead to an engagement with the multidimensional social reality of space.<sup>203</sup> In analysing the occupation of public space, the main issue of concern is the extent to which these spatial relations can be contested and re-articulated. Clearly, the concern here is with the potential scope for lived space to defy ‘abstract space’ in favour of

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<sup>200</sup> Jacobs, J. (1961).

<sup>201</sup> Berkman, A. (1929).

<sup>202</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p. 83

<sup>203</sup> Shields, R. (1999).

'differentiated space'. In 18 days, Tahrir Square was dramatically transformed from an abstract profane space to a differential space. Lefebvre's triad facilitates the unfolding and understanding of the sophisticated layers of interaction between people and space. It shall provide a balanced emphasis on the multiple scopes of the Tahrir narrative. It shall be a guideline for the spatial experience in Tahrir Square. It highlights the importance of understanding the lived experience as a product of a process of space adaptation and divergence. Thus, while the physical space of Tahrir Square is no longer that of the protesters of the 18 days, the social space has been altered through this occupation. The abstract spatial relations of capitalism and authoritarianism have been challenged and the potential for a new differentiated space has been experienced.

This chapter went through emphasizing the importance of reproduction of space as a means of transforming social relations; and it elaborates the way in which the reconceptualization of space and transformation of social relations in such spaces may contribute to the broader contestation of the existing hegemonic social and political order. There is, of course, no completion, certainty, or purity in a politics of space concerned with radical spatial transformation. The contestation of hegemony of power is a continuous struggle and the spatial politics of the protesters during occupation should thus be understood as an intervention, an attempted rupture in dominant spatial relations, from which a broader contestation of the existing hegemonic order may result. The research introduced the politics of space through acts of resistance and their link to democracy practices. The transformation of public spaces and social relations, then, serves primarily to enable the empowerment of people in opposition to the existing order. From this perspective, the occupation of public space is significant insofar as it enables the emergence of new spatial practices. Although the public realm is made up of social conflict over the use, function and meaning of space, the social integration in public space towards a common goal redefined urban meaning, forming the basis of a negotiated adaption of urban function to the Square. For uprisings concerned with a radical transformation of spatial and society, this politics of space must be decisively employed as a tool for the broader contestation of the existing order. Therefore, the research highlighted this politics of space that must be regarded as part of a repertoire of action available to movements.

The reproduction of Tahrir Square as public space took an evolutionary approach to spatial typology, where new functions of space were adopted based on human interaction with space. Spatial typologies were created and shall be deeply investigated and traced through their tactics of resistance in coming chapters, such as hospitalization and emergency support: living and life needs supplies: media and news display: prayers and ritual practices: art and freedom of expression: and offense and defence. The findings of this chapter can be useful for further chapters while investigating the extent of dynamicity and interchangeability of spatial practices in response to changing situations and degrees of their flexibility of on daily basis in the 18 days the sit-in in Tahrir Square.

## **4. Factors Affecting Spatial Practices in Public Spaces during Old Uprisings**

### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter narrows down the studies on older mass occupation of urban squares and highlights the factors affecting their spatial practices, in different parts of the world. The literature study was the way to create more knowledge about three different cases represented a conflict in which the public sought to use the urban square as a setting to challenge the authority and freely express. Urban squares, during these events appeared to accommodate different circumstances. These conflicts have exposed each urban Square to new spatial order, use and constraints, which shall have significant effect on the design of the space and its spatial practices.

The analysis of case studies was chosen including Tiananmen Square in China, Azadi Square in Iran and Wenceslas Square in Czech Republic during mass occupation and acts of resistance. This chapter presents each case study separately trying to uncover the particularities of each public space through its spatial practices and factors affecting their appearances. In order to carry out this analysis, it was essential to learn about certain aspects of each public space's history, its importance to its community and the state, and timeline of actions and practices during uprising occupation. The study of previous civil resistance and power of politics in different urban Squares shall help in developing a better understanding of the unusual dynamics and spatial practices, and in determining the qualities and spatial characteristics that allowed only certain Squares to act as spaces of resistance in face of dominant State power recently. Moreover it develops a suitable methodology for further research and field work for recent uprising in Tahrir Square.

### **4.2. The Tiananmen Square Case and the 1989 Movement**

The 1989 movement in china turned all audiences into one central point which is the Tiananmen Square. It was the center of actions, tension and conflict. The Square witnessed process of transformation through events disseminated by the media during its occupation by the public that was accompanied by tactics and activities in university campuses. It was turned to a small city of tents with protesters, organized and controlled zones, services points, hunger strikers clustered around the monument to the people's Heroes in the middle of the Square. The student movement in Tiananmen Square is a complex image where Tiananmen Square's particularity affected the movement's spatial practices. It was not only about transformation of the city Square and adapting it to host a specific function. The matter goes beyond that, this spatial practice imbued the space with new meanings that will remain forever as well. During this period of May and June the Tiananmen Square was more than being a stage for political drama, a concentration of social actions.

Between 15 April and 4 June 1989 was a series of demonstration in China especially in Tiananmen Square in Beijing, demanding reforms to the system of communist party rule that had existed in China since 1949.<sup>204</sup> Despite the facts that China has no tradition of nonviolence and civil disobedience in a philosophical sense, 1989 demonstrators differed. The demonstration began spontaneously, but was quickly coordinated by students'

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<sup>204</sup> Goldman, M. (2009). pp. 247-259.

leaders of informal discussion groups on campuses. The organizers then contacted friends and colleagues at the other universities.<sup>205</sup> 1989 demonstrations sought broad participation in their movement and spatial actions that took place in Tiananmen Square. In addition to calling for political reforms, they demanded a crackdown on corruption and control of China's reforms, accelerating inflation, which by the late 1980s was increasingly affecting major segments of China's urban population.<sup>206</sup>

#### 4.2.1. Historical Background of Tiananmen Square

Drawing the morphological evolution of Tiananmen Square can start from its creation; at the end of the 14th century when the Ming dynasty overthrew the Mongol Yuan dynasty and established its own imperial seat (1368-1644). The space organization was clear representation of the organization of political power. The remaking and redefinition process of Tiananmen is a product of the spatial practices of political tension in China along the history. Tiananmen Square is defined by series of monuments and events occurred over this period of time. Its morphology and monuments historically have embodied with political power of Chinese State. This architectural symbolism and its spatial practice highlighted the sacred origins of secular political power. It hosted several mass demonstrations that was a landmark for modern history; since the demonstration on 4 May 1919 in protest against the Treaty of Versailles handing over Chinese lands to Japan and finally the 1989 student uprising.<sup>207</sup> However, it was the ground for series of performances of uprising another sequence of performances mobilized by authorities to display their power. Accordingly, the memory of the Square and its practices were tied to two conflicting patterns of events that spatially appeared in the Square. The Tiananmen Square is a product of five hundred years of spatial practice, during which its symbolic geography has been molded by two interdependent spatial traditions a creation of the orthodox political power that developed into a the monumental public space to guarantee a physical representation of the hegemony of the Chinese state shaped and reshaped: and the second is the dissidence, revolt, and occupation desire. Moreover the unambiguous symbolism of architecture that highlights sacred origins of secular political power gave the Square its effectiveness to be the site for popular action chosen by the public. During the time, the mission of every oppositional movement is to appropriate the space and transform it in ways which articulate their own political vision. Although every time this appropriation never last, but changing the meaning of the place and its symbol remains on the physical space that keeps physical struggle. From this giant transformation vision, emerged the new Tiananmen Square that is freed from its traditional enclosures, hence that of the Chairman and the Party.<sup>208</sup>

The post-revolutionary Square was significant for its complex of layers of history that was physically occurring with their elements in the Square since its period or as narratives as an iconography on elements of modern time or elements of the modern revolutionary tradition. The iconography of the old regimes along with modern revolutionary tradition ones inscribed on the modern revolutionary monuments that was constructed by the Chinese communist party are the most complex, as it reveals as their complete claim of possession. The Square regenerated its political function and meaning from 1976 through its appropriate by the popular movements that were consolidated. It challenges it through re-occupation of the space and re-appropriation of the monuments to regenerate them with their own political view. They invested the symbolic geography of the Square with new images which would now mingle with those of the opposition movement of 1919 and 1925 to create a new feature on its horizon of meaning.<sup>209</sup> The Monument was the destination point this time to people in 1976, instead of the Tiananmen. It was now a living monument that wove people's recollections of their struggle and death into a whole. Mao's Mausoleum was unveiled in 1977 at the anniversary ceremony of the Chairman's

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<sup>205</sup> Goldman, M. (1994).

<sup>206</sup> Higgins, A. (1989). Pp 13-16.

<sup>207</sup> Hung, W. (1991).

<sup>208</sup> Hung, W. (1991).

<sup>209</sup> Hershkovitz, L. (1993). Tiananmen Square and the Politics of Place. Political Geography. Vol.12, Issue 5, September, PP.395-420.

death.<sup>210</sup> In 1977 the Square reached its new significant form, size and texture enclosure. The Mausoleum changed the map of the Square. The Monument was no long defining the southern limit of the Square. Instead it stood in the middle of the public Square replaced by Mao's Mausoleum at the southern edge. The Monument was the only building welcoming the people in the Square at the moment when ordinary people were restricted from entering the buildings in 1977. (See Fig. 4.6)

#### 4.2.2. The Contemporary Transformation of Tiananmen Square

##### *The Occasion of Outlining of the 1989 Student Movement*

The moment of demand for change must have a reasoning event that starts it up, the moment that has the potential to start a movement. In china in Beijing, the 15 of April 1989 Hu Yaobang, one of the politburo seen as most friendly to students' university, he was a reformist, who served as General Secretary of the Communist Party of China from 1980 to 1987, died. Wall posters commemorating and mourning Hu appeared although it had been prohibited since 1979.<sup>211</sup> Besides 1989 was the intersection of several significant anniversaries 1989 was the two hundred anniversary of the French Revolution, a revolution the Chinese looked to as a model of 'freedom, equality and fraternity';<sup>212</sup> it was the 70th anniversary of the May 4th movement and the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic.

On April 16th wreath and elegiac couplets appear in Tiananmen Square and at many Beijing colleges. Students appeared on the Beijing campus mourning first in semi-public space. On April 17th many dazibao "reports" began appearing in the Triangle<sup>213</sup> with no only memorial for Hu but also some political declarations like "those who should die don't die."<sup>214</sup> On the same day, the student first marched to Tiananmen Square. April 18 thousand of university including Beida University students organized marches to Tiananmen Square. The Workers' Autonomous Federation officially declared itself a part of the movement on the Square.<sup>215</sup> April 19 the Triangle and all the campus were crowded with speeches and narratives expressing their opinion.<sup>216</sup> They believed that the first action should be taken is to establish a committee. Moreover Shen addressed the crowd "...Hu Yeoman's death is the perfect moment. We should seize the chance to recapture our tradition of democracy and science, but we must proceed with reason and planning".<sup>217</sup> Since this moment the Triangle was a multi-function space, not only for narration and discussions but also for gathering resources and funds. 20<sup>th</sup> April when students hear about police brutality they started to move from Beida University with their tactics for mobilizing students from other campuses. "We walked past five universities over long distance and reached Tiananmen Square."<sup>218</sup>

##### *The Mourning as a Potential Event to Start the Movement*

On April 22 Hu's State funeral was held at the Great Hall of the people, located on the west side of Tiananmen Square. Around 100,000 students march to the Square overnight to participate in the funeral. It has

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<sup>210</sup> Hung, W. (1991).

<sup>211</sup> Guthrie, D. (1995). pp. 419-454.

<sup>212</sup> Shen, T. & Yen, M. (1990). *Almost a revolution*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

<sup>213</sup> The Triangle: is central area of campus The Beida Triangle, a central meeting place on campus. It has always played an important role in student movements. One side consists of a row of bulletin boards, where the Dazibao first appear. The dining hall and the bookstore are on the other two sides.

<sup>214</sup> Shen, T. & Yen, M. (1990).

<sup>215</sup> Walder, Andrew G. and Gong Xiaoxia (1993). Pp.1-29.

<sup>216</sup> Shen, T., & Yen, M. (1998).

<sup>217</sup> Shen, T., & Yen, M. (1998).

<sup>218</sup> Shen, T. & Yen, M. (1998).

been no longer just memorials to Hu but they included inflammatory declaration. The date of Hu's memorial ceremony also became a significant moment of protest.<sup>219</sup> The students chose this event as a turning point to demand changes from the government. Since then public demands started to turn intentions into organized actions and planned tactics. The Tiananmen Square welcomed the people with Hu's portrait on the top of the monument to the people's heroes. The students built up organizations, conducted marches, while the police beat up students at a rally and destroyed their bicycles.<sup>220</sup> This brought out even more students and more activism. Beijing citizens took the side of the students.

*The Consequent Action: Tiananmen Square as stage for Democracy practice*

This was the moment for transition of the movement from unorganized groups with separated actions relaying on the formal pre-existing student organization to autonomous groups. On April 23rd, the Beijing Student Autonomous Union provisional Committee is founded. On April 27th, about 10000 students marched to Tiananmen Square to protest the editorial and the governments' rumours. More ominously for the government, other groups also joined in: housewives, workers, doctors, and even sailors from the Chinese Navy. On May 4<sup>th</sup>, students hold marches in commemoration of the May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement of 1919. The residents of Beijing lined the streets by the thousands, cheering, handing food and drink to the students, offering general support. On May 5<sup>th</sup>, the Beijing Student Dialogue Delegation is formed. On May 12 the Triangle was buzzing with people arguing, the pros and cons of a Dazibao that had been posted the night before. The large characters said "It is time for us to hold a mass hunger strike."<sup>221</sup> There they were discussing about the hunger strike with speakers supporting and talking in microphones. On May 13, some 3000 students went on a hunger strike in Tiananmen Square, resolved to fast until the government met them in equal dialogue.<sup>222</sup> The government also ignored this approach, and people began openly calling for the resignation of Li Peng and Deng Xiaoping.<sup>223</sup> A huge number of students begin to occupy Tiananmen Square. Students from other cities set up camp at Tiananmen Square, again demanding dialogue with the government and political reform and with the goal of getting the government to retract April 26 editorial. On May 14 a high level state delegation starts an emergency dialogue with student's activists; the meeting goes chaotically because different students have totally different agendas in mind. In the evening students withdraw from the talks.

On May 15 Gorbachev Arrived. By the time, the occupation over the Square got more reinforced and effective. The student hunger strike had been going on for two days and the Square was under twenty four hours occupation by the strikers and their supporters. The moment Gorbachev arrived was the moment when the students' spatial practice has been extended outside the Square towards the Changan Boulevard along the approaches to the Square.<sup>224</sup> Gorbachev's visit was affected by the students occupation: The welcoming ceremony took place in the Beijing airport rather than in the Tiananmen Square; The route to arrive to the Great Hall of the people had to be reconsidered away from the boulevard; the usual wreath-laying ceremony at the central monument in the Square was replaced by a visit to the official cemetery on the outskirts of the city; the scheduled visit to the Forbidden City had to be cancelled because of the crowds blocking the entrance though Tiananmen.<sup>225</sup> The students' occupation of the Square and their spatial practice proofed to be more prominent. Adding to this, the international media was the second evidence that manipulation and control of the student over the Square. While international media was already gathering in Beijing for Gorbachev's visit, his visit became a sideshow in comparison to the gripping scenes in the Square being transmitted to the rest of the world.

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<sup>219</sup> Wasserstrom, J. (1992).

<sup>220</sup> Shen, T. & Yen, M. (1998).

<sup>221</sup> Shen, T. & Yen, M. (1998).

<sup>222</sup> Shen, T. & Yen, M. (1998).

<sup>223</sup> Shen, T. & Yen, M. (1998).

<sup>224</sup> Shen, T. & Yen, M. (1998).

<sup>225</sup> HersHKovitz, L. (1993).

The media exerted great effort on showing through this event how the Tiananmen Square now firmly in the control of the protesters, and new organization of space to accommodate them.<sup>226</sup>

On May 17, over one million Beijing residents of all occupations marched in Beijing to express their concern for the hunger strikers and to support the students.<sup>227</sup> On May 19 the Square was organized by the students, each school has its own marshals to check passes and keep order, and the marshals cooperated with one another to form a special security service. Most students didn't leave the Square. Everything was available - bread sodas, blankets, tents, portable toilets. Much of these materials had been donated by Beijing residents and the students in charge of supplies had one of the most difficult jobs in the Square, since they had to maintain an orderly storage space and dealing with all the requests. The distribution was also problematic since many students were far from the tents where the food and drinks were kept and had trouble getting to the supplies. Translating these practices reveals a spatial concentration and centrality of living and life needs supply process that was formally established through the establishment of the Workers' Autonomous Union. They were receiving all requests and they were receiving all funds and resources.

On same day, Li Peng declares martial law, but the martial law troops are blocked by Beijing residents and students. More and more students from universities outside Beijing arrive in the city. Moreover on May 20, all negotiations between students and the government failed, partly because the government was divided, and partly because the students did not have one single voice to speak to the government. On May 21 after some warning that they already saw tanks towards the area, the decision to head back to Beida University, and that they should focus the movement back to the campuses which would be the start of the second stage was taken. The federation people went back to Beida to regroup. Yet majority remained in the Square. The Square was controlled by new organization, the safe guard Tiananmen Square headquarters with Chain Ling as The hunger strike leaders had completely taken over.<sup>228</sup> The spatial order in the Square was following the existing power control. On May 22, journalists and intellectuals demonstrated in the Square calling for Li Peng to step down. On May 30, the students set up a large sculpture called the "Goddess of Democracy" in Tiananmen Square, modeled after the Statue of Liberty, it became one of the enduring symbols of the protest the government issued an official statement, condemning the statue and the movement as a whole.<sup>229</sup>

On June 2, The Communist Party Elders met with the remaining members of the Politburo Standing Committee. They agreed to bring in the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to clear the protesters out of Tiananmen Square by force. A general warning was broadcasted for people to stay off the streets during the night of June 3rd. The Tiananmen Square Massacre, Military repression started. Hundreds of people were killed during the confrontation. People's Liberation Army moved into Tiananmen Square on foot and in tanks, firing tear gas to disperse the demonstrators. They had been ordered not to shoot the protesters; indeed, most of them did not carry firearms.<sup>230</sup> That night, around 10:30 pm, the PLA returned to the area around Tiananmen with rifles, bayonets fixed. Contrary to popular belief, the bulk of the violence took place in the neighbourhoods all around Tiananmen Square, rather than in the Square itself.<sup>231</sup> On June 4, Military swept into Tiananmen Square and surrounding neighbourhoods, killing hundreds of people and clearing out all protesters. This ended the public aspects of the student movement, and many of the protest organizers managed to flee the country. (See Fig.4.5)

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<sup>226</sup> Herskovitz, L. (1993).

<sup>227</sup> Shen, T. & Yen, M. (1998).

<sup>228</sup> Shen, T. & Yen, M. (1998).

<sup>229</sup> Guthrie, D. (1995).

<sup>230</sup> These divisions were chosen because they were from distant provinces; local PLA troops were considered untrustworthy as potential supporters of the protests

<sup>231</sup> Shen, T. & Yen, M. (1998).



#### 4.2.3. The Occupation of Tiananmen Square 1989 and its Practices

The students' spatial transformation of the Square continued to reflect the full control of the Square. Students redefined the public Square; meaning; uses; and perception. The articulation of new vision for their space layout and zoning to work sufficiently was challenging. The Square was occupied physically and symbolically through active transformation process. The Square for them was not as a place for being simply used but as space to recreate with their own spatial practice. It has turned to a small organized city hosting daily activities. A process of space production purely affected by political and urban changes appeared. An evident transformation occurred in the Square to suite the new function as providing services for student delegation from other cities, hunger strikers, the news media, demonstrators and onlookers under formal organization. The central monument surrounded with banners continued to serve as a post and press center to the whole world. Teams were divided to keep the Square clean and free of garbage, but it didn't last during the continuous occupation of the Square.<sup>232</sup> Toilets sheds were set up along the eastern side of the Square.<sup>233</sup> City workers tapped the underground water to provide drinking water. When the rains began, makeshift were constructed of plastic sheeting and bamboo poles.<sup>234</sup> Public buses commandeered to transport students to the Square were lined along its northern edge across from Tiananmen. They were draped with banners and used as portable canteens, clinics command headquarters and dormitories.<sup>235</sup> Onlookers were kept at a distance by the student marshals who directed traffics and also controlled access to the Square and circulation, keeping continuous stream of ambulances, and adorned with pro-student banners. They were spread in and out the Square to pick up supplies and to transport casualties hunger strikers to hospital. The Square was cordoned off into segments for each of the schools and universities participation in the occupation. Security was tight around these clusters. Identity cards were checked for accessing these edges. The Square was a magnet attracting daily marches and bicycle demonstrations by groups carrying banners identifying their works units as: government agencies, schools, media and publishing units, factories, police academies, Buddhist monasteries and others. Chanting slogans and singing the "Internationale" was always there.<sup>236</sup>

The occupation of the Square and its transformation events seemed to have a target. They signified consecutive stages in a pursuit for a visual symbolism of the new public through the iconoclasm process of the old symbols. They turned the existing monuments to their own power, with addition to new monuments one to the iconography of the Square that demonstrate their own political vision. This Square with its change in scheme, allows us to see that a single monument can be either type depending on what kind of memories associated to it and what kind of spatial activity related to it. Once the existing statues and monuments were imbued with new memories, it was re-interpreted. The Monument transformed from being a memorial to place for mourning and gradually to protests. In 1989, 15 April Hu Yaobang died. But unlike 1976, by 1989 a disillusioned public had gradually formed, and the Square with the Monument had assumed a new identity. A giant white banner appeared on the Monument, with inscription "Long Live the People." A portrait of Hu made by students was carried to the Monument placed it directly opposed to Mao's portrait on the gate. The Moment turned to be the spot for established headquarters for the occupation of the Square.<sup>237</sup> Later a portrait of Mao was defaced on the Gate. Followed by a replica of the Statue of Liberty was paraded through the streets of Shanghai and was set in front of City Hall. The final action was the erection of the statue of the Goddess of Democracy in the Square before Mao's portrait. The statue of the Goddess of Democracy is different because what it intended to invoke were not memories of the past but memories of itself; and to leave such memories to

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<sup>232</sup> Shen, T. & Yen, M. (1998).

<sup>233</sup> HersHKovitz, L. (1993).

<sup>234</sup> Guthrie, D. (1995).

<sup>235</sup> HersHKovitz, L. (1993).

<sup>236</sup> HersHKovitz, L. (1993).

<sup>237</sup> Cited Hung, W. (1991). Wu Muren et. al.(1989). Zhonggong minyuanjishi (A factual record of the 1989 Chinese Democratic Movement), 2 vols. (New York,), Pp.1:27.

the future, it was prepared to be destroyed.<sup>238</sup> The appearance of the Goddess of Democracy represented the final stage of the process, regenerated with new meanings to act as their own symbol. (See Fig.4.3) Translating these spatial actions can demonstrate the movement's belief that the existing monuments could no longer convey their messages and so they employed these new action to demonstrated and guarantee that there messages could be heard loudly. The location chosen for it was a direct provocation to the authorities. This was a powerful political act, the imposition of a monument not only unauthorized by the state but representing a direct challenge to the state's monopoly over the iconography of the Square. But it was at the same time an act carried out within an established spatial tradition of protest and dissidence also embodied in the political geography of Tiananmen Square.<sup>239</sup> The influence of the occupation process of the Square with its symbolism and, the movement's spatial practice can't be captured only by the transformation, resistance and resonance while the response is a vital evident for its effectiveness.

#### 4.2.4. Factors Affecting Spatial practices in Tiananmen Square

##### *Campuses as Preparatory and Operational Stage*

The roles of the 1989 students' started since before the occupation of the square. They were already divided in different five campuses of universities under different leadership. They needed to articulate opinions, and experiences that were very limited and divided actions. The students were able to leave their gated semi-public spaces in the campuses and move to the main public space which the state recognizes it as their own property and image for their power. They highly depended on their campuses for mobilizing, communication and being intermediate location for receiving funds and supplies. Since 22 April, setting up a publishing centre in a room, other meeting room and other one reception inside the Beida campus was crucial. The students started a low-powered radio station, a newspaper, a printing press for flyers, and a media room for the many journalists from around the world who had taken an interest in the movement. Broadcast was near Triangle where many people stayed there and passing and so University campus was spatially effective in the process of reclaiming Tiananmen Square and asking for demands. The "dizibao" or information walls were tools to post viewpoints and expressions. This demonstrates the deployment of other physical stages for democracy practices away from Tiananmen Square.

##### *The 1989 Chinese Movement Structural Organization*

The 1989 movement spatial practices and actions illuminates the need for taking into account the organizational structure and collective actions frames aspects. The complex factors for mass mobilization of the movement's perspective, shows how difficult it is to tackle from single aspect. It evolved from creative interaction of organizational structure. The research follows Guthrie's analysis for the 1989 Movement as two-tiered movement and the mobilization of each tier required different mobilization tactics to engender mass participation.<sup>240</sup> On one level were the student leaders themselves with an organized student leadership tier and a second level, the "ordinary citizens"<sup>241</sup>, fully disconnected from the student organizations, were mobilized primarily through the collective action frame tactics of "political theatre."<sup>242</sup> Student Leadership Tier was described as the community that organizations create, Walder's discussed the Tiananmen experience, highlighting the centrality of organizations in this movement.<sup>243</sup> These organized groups where many, Shen in

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<sup>238</sup> Hung, W. (1991).

<sup>239</sup> Guthrie, D. (1995).

<sup>240</sup> Guthrie, D. (1995).

<sup>241</sup> Strand, D. (1990). pp.1-19.

<sup>242</sup> Wasserstrom, J., & Esherick, J. (1992). pp. 28-66.

<sup>243</sup> Walder, A. G. (1991). pp. 467-492.

his book described the movement into many organized groups within the student leadership: the Beijing University Student Association, the Dialogue Delegation, the United Leadership Federation, and Preparatory Committees at numerous universities. The Leadership Federation was an organizing body that set agendas, organized meetings, activities, and strategies, and managed incoming funds which amounted.<sup>244</sup> The student-run journalism bureau set up to report on movement activities also raised money and had accounting systems to keep track of incoming funds.<sup>245</sup> Several of the universities also had radio broadcasting and printing stations set up for the duration of the movement.<sup>246</sup> These diverse activities confirm the existence of highly qualified leadership and organizational structure capable to organize; marches, meetings, planning. These organized strategies and their action planning is a proof that this movement has specific characteristics of student leadership differentiates it from the previous spontaneous earlier movements in China's.

Due to the fact of state party penetration in the student organization and the campus, made students hesitated to cooperate with others whom they did not fully know and trust. This led to student organizations were often plagued by an inability to make and implement decisions, they were unable to truly unite in a powerful overarching federation. Student organizations were unstable and conflict ridden.<sup>247</sup> The main body of student leaders was out-manuevered by a subgroup that initiated a hunger strike, amidst a similar trend toward more radical tactics among student leaders in bids to shore up their following. The disorganization between the many groups of the movement was mentioned by Shen Tong as a cause of the failure of the protests. Inside Tiananmen Square, the federation of all the groups there had a leadership group. The hunger strikers, however, gradually saw themselves as the most dedicated and thus most eligible to be in charge. Eventually, "the hunger strikers and the federation leaders were fighting over control of the Square."<sup>248</sup> Highly qualified leadership and organizational structure of each committee, yet their impact of spatial practices was not efficient.

The students' movement activities were supported by the 'All-China Federation of Trade Unions.'<sup>249</sup> This generated the Workers' Autonomous Federation that took place among the workers. The presence of autonomously organized workers in the Square has been seen as among the most powerful and significant of the movement accomplishments.<sup>250</sup> The combination of this independent organization within the movement structural organization created a highly organized leadership tier that made conceivable such activities as marches, radio broadcasting, coordination among university groups, and the management of funds for the movement. The Second Tier was mobilizing the mass that requires emphasis on the linkages between the groups of the student leadership each other and the linkages with other who were not part of the organizations included in the movement. In 1989 student movement, student leaders carried effective performances proofed by large-scale insurgency. The main actors were the student leaders, with secondary roles going to officials who were manipulated into participation by the students.<sup>251</sup> There is the stage of performance. The occupation of Tiananmen Square by the student movement was critical for the symbolic power and public attention of the movement where the students were in full control. The audiences, in this case, were the people of China and the globe. According to Esherick and Wasserstrom, "As a political mode, theatre is only as powerful as the audience that it can move; and this theater certainly inspired and energized hundreds of millions of people in China."<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Shen, T., & Yen, M. (1990). Pp.280-321.

<sup>245</sup> Guthrie, D. (1995).

<sup>246</sup> Guthrie, D. (1995).

<sup>247</sup> Wright, T. (2001).

<sup>248</sup> Shen, T. & Yen, M. (1998).

<sup>249</sup> Guthrie, D. (1995).

<sup>250</sup> Walder, A. G., & Xiaoxia, G. (1993).

<sup>251</sup> Guthrie, D. (1995).

<sup>252</sup> Wasserstrom, J., & Esherick, J. (1992).

While other theatrical acts had been organized by student action through: group to provide blankets for the hunger strikers; group to negotiate with medical teams who tended to the strikers; group to negotiate for and handle the busses that were provided to house the strikers in bad weather; and an organized effort to gather materials for, construct, and transport a statue to Tiananmen Square. These acts, laden with cultural symbolism could not have taken place without the orchestration of the student leadership tier.<sup>253</sup> There were two tiers to this movement that were mobilized in ways that each fit with the different movement perspectives. The student leadership tier was a significantly organized group of collective actors. While these organizations lacked the linkages to the mass population. Yet student leadership were able to mobilize the mass population through cultural symbols and actions on public stages, through the political theatre that sent cultural messages to the larger society; people interpreted these messages and joined the movement on a scale that had never before been observed in contemporary China.

#### *The Effect of Institutional Change in Chinese Society*

The institutional and organizational changes that were occurring over the decade of reform-accelerating at the close of the 1980s-were beginning to alter the state domination of this system in significant ways.<sup>254</sup> This institutional change had a significant impact on the dynamics of the social movement that emerged in 1989, at least in Beijing.<sup>255</sup> The private sector played a critical role in the 1989 Chinese movement, as members of this autonomous sector contributed money and resources to the movement as blankets, megaphones, and the money to build the Goddess of Democracy. These types of bodies and their type of resources made a significant change in the organizational structure of the movement and consequently on their spatial actions and activities. The student leadership organizations were able to employ activities that were not in the scope of past movement groups. The major example is the support from Workers' Autonomous Federation with money for blankets, have extremely affected the occupation process of Tiananmen Square. One of the institutional changes that affected the significance of 1989 movement was as Walder mentioned, with sharp increases in telephone lines to the outside world, radios, photocopy machines, and faxes, the ability to communicate and distribute information widely endowed the student leaders with powers that leaders of other movements did not possess.

#### *Hunger strike*

Another feature of the Tiananmen that resonated was the use of a hunger strike as spatial phenomena. They carried it out to capture the attention of the Chinese leadership as well as the world community. On May about 3,000 student demonstrators began hunger strike in Tiananmen Square to focus public attention on their efforts. On 18 May over a month into their protest, protesters actions had captured the attention of outside observers and gained the support of the Beijing but it did little to change the Chinese leadership's refusal to engage in meaningful dialogue or be responsive to the striker's demands. This action reenergized the multi class alliance that was emerging during the hunger strike. Consequently, when tanks and military columns entered Beijing from their army barracks in the suburbs, a human wall of peaceful protesters attempted to stop them. These acts of resistance sustained until the night of 4 June. (See Fig.4.5)

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<sup>253</sup> Guthrie, D. (1995).

### 4.3. The Azadi Square: a Space of National Symbol and Civil Revolution

The Iranian Revolution in 1979 refers to sequences of events and practices that ended with the overthrow of the Pahlavi dynasty under Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and its replacement with an Islamic republic under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of the revolution. 1979 Revolution was convoyed by pre-mass demonstration in 1978 that occupied the Azadi Square and others all over Iran since 1977. The pre revolution demonstration played a very significant role in the process of evolving the final step in the Revolution and letting the monarchy system to be collapsed in 1979.<sup>256</sup> It was the moment of changing the meaning the Square from celebrating the monarchy system to brining it down. Many important political and social events took place in Azadi Square, including different types of celebrations, ceremonies, demonstrations, protests, cultural festivals, anniversaries, rituals, and parades.<sup>257</sup> This category of events that was able to appear through crowd and occupation in Azadi Square is clear evident for its potency and particularity of the Square. It was a prepared stage with high viability and accessibility. Azadi Square and its particularity being highly connected to the historical and social setting provided it the opportunity to host the 1979 revolution and its practices. The public space with its function as a national symbol for Iranians affected the quality of protest. It became a symbolic unifier: as a national symbol embraces the diverse groups of protestors: an international symbol that the media and world citizens recognize as an Iranian identity.<sup>258</sup> Azadi Square as a very important public arena in Tehran becomes a unique place for mass protests, because it is: the best destination for rallies in the end of important streets of the capital: and capable to contain very large crowds.<sup>259</sup>

#### 4.3.1. Historical background of Azadi Square

Freedom Square (Azadi), it was first known as Memorial of the king Square (Shahyad Square). This was the name of the Square before the 1979 Revolution. It includes a monument which is known as Azadi Tower or Shahyad Tower or the king Memorial Tower which was the name before the 1979 Revolution. It was one of the architecture project that symbolized the monarchy power at it moment. The representation of the monarchy power was clear through organized series of ceremonies and celebrations.<sup>260</sup> The inauguration of the Square in 1972 was hosted by many important figures from all over the world: "the mayor of Tehran, Gholam Reza Nickpay handed the Shah a replica of the Cyrus Cylinder."<sup>261</sup> The concept behind these actions was to show globally, the progress, development and wellbeing that Iran reached during the monarchy. The inauguration of Azadi Square in Tehran coincided with the day of celebrations of 2500- years, anniversary of the foundation of the Persian Empire in 1971. The revolutionists attempted to utilize the Square to overthrow the Pahlavi dynasty. It was the site of many of the Revolution's demonstrations leading up to 12 December 1979. The moment of Shah's departure on 16 January 1979, Shahyad Square was renamed Azadi Square which is translated as "Freedom Square," where the people literally symbolizing the people's ability to win over oppression and reclaim the national symbol its Square.

#### 4.3.2. The Timeline of the 1979 Revolution and its Pre-revolution Protests

The demonstration started in October 1977, developing into a movement of civil resistance that was partly secular and partly religious with University protests. It picked up pace with seminary protests in January 1978

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<sup>256</sup> Lotfi, B. (2010). p 24.

<sup>257</sup> Lotfi, B. (2010).

<sup>258</sup> Lotfi, B. (2010).

<sup>259</sup> Lotfi, B. (2010).

<sup>260</sup> Lotfi, B. (2010).

<sup>261</sup> Kadivar, C. (2002, January 25).

and with forty day mourning commutations.<sup>262</sup> Iranian Revolution officially starts on January the 7<sup>th</sup> 1978. It turned to mass rallies. The protest movement took a new turn in January 1978, when a government-inspired article in 'Ettelaat', one of the country's leading newspapers, cast doubt on Khomeini's piety and suggested that he was a British agent.<sup>263</sup> Seminary students took to the streets in Qom and clashed with police, and several demonstrators were killed.<sup>264</sup> Accordingly the revolution inflated in January 1978 and ended by February 1979. The main reasons were; discontent with the Pahlavi rule; exile of Ayatollah Khomeini; and social injustice. The revolution was unusual for the surprise it created throughout the world: it lacked many of the customary causes of revolution as defeat at war, a financial Crisis, peasant rebellion or disgruntled military.<sup>265</sup> It produced profound change at great speed,<sup>266</sup> and was massively popular.

On February 18, 1978, mosque services and demonstrations were held in several cities to honour those killed in the demonstrations. August 19<sup>th</sup> is the worst day of the revolution with 477 killed in arson fire at Cinema Rex in Abadan.<sup>267</sup> The protests started to appear with more organized actions. The ritual events were the potent occasion for guaranteeing mass mobilization. On September 4, the day of celebrating the Eid feast, "on that day, rallies were held in most large towns. Azadi Square acted as a destination point in the city; and a humanistic space chose by the people to occupy as "a large crowd could congregate in the Square."<sup>268</sup> "It is the centre of the western part of Tehran and all critical points were connected to each other on the path to the Square. As an important ending point, it connects several important Squares, as well as Tehran University, and Ariamehr (Sharif) University to each other."<sup>269</sup> The high accessibility of the Square with its unique location on the main axe of the city played a vital role in gathering several masses of political and social groups from different classes in one place. "Diverse elements organized the four processions ending at (Azadi) Freedom' Square on the western road out of Tehran. College students marshalled the two from the university campus nearby and from the modern middle-class neighborhoods in the north-east. Apprentices and shop assistants coordinated the eastern one starting at Jaleh Square - a lower middle class district walking distance from the central bazaar. High school students organized the southern one starting at the railway station in the midst of the working-class districts. Further south were some of the worst slums."<sup>270</sup>

On September 7 prepared mass demonstrations were in Tehran towards Azadi Square as the destination. "At (Azadi) Freedom Square a declaration was read by the militants, demanding freedom, independence, release of political prisoners, dissolution of SAVAK,<sup>271</sup> and an Islamic government led by Khomeini"<sup>272</sup> since "this was the largest meeting ever held in Iran."<sup>273</sup> Accordingly the Square till the moment played a vital role in affecting the quality of democracy practice process since it was the stage for gathering people as one mass and a stage for public claims declarations as well. The significant point that can be realized about the role of (Azadi) Freedom Square is that, the demands were read and approved by the crowd.<sup>274</sup> And its role didn't stop at these roles while it was the stage where the media monitored the revolution and its strength. After this demonstration "(The Shah) forced the cabinet to decree martial law in Tehran and eleven other cities."<sup>275</sup> On September 8,

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<sup>262</sup> Abrahamian, E. (2009). Pp. 162-178.

<sup>263</sup> [http://www.mongabay.com/reference/country\\_studies/iran/HISTORY.html](http://www.mongabay.com/reference/country_studies/iran/HISTORY.html)

<sup>264</sup> Chapin Metz, H. (1987). Iran: A Country Study. In *GPO for the Library of Congress*. Retrieved from <http://countrystudies.us/iran/>

<sup>265</sup> Amuzegar, J. (1991).

<sup>266</sup> Arjomand, S. (1988). *The turban for the crown: The Islamic revolution in Iran* (p. 191). New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>267</sup> Fitzgerald, P. (n.d.).

<sup>268</sup> Lotfi, B. (2010).

<sup>269</sup> Mehdi, H. (2007).

<sup>270</sup> Abrahamian, E. (2009).

<sup>271</sup> 5 SAVAK National Intelligence and Security Organization of Iran which was established by the Shah in 1957. 35

<sup>272</sup> Afkhami, G. R. (2008). pp. 463.

<sup>273</sup> Abrahamian, E. (1982).

<sup>274</sup> Kurzman, C. (2009).

<sup>275</sup> Abrahamian, E. (1982).

demonstrations are still ongoing and the Shah responds with super military, 88 are killed and the day is dubbed 'Black Friday.'<sup>276</sup> It considerably radicalized the opposition movement and made compromise with the regime, even by the moderates, less likely.<sup>277</sup> On October 11 the press of Iran joined the strike.

On November 5 the Shah, addressing the nation for the first time in many months, declared he had heard the people's "revolutionary message," promised to correct past mistakes, and urged a period of quiet and order so that the government could undertake the necessary reforms.<sup>278</sup> Angry protests were everywhere which results in protesters burning buildings. While this is going on students protesting in the University in Tehran are killed by armed forces who storm the building.<sup>279</sup> The day was known as "as the day Tahrān burned."<sup>280</sup> Anti-government protests despite the creation of a new government by the Shah, it being dominated by members of the military. On November 28, although the military government had imposed a curfew, it was violated. On December 2, the first day of Moharram,<sup>281</sup> hundreds of thousands of people filled the streets around Tehran's Azadi Square, to demand the removal of the Shah and return of Ayatollah Khomeini.<sup>282</sup> December 8<sup>th</sup>, the Azhari government announced that it had lifted the ban and would permit Moharram commemorations to take place and the government promised that except for a token presence along the path of the demonstrators, it would keep the army mostly in the northern parts of Teheran.<sup>283</sup>

On December 10 and 11, vast rallies commemorating the climactic days of 'Tusu's and Ashura'<sup>284</sup> appeared. Another religious celebration was an opportunity for demonstration to appear on the Azadi Square. Ashura was used to advance a political cause; it is when the Revolution had gained momentum.<sup>285</sup> This ritual day is signified with its particular practices throughout the whole city. The religious celebration turned to chants and slogans against the monarchy. The rallies were huge mass also "brought in all social classes"<sup>286</sup> and numbered nearly one million."<sup>287</sup> The royal ceremonial space turned to public political space. Free political context, within which all extreme and moderate socio-political views were expressed and debated in public. They gathered under the arch, anti-imperial manifestos were declared, rituals were performed, and men were condemned. The whole religious celebration and its reconceptualization to host a political environment have been mobilized through the international media. Audiences were of local and international part of the world found the opportunity to follow the demonstrations and its spatial practices around the Square. The media and its great attention to Iran and its spatial practice in particular places confirmed its significance and particularity. It was a sign that a very transformation was going to happen in Iran.<sup>288</sup> On that day *Washington post* concluded that "the disciplined and well organized march lent considerable weight to the opposition's claim of being an alternative government."<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Fitzgerald, P. (n.d.).

<sup>277</sup> Iranian politics, Military. (2011 September). Retrieved from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iran/politics-4.htm>

<sup>278</sup> Iranian politics, Military. (2011 September).

<sup>279</sup> Fitzgerald, P. (n.d.).

<sup>280</sup> Roberts, A. (2011).

<sup>281</sup> First month of the Islamic calendar. It is one of the four sacred months of the year

<sup>282</sup> Ahimi, M. (2009, December 24).

<sup>283</sup> Ahimi, M. (2009, December 24).

<sup>284</sup> 9th and 10th day of first month of the Islamic calendar. It is one of the four sacred months of the year

<sup>285</sup> Ahimi, M. (2009, December 24).

<sup>286</sup> The Financial Times wrote that the rally

<sup>287</sup> Abrahamian, E. (2009).

<sup>288</sup> Lotfi, B. (2010).

<sup>289</sup> Randall, J. (1978, December 12). In Iran, a Throng Votes No. *Washington Post*.

### 4.3.3. Factors Affecting Spatial Practices in Azadi Square

#### *The Iranian Movement 1979 Organization*

Emad Baqi, who later became prominent as a liberal gadfly journalist, was concerned about the revolution was made by street folk- not by leaders and centrally coordinated organizations.<sup>290</sup> This shows that democracy practice process was more a resultant of unorganized and spontaneous intention that turned to effective actions. "The Iranian revolution 'came' from below rather than was 'made' from above. There were no state-wide parties, no systematic networks, and no coordinated organizations mobilizing the protests, meeting and strikes. On the contrary, the crowds were often assembled by grassroots organizations, and, at most, informal networks: classmates in high schools, colleges and seminaries: teenagers in the slums: guild members, shop assistants, and, occasionally: mosque preachers in the city bazaar."<sup>291</sup> However, there were significant bodies of the Revolution Organization: Revolutionary Council composed of religious figures associated with Khomeini, secular opposition figures, and representatives of the security forces. Tehran University played a crucial role as well in the Iranian Revolution. It was at the heart of political activism as it provided the conditions to nurture the aspirations for democracy and self-fulfillment of a young and idealist population.<sup>292</sup> It was an active stage for allowing people interact, meet and claim. It provided the space for citizens to practice their first roles for democracy performance process. It became a hotbed of revolt and dissension that proved to be effective to mass mobilization for revolutionary purposes.<sup>293</sup> During the days of revolution people from outside the University went for meetings, listen to speeches, chant slogans, and entice soldiers from across the street to join them.<sup>294</sup>

The Iranian movement organization case confirms that the alignment between structural opportunities (the vulnerability of the state to popular political pressure) and perceived opportunities (the public's awareness of opportunities for successful protest activity is not always the case.<sup>295</sup> The monarchy was not structurally vulnerable, according to several indicators.<sup>296</sup> Iranians appear to have perceived opportunities for successful protest, basing their perceptions on a shift in the opposition movement, not on a shift in the structural position of the state.<sup>297</sup> In early September of 1978, they began to consider the revolutionary movement to be stronger than the state.<sup>298</sup> Tracing the evolution of the movement through series of events that allowed Iranian to gather, it was since mid1977, the events were always ending with Martyrs that generates mourning demonstrations throughout the first half of 1978. These inflammatory events brought Iranians together more. In terms of popular perceptions, series of mass demonstrations reinforced the Iranian's perception of the coercive power of the state to be intact right up to the end. At the same time, however, they considered political opportunities to have increased as a result of the growth of the opposition. The physical significance of this process appeared clearly in Azadi Square and how it maintained its use of being the final destination for all protestors to crowd and mobilized. What is more, these crowds were on the whole peaceful and no violent in Azadi Square and being recognized through the media.

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<sup>290</sup> Emad Baqi, *Tarekh-e shafah-ye Enqelab* ( oral history of the revolution) ( Tehran: Nationa Lbrary, 1982), 1-145

<sup>291</sup> Abrahamian, E. (2009).

<sup>292</sup> The Four Squares Project, Retrieved from: [fourSquaresmovements.wordpress.com](http://fourSquaresmovements.wordpress.com)

<sup>293</sup> The Four Squares Project, Retrieved from: [fourSquaresmovements.wordpress.com](http://fourSquaresmovements.wordpress.com)

<sup>294</sup> Baqi, E., *Tarekh-e shafah-ye Enqelab* (oral history of the revolution) Tehran: National Library, 1982), 1-145.

<sup>295</sup> Kurzman, C. (1996). pp153-170.

<sup>296</sup> Kurzman, C. (1996).

<sup>297</sup> Kurzman, C. (1996).

<sup>298</sup> Kurzman, C. (1996).



The fact that Khomeini left Iraq and went to France and established his headquarters at Neauphle-le-Chateau, provided new impetus to the revolutionary movement. It facilitated the communication process between the leaders of the movement. The development Khomeini's ideology of guardianship of the jurist as government, that Muslims required "guardianship," in the form of rule or supervision by the leading Islamic jurist or jurists was spread through his book "Islamic Government," sermons, smuggled cassette speeches by Khomeini, among Khomeini's opposition network of students, clerics and traditional businessmen inside Iran, included constitutionalist liberals. Smuggled audio cassette tapes of Ayatollah Khomeini speaking about the revolution played a key role in the movement's mass mobilization.<sup>299</sup> It was the source of information of how to act. This tips of advice was to achieve a clear commitment to keeping the actual insurrection unarmed as demonstrations, strikes, boycotts, contestation of public space, and the establishment of parallel institutions, despite the bloody image of the revolution and the authoritarianism and militarism of the Islamic Republic that followed. Protestors were told by the leadership of the resistance to try to win over the troops rather than attack them; indeed, thousands of troops deserted, some in the middle of confrontations with crowds.<sup>300</sup>

*Ritual celebrations as opportunity for gathering in Azadi Square and around its Tower*

Religious events and their festivity were opportunity moments through their spontaneous mobilization of masses. Their practices took part in the revolution. On Muharram 10, the first month of the Islamic calendar, Shi'ites commemorate the assassination of Husayn, the grandson of prophet Muhammad, with processions of mourners expressing their grief with an intense display of distress.<sup>301</sup> Ritual and cultural tradition had a great impact on the spatial practice on Square and on revolution in general. During the revolution unrest, millions gathered under, around, inside, and atop the structure while physically reclaiming it. The architecture of the structure enabled spatial practice with its performative patterns of collective behavior to occur. Public Art work was a technique of social protest, denouncing authoritarian occupation of the public realm. People were able to display and hang their posters, slogans and graffiti people were able to climb, stand over monument. Participants were heard by audiences. Videos and photos were easily captured from the roof of the tower itself. Therefore the tower played a vital role in occupying the Square. It enabled protestors to occupy the large Square and experience the revolution in and through the monument. The graffiti and the banners on the planes of Azadi tower were the visual proclamation of the people's demand for freedom and justice. The writings on the walls read 'God is great; Khomeini is our Leader', 'Death to the King', 'Death to America', 'Death to Israel', 'Death to USSR!' and 'Neither East nor West; an Islamic republic instead!' The tower was able to sustain the popular revolt, symbolically and literally by changing its name, carrying the revolutionary banner and charged with new meanings. Accordingly the monument relieved itself of royal burdens though changes in ideologies and shifts in the dynamics of power and resistance. After December 10 the military essentially lost its will to confront the people. It had become a foregone conclusion that the Shah had to leave the country. Every day more soldiers defected from the army and joined the revolutionaries.<sup>302</sup> Two months later Khomeini came back to the country from exile and the monarchy system collapsed on February 11, 1979.<sup>303</sup>

The strategic location of the tower, its visibility, centrality, ability, and monumentality of the landmark enabled possibilities that assured the making of the revolution.<sup>304</sup> It appeared as the symbol that legitimize the new system and challenge the ancient regime. Now, the people imprinted the monument, altering its meaning

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<sup>299</sup> Zunes, S. (2009). The Iranian Uprising Is Homegrown, and Must Stay that Way. *Foreign Policy In Focus*.

<sup>300</sup> Zunes, S. (2009).

<sup>301</sup> Art & Symbolism Retrieved from: <http://fourSquaresmovements.wordpress.com/art-symbolism/>

<sup>302</sup> Ahimi, M. (2009, December 24).

<sup>303</sup> Lotfi, B. (2010).

<sup>304</sup> Grigor, T. (2003).

through practice, through use.<sup>305</sup> The physical aspect is embodied with meaning and forces communication. It evoked a dialogue between ruler and ruled, actor and audience. The new symbolic meanings and uses comprised in the spatial practices by protesters, confirm the spatial capabilities of Azadi Square to contain a huge crowd. Also due to the symbolic significance of being the national symbol affected the quality of the 1979 Revolution and its spatial practices. New meanings were embodied in Azadi Square since the Islamic republic it became the monument of freedom. It remains to act as the ceremonial, social, and representational space of the city. It was that which gave the capital city a coherent sense of direction and orientation. Consequently, the name of the Square was changed from that moment to Freedom Square and Azadi Tower has changed to be Freedom tower. (See Fig. 4.8)

## 4.4. Wenceslas Square as a Theatre of Revolution

The third case is the Velvet Revolution in Wenceslas Square. In Czechoslovakia in 1989 after decades of repression, the Czechoslovak state found itself isolated in the late 1980s with Gorbachev's calls for reform and the fall of neighbouring Leninist states.<sup>306</sup> The Communist government established tight control over its citizens. Students launched a series of protests against Communist rule in 1989 in order to express their dissatisfaction with political repression. Student and actors were led by democracy activist Vaclav Havel. The "Velvet Revolution" gained millions of supporters through marches and strikes. Wenceslas Square is a site closely associated with the construction of the Czech nation-state and shaping of Czech identity. Wenceslas Square is a key location of protest due to the site's Historical and topographical significance that produced the Square as one of the central locations of Czechoslovak resistance. Depiction of political struggle and documentaries for Velvet revolution action were almost focusing on Wenceslas Square as a site of confrontation. Richard D. E. Burton has called Wenceslas Square "the focus of every political protest and celebration in the city for almost a century and a half, and familiar to the world over from newsreels, films, and photographs."<sup>307</sup> The Soviet repression over Prague generated unique modalities and interpretations of urban space by people. The invasion brought into contact the ordered spatial relations of the hegemonic order with the potentially historically motivated, imaginary modalities of protest mapping.<sup>308</sup> Wenceslas Square, as a symbolic geography due to the histories encoded into its architecture allowed the site to be activated in specific ways and clearly played an essential role in its designation as the primary location of resistance during the invasion of Prague. Wenceslas Square's iconic setting is thus not merely a component in the performance process; on the contrary, it directly affects the protests performance towards spatiality and tactics of resistance.

### 4.4.1. Historical Background of Wenceslas Square

The establishment of Wenceslas Square conjures the incessant care of Old Town and New Town with which Charles IV shaped. The plan of King Charles IV was far in advance of other contemporary urban designs in that it was based upon the inclusion of wide, straight avenues, parallel alignments of structures and streets. And broad sweeping Squares.<sup>309</sup> The architecture of the city of Prague including Wenceslas Square was preserved from destruction and modernization until the era of urban industrialization in nineteenth century Prague and the time of Czechoslovak independence in 1918. In the years of Nazi occupation (1939-1945) Wenceslas Square

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<sup>305</sup> Grigor, T. (2003).

<sup>306</sup> Glenn, J. K. (1999). pp. 187-211.

<sup>307</sup> D. E. Burton, R. (2003). p. 163.

<sup>308</sup> Friday, J. (2011). pp. 159-178.

<sup>309</sup> Adams, C. (1991). p. 161.

was the venue anti- Nazi protests.<sup>310</sup> In 1968 the Square continued maintain its political function and has become the site and centre of anti-communist and anti-Soviet protests. Consequently, the government was moved to enforce greater controls and restrictions on public activities on the Square. Wenceslas Square is the place of power.<sup>311</sup> The Square was always the space for who has the power either state or society. Governmental power is embedded on Wenceslas Square when it is used for military parades, victory parades, and other government sponsored events such as the former May Day Parades. Wenceslas Square embodies national unity in its meanings and is physically visualized in daily life. People feel and sense their nationality in commonalities of history and a sense of togetherness and mutual recognition. Wenceslas Square was always social and cultural place with its large open space, cafes, restaurants and theatre. It is connected with all events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century occurred in Prague. Wenceslas Square is a complex symbolic geography that is full of powerful representations of past events that imbued it with huge horizon of meanings. Wenceslas Square complexity is derived from occupying diverse spatial traditions of its society. The use of Wenceslas Square as the stage and theatre of revolution is totally reasonable as a result of being a meaningful activity place during the previous revolutions. Since the revolutions of 1848, when the horse market came to be known as Wenceslas Square, it has been the centre of public demonstrations, revolutions, and celebrations.<sup>312</sup> The choice of toppling down the communist party from this Square was based on contingent values that were spatially allocated.

Wenceslas Square is characterized by its significant architecture functioning as a city Square and has boulevard form. It is in the Central core of Prague. From its beginning as a horse market as early as the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Wenceslas Square has been a commercial and meeting place for Prague. Wenceslas Square is a clearly delineated open space, approximately a kilometre long and thirty meters wide.<sup>313</sup> In front of the National Museum stands the statue of Saint Wenceslas and important element of the life of the Square. Most of the architecture that establishes the character of Wenceslas Square today dates from the 1880s through the 1920s and features the passages as an essential element of the structure.<sup>314</sup> Several earlier structures were remodelled during this era, including the Melantrich Building. One structure is remained with baroque style that is Adria Hotel with its gothic masonry in its lower levels. Five buildings on the Square date from the pre- war 1910s, four form the 1890s, including the National Museum, and three at the Square's upper end, including the house of Food, are from the functionalist 1950s.<sup>315</sup> On the Square there were several entrances for the underground subway. They were major cross stations, thus providing many access routes to the subway as well as large areas for people to congregate which include shops telephones, public televisions, etc.

#### **4.4.2. Contemporary Transformation during the Velvet Revolution**

##### *Student Massacre as an Inflammatory Occasion for Velvet Revolution*

Prague's Wenceslas Square witnessed two events with different atmosphere on October 28, 1989. In the morning, communist officials standing on a platform gave their speeches in front of young army recruits about to take their oath of service. A few hours later, police units charged into the Square using truncheons and water cannons to disperse an illegal demonstration organized by independent initiatives, including Charter 77, and attended by an estimated 3,000 people.<sup>316</sup> However it was such an effective rehearse for people to know where is

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<sup>310</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>311</sup> Petronjevic, E. (1998). pp. 95-117.

<sup>312</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>313</sup> Anderson, C. E. (2011).

<sup>314</sup> Staňková, J., Stursa, J., & Vodera, S. (1992).

<sup>315</sup> Flegl, M. (1988).

<sup>316</sup> Horáková, P. (2009, October 27).

a suitable space that could occupy for specific practices with huge crowds. Distinguishing the particularity of Wenceslas Square was quite obvious for its size and visibility. It was important to perceive how the police got control over the space. People were impressed that a demonstration occurred, and also, perhaps of greater significance, that the media recognized the event.

### *Timeline for acts and Tactics of Resistance during Velvet Revolution*

The story ended up with a huge crisis and the Velvet Revolution began somewhat spontaneously on November 17, 1989, with a student march organized to mark the 50th anniversary of a protestor's death in a student demonstration against the Nazi occupation. However, it quickly turned into an anti-government protest, with students at the Charles University carrying banners and chanting anti-Communist slogans.<sup>317</sup> A march started from campus to the Vyšehrad Castle and back through the centre of the city with Wenceslas Square as the intended destination.<sup>318</sup> Therefore the events of Velvet Revolution began on that day with Wenceslas Square in a central role. Although the student protest was conducted in a peaceful manner, 167 student protestors were hospitalized after being beaten by police.<sup>319</sup> With the city's permission, the sponsorship of the established youth union and the blessing of informal, quasi-dissident student networks, thousands more turned up than would have had it been either a purely official or purely unofficial event.<sup>320</sup> When the approved programme had ended and remnant of the throng marched down from Vyschard toward the more traditional Wenceslas Square, they encountered cordons of riot police. The marchers clearly presented passive, non-threatening behaviour; the police beat them savagely. That incident, caught on by film by four western television crews, followed by unfounded rumours of a student's death, led within forty-eight hours to a cascade of steadily bolder calls for further action.<sup>321</sup> The Velvet revolution inflamed immediately after the brutal "student massacre," in the late hours of November 17 when students and actors met in the Realistic Theatre. On the same day night there was no mention of the massive procession of the Prague citizens that was confronted and attacked by riot police on their way to Wenceslas Square.<sup>322</sup> New movements led by Václav Havel came into being that stood for a united society with a demand that the state politically restructure.<sup>323</sup>

*Saturday November 18* huge crowds gather in the streets of Prague.<sup>324</sup> In the evening, Radio Free Europe reported that a student was killed by the police during the previous day's demonstration. Although the report was false, it heightened the feeling of crisis, and persuaded some hesitant citizens to overcome their fear and join the protests.<sup>325</sup> The first strike committee of university students was set up at the Prague Academy of Performing Arts in the morning.<sup>326</sup> The students in Prague began a strike. The declaration of the strike at the Realistic Theatre in Prague occurred, and other theatres quickly followed. The theatres opened their stages only for public discussions.<sup>327</sup> The theatre employees and actors in Prague supported the students in diverse ways: gone on strike; instead of playing, actors read a proclamation by the students and artists to the audience that called for a general strike on November 27; home-made posters and proclamations were posted in public places as this was the only way to spread the message. Martin Mejstrik, a student the Academy of Performing Arts, speaking

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<sup>317</sup> History Online: (1997).

<sup>318</sup> Anderson, C. E. (2011).

<sup>319</sup> History Online: (1997).

<sup>320</sup> Dest Prazkych dnu 17,-27. Listopad 1989. Dokumentace (Prague: Academia, 1990), 559.

<sup>321</sup> Williams, K. (2009).

<sup>322</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>323</sup> Glenn, J. K. (1999).

<sup>324</sup> Sauvain, P. (1996). *Key themes of the twentieth century*. Nelson Thornes.

<sup>325</sup> Glenn, J. K. (1999).

<sup>326</sup> Czechoslovak News Agency 1989:1

<sup>327</sup> Glenn, J. K. (1999).

from the statue of St. Wenceslas at 4 p.m. announced the decision of actors and students of the academy: Strike.<sup>328</sup> The Square started to take its role in the revolution as a stage for declaring public decisions.

*Sunday, November 19* a group called the Civic Forum was established as a collection of spokespeople of the democratic movement.<sup>329</sup> The group demanded “the resignation of the Communist government, the release of prisoners of conscience, and investigations into the November 17 police action.”<sup>330</sup> The first debates took place on the evening at all Prague theatres, except the National Theatre. *Monday, November 20*, since three days, the role of writing on the walls of Prague had literally become crucial for communication network and credible source of information and rumours to all citizens of Prague. At the same moment Art performance stage has turned to be a political performance one where actors of Prague theatres and events taking place in the buildings of faculties, university hostels and secondary school.<sup>331</sup> The student strike was an “Occupational Strike” in which students occupy and control all school and university buildings around the clocks.<sup>332</sup> Student activities took place inside. The Gallery of the Young and the Manes and Spate galleries became the printing, distribution, and organizational centres of Civic Forum.<sup>333</sup> On Wenceslas group of students had been gathering around the statue of St. Wenceslas since early morning. They were lighting candles, hoisting Czechoslovak flags and banners, and acquainting passer-by with the students’ statement.<sup>334</sup> Wenceslas Square had gradually filled up by 4 p.m. protests were ever more frequently and stronger. The participants on the rally- 150,000 of them- maintained order and themselves eliminated efforts to break it.<sup>335</sup> When it started to get dark and cold in the Square, no organized activities or speeches were there. Most of the gatherings dominated space near National Museum at the top of the Square. Cheer went up as someone climbed upon the massive equestrian monument of the medieval namesake of the Square and placed a large Czechoslovak flag on the saint and his mount.<sup>336</sup> They started to order the Square for their coming actions.

*Tuesday, November 21* an organized mass demonstration took place in Wenceslas Square just as the day before, some 200 thousand people filled Wenceslas Square and adjacent streets at 4 pm. The Square was completely packed with people.<sup>337</sup> The balcony of Melantrich building of the newspaper Svobodne slovo became the stage for voices to be heard. It was the first moment of relief after the period of tension with the building being the image of the official newspaper. It was effective for representatives of civic movements and initiatives, and students on strike to speak from. Vaclav Havel addressed such a large crowd for the first time to explain the objectives of the newly formed Civic Forum.<sup>338</sup> Other speakers, including a Roman Catholic Priest, newspaper editors, film director and singer Marta Kubisova who promised their support. The crowd of Square was bigger tonight than the day before, while most people left by 9 pm freezing. The frequent zone around St. Wenceslas at the top of the Square was the major place of congregation after 10 pm. The statue has turned to be the main spot for collecting supplies. Donations of food, blankets, tea, coffee and money, were beginning to be stockpiled on the steps of the monument for the statue vigilantes.<sup>339</sup> The monument hosted small groups of citizens of various ages were continual engaged in political arguments, especially about what plan of action must be taken next. Other people, congregated near the Melantrich Building offices of the socialist party newspaper, Svobodne slovo. At midnight the space in front of the building, a huge bundle of newspapers is held out. They were

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<sup>328</sup> Czechoslovak News Agency 1989:1

<sup>329</sup> History Online: (1997). The ‘Velvet Revolution.’ Radio Prague.

<sup>330</sup> History Online: (1997).

<sup>331</sup> Czechoslovak News Agency 1989:1

<sup>332</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>333</sup> Wheaton, B., & Kavan, Z. (1992). *The Velvet Revolution: Czechoslovakia, 1988-1991* (p. 62). Boulder: Westview Press.

<sup>334</sup> Czechoslovak News Agency 1989:1

<sup>335</sup> Czechoslovak News Agency 1989:1

<sup>336</sup> Czechoslovak News Agency 1989:1

<sup>337</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>338</sup> Czechoslovak News Agency 1989:1

<sup>339</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

waiting to buy a copy of the Socialist Party newspaper, *Svobodné Slovo*, which was the first to carry accurate reports of the demonstrations and Forum statements.<sup>340</sup>

*Wednesday November 22* in the offices of the Department of Economic and Regional Geography, striking students used computer and printer to print their appeals. These printing were to be taken to factories outside of Prague,<sup>341</sup> while the headquarters of the strike committee of students of Natural sciences was located in the basement of the geography building as well. During the day, Prague students and actors went to factories to tell workers what was going on. They thus responded to the big shortage of objective information in the television, radio and other, mainly regional, media.<sup>342</sup> Evidence exists, too, that workers, mostly of the younger generation, actively strengthened the students' alternative information campaign. Even before the students had gone out into the factories of Prague, workers brought money and material aid to them at their faculties.<sup>343</sup> However Wenceslas Square was the center of drama and evidence for the Revolution yet disperse spaces and actions were performing as well. People flooded Wenceslas Square in the afternoon for another demonstration even more workers and groups from other towns were joining the students. By 2 pm all the prime locations for example near the monument and in front of the Melantrich Building, were filled. The daily schedule program of speakers began at 4 p.m., as not to disrupt the working day hours, and was over around 5 p.m. After that additional speeches continued at the "horse" St. Wenceslas monument, which had now become plastered with more poster, photos, and banners than ever. Other people enjoyed being spectators and participants in the road rally activity on the "Victorious February" highway in front the National Museum at the top of the Square. Drivers were going around the National Museum in some sort of loop all evening to the delight of the celebrating crowd.

*Thursday, November 23*, for the first time, factory workers join demonstrators in Wenceslas Square.<sup>344</sup> At 8:30 p.m., people were making announcements with the help of a large sound system at the saint's horse.<sup>345</sup> Many leaflets were being handed out by students at the monument in the freezing cold weather. Organizers were afraid that fatigue was setting in, and urged people to go home and get some rest before the weekend's activities.<sup>346</sup> The subway station walls especially at the Museum and Mustek stations, were protected from rain and snow, provided a warm place to read the latest proclamations, appeals, news and comics, which now filled nearly every open wall space. *Friday November 24*, Square was filling up early; most people took the afternoon off from work. Many people brought younger children today in the mixed rain and snow. After 3 p.m. 500,000 demonstrated in Wenceslas Square and listened to Alexander Dubcek, the disgraced leader of the Prague Spring in 1968.<sup>347</sup> At 4:15 Pm. Havel approached the microphone and then followed by several speakers. The demonstration was greeted by many famous singers, actors, artists and sportsmen, Metal worker Petr Miller spoke on behalf of his colleagues of the CKD plant.<sup>348</sup> By 8 p.m. crowd was formed at the high end of Wenceslas Square around the horse. People dance for joy when news comes through that Milos Jakes and other party leaders have resigned.<sup>349</sup> The same day the entire politbureau of the CP resigned<sup>350</sup> giving their functions to allow a new party leadership to be elected. A Civic Forum banner hung from the balcony of the newspaper offices. The large red star on the top of a neighbouring building had been removed.<sup>351</sup> Civic Forum had made its headquarters in the deep sanctuary of the Magic Lantern Theatre on Narodni Avenue. Prague theatres

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<sup>340</sup> Ash, T. (1990).

<sup>341</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>342</sup> Czechoslovak News Agency 1989:1

<sup>343</sup> Wheaton, B., & Kavan, Z (1992).

<sup>344</sup> Sauvain, P. (1996).

<sup>345</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>346</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>347</sup> Rees, J. (1999). The socialist revolution and the democratic revolution. *International Socialism*, 3-84.

<sup>348</sup> Czechoslovak News Agency 1989:1

<sup>349</sup> Sauvain, P. (1996).

<sup>350</sup> Rees, J. (1999).

<sup>351</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

had been paces for organizational meetings since this day. *Saturday, November 25*, it was humorous when a small police car drove past the crowd. It was 6 p.m. however, Wenceslas Square continued crowding. Microphone was turned over to various speakers with various thoughts. In the subway station below where there were three televisions monitors with public broadcast. Now, the screens were showing a documentary about International Day of Students on Albertov Street and the ensuing "student massacre" on the night of November 17<sup>th</sup>, and the founding of Civic Forum in the Realistic Theatre and later meetings in the Magic Lantern Theatre.<sup>352</sup>

*Monday, November 27* the general strike started. It was held under the slogans: "Down with one party rule" and "Free elections". The whole country stopped.<sup>353</sup> Workers throughout Czechoslovakia join a two-hour general strike called in support of the students. Czechoslovakia radio reported: the wave of real civic activity and initiative swelled.<sup>354</sup> A successful two-hour general strike led by the civic movements strengthened what were at first a moderate set of demands into cries for a new government.<sup>355</sup> It took place throughout the country between 12:00 and 14:00, supported by a reported 75% of population.<sup>356</sup> After this highly symbolic show of national unity, strikers were expected to make up the lost time by working overtime.<sup>357</sup> Three million workers took part in a two hour general strike, and 200,000 demonstrated in Wenceslas Square. After two decades they again waved the state flag. Wenceslas Square was filled of people and many from out of town. Every group on the Square was displaying a banner signifying their towns, factories, schools, collectives, and occupations. Few speeches were being giving at the horse over a sound system. The representatives were their organization's support.<sup>358</sup> The result of this massive spasm of popular activity was that Civic Forum announced the suspension of the demonstrations and the government conceded free elections. Within a week a majority reformist government took over.<sup>359</sup>

*In the Aftermath Phase* theatre and student strikes didn't end, and the second phase of the revolution which would continue through International Human Rights Day on the 10 of December.<sup>360</sup> This concluded the phase of the revolution, with Wenceslas Square as stage hosting democratic performances. The following victories, though supported by the strike students and actors lasting until December 29, were achieved mainly through negotiations between the governments, the Civic Forum and Public against Violence.<sup>361</sup> The centre of gravity of the events, however, moved away from the streets, universities and factories into politicians' offices where details of reforms were being elaborated.<sup>362</sup> After a one week of calm, Wenceslas Square was again filled with demonstrations, this time to protest the composition of the new government.<sup>363</sup> The afternoon seemed a replay of events a week ago. The same personalities from Civic Forum, the same place, the same chants, the same flags filled the Square. Important messages at today's demonstration said that neo- Stalinist forces were secretly mounting a counter- revolutionary effort. Instead of Marta Kubisova , Karel Kryl and Karel Gott led the Square in the national anthems.<sup>364</sup> *Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>*, a massive demonstration was called for International Human Rights Day, to announce new members of the government. Finally it was the day, Czechoslovakia's first non-communist government in 40 years takes power.<sup>365</sup> This was the last massive demonstration on Wenceslas

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<sup>352</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>353</sup> Czechoslovakia - History - Year 1989. (n.d.).

<sup>354</sup> Czechoslovak News Agency 1989:1

<sup>355</sup> Shepherd, R. (2000). Czechoslovakia" The Velvet Revolution and Beyond. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, Inc.

<sup>356</sup> Glenn, J. K. (1999). pp 187-211.

<sup>357</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>358</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>359</sup> Rees, J. (1999).

<sup>360</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>361</sup> The Velvet Revolution - 1989. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://thebrandoneffect.wordpress.com/2008/09/27/the-velvet-revolution-1989/>

<sup>362</sup> Czechoslovakia - History - Year 1989. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.year1989.pl/portal/y89/1231/8699/Czechoslovakia.html>

<sup>363</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>364</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>365</sup> Sauvain, P. (1996).



Square during velvet revolution.<sup>366</sup> On December 29 – Federal Parliament elected Václav Havel as President. Students subsequently ended their strike. The Velvet Revolution ended.<sup>367</sup>

#### 4.4.3. Factors Affecting Spatial Practices in Wenceslas Square

##### *Pre-Revolutionary Stage for Democracy Performance*

The Velvet revolution was characterized by its organized strategies and the tactics since a preparatory stage. Gathering space as cellars of theatres, pubs and apartment in Prague were very influential for preparatory stages. They enrolled critical missions and actions that are behind the scene planning, which was not part of the public display of mass demonstration. Magic Lantern Theatre- with its actor's role in democracy performance had the chance to perform as preparatory stage for the revolution. *"The revolution was thus well under way, indeed rocking around the clock, and in headquarters was just hundred yards from the bottom of Wenceslas Square, in that theatre called the Magic Lantern. For here sits Vaclav Havel, with his "private secretary" and the few key activists from the Forum who are thrashing out the texts of the latest communique, programmatic statement or negotiating position."*<sup>368</sup> This one of the preparatory stages that hosted many social interaction and debates and has played an effective role in mass mobilization and organizing actions for the revolutionary event in Wenceslas Square.

Both universities and theatres were essential to the early period of mobilization of the public, the students maintained their own independent identity and goals apart from Civic Forum, while striking theatres were transformed into smaller, local branches of Civic Forum itself. Branches of Civic Forum in theatres were also distinguished from those founded in factories, research institutes, and schools, because they did not represent one group of society but rather, like their parent body, a forum in which members of all groups of society met regularly.<sup>369</sup> This provided an important network of communication throughout the country, located in places which were familiar to all citizens. Organized trips by actors and students to factories and the countryside and the theatre strike in the form of public discussions in place of performances were efficient for mass mobilization.

##### *Wenceslas Square as a Theater for Democracy Performance*

Wenceslas Square as a physical theatre of velvet Revolution had provided a space for performance with specific events and actions. The organizers included dissident, student, politicians, artist and worker organizations. The director for the revolution: major bodies were of Civic Forum. These spatial features for democratic performances can demonstrate the theatrical and dramatic role of Wenceslas Square. The symbolic geography of the Square with all its political, historical and social meaning embodied in its architecture and space, has supplied it with potentials to perform as revolutionary theatre. In late November 1989, the primary function of Wenceslas Square changed dramatically. That Square has witnessed an organized revolution that has transformed the Square into organized stage for Revolution. New orderly pattern of spatial practices has appeared there. All political revolutions are inherently organized around time and space.<sup>370</sup> This organized process appeared as patterns of spatial practices occurred in the Square and proceeded over a period of time to various outcomes. During the first three days of Velvet Revolution, activities of people were still unorganized and somewhat random, while the constant factors were the choice of the space: Wenceslas Square and theatrical performance as part of its spatial practices. On the first day, 17 November, the Square started to witness this organized process after the event of Friday with the attack on students on Narodni Avenue and the

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<sup>366</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>367</sup> The Velvet Revolution – (1989). (n.d.).

<sup>368</sup> Ash, T. (1990).

<sup>369</sup> Glenn, J. K. (1999).

<sup>370</sup> Ozouf, M. (1975). pp.372-384.

establishment of Civic Forum as major actor supporting the student in the movement activities. The consistency and the organization of the revolution process tend to highly and quickly overwhelm public participation that was an indicator for its efficiency. The Square was signified with its punctual schedule for events and organized spatial practices in specific locations that fits it solely. Accordingly, the use of Wenceslas Square as a revolutionary Square has affected the efficiency of its spatial practices. The spatial practices in the Square have been articulated according to the occupation of the Square. Yet, they have added new symbolic meanings to Wenceslas Square's horizon.

The architecture and use of the buildings in on Wenceslas Square in 1989 were important to revolutionary events on the Square. Melantrich Building was the most significant building during the Velvet revolution. 1989 it housed the Melantrich Publishing House and the editorial offices of the socialist party newspaper Svobodne slovo. The balcony of Melantrich building served as a tribune for speakers to the masses of protesters gathered on Wenceslaus Square. It became a platform of the Square being source of information and public claims during Velvet revolution. The area in front of the building was standing-room only packed by 2:00 p.m. every day. Ambassador Hotel lobby was always jammed with froing media crews during the revolution. The passageways that were filled with retail shops and movie theatre were part of the events. The buildings on the west side of Wenceslas Square are honeycombed with interior passages, which house retail, restaurant and entertainment functions.<sup>371</sup> The Lucerna is one of the largest theatres off passage and, has played significant role with other theatres for organizing the revolution and practices performed in the Square. Actors and playwrights were prominent within the dissident movement, so theatres became meeting places where activists devised their political strategies and held public discussions.<sup>372</sup> The building housed the Academia Publishing house; its balconies during the velvet revolution were 'bedecked with Czechoslovak flags and some media crews trying to get a shot at the neighbouring Melantrich Building balcony.'<sup>373</sup> The saint Wenceslas statue is the most symbolically important monument in Prague. Saint Wenceslas statue was a central element of the Velvet revolution physically and symbolically. It was the physical façade for public claims where banners, photos, flag, candles and flowers appeared. It became a billboard or placard, displaying the events which had happened in the revolution. Its podium was the gathering point for University and high school students camping around the block during the revolution. They made shifts for guarding the banners on the statue. The podium was also the space for food supplies and canteen of hot beverages. There were boxes to hold donated money.

#### *Cultural backgrounds and behaviours*

The orderly pattern of spatial practices in daily demonstrations on Wenceslas Square reflects some of their behaviours and cultural backgrounds. They were keen on how to minimize the economic impact of the two-hour strike and how to keep the image of the Square well. In addition to that, in the centre of the Square there is still green grass. This means that none of the thousands of people have stood there, even when there was no more room. This spatial action shows something very important: about their culture of behaviour. There was kind of discipline behaviour by the people that was spatially demonstrated. Moreover, the leaders of the movement used tactic plans with prediction to the consequences for every action. To avoid appearing reckless in a society that valued decorum, activists pulled some punches: students volunteered to work shifts, bake bread, clean streets, and help out in hospitals, in part to minimize the economic impact of the two- hour strike on 27 November, in part to make a good impression on their elders.<sup>374</sup> Citizen's Forum issued guidelines for the strike

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<sup>371</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>372</sup> Wheaton, B., & Kavan, Z. (1992).

<sup>373</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

<sup>374</sup> Wheaton, B., & Kavan, Z. (1992).

that included advice to employees in health care, transport, and “services that meet the essential needs of towns, cities and enterprise” to indicate their sympathy without actually interrupting their work.<sup>375</sup>

#### *Wenceslaus Square as stage for Communication and Mass Mobilization*

The Square was a stage for public claims through diverse sources of information that were spatially practiced in the space: printed material either by student or newspapers that were particularly unavailable elsewhere; public speakers; and personal exchanges of information. These three types of information spatially appeared in different location in the Square. The leaflets, handbills and posters were found in the subway stations underground bellow the Square, on the Square there were several entrances at Mustek and the major cross streets and also under the National Museum and the Saint Wenceslas monument. The metro stations were the warm place, a convenient location for people to congregate in small groups to discuss the current situation and debate what must be done next. Communication between people on the Square was another source of information during the Velvet revolution. Wenceslas Square became a stage for freedom of speech where citizens could speak to anyone. The key place was the Melantrich building balcony where the speaker can be heard by the majority in the Square and could be seen easily. These buildings embraced cultural and political values. Thus the Square was not only symbolic, but it was also functional during the revolution which provided a stage for dissemination of timely information as well as political propaganda. Setting tactic plans for the next several days were done successfully, Havel and the Civic Forum coordinated mass demonstrations and general strike throughout the country and using Wenceslaus Square as the platform to openly express locally and globally the displeasure with the government.

## **4.5. Conclusion**

The chapter discussed in details the experiences of the mass occupation of three urban Squares in different parts of the world. Here, the aim was to discover the dynamics and help to conduct a methodological analysis of the existing research into the factors affecting spatial practices in these three urban Squares during mass occupation and democratic performances. With the breakdown of political authority and the rise of a revolutionary situation, public Squares become the communal and stage through which social and political grievances can be aired. As open and undetermined, public Squares make the perfect choice as a site of mass mobilization, however a movement cannot sustain this phenomenon forever. State violence and brutality, like in Prague, or China or Iran, put pressure on movements and led to practice democracy and occupy Tiananmen Square, Wenceslas Square and Azadi Square. Movements rise and fall with their ability to occupy Public Square.

The first case study is 1989 student movement in Tiananmen Square in China. Tiananmen Square worth mentioning in this argument not only for the significant China's Student Revolution in 1989 that took over Tiananmen Square but also the uniqueness of its making and transformation of the space as being the centre of political tension and attention. It was a resultant of opposing spatial traditions. Tiananmen Square is defined by series of monuments and events occurred over a period of time. Its morphology and its monuments historically have embodied the hegemonic political power of the Chinese state.<sup>376</sup> Spatial practices appeared to demonstrate the mission of oppositional movements to appropriate the space and transform it in ways which articulate their own political vision. Although this appropriation never last, but changed the meaning of the place and its symbol remained on the physical space that keeps physical struggle. According to this enduring conflict, the Square is remade and transformed. This remaking and redefinition of the space is a product of tactics of

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<sup>375</sup> Jiri Suk, *Obcanske forum*. Listopad- prosinec 1989.2. dil- dokumenty (Brno: Doplne, 1998) , 16.

<sup>376</sup> Hershkovitz, L. (1993).

resistance and spatial practices by oppositional movements in the Square aiming political change. This process of urban transformation was based on imposed factors affecting these spatial practices as: 1989 Student Movement and its particular structural organization: campuses as preparatory and operational stage: particularity of Tiananmen Square as a public Space: mass mobilization: institutional changes effect: media and mass communication: hunger strike: and multiclass demonstration in 1989. As a consequence, Tiananmen Square has constituted the physical and spatial framework by which both state power and grassroots movements used to manipulate that cultural memory to justify their differences.

The second case study is Azadi (Freedom) Square was a space of national symbol and civil Revolution in Tehran. During the protests in 1979 revolution, it hosted some democracy practices and was a main stage for expression and representation. Underlining the association of Azadi Square with the social and historical context was through focusing on the political meanings, uses of space and its morphological evolution. This enabled us to highlight that the Azadi Square is not only empowered to be the national symbol but also a space of conflicts for social and political activities that embodies new feature to be added to the horizon of meaning of the Square. The particularity of the Azadi Square was captured through the spatial practices of protests 1979 in regard to the politics of the space and its spatial tradition. Understanding the way of transformation of space during the revolution it was essential to explore the spatial practices and factors affecting them. As ritual celebrations and events that turned to be mobilization opportunity for the revolution to turn in Azadi Square in space for mass gatherings with rituals and cultural tradition that had a great impact on the spatial pattern of space. The royal ceremonial space turned to public political space. Free political context, within which all extreme and moderate socio-political views were expressed and debated in public. Other factors affecting spatial practices during revolution: pre-revolution protest: particularity of Azadi Square as a public space: methods of communication and mass media: movement and rallies for protests: the Iranian Movement 1979 organization: movement as perceived opportunity in the Iranian Revolution: and the movement and mass mobilization responsibility.

The third case is in Prague, the velvet Revolution in Wenceslas Square in late November 1989. The larger political movements within Eastern Europe spurred a set of individual and group actions, which played out on Wenceslas Square. That Square has witnessed an organized revolution that has transformed the Square into a stage for the Revolution. The research has introduced the new orderly pattern of spatial practices that has appeared there and the symbolic geography of the Square with all its political, historical and social meaning embodied in its architecture and space. Wenceslas Square as a theatre for democracy performance is a site closely associated with the construction of the Czech nation-state and shaping of Czech identity. Indeed, the occupying forces were aware of the site's importance, both strategic and symbolic. Wenceslas Square, as a symbolic geography due to the histories encoded into its architecture allow the site to be activated in specific ways and clearly played an essential role in its designation as the primary location of resistance during the invasion of Prague. Wenceslas Square's iconic setting is thus not merely a component in the performance process; on the contrary, it directly affects the protests performance and tactics of resistance. The occupation of Wenceslas Square was example of successful tactics, executed by the weak against the strong that disable power relations and dissolve spatial hierarchies. These practices were affected by series of factors: inflammatory event: general Strike: skillful use of media and innovative methods of communication on space: mass mobilization tactics: civic and non-violent movement: theatres as secondary\preparatory stage for democracy performance: Civic Forum framing nonviolence movement: cultural backgrounds and behaviours: and Wenceslas Square as a theatre for democracy performance.

In conclusion, the three cases demonstrated that politicizing a public space is of imbedded social links and memories that lead to occupy the space for political agendas. It combined two major realms: first the geography of the space and second the political history of the nation in relation to the place. The spatiality of each public space and diverse use of places within the area, contributed to protesters making the best use of the area in order

to appear in the public life and experience democratic practices. On the other hand, what history had left in the nation's mind over time transformed into actions and encouraged them to act to achieve their common goals. The use of the space by oppositional groups can come from their deliberate appropriation and tactical use of the space that was dominated by other hegemonic power. They became integral part of the iconography and meaning of the place. These uses and practices are not specifically what their makers intended to be. They are essential elements in the production of space and charging it with new meanings. It is in this way that urban Squares can be understood as the outcome of a cumulative and dialectic political process due to acts of resistance. The idea of occupying the dominated space is deliberate process, it is a political act expressed in spatial practices. It is a place for political expression of those who hold no power and challenge the hegemony of the power holder that dominates the space. This concept involves occupation and transformation of space as result of dissident political practice. The Squares Tiananmen Square in China, Azadi Azadi Square in Iran and Wenceslas Square in Czech Republic appeared not only as container of these struggles but also the physical object of struggle and transformation. The Squares which became the hub of the three uprisings are quite literally the product of a historical process that engaged the two distinct spatial traditions. Mobilization occurred in public Squares that maintain collective memories of the urban population; Tiananmen Square, Wenceslas Square and Azadi Square were saturated with collective memory and it is through the iconography and repertoires of mobilization that a movement gave voice to its own urban history. Overall, political memory and existing spatial patterns that justified processes of mobilization by giving substance and context for the claims a movement made on the state in the three cases.

The investigation described in this chapter is intended to deepen our understanding of the challenges facing the spaces for politics and of how and why urban space is used to affirm grip on power by a regime or even ideology. The urban transformation was achieved by introducing different tactics and factors affecting spatial practices by civic structures. Understanding the many factors affecting spatial practices in the three case studies puts into our hands insights into the essence of the challenges the public faced in their previous mass occupation and reproduction of urban Squares entailing urban and political transformation. It can be concluded that the lesson from the past is not that tactics and the acts of resistances are insufficient old tradition, but that the reproduction of public space is about urban Square and the used tactics and strategies to mobilize people in order to practice their own rights and to politicize the urban space.



Figure 4.1: Tiananmen Square, students continue to camp out on the Square in protest. 29th May 1989. (Source: [www.magnumphotos.com/C.aspx?VP3=SearchResult&ALID=29YL534Q87WO](http://www.magnumphotos.com/C.aspx?VP3=SearchResult&ALID=29YL534Q87WO))



Figure 4.2: Pro-democracy demonstrators pitch tents in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, June 3, 1989. (Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/04/us-china-tiananmen-idUSKBN0EF0DV20140604>)





Figure 4.3: Beijing University students put the finishing touches on the Goddess of Democracy in Tiananmen Square, on May 30, 1989. (Source: [www.theatlantic.com](http://www.theatlantic.com))



Figure 4.4: The protest swelled to hundreds of thousands. Students gathered around a 10-metre replica of the Statue of Liberty. (Source: <http://www.democraticunderground.com/1014818430>)



## Remembering the Tiananmen Square massacre

In the spring of 1989, students in Beijing began a pro-democracy demonstration that would shake China's Communist Party to the core. It ended after several weeks in a bloody massacre in Tiananmen Square.

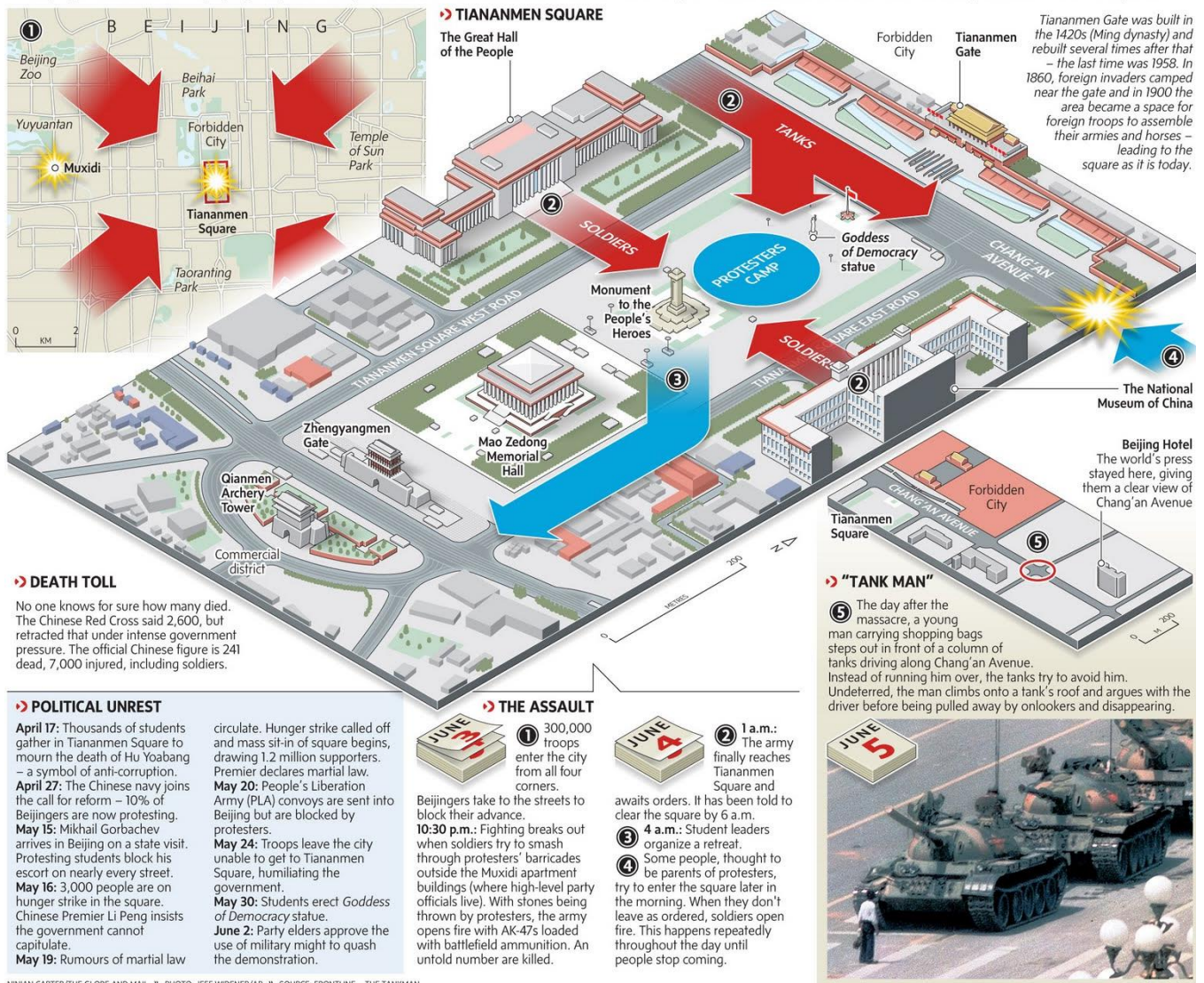


Figure 4.5: Tiananmen Square protests 1989. (Source: <https://collidecolumn.wordpress.com/page/2/>)

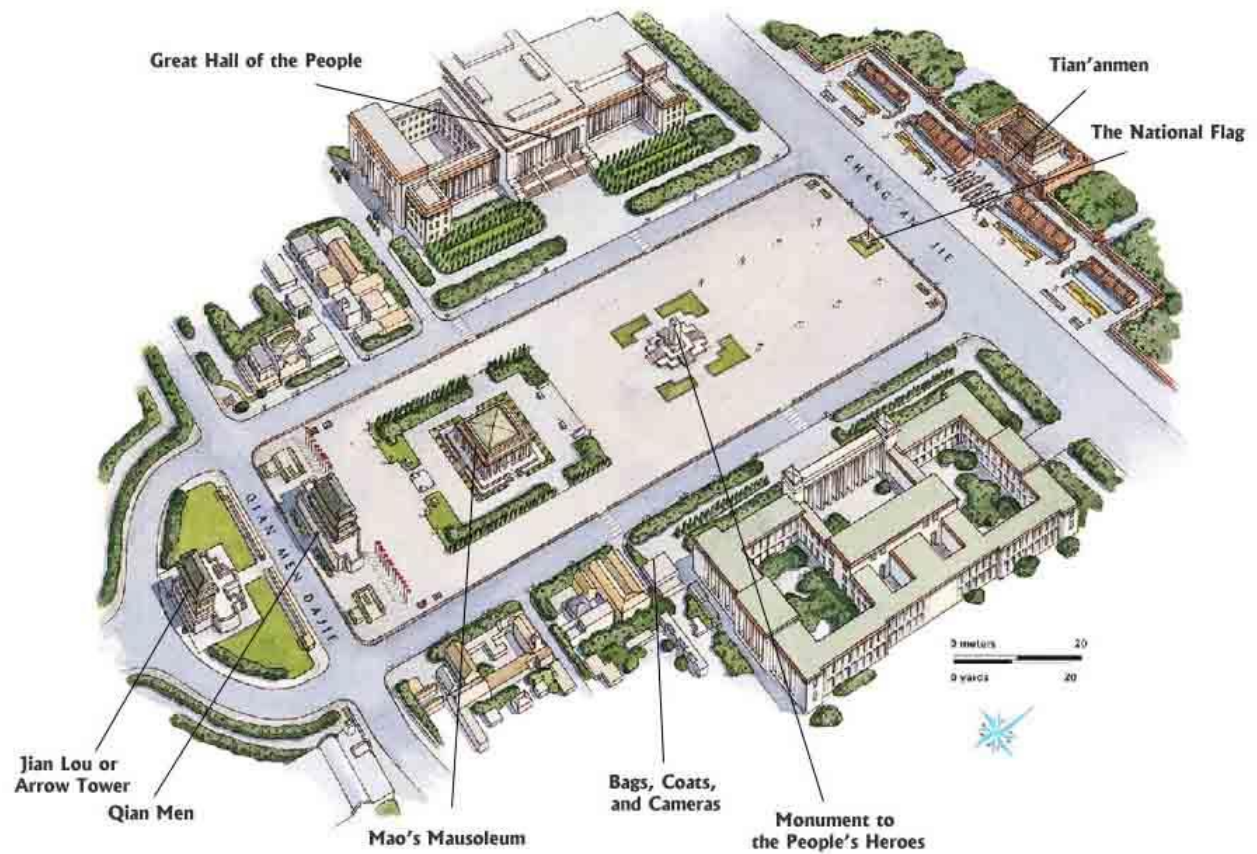


Figure 4.6: Bird's view Tiananmen (Source: Square <http://www.chinaspre.com/china-travel-guide/china-tours-beijing-tiananmen-square.html>)





Figure 4.7: Tehran's Azadi Square in the days leading to the 1979 Islamic Revolution. (Source: [fourSquaresmovements.wordpress.com/space](http://fourSquaresmovements.wordpress.com/space))



Figure 4.8: Tehran's Azadi Square bird's view. (Source <http://www.ecosai.org.pk/assembly.html>)





Figure 4.9: The statue of Saint Wenceslas and Wenceslas Square Bird' view. (Source: <http://zpravy.tiscali.cz/tag/holesovska-vyzva>)



Figure 4.10: The statue of Saint Wenceslas in Velvet Revolution (Source: [news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/analysis/31580.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/analysis/31580.stm))



Figure 4.11: The Melantrich building on Prague's Wenceslas Square- On 20 November 1989, Vaclav Havel addressed a crowd of half a million people. (Source: [www.city-of-prague.eu/history-of-melantrich](http://www.city-of-prague.eu/history-of-melantrich))

## 5. Research Methodology

### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter provides the methodological backbone of the research. First, it describes the case study methodology in detail, starting from the reasons for choosing a case study approach and then taking up the applicability of this choice for dealing with the main research question. This chapter also contributes to demonstrate the link between theory and practice in analysing of spatial and social evidence as determined by socio-spatial survey of public space in the 18 days of the Egyptian revolution.

### 5.2. The Case Study Research Method

Case study methodology is chosen for application based on the thesis research question mentioned in the introduction. Robert K. Yin defines the case study research method as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.”<sup>377</sup> Several prominent qualitative urban studies have also used the case study as a form of research methodology.<sup>378</sup> “The more your questions seek to explain some present circumstances e.g. how or why, the more the case study methodology will be relevant.”<sup>379</sup> The “present circumstance” investigated in this case study is the re-conceptualisation of Tahrir Square, during the 18 days of the Egyptian revolution as social phenomena and the socio-spatial practices entailed from patterns of resistance. In the words of Feagin, the case study is an ideal methodology when profound investigation of a certain problem is needed.<sup>380</sup> A case study methodology benefits from having multiple sources of evidence and multi-perspective analysis for a contemporary phenomenon in a real-life context. This helps to understand and work with complexity. This can be confirmed since the researcher can work within multi-disciplinary and multi-perspective informants. Therefore, case studies are process-oriented, flexible, and adaptable to changing circumstances and dynamic context.<sup>381</sup> The aim in applying this case study approach is to analyse spatial and social evidence as determined by spatial survey of public space in the 18 days of the Egyptian revolution that will be traced in terms of spatial systems that allowed them to resist and challenge oppressive regime system and also to bring an understanding of the complexity of the factors affecting spatial practices in recent public space that are occupying uprisings and acts of resistance.

This research will employ a dual approach comprising both descriptive explanatory and exploratory phases. The first phase in the present research will be the explanatory descriptive phase, which focuses on:

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<sup>377</sup> Yin, R.K. (1984).

<sup>378</sup> Whyte (1981).

<sup>379</sup> Yin RK (2009).

<sup>380</sup> Feagin, J., A. Orum, and G. Sjöberg. (eds.) (1991).

<sup>381</sup> Eda Ünü Yücesoy. (2006).

*A. Scoping research and theoretical framework*

1. Identification of a pertinent research question, to investigate of the political, social and spatial layering of Tahrir Square and its symbolism for revolting groups.
2. Survey of online social media accounts, video recording, archived accounts and interviews, documentaries, online press and blogs, and archives for independent initiatives and NGOs.
3. Identifying factors and activities that influenced spatial patterns of Tahrir Square during the occupation and political actions within a shared framework.
4. Classifying types of activities and spatial practices that can be decoded and developed into schematic maps during the eighteen days intervals (testing a research methodology: to draw spatial practices from visual accounts).

The explanatory descriptive phase consisted of a theoretical research involving a literature review and virtual observations through videos and other media in order to investigate the dynamics and complexity of spatial patterns and activities emerged during the eighteen days of revolutionary activity: identifying factors and activities that influenced spatial patterns of Tahrir Square during the occupation and framework of political actions. Testing a research methodology for decoding and mapping information shall be obtained through schematic maps in order to enhance a suitable research methodology that can be efficient for decoding visual narratives, accounts, video recordings, and online social media resources, to provide a factual basis for the second phase.

The second phase will be the exploratory phase which focuses on;

*B. Narrations, Observations and Scrutinizing*

1. Exploring documented narratives about 18 days in Tahrir Square and site observation.
2. Implementing unstructured interviews and tracing influencing activities in space from one day to another.
3. A systematic classification of socio-spatial patterns and distribution of activities on daily intervals through the 5 main themes.
4. Developing a visual narration of the development of the spatial setting: mapping and decoding information chronologically.
5. Generating a matrix of analytical maps according to 5 main themes: hospitalization and emergency support, living and life needs supplies, media and news display, prayers and ritual practices, and art and freedom of expression.
6. Analyzing the evidences of each theme separately and the dynamics and changing location of activities due to spatial and political influences.

*C. Findings*

## 1. Developing the research findings

The main tools used in this second phase for exploring narratives was unstructured interviews and other walking interviews on site, as well as collecting personal archives from interviewees. Site observations, field notes and survey investigations are important as well in this phase. According to Yin, direct observations serve as a source of data collection activities and a multiple source of evidence in a case study.<sup>382</sup> These tools facilitate the work on a systematic classification of socio-spatial patterns and the daily distribution of activities through the five main themes. Developing a visual narration for the development of the spatial setting can help in generating maps and decoding information chronologically. Analyzing the evidence of each theme separately within the dynamics of the changing location of activities due to spatial and political influences shall be followed by further augment research findings. This research methodology will be customised to draw together spatial practices from diverse sources: narrations, visual accounts, video recordings, and online social media resources. The methodology to be implemented aims to translate visual and verbal accounts into understandings of spatial practices. Decoding information through maps will facilitate the tracing and analysing of spatial transformation due to acts of resistance that entailed new spatial patterns and political changes. The two phases will be implemented through using the three main steps recommended by Yin and Feagin based on an understanding on the nature of the research, defining and designing the work plan for the case study, preparing and collecting data and conducting an action plan for the case study and: analysing the work results achieved and establishing recommendations for future work.<sup>383</sup> In addition to that, principles of data collection are considered throughout the multiple sources of evidence, which together, create a database of case studies, and maintain a chain of thought and analysis.

## 5.3. Research Methods

### 5.3.1. Collection of Historical Background Data of Space

Gathering historical data about Tahrir Square and its neighbourhood is vital in establishing an initial knowledge base about the politics of the space for the case study. The historical data collected served as a guide in understanding the situation. The Archival Records and literature search for historical and contemporary data can be done in NAE - National Archives of Egypt and The American University in Cairo. The search will be mainly for manuscripts, microfilms, photographs, recordings, archives, literature and maps about the Square. Some search will tackle the chronological changes in the Square in the form of maps and photos. The information gathered and maps consulted will be used in the analysis of the production of Tahrir Square and the politics of the Square.

### 5.3.2. Contemporary Reports and Records

Since the news on the Egyptian revolution was broadly distributed in the world through online media, therefore Social media and press media are vital sources that this research will rely on. Significant mobilization of news, blogs, videos, photos, interviews and social networks from the Square shall be traced. These tools were able to transfer a real image of what was happening in the Square. Facebook groups like “we are Khaed Said” and accounts like famous bloggers; Twitter accounts with #egypt #jan25; YouTube; Al Jazeera as online Press and their live blogs are some of the sources used for this research.

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<sup>382</sup> Yin, R.K. (1984)

<sup>383</sup> Yin, R.K. (1984).



Press media and online media press shall be explored, targeting local independent and international ones to diversify the sources. Prominent foreign media during the Revolution are included such as CNN (Anderson Cooper, Ben Wedeman, Hala Gorani); Al Arabiya (Randa Abu Al Azm); Al Jazeera; Al *Masry alyoum*; BBC; The *New York Times*; The *Guardian*. Following Al Jazeera as online press and their live blogs like Dima Khatib.<sup>384</sup> Tracing their written material including journalistic reports, articles, memos, and blog entries as well as visual materials such as TV programs, videos, photos, and maps of the protests can be useful. Although the scope of sources, accessibility, and amount of data can be considered as an advantage, it leads at a certain point to a chaos in terms of classification and interpretation. Depending on documentary movies can be: Tahrir 2011; the Good, the Bad and the Politician the first documentary film to be released commercially in theatre directed by: Tamer Ezzat ;and Tahrir: Liberation Square documentary, by Italian director Stefano Savona who lived and filmed in Tahrir Square during the 18 days.

Data gathering from documentaries and archives initiatives can be from: University on the Square Initiative documents AUC's Revolution Experiences. It is a project held by the American University in Cairo for documenting Egypt's 21st Century Revolution. This comprises more than 200 interviews held by AUC stuff and students to diverse interviewees some who attended the 18 days. Another crucial source of information was Moserien archive; it is a non-profit media collective in Downtown Cairo born out of explosion of citizen media and cultural activism in Egypt during the revolution. Mosireen, which is a play on the Arabic words for "Egypt" and "determined" was founded in the wake of Mubarak's fall by group of film makers and activists who got together to found a collective space dedicated to supporting citizen media of all kinds. During the 18 days media tent was erected by this group side in the sit-in aiming to collect multimedia materials from protesters in order to be shared by the world. This collection was the foundation for their initiative to open a shared archive. A massive amount of videos and photos were accessed that were arranged chronologically of around 250 GB.

### 5.3.3. Unstructured Interviews

Narrative as derived for life experiences has long been used by sociologists and anthropologists in conducting researches.<sup>385</sup> Expressing through narration holds many emotions and feelings that brings back the spirit of the event from its old time and allocate it in its geographic context. By using what Seamon terms "first-hand explication,"<sup>386</sup> narratives should seek to bring the qualities of the people and places of the revolution into a recognizable sense of locale and action. Time and place work together to create the experiential quality of narrative because time is essential to any narrative plot and the place or scene is where the action occurs and where characters are formed.<sup>387</sup> Kukrall Andrew, while studying the Velvet Revolution in Prague,<sup>388</sup> captured the mood and atmosphere of the time and city in Wenceslas Square. The significant methods that he used were personal narratives as an American eyewitness account as a source of information. The source of personal interviews which he conducted in Prague included the media reporting of the revolution, other writers' descriptions of the events, and visual images from films and photography. He believed that the materials help the readers to build a greater image and understanding of the Velvet Revolution as they were carefully selected for their emphasis on the importance and role of the place. A first-hand explication narrative shall provide the primary source of information used in this research for exploring the changes in spatial patterns and activities during the 18 days through people's experiences. Specifically, unstructured interviews can tackle this mission.

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<sup>384</sup> Twitter account: [https://twitter.com/Dima\\_Khatib](https://twitter.com/Dima_Khatib)

<sup>385</sup> Miles, M. and J. Crush (1993).

<sup>386</sup> D. Seamon (Ed.), (1994). pp. 247-269

<sup>387</sup> Clandinin and Connelly: 416

<sup>388</sup> Kukral, M. A. (1997).

Data gathered from interviews shall be used to clarify the research problems and orient the research to the intended goals. Rubin argued that one of the most important sources of case study information is the interview.<sup>389</sup> Unstructured interviews are more informal, interactive process and utilize open-ended comments and questions. Unstructured interviews in the second phase will be used to gather information about spatial behaviour, human activities and spatial patterns. It targeted 45 interviewees according to their roles in the Square during the 18 days: from participants as activists or reporters of events to participants as observers, in order to give information that can add to the complexity of mapping the spatial practices in the Square. The outcomes of the interviews will be in the form of written notes and audio records that will be examined, decoded and analysed. Information shall be classified and filled into the 5 thematic layers. Interviews will be taped and transcribed, to avoid missing some parts of the conversation. Tracing this effective process of reporting in the first phase of the research played a crucial role in collecting and listing names for potential interviewees of valuable archive with reporters' names and profiles. Social media records – especially Twitter – played a crucial role in making from every participant a blogger and reporter who was eager to transmit his instant experience to the whole world. A coding system was performed for interviewees to give them their privacy, space of comfort and confidence without any fear while being interviewed. A choice was left for every interviewee either to appear in research text as Anonymous with code or with their own names. The coding was; pro: protestors\ Int: intellectual \ Act: activist \ Pub: Public\ Dr: doctors\ Art: artist\ Res: resident. The interview will be preceded by the Informed Consent statement, to which the respondent must consent before continuing.

These interviewees will be frequent participants either in particular mission like being a bloggers; food and service suppliers; doctor in makeshift hospital; volunteers who tried to help in the campsite and housing; protesters responsible for the makeshift check and control points; inhabitants who watched the events from aerial view (Res1, Res2); artists who had the chance to freely express themselves; and normal activists who appeared in the Squares and were good observers: and many other participants. Interviews will target mainly youth interviewees, in order to gather tactic knowledge and strategies of events and actions. The interviews will be particularly useful to add, validate, clarify and enrich the information obtained in the first phase from social media. Walking interviews will be conducted with locals from Tahrir Square neighbourhood. Interviewees will be participants in the revolution who have direct contact with the context daily. They will be chosen from publish centres 'Merit press' where politicians, artists and activists gather sometimes; and culture initiatives like Town House center; El horreiya Café, Zahret El Bostan café and other significant places in Downtown for cultural and political meetings. Other interviewees will be residents who played a significant role and their flats are located in a strategic location from the Square. Interviews with the guardian or person responsible for the Zawia (mosque converted to main field hospital) and near shop owners who gave their space for storing medical or food supplies, are crucial. These interviews will be useful to hold on site where the events were witnessed, in order to recall many description and details. Walking around with the interviewees and explaining what was happening there will be a way to see the revolution through their eyes and observe how they interacted physically and socially with each other and with the space. It will be a successful means of locating special spots - in terms of time, memory or geography- within the Square that are of special relevance in daily life or extraordinary events during the revolution.

These interviews will be helpful in understanding the activists' sense of the place and their daily socio-spatial practices during the revolution. Interviewees shall be requested to identify their roles and location and daily life activities during the 18 days chronologically. Identifying principal spatial activities shall be accompanied with observations to other events or actions happened in space around them. In order to gather narratives and day by day records of what was really happening, it was a challenging process in order to get objective outcomes. Lots of side discussions on political initiatives but understanding how everyday worked

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<sup>389</sup> Rubin.H, J. and Rubin I.S. (2005).

more than the political initiatives and discussing how the 18 days came to existence and living shall be the main target. Unstructured interviews shall be effective for narrating the Egyptian revolution phenomena since you were really touching a very exclusive experience for every interviewee life that was mixture of grief, sadness, pride, fear and courage. It shall give them more space to recall the whole scenery with mixture of feelings, actions, events that sometime they prefer to mention it collectively and asking me to just pick up what is useful for my research. This shall be very interesting and challenging. In other instances the researcher has to repeatedly orient the narration towards my field of research. The knowledge and information that shall be obtained from analysing vast media sources of life reports and videos in phase one can be useful to get comprehensive idea of everyday happenings so that it can help in during the interview to manoeuvre the scope of discussion in a specific way whenever it lost track away from spatialities. These interviews are always useful for confirming information and social media accounts and records.

The fact that many of these participants are aware of physical space zoning and circulation- as if it is their home- require from researcher to hold all tools for drawing, maps and photos of the Square to allow them to specifically and extensively describe their experience and particular incidents that are still remaining in their memories. These methods were very helpful to allow many interviewees to recall what was happening and what they have experienced contextually and chronologically. Moreover, interviewees were asked to bring with them any personal documentations or records that can allow them to remember their own experience.

#### 5.3.4. Documented Narratives

Gathering data about the revolution in Tahrir Square and its activities can be from documented narratives. The narrated data can serve as another guide in tracing the phenomenon. Data sources and documented narratives can be in Mona Prince's memoir of the 25 January Uprising, *Revolution is My Name* (Ismi Thawra) that tells the story of revolution as it unfolds over eighteen days. It expresses and reflects on, rather than documents a set of lived experiences. Another focus around documented narratives from activists, Journalists and even actors from the regime were traced through: a memoir by Wael Ghonim *Revolution 2.0, The Power of the People Is Greater Than the People in Power*. It gives a detailed account of his personal experience. Wael Ghonim is the admin of the Kulina Khaled Said (We Are All Khaled Said – WAAKS) Facebook group that was instrumental in getting people into the streets on January 25<sup>th</sup> 2011. Another documented narratives can be found in: *Tweets from Tahrir: Egypt's Revolution as it Unfolded, in the Words of the People Who Made it* Ed by Alex Nunns, Nadia Idle; *Cairo My city, Our revolution* by Ahdaf Soueif; *Revolution of Tahrir* by El Sayed Adb El Fattah; *Tahrir Memoir* by Tarek Shalaby, Amir Salah; *Tahrir the last 18days of Mubarak* by Abdel Latif el Menawy; and *Translating Egypt's Revolution: The Language of Tahrir* Ed. Samia Mehrez.

#### 5.3.5. Direct Observation and Field Notes

Since the research approach is qualitative, then it 'necessitates an active and reflective role for the researcher'<sup>390</sup> in order to conduct the research efficiently. William Whyte's extensive fieldwork in public space was sufficient with one of the most perceptive observers of public space in urban areas to understand how people used them. Seminal work in the study of human behaviour in urban settings and its dynamics, achieved through assembled rich body of data through the use of interviews as well as cameras for observation. Another active researcher is Setha Low, in anthropological excursion *On the Plaza*. Low's fieldwork methods involve a high degree of interaction, visibility, and reflexivity.<sup>391</sup> Observational experience of Low, because of her concern that participant observation in a public space might not capture all the on-going activities, she utilized different

<sup>390</sup> Mason, J (1996) *Qualitative Researching*, London, Sage.

<sup>391</sup> Miriam E. Wells review for Setha Low.(2000).

observational strategies: plaza was observed by sector, and everything that occurred in that sector was recorded for a designated period of time.<sup>392</sup> Some of the conclusions that arise from her observational data were in the form of series of behavioural maps, locating activities and counts of people by locations, sex, and age were also created. The idea of recording activities and changes through set of observations of site is crucial then.

As this research has both a revelatory and analytical case with regard to the spatial behaviours of activists, it is significant not only in doing research itself, but having in an extensive knowledge of the setting; especially considering not just the perspective of the interviewees, but also the spatial patterns and the interaction between users on site. In this section, a close look at the socio-political situations and changing social behaviours and designs through several observations over a period of time shall be tackled. According to Yin, it is useful to have multiple observers; therefore I will have assistance that can help me to record these practices and physical changes. These observations will be recorded as field notes, photos, maps and description. These notes will contain thoughts, ideas and reflections about spatial transformation that can be discussed in the coming interviews. Recording insights and speculation about what I observe will provide a tool for clarifying points and misunderstandings, and reconsidering previous assumptions. Date, time, location and short titles for observed subjects will be helpful afterwards in the analysis phase for identifying the purpose of the observation.

## 5.4. Analysis of the Evidence

Undertaking these methods and procedures, they should be effective in providing different kinds of data that can be decoded into maps to trace the spatial transformation of Tahrir Square as an urban space. According to Yin, analysing the evidence in the case study methodology requires first, analytic strategy by developing a case description.<sup>393</sup> A descriptive framework for organizing the case study followed by analysis organized on the basis of description of the general characteristics and relations of the phenomenon in research question. Second, analytic techniques time-series analysis by questioning “How”- and “why”- questions about relationships & changes of events over time.<sup>394</sup> Analysis should show that it relied on all the relevant evidence; all major rival interpretations are dealt with; the most significant issue of the study is addressed: and prior expert knowledge is brought to the study. The content analysis of contemporary records, field notes, interview, maps, photographs, and historical documents will generate a systematic classification of socio-spatial patterns and distribution of activities on daily intervals through the 5 main themes.

Interviews will be carried out and the transcriptions of each one will be first examined separately, once all the interviews are completed, they will be examined as a whole to discover connections and common or related information. Analysis of the interviews shall be tackled through three steps while following Kathy Charmaz’s instruction for analysis of the interviews.<sup>395</sup> First, portions of interviews that seemed to have a clear and direct relevance to the main research inquiry will be highlighted; the input of relevance will be then summarized and categorized using key themes, such as protester role, type of activity, location and time. Second, a search will be carried out to locate similarities and differences related to the key themes. Information will be then summarized and divided into categories related to the research questions using the previously selected key themes. Third, data will be decoded through maps as well as data from the documented narratives, social media records, and surveys. Then these diverse data will be synthesized and analysed.

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<sup>392</sup> Low, S. (2000).

<sup>393</sup> Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case study research: design and methods*. 2. ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

<sup>394</sup> Yin, Robert K. (1994).

<sup>395</sup> Charmaz, K. (1983). pp.109-128.

Mapping and decoding information<sup>396</sup> in the analysis shall be applied by classifying the space, time and activities chronologically. This framework will be decoded into maps defines the space and its spatiality as the ability of people to manage its available spatial patterns, and to elaborate new patterns through different systems and organizations that respond to changing of needs in a particular circumstances. Decoding information shall be generated through a matrix of analytical maps to illuminate the socio spatial practices and their effect on space through 5 themes: hospitalization and emergency support, living and life needs supplies, media and news display, prayers and ritual practices, and art and freedom of expression. Analyzing the evidence of each theme separately, the dynamics and changing location of activities due to spatial and political influences shall be achieved. Pointing out the ways revolutionary acts were articulated and interpreted through spatial practices shall be implemented in each theme. This investigation of spatial patterns and activities, and their appearance on the Square will be helpful in synthesizing the socio-political patterns of the dynamics and the spaces of resistance of the Square during the revolution.

## **5.5. Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the case study methodology adopted as a methodological approach to achieve the main goal of the research, to reply to the research question. It also describes the track followed to answer the research questions. The thesis employs an inter-disciplinary case study methodology comprises two phases: descriptive explanatory and exploratory phases. Each phase includes several tools and techniques for collecting information. Since the research aims to develop a methodology of analysis of spatial and social evidence as determined by the spatial survey of public space diverse research methods were comprised: collection of historical background data of space, contemporary reports and records, unstructured interviews, documented narratives and personal experience as information source, and direct observation and field notes. Methods of analysing the data gathered from different research tools were also discussed in this chapter.

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<sup>396</sup> Cosgrove, D. (1999). p 1516.

**Case Study Research Methodology** (Robert K. Yin, 1994, Feagin, Orum & Sjoberg, 1991)

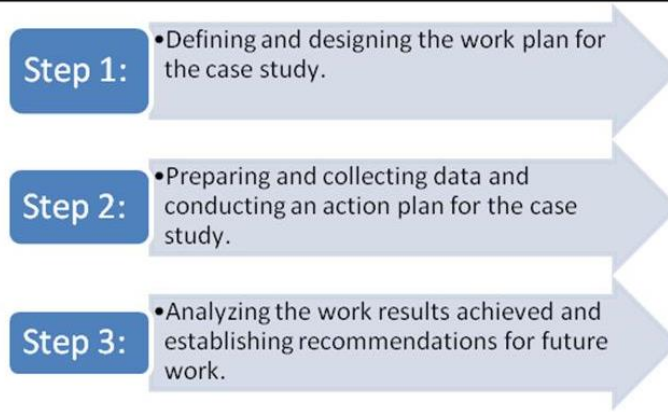


Figure 5.1: Case Study Research Methodology

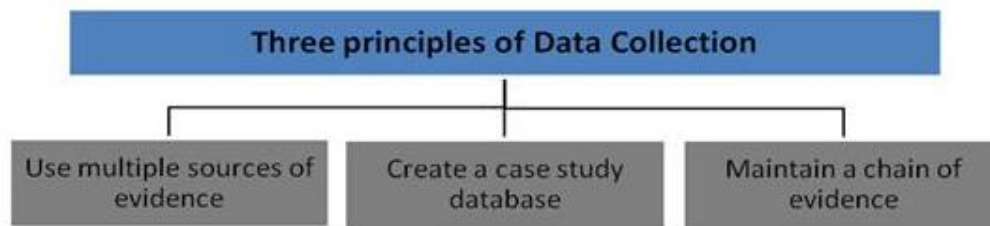


Figure 5.2: Principles of Data Collection

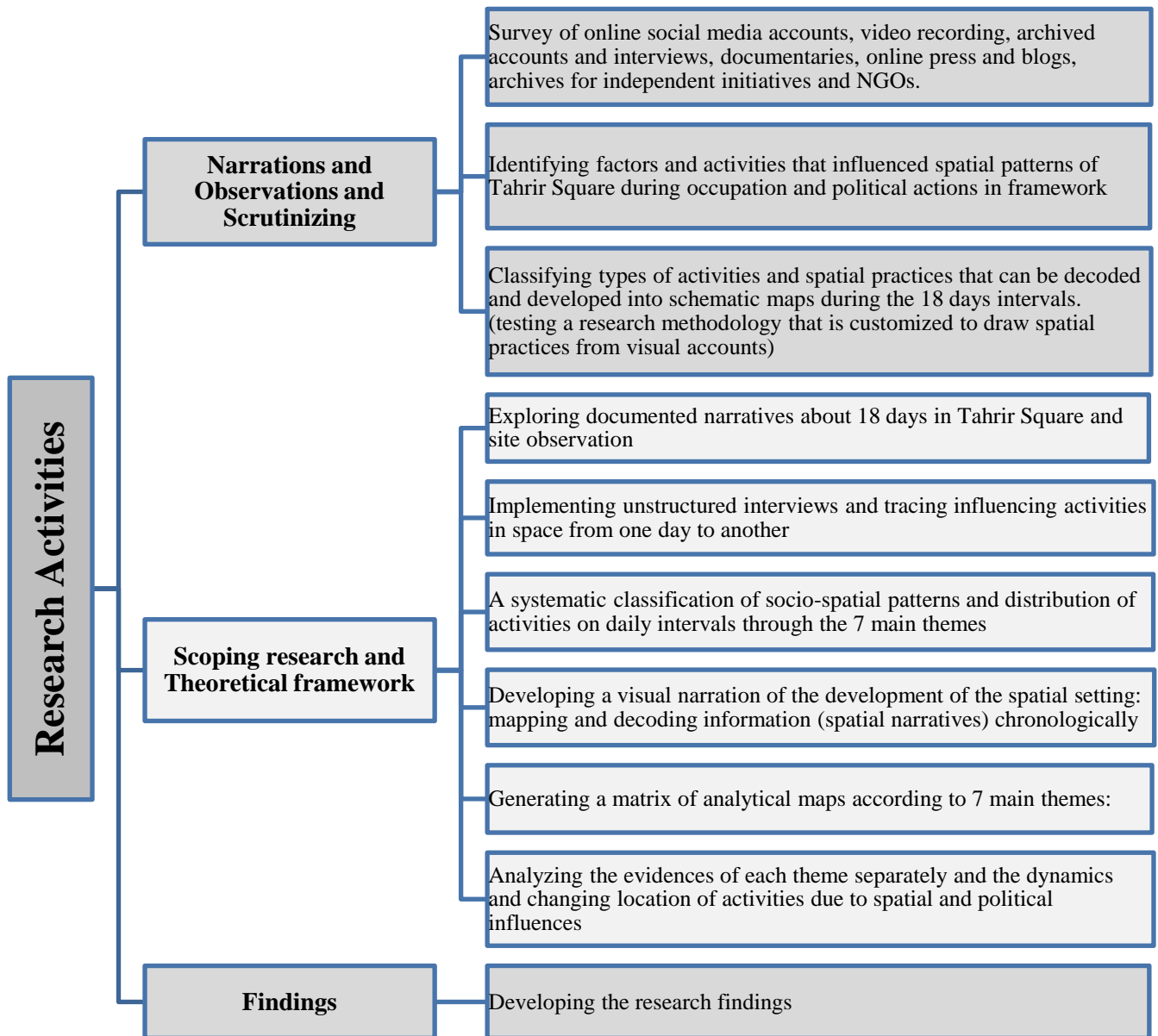


Figure 5.3: Research Activities. (Source: By the researcher)

## Research Consent Form

<b>Name of Researcher:</b> Basma Reda Rashwan Abou El Fadl
<b>Position:</b> Management and Development of Cultural Heritage (MDCH), PhD student, IMT Institute for Advanced Studies, Lucca, Italy.
<b>Title of study:</b> A Performative Space: Spatial Practices and Tactics of Resistance as an Act for Re-conceptualization of Tahrir Square during Revolution

### Abstract

This research shall focus on Tahrir square in Cairo as space of revolt during the 18 days-long Egyptian revolution from 25<sup>th</sup> Jan till 11<sup>th</sup> February 2011. It aims to explore patterns and activities of mass occupation over space that entailed act of resistance. Tahrir Square was transformed into a city by itself where all social, ritual, cultural, social and political performances appeared. This adaptation in space embedded spatial patterns of activities that can be classified into: defence and offence spots with access point; housing and makeshift tents; art and freedom of express; ritual practices as praying; medical support points as makeshift field hospitals; display and media makeshift; living and life needs: access and welcoming point. Tracing these spatial activities that appeared in a short period and by mapping the spatial patterns, social behaviours and use of space with its physical characteristics and spatial order of Tahrir square during the 18 days of revolution, aims to highlight that these socio-spatial practices entailed urban transformation of the space during the time as an act for resistance. This research requires a deep investigation through social media, press archives, photographic and video documentations, *eyewitness testimonies* and interviews with protestors who has been there 24 hours in order to be able to understand and decode the dynamics and tactics of resistance entailed space transformation. A matrix of maps will be a tool to display act for resistance and conflict over the space and how square was re-conceptualized, highlighting the social practices that spatially occupied the space and its changes through the time.

### The procedures

- Interviews will be recorded by tape/ video recording or written notes depending on the obtained consent. It shouldn't put the interviewee in risk or danger. The recorded materials/ transcript will be stored securely at the research supervisor's office. Participants will not be identified unless a written or verbal approval is given by the subject.
- The interviewer will respect the interviewee's right to a point of view and must not use any means to restrict the interviews from expressing that view.

**To facilitate a high quality of research and to ensure the comfort and rights of contributors, what is requested from you and the rules that will apply to the interview and data collection are below:**

- I agree to take in the above research and confirm that I have read and understand the research objective. ☐
- I agree to participate and I am free to withdraw at any time without reason. I can refuse to answer any question. ☐
- I agree for the data collected from me to be kept on an electronic database and analysed for research purpose. ☐
- I agree that data collected from me to be quoted in reports on my study. Choose to be under (anonymous activist or your name) ☐
- I agree for the data collected to be used for academic purposes:
  - ☐ In PhD thesis
  - ☐ In academic Journals and Books (academic publication)
  - ☐ In academic presentation, conference papers and further research
- I agree to be photographed / appear in voice recorded/ appear video recorded by the researcher.

Researcher Name:	Signature:	
Participants Name:	Signature	Date:

Figure 5.4: Consent Form



	Name of interviewee	Type of Information	Contacts	Code if anonymous
1	...	Resident in flat overlooking the Square	....@yahoo.com, address	Res1
2	....	Architect engineer \ Army	010 6305 ....	Arm1
3	....	Communication engineer \ Activist		Tech1
4	..	Participant	010020....	Act 1
5	...	Hisham Mubarak Law Center Defence & Control points,	0122...	Act 2
6	..	Participant	Skype	Pro 1
7	...	Resident in 15 Tahrir Square		Res2
8	...	About makeshift hospitals	0122..0	Dr 1
9	....	media tent organizer, Documentaries,	010...	Act3, 4
10	....	About makeshift hospitals		Dr2
11	...	About makeshift hospitals and art practices	0100...	Dr3
12	....	Architect... participant		Pro2
.....	....	X police and protester		Pro12
....	....	Artist corner founder		Art2
45	.....	Artist protester		Pro13

Res: resident \ Pro: protestor \ Int: intellectual \ Act: activist \ Pub: Public \ Dr: doctors \ Art: artist

Figure 5.5: List of potential interviewees and Interviewee Codes

## 6. The Production and Reproduction of Tahrir Square

### 6.1. Introduction

In order to trace the re-conceptualization of Tahrir Square during the 18 days, this chapter shall talk first about the urban and social condition of urban space in Cairo pre-revolution. It will focus on diverse ideologies leading to general declines in the use of public spaces and their influence on the production of space in Egypt. Clarifying the consequences of this decline of public space can give better understanding to the deterioration of them, their socio-spatial injustice in Cairo's urban realm and how it threatens their spatial distribution in general. Spatial practices in Tahrir Square under State-driven system of power and control is a significant case to focus on in order to give a clear idea of the acts of resistance that space hosted. This chapter shall talk about the production of Tahrir Square and its historical background. The space composition of Tahrir Square is a result of significant layers of history Egypt had witnessed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The history of Tahrir Square enriches its terrain with unique spatial, political, and symbolic value. Through the history of Cairo, urban spaces and Squares played a pivotal role in gathering people and hosting significant events, ceremonies and demonstrations. Tahrir Square is one of the most important Squares in Cairo that led this role till today. As *El Ahrām Weekly* once wrote about el Tahrir Square: "Tahrir Square is not only the hub of Cairo, it is home to some of the city's most important buildings and a constant headline-maker in the local press. Whatever happens in Tahrir immediately becomes a national concern."<sup>397</sup> In addition to that, the essence of Tahrir Square was described by the Egyptian writer Samir Raafat in the *Cairo Times*: "Maidan al-Tahrir cannot sit still. Whether reflecting the city's moods or the leadership's political agenda, the nation's most important plaza has gone from faux Champs de Mars to Stalinesque esplanade. Whenever a new regime feels the nation's capital needs a new look, the Midan has been the place to start."<sup>398</sup> Accordingly the research traces the spatial transformation of Tahrir Square as part of a complex transformation of Cairo. This ongoing transformation started before and from the origins of the modern city district. In this chapter the research shall analyze chronologically the political shifts and their effect on the urban landscape of Tahrir Square history till right before the 18 days of the Egyptian revolution, its spatial significance and political symbolic value.

Public spaces in Egypt have been transformed during the first days of the 18 days on both the spatial and social levels. Yet Tahrir Square was also changed on the physical level as well. Changing power relations affected the way public space was re-produced and regulated. Protesters reproduced Tahrir Square through everyday practices, uses, and explicit forms of resistance. This chapter investigates the moments before transformation and use of space during the 18 days, as preparatory process and part of these acts of resistance. By taking deep investigation on the preceding activities and actions that was before 18 days the research shall demonstrate how it was the story of growth for new powers away from real public spaces and consequently away from police tactics. The role of spatial systems that preceded it was responsible in shaping practices of resistance and security responses in Tahrir Square. The research presents the uprising being marked with reactive revolutionaries employing non-traditional tactics as well as tools of technology and alternative forms of organizing to articulate concerns and reclaim Tahrir Square. They played a crucial role in the preparation of spatial practices to appear in this form of resistance. These efforts featured a discontinuity with past strategies of resistance through new tactics for mobilizing the common people and the adoption of a different spatial patterns

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<sup>397</sup> Farag, F. (1999).

<sup>398</sup> Raafat, S. (1998).

and order in public space that needs to be investigated. In order to understand the shift towards the acts of resistance the research shall explore the streams of contemporary public protests in Egypt and how it witnessed growth, strength and diversity of political opposition. This chapter further explores the main functions of social media in order to investigate how cyber space was an alternative public sphere for promoting the cause. In claiming their right to the city, protesters created a physical and political space for reasserting the power of the people. This chapter tracks the development of youth movement and explores its implications on the tactics-entailed contestation of public space and effective urban occupation through their unique spatial practices. Tracing the reconceptualization process through diverse resistance shifts demonstrates spatial order articulated in Tahrir Square and phases of deterioration of original structure of society that should be deeply investigated in 5 themes in the following chapters.

## 6.2. Urban and Social Condition in Cairo in Pre-Revolution

### 6.2.1. Deterioration of Urban Spaces through Series of Ideologies

Public spaces, by nature, are socially inclusive and pluralist.<sup>399</sup> According to Akkar the 'inclusive public space' can be defined as possessing four mutually supportive qualities of 'access': physical access; social; access to activities and discussions or intercommunications; and access to information.<sup>400</sup> Accordingly, everyone is entitled to be physically present in a public space. Social access includes the spatial patterns and order of people, design and management elements, signifying who is and is not welcome in the space. Therefore, developing public space should always target a wider range of society instead of intimidating them. Hence, the 'inclusive' public space is the place where the activities and discussions in its development and use processes are open to all.<sup>401</sup> The extent of the inclusivity in public space depends on the degree to which the public space, physically and socially is open to all: and the activities occurring in and information about, its development and use phases are accessible to everybody. Discussing these qualities of access in order to measure inclusivity in public space, can give us better understanding of the decline in the use and production of Tahrir Square and public space in Egypt. Their process of transformation from inclusive and pluralist public space to public space was undermined by the limited public involvement in the development process where the large-scale of control is by the state. Public space was used as a tool to control the public and discourage them from gathering. The restricted public access to the activities, discussions and intercommunications of, and information about, the development process was powerful. It has entailed a public space where the physical and social accessibility was impoverished to an extent of; gentrification, social exclusion and stratification that have been reinforced. Consequently, the ideal public realm qualities of social inclusivity have been violated to a remarkable degree.

Exploring the relationship between Cairene society and public spaces and the extent of exclusivity, the research claims that Cairo is marked by the absence of public realm that includes all members of the Cairene society. Citizens are separated into social groups or classes and are spatially placed into separate realms. Therefore, the urban public realm became contested with diverse ideologies. First: *social segregation*, which affects the production of successful places in the city. A segregated public space is an urban space of social un-integration and physical segregation, which has the lack of the factors of integration, missing the qualities which a contemporary urban society requires.<sup>402</sup> It can be one of the ideologies leading to the decline occurring at all levels within Cairo's Nile front, public Squares, public gardens and semipublic spaces between residential areas.

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<sup>399</sup> Tiesdell and Oc, (1998). Pp 639-655.

<sup>400</sup> Akkar Z.M. (2004).

<sup>401</sup> Akkar Z.M. (2004).

<sup>402</sup> Nunes da S. F, Serdoura, F., Costa, P. (2001).

Increasing social injustice through segregation is reflected in the privatization of waterfronts. As the Nile riverside plays significant role in Cairo's urban fabric. It is thus used by private institutions, elite restaurants, clubs and floating boats. In the last 20 years available spaces for the public were very limited. Cairo's city Squares, as in most historical cities, were decorated with fountains, monuments, statues, and other works of art, while the public space was used for public celebrations, state proceedings and the exchange of goods and services.<sup>403</sup> Yet these spatial configurations do not differentiate them anymore. Moreover, the introduction of the compounds and gated communities in cityscape has injected new forms of public spaces that did not exist in the indigenous city. These new urban spaces were relatively semi-public and were limited to the residents or elites. It also limited political discourse to medium and upper classes. Therefore, Cairo has been marked by clear spatial segregation, and immense social inequality, which dispersed the civil society's collective identity. A clear absence of public spaces weakens sustainability, and producing a strong social gap among its citizens.

Second, *social conflicts* which lead to pushing away traditional festivals and celebrations, like Mulids, from major public spaces as they are not generally accepted by the intellectual and elite population, who tend to separate themselves from the general public. Despite these and other festivities displaying cultural folklore, the middle and upper classes regard them as chaos representing a distorted image, as they are commonly led by lower class citizens.<sup>404</sup> The reality of urban society is based on the conflict over social organization, as each group aims to communicate their own social interest through the expression of urban meaning.<sup>405</sup> Therefore, this appears as social conflict process and struggle where urban realm tends to suit the interest of the dominant class, while disclosing part of society that is considered as a threat to public wellbeing far from social space through physical and spatial barriers. Addressing the issue of how Cairo is formed of separate social spheres entailing social conflicts, these challenges are the natural expression of aggressive growth, extending from core to outskirts at an unbalanced rate all over the last 30 years. Consequently, the uncontrollable growths lead to major socio-spatial conflicts, such as exclusion, isolation and marginalization of certain groups in urban society, specifically the informal settlements communities.

Third ideology that shaped the urban public realm was *increasing economic interests* through privatizing urban spaces. Mubarak government promoted the development of gated communities with private parks, golf courses, private resorts, shopping malls that are typical trends to the development of space as single privatized entities targeting the interest of a particular group. In doing so, they imposed behavioral patterns in urban spaces. In the meantime, the government ignored the city's center through ongoing mismanagement of housing development entailing remarkable informal housing that rings every neighborhood and Cairo. This leads to public space deterioration as they become neglected, as well as the disappearance of collective social and cultural spaces. Spaces and streets, which had been crucial for public gathering and spatial integration, have been reduced to a "simple space for movement."<sup>406</sup> Deformation of streets and public space, and destroying traditional configuration had developed spatially through the time and through human interaction with space. Public space became limited or controlled from hosting any events or celebrations, threatening socio-spatial distribution as elites reclaimed the city through refurbishment and urban development in new spaces away from traditional social space. Traditions, folklore, religion celebrations and festivities attracting masses are displaced from contemporary life of main public space.

The last factor responsible for the decline in the public space production and shaping the urban public realm, is the *political power* enforced by the State that is manifested within the urban fabric. Public spaces have always symbolized the power of the state, and demonstrated their interest during previous decades. Public space did

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<sup>403</sup> Madanipour, A. (2003). pp. 139-151.

<sup>404</sup> Schielke, cited in Singerman, D., ed. (2009).

<sup>405</sup> Castells, M. (2003). pp. 23-27.

<sup>406</sup> Levy, A. (1999). pp. 79-85

not only represent the power of the state, but also demonstrated the degree of oppression by the state, where the use of public space is controlled, prohibited, or regulated. Though part of society is unwelcomed, so spatial barriers are promoted in the urban realm as a mode to control accessibility and manage activities. Therefore, Egyptians do not have the right to public space in law and only started to reclaim it in practice since 2011. Festivities attracting great masses, such as the example of Mulids, are therefore not allowed in public spaces as they are displaced from modern urban life, generating a common feeling of the loss of ability to participate in public spaces.<sup>407</sup> According to Singerman, those are controlled by the presence of government officials monitoring and regulating behavior, as well as acting as symbols of power over citizenship.<sup>408</sup> Such was Mubarak's urban planning legacy. Under emergency law—established from the moment Mubarak took office in 1981 and yet to be lifted—a gathering of even a few adults in a public Square would constitute cause for arrest. Like all autocracies, the Mubarak government understood the power of a true public Square, of a place where citizens meet, mingle, promenade, gather, protest, perform and share ideas; it is understood that a real public Square is a physical manifestation of democracy. A real Tahrir Square would have been a threat to the state. Accordingly, the state deployed the physical design of urban space as one of its chief means of discouraging democracy.

Mubarak government worked to effectively depopulate Cairo's famous public squares and parks, including not just Tahrir Square but also Ramses Square, Orman Garden and Azbakiyya Gardens. Public policies and urban planning were serving only the state security. Any urban spaces that might function as gathering points were systematically fenced off or subdivided or traffic and flyovers were prioritized, and thus intimidated people and even sometimes fearing pedestrians of appearing there. Another tactic was the relocation of significant downtown landmarks. The American University of Cairo moved in 2008 in the New Cairo. The Egyptian museum will be soon relocated near the Pyramids in Giza. Such Urban planning and public policies have led to decline of public space through erosion of civic pride and limitation of human rights, and also uncompromising deterioration of socio-spatial distribution in the city and spatial injustice in public realm. Exclusion from public spaces is also because of the inadequacy of spaces. Public gardens in Cairo are familiar with the fences that close off and disinviting with no seats, shade, lighting, and limited accessibility for the disabled discourages public usage. In addition to that, particular exclusion was imposed on Women from visiting public spaces due to increased sexual harassment and perceived danger: "According to a survey by UN Women, 99.3% of Egyptian women reported having been sexually harassed, with 91% saying they feel insecure in the street as a result."<sup>409</sup> The deterioration of public spaces is a result of poor management and increase of uncontrolled vehicle traffic on the expense of public space and green areas. these diverse ideologies were illustrated as modes entailed general decline in the use of public spaces and their production of space. Yet the tendency of public spaces towards gentrification, social exclusion and stratification has been clearly contested during the 18 days of the Egyptian Revolution through its significant inclusion.

### 6.2.2. Consequences of the Decline in Public Space Production

The production of public space has been a topic of great discussion in spatial as well as in social disciplines and control tracing how places are efficient in achieving a vibrant urban environment. Public spaces are inclusive spaces that people are freely using without consent or justification, thus exercising their citizenship rights.<sup>410</sup> The absence of these rights demonstrates the existence of power over citizenship. It therefore suggests

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<sup>407</sup> McCann, E. (2002). pp. 77-79

<sup>408</sup> Singerman, D., ed. (2009).

<sup>409</sup> FIDH - The International Federation for Human Rights, (2014). Egypt: Keeping women out Sexual violence against women in the public sphere [www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/egypt\\_sexual\\_violence\\_uk-webfinal.pdf](http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/egypt_sexual_violence_uk-webfinal.pdf)

<sup>410</sup> McCann, E. (2002).

that production of public space through democracy practices is dependent on the inclusivity of public space and capacity of citizens to use and adapt public spaces to their needs. As discussed before, the situation of public spaces in Cairo has been significant in how the city witnessed major transformations in the roles of public spaces on urban society, and production of public spaces by its society and socio-spatial justice. The production of space is therefore shaped based on the concept of “whoever controls the streets, controls the city.”<sup>411</sup> The notion of conflict and who owns the city was spatially contested in public spaces in Egypt in recent decades. The right to public space is the right of all citizens to access and spatially use public space for deliberation, public discourse, cultural expression, leisure activities, and the obligation of the State to ensure that these public spaces are available for these purposes. Yet, social, economic, urban and political forces shaping the urban realm limited the capability of the society to practice their rights to the city, as their rights to voice and participate in social and physical space, and increasing socio-spatial injustice in Cairo's urban space.

The power of decision making by the State and its institutions was confronted by parallel world of the city: gated communities and informal urban settlements that were sustaining their informal economy, parallel management, and social control to guarantee inaccessibility to the state. These separate spheres had their parallel security, collective protection against intruders or state, social system, and medical support that was autonomously organized. The city has evolved over the past few decades into a hierarchical structure with centres of powers, where economy and businesses have privileged a central position in the services and in the decision making, neighbored by areas of less importance inhabited by mid-classes communities, and then bordered with areas inhabited by low classes -Informal settlements- since they were dependent on each other. However, the State has no interest on low classes areas. This local territorial inequalities can be one of the factors which spatially drove the uprising. Accordingly the power of decision making by the State and its institutions is responsible for the appearance of this parallel power of activities and spatial practices by people and communities in these alternative spaces.

Moreover, the pattern of exclusion shifted from informal areas settlements to hit the gated communities' residents. Whitehand describes this urban extension as the development of distinct zones encircling the original city, forming an urban fringe belt that creates a spatial gap between the old and new, the core and the peripheries, as well as between the rich and poor.<sup>412</sup> This urban extension brought physical limitations, such as weak connectivity between the outskirts and the centre. According to Madanipour, “this dispersion in society has led to severe social consequences that contributed to the de-spatialization of activities from the public sphere, reducing the political, economic, and cultural significance of public spaces of the city.”<sup>413</sup> Again another separated sphere emerged through people from different backgrounds have combined into communities that represent similarities in social level, and income. This sphere is based on segregation from the outside public; it destroys the sense of community and national identity by placing urban society in a hierarchical social structure, which reflects the interests of the dominant class. Public spaces are therefore controlled or privatized, preventing certain groups from accessing or practicing their rights to publicly owned space.

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<sup>411</sup> Madanipour, A. (2003) Atkinson (2008).

<sup>412</sup> Whitehand, J. (1987).

<sup>413</sup> Madanipour, A. (2003).

## 6.3. Urban History of Tahrir Square through Political Shifts

### 6.3.1. Islamic Era

Once, the highly developed urban Square was a patch of silt, part of the Nile's bed. In the sixth and seventh centuries of the Islamic era -the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries AD, the Nile shrank eastwards, uncovering land which was to become the Qasr Al-Aini area, Munira, Garden City, and Tahrir Square.<sup>414</sup> In those days, the area was known as Al-Louq. The first developments on the new land were far from glamorous.<sup>415</sup> Originally part of the Nile river bed, the site was urbanized in the 19th century and became a working class neighborhood named Al Louq.<sup>416</sup> During the Sultanate of Al-Nasser Mohamed Ibn Qalawun, it became one of the richest and most luxuriant gardens in Cairo to return, in just a few decades, to conditions of decay, a mosaic of gardens and wetlands.<sup>417</sup> The remains of the richest and most luxuriant gardens in Cairo were used for marshland by Napoleon Bonaparte soldiers. (See Fig.6.1)

### 6.3.2. Haussmann Era

In constructing the 'Ismaili Cairo' in the second half of the 19th century, the urban fabric was transferred but not by cutting through the old city fabric, rather it was copied on a vacant land next to the old city.<sup>418</sup> This was to be the modern façade that the Khedive will receive and show his royal guests during the opening celebrations of Suez Canal.<sup>419</sup> As such, a second Modern and healthy Cairo was constructed next to the historical un-sanitized one.<sup>420</sup> The Khedive commissioned Ali Moubark Pasha, his minister for public works, to set the plan for the new city. Together with his crew, influenced by the plan for Paris, they came up with the plan for the new city.<sup>421</sup> A major development and rehabilitation of an area was originally known as the Ismailia quarter which is known today as the Downtown area.

Qasr el nil Square was an open space left between a series of royal palaces along the eastern bank of the Nile and new district designed a La francaise in the late 1860s by Ismail pasha.<sup>422</sup> This space was part of the dream of developing Cairo into "Paris of the Middle East" Ismailia neighborhood. The area was inhabited by princes and nobles and was the site of the most important government buildings during "Golden era." The goals of Haussmannization, the representation of modern Western urbanism, were on the meantime, significant desire to modernize Egypt and to root a new order in its social structures. Part of the development plan for Ismailia terrain; construction of the Ismailia Bridge -named now Qasr Al Nile Bridge.<sup>423</sup> Khedive Ismail ordered it to be planned similar to Charles de Gaulle – Étoile Square in Paris with the same form, proportion, approaches, converging point for axial streets and named Ismailia Square. The Square (literally, an open space) was built to regulate the increasing traffic of Cairo.<sup>424</sup> The area of Tahrir Square now, witnessed the first landmark when Qasr Al-Nil Barracks was erected -where the Nile Hilton stands stood. It was set up in the reign of Khedive Said

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<sup>414</sup> Farag, F. (1999).

<sup>415</sup> Farag, F. (1999).

<sup>416</sup> Kafafy, N. (2012).

<sup>417</sup> Forms of Energy #15 A history of Tahrir Square, and the rediscovery of public space in Cairo. A conversation with urban planner and researcher Costanza La Mantia. Interviews / Marialuisa Palumbo. Retrieved from [www.domusweb.it/en/interviews/2012/01/31/forms-of-energy-15.html](http://www.domusweb.it/en/interviews/2012/01/31/forms-of-energy-15.html)

<sup>418</sup> Serag, Y. (2013).

<sup>419</sup> Serag, Y. (2013)

<sup>420</sup> Ali, Arafa A. (1997).

<sup>421</sup> Abu-Lughod, Janet L. (1971). *Cairo: 1001 years of the city victorious*. New York: Princeton University Press.

<sup>422</sup> Rabbat, N. (2011).

<sup>423</sup> Adham, K. (2013).

<sup>424</sup> Ghannam, F. (2011).

(1854-1863).<sup>425</sup> The barracks also served as the Ministry of War and drew people's attention to the area west of Cairo, setting the pattern for developments that were introduced by Ismail Pasha later on.<sup>426</sup> September 1882, before the completion of Ismailia district, marked the beginning of the British colonial period in Egyptian modern history. The first British colonial act was the requisition of the main royal barracks, as the headquarters of their Occupation Army. British soldiers used the court between the barracks and the Square to the east as a daily parade ground.<sup>427</sup> On the other side of the bridge they placed their embassy. Since then, the Square was spatially charged with conflict aiming at preserving Egyptian identity and resistance for independence. (See Fig. 6.2)

Yet, 1902 the area acquired its major cultural institution: the museum of Egyptian Antiquities. New spatial power occupied part of the terrain which Rabbat described: "not only did the barracks of Qasr al Nile and the Egyptian museum demarcate the northern boundary of the Ismailia Square; they visually symbolized the interdependence between military colonialism and cultural imperialism."<sup>428</sup> Moreover, its socio-spatial patterns changed, early 20<sup>th</sup> century, colonial period based on economic growth, new bourgeois colonial class bought huge palaces built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century around Ismailia Square by members of the royal family.<sup>429</sup> In 1919 the Square housed social and cultural transformation through the establishment of the American University in Cairo instead of the Greek cigarette factory. It became a symbol of American culture along Ismailia Square, as a finer institute of higher education. Yet, it was relocated in 2008 to New Cairo, 30 miles away from downtown Cairo. The Square would not remain a zone divided between the British army and the Egyptian aristocracy living in palaces around it. In 1946, the National Committee of Workers and Students proclaimed Thursday 21 February of that year as Evacuation Day and called for a general strike. According to a leaflet issued at the time, the day was to "make it clear to British imperialism and to the world that the Egyptian people have completed their preparation for active combat until the nightmare of imperialism that has crushed our hearts for 64 years has vanished."<sup>430</sup> Confrontation between the British garrison and students ended in violence. In 1919 the Square acquired its name Tahrir instead of Isamilia Square after the numerous demonstrations against the British in the Square.

### 6.3.3. Modern Transformation Eras

#### *The Nasser Era*

The modern transformations of el Tahrir Square consisted of two major shifting points; the Nasser era with the notion of modernity, and the Sadat era with the notion of Infitah (opening). The changing political ideology after 1952 revolution tried to erase all traces of long ruling royal family. The idea of Tahrir Square being born as public space for public began since Gamal Abdel Nasser designated January 23, 1953 as a national holiday.<sup>431</sup> The newly established Ministry of National Guidance selected Midan Al Ismailia as the festivities' locale and renamed it Midan Al Tahrir for the occasion.<sup>432</sup> Metaphorically expressing liberation from the British occupation, "forty thousand Egyptians packed into Cairo's newly named Liberation Square," reported *Life* magazine correspondent in Cairo, "to see and hear the revolutionary officer's pledge for the new Liberation Society, which replaces all previous political parties."<sup>433</sup> This was the moment Tahrir Square emerged as a public space never

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<sup>425</sup> Farag, F. (1999).

<sup>426</sup> Farag, F. (1999).

<sup>427</sup> Rabbat, N. (2011).

<sup>428</sup> Rabbat, N. (2011).

<sup>429</sup> Rabbat, N. (2011).

<sup>430</sup> Farag, F. (1999).

<sup>431</sup> Kamaly, A. (2011) Al Gaysh wa Al Sha'b fi Zakirat Al Tareekh. *Selselat Ayam Masriya* 40 58.

<sup>432</sup> Kamaly, A. (2011)

<sup>433</sup> Editorial, Carnival in Cairo. *Life* 34 (9 February 1953): 31.



before experienced in Cairo. Revolutionary decisions reinforced the power of Tahrir Square being the political and cultural center for a postcolonial Cairo.

The Square not only holds significance in itself; many of its buildings and surrounding side streets that were built after the revolution have also played a role in Egypt's history and contemporary political life. It reflected the government's political and economic orientations. Qasr el Nil barracks building was torn down in 1952 to figuratively liberate the Square of its occupation.<sup>434</sup> Its land became part of Tahrir Square. The building could have remained and been reused as was the fate of many downtown buildings, however the choice to remove the building was a necessary symbolic act.<sup>435</sup> The reorganization of Ismailia Square under the 23 July Revolution, who turned it into Tahrir (Liberation) Square, also had obvious political connotations, not only in the new name of the Square but also in many of the buildings that were to border it: the Arab League, built in 1960 and Nile Hilton hotel built on the site of the British Barracks. The Arab league building marked the moment which Nasser rode on the high wave of pan-Arabism seeking Arab solidarity. The colossal Mogamma building was the first sign of a shift of the city's political centrality to Midan Al Ismailia.<sup>436</sup> The Mugamma', the one structure that has come universally associated with Egyptian bureaucracy housing most government agencies; it was a symbol of authoritarianism in Abd el Nasser's republic. (See Fig. 6.3) During this period, the Square and the surrounding neighborhood became a part of the everyday popular life of the city, whereas before they had been elitist, with a cosmopolitan nature that was alien to the masses' populism.<sup>437</sup> Nasser opened the zone of Tahrir Square for touristic development as well: the Nile Hilton, the first international hotel to become functional in Nasser's Egypt.<sup>438</sup> It was developed along the east bank of the Nile. The proximity to the museum and the famed downtown made the southern tip of the district a prime location for tourist accommodations. Hilton hotel represented the first American relationship which did not last with a degree of openness to the west.

After the confiscation of property of foreign residents in the name of the revolution, Downtown lost its cosmopolitan population. The view of downtown as a distinctly different district from its surrounding has been dissolved and blurred as it deteriorated and its surroundings modernized in up-dated style. Downtown no longer was the stage of certain behaviors or codes of dress, for better or worse, it has lost any signs of alienation and it has been fully integrated. Greater Cairo has lost its center, and in the coming decades as the city expands into the desert in government planned cities such as Nasr city, Cairo will be multi-center fragmented city with zones catering to three economically divided social groups: lower strata, intermediate strata of Cairo's social space."<sup>439</sup> Consequently, thousands of wealthy Egyptian families began their mass departure from the neighborhood, moving to luxurious areas like Zamalek or newly built suburbs like Nasr City. When development in the urban core halted, downtown became increasingly down market and began to take on today's physiognomy as a lower middle class, densely populated area with congested traffic and fast-paced and varied commercial activities.<sup>440</sup> The primary streets of downtown falling into disrepair are more active then ever before with ordinary goods replacing luxury items in stores."<sup>441</sup>

The Square was already a huge traffic circle surrounded by located government buildings, luxury hotels, and cultural institutions like the historic campus of AUC and the Egyptian museum, and large garden used by many as recreational area. Nasser continued the road system and the Squares development; therefore Tahrir Square witnessed a lot of urban changes. The result was the emergence of three distinct urban areas: the Nile

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<sup>434</sup> *El Musawwar* magazine (1947).

<sup>435</sup> Golia M. (2004).

<sup>436</sup> Serag, Y. (2013).

<sup>437</sup> ElShahed, M. (2007). p. 29.

<sup>438</sup> Farag, F. (1999).

<sup>439</sup> Raymond, A. (2000). Cairo, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

<sup>440</sup> Kafafy, N. (2012).

<sup>441</sup> Raymond, A. (2000).

Corniche, the urban space of Midan Al Tahrir and the urban space of Mogamaa Tahrir complex. The urban space of Tahrir Square hosted a round granite pedestal erected in the center of Ismailia Square that was waiting for Ismail Pasha Statue to be placed before the 1952 revolution in order to be a major landmark in the center of Cairo. Another landmark was constructed in late 60s which was a huge circular pedestrian bridge around the Square, where it changed the circulation in space by giving priority to pedestrians. This bridge was removed in the late 70s. The use of Nile front with all these building hotels was a sign for continuation of the liberal economic tendencies first implemented at the turn of the twentieth century. The Nile Corniche was highly refurbished to a recreational area where the fountain and urban furniture were highly used by people. These new urban spaces emerged inside the Square as resulting enclosure- offering these hotels double view and worked as attraction points for real estate potentials along the eastern side of the Square. It was an eco-balance space where greenery and traffic jam occurred.

### *The Sadat Era*

Tahrir Square was officially renamed Sadat Square after the leader's assassination in 1981. But the new name fast faded away and was displaced to the first metro station under Tahrir Square.<sup>442</sup> The infitah or open door policy of President Sadat which encouraged private investments leads to increased land speculation. Due to this capitalistic penetration paradigm, Tahrir Square and its neighborhood started to lose its particularity through invasion of international retail and restaurant chains, banks and even malls. The rates of building vacancies grew and many buildings in downtown witnessed their worst deterioration in this time. New multi-level garage structures and high-rise offices replaced the 19th century buildings. The nice belle époque facades were embellished with signs and advertising billboards.<sup>443</sup> By the mid- 1970s development ceased to exist in downtown for over thirty years with major catastrophic events such as Black Saturday and the migration of residents by 1956, the central district grew increasingly popular with bargain shoppers and professionals establishing more businesses in the upper floors of downtown buildings transforming the area into a fully commercial zone that is swarming with activity during the day and abandoned by night.<sup>444</sup> The recent revival of interest in the old central so-called-European district of downtown is due to a new phase of Cairene identity-making, the search for a counter balance to the present fragmented city with its multiple manifestations serving diverse social and economic segments of the population that do not share a city center.<sup>445</sup> (See Fig. 6.4)

### *The Mubarak Era*

Later on, Tahrir Square was discharged from its public space qualities and power again during Mubarak regime and laws. It is one of the urban spaces that symbolizes the failure of the urban planning policies carried out during the decades of Hosni Mubarak. The Mubarak government extended a series of policies that was already initiated under Anwar Sadat. The regime supported laws and actions that sharply limit Egyptians' access to public space where they can congregate, meet, talk or interact. Tahrir Square was merely a big and busy traffic circle, its limitation was the result of political design, of policies that not only discouraged but also prohibited public assembly. In Tahrir this meant dividing and fencing open areas into manageable plots of grass and sidewalks to restrict the ease of pedestrian movements. The closing public spaces policy is a response to the logic of state of emergency which forbids any demonstration in public space. In the mid-1980s, under Mubarak's visionless regime, the garden was transformed into a large parking lot for tourist buses visiting the Museum, thus removing the vital public green space.<sup>446</sup> The massive space was surrounded by sheets of corrugated sheets;

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<sup>442</sup> Rabbat, N. (2011).

<sup>443</sup> Diversity Downtown Cairo , ETH Studio Basel. Retrieved from [http://www.studio-basel.com/assets/files/files/05\\_Downtown\\_web.pdf](http://www.studio-basel.com/assets/files/files/05_Downtown_web.pdf)

<sup>444</sup> ElShahed, M. (2007).

<sup>445</sup> ElShahed, M. (2007)

<sup>446</sup> Kafafy, N. (2012).

it was in ruined condition for twenty years. The action of closing the recreational garden was part of Mubarak policy that sought to discourage public gatherings. The pedestal remained empty until it was removed altogether with excavation of the Square in the 1980, in preparation for the construction of the new Cairo Metro.<sup>447</sup> Sometime in the past decade a sign appeared, announcing that a multi-level underground parking garage was being built.<sup>448</sup> During the protests in Tahrir Square, activists took down the fence and used it to build barricades to protect themselves from the attacks of pro-Mubarak thugs. The removal of the fence revealed that none of the promised construction had ever taken place. The area had been taken away from the public sphere precisely to avoid the possibility of large crowds congregating in Tahrir.

Downtown was an opportunity of competing interests all of which aim at optimizing their advantages. The larger trend of commercial and economic decentralization that Cairo is witnessing has shifted the primary node of commercial activity to scattered points in the city.<sup>449</sup> Moreover, Tahrir Square is in close proximity to many important national, political, and educational institutions, including the Egyptian Museum, the National Democratic Party headquarters (recently burned down by protesters), the Headquarters of the Arab League, part of the American University in Cairo, and the Mugamma.<sup>450</sup> At this point, Tahrir housed the central symbols of power and was also the symbol of a government stance totally unaware to the quality of life of its citizens.<sup>451</sup> Downtown thus transformed from an urban space conveying aesthetic beauty to merely a domain for circulation.<sup>452</sup> (See Fig. 6.5) The sole religious building in Tahrir Square is relatively a latecomer. The small elegant mosque of Omar Makram was built by Mario Rossi. Having only one mosque in such a large public space is unusual in Cairo, affectionately known as the “City of thousand minarets.”<sup>453</sup> It was indicative of the largely civic role of the Square in modern Egyptian life. Unlike regular mosques it appears to have transcendent religious function from the outset to become the funerary mosque of choice for the Cairene elite.<sup>454</sup>

The diverse urban functions result in variety of different types of urban users coming into the city center and crossing by Tahrir Square either for: tourism, education, recreation, working or living. Tahrir Square’s main feature was that it contains all sectors of Egyptian society from different cultures, mainly because of the Mogamaa that serves the whole citizens for obtaining governmental documents. The museum as well affects the livability of space where tourists appear entailing lots of bazzars and tour agencies to open near. Tahrir Square, the area of which encompassed the original circle, an urban space, several important buildings, the nexus of the Egyptian capital’s metro system, major stop for cabs, city buses that connects different parts of Cairo was however on the edge of a radical transformation under Cairo Vision 2050, the state’s strategy to striate and de-territorialize the organic growth and cultural production of modern Cairo.<sup>455</sup> Mubarak Regime revealed intentions to change from Downtown the significance of political and cultural centrality. In fact, the de-territorialize of urban life in Tahrir Square was performed through transferring its historically significant buildings and institutions: the American University in Cairo to the suburb of New Cairo - it was relocated in 2008 to New Cairo, and the ongoing project to move the Egyptian Museum to a site near Giza pyramids plateau.

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<sup>447</sup> Rabbat, N. (2011).

<sup>448</sup> Ford, M. (2012, 12 February).

<sup>449</sup> ElShahed, M. (2007).

<sup>450</sup> Uprising in Egypt: Space and resistance posted by Farha Ghannam, 2011 *The Immanent Frame (TIF)*. Retrieved from <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2011/02/08/space-and-resistance/>

<sup>451</sup> Kafafy, N. (2012).

<sup>452</sup> Krampen, M. (1979).

<sup>453</sup> Rabbat, N. (2011).

<sup>454</sup> Rabbat, N. (2011).

<sup>455</sup> Sanders, L. (2012).

## 6.4. Tahrir Square as Site of Several Important Protests

Tahrir Square was not only the focus of political shifts by the leaders and the regime but also a focus of political struggle in Egypt through protests as a spatial pattern since its early days in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Ismailia Square has witnessed political struggle since the 1919 Revolution and was a focal point in many demonstrations and popular uprisings.<sup>456</sup> According to an article dated 18 February 2011 in *Al-Ahram* newspaper, large protests took place in front of the barracks in the 1919 Revolution as cited by Abdel Wahab Bakr, a professor of modern history.<sup>457</sup> It emerged as the epicenter of uprisings and protests against colonialism. One of the first significant protests that took place in the Square was the Galaa (evacuation) protest on 21 February 1946 calling for the British forces to evacuate the Nile Valley completely (Egypt and Sudan) and was dispersed by forced by the British occupation. According to the book *Workers and Students in the National Movement of Egypt* by Assem Dessouki, 28 protesters were killed and tens were injured in the 21 February Galaa protest. On 14 November 1951, another significant protest against the British occupation took place. Political forces had united to call for a militant resistance.<sup>458</sup> According to *Al-Ahram* archives, a million citizens went to then Ismailiya Square to demonstrate and marched until the king's palace in Abdeen Square. (See Fig. 6.6)

During different phases for Tahrir Square, another large protest took place on 9 June 1967, upon the stepping down of President Gamal Abdel Nasser after the military defeat against Israel. In a spontaneous manner, Egyptians took to the streets to demand his return, with large crowds gathered in Tahrir Square and in front of his home.<sup>459</sup> In February of the following year, students demonstrated in the Square to call for more freedoms and to voice protest against the verdicts of the trials of military personnel charged as co-responsible for the 1967 defeat. All were symbols of the new regime, at least until 1972, when the Square once again became the focus of the student movement and opposition to the status quo.<sup>460</sup> During the Sadat era, two major protests took place, the first being the student protest in 1972, on which Amal Donkol wrote his famous poem *Oghneyet El-Kaaka El-Hagareya* (The Song of the Brick Cake), referring to the circular centre of the Square. The poem, which is applicable to today's events, describes a scene familiar Tahrir protester: bullets, chants and songs of determination.<sup>461</sup> The student protest called for war against Israel and the return of Sinai, which was occupied. The unusual scene attracted Cairo's inhabitants who, according to Abdallah, tried to help the students by providing them with food to supplying them with blankets to guard them against the cold January night. "Later that night, the chanting students were warned to disperse by the commander of the Central Security Forces. Having refused to do so, they were dispersed by force at dawn, only to reassemble in smaller groups, which toured the central shopping area in Cairo shouting, 'Cairo, arise'," concludes Abdallah.<sup>462</sup> In 1973, the Square was the scene of one the largest gatherings the purpose of which was to salute President Sadat as he passed through to deliver his victory speech at the People's Assembly.<sup>463</sup> The second protest was the bread riots of 1977; another large protest shook the country as thousands took to the street enraged about rising prices. Tahrir also held a central place in the 1977 uprising.<sup>464</sup>

In the Mubarak era, the first large protest in Tahrir Square took place on 10 September 2001 and was an extension of a series of protests throughout Egyptian universities following the second Palestinian Intifada (uprising) in 2000. According to an article by activist Kamal Khalil on the Centre for Socialist Studies website,

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<sup>456</sup> Taher, M. (2012, Friday 20 January).

<sup>457</sup> Taher, M. (2012).

<sup>458</sup> Taher, M. (2012).

<sup>459</sup> <http://www.sis.gov.eg/Newvrr/reveulotion/ehhtml/etahrer.html>

<sup>460</sup> Abdallah, A. (1985).

<sup>461</sup> Taher, M. (2012).

<sup>462</sup> Abdallah, A. (1985).

<sup>463</sup> <http://www.sis.gov.eg/Newvrr/reveulotion/ehhtml/etahrer.html>

<sup>464</sup> M. Lynx Qualey (2011) 5 novels on: Revolution and Tahrir Square. Retrieved by: [www.egyptindependent.com/5-novels-revolution-](http://www.egyptindependent.com/5-novels-revolution-)

the 2001 protest was a new birth for protests by Egypt's intellectuals in Tahrir Square.<sup>465</sup> On 20 March 2003, another large protest took place condemning the US invasion of Iraq. The protest, according to Khalil, "was unlike other protests because Central Security Forces officers were the ones who were besieged, not the protesters. Around 20,000 protesters occupied the Square until midnight. However, the next day, protesters were violently dispersed as they tried to gather again in the Square with bigger numbers."<sup>466</sup> Those who protested in the Square from celebrities and activists were then stalked by state security for days and months. Some of them were arrested and tortured too.<sup>467</sup> On the next day, security forces had cordoned off Tahrir Square early on, but demonstrators began gathering in the surrounding streets. The water cannons were used first. As demonstrators fled into nearby buildings and alleys, security forces chased them, often beating, slapping, and striking protesters as they retreated. Many viewers were apparently not convinced. "Leave, Mubarak, leave," many shouted for the first time at the March 21 demonstrations.<sup>468</sup>

However, since March 2003, Tahrir Square was always a meeting point that protesters were rarely able to reach, and if they did they would face a crackdown before their gathering ever succeeded in gaining momentum. (See Fig. 6.7) For years Egyptian activists would gather outside the High Court or the Journalists' Syndicate, that is only 10 minute walk from Tahrir Square. All these protests in past years helped fuel the large uprising that marked 25 January 2011. As the hub of a city growing at phenomenal rates, it seems only natural that the Tahrir Square would witness some of the most important events of the past 25 years: not only political movements, but also events such as the funeral of Umm Kulthoum, during which over two million mourners "hijacked" the late singer's coffin in Tahrir Square in their march towards Al-Hussein Mosque. Tahrir Square also hosted large-scale funerals: such as Nasser and the famous Egyptian singer Abd Elhalim Hafez.<sup>469</sup> All these protests, demonstrations and events in past years helped to generate the resistance of occupation of Tahrir Square during 18 days with familiar spatialities.

## 6.5. Recent Acts of Resistance and How Did it Start to Come out Physically

The urban transformation of Tahrir Square through political shifts for Tahrir Square has been illustrated in the previous chapter left Tahrir Square as abstract space. For Lefebvre, abstract space is "a space of quantification and growing homogeneity, a merchandised space where all the elements are exchangeable and thus interchangeable; a police space in which the State tolerates no resistance and no obstacles. Economic space and political space thus converge towards an elimination of all differences."<sup>470</sup> The reproduction of Tahrir Square as abstract space was to render it a historical and eliminate any socio-spatial struggles around its production. An abstract space must "be a space from which previous histories have been erased."<sup>471</sup> Therefore, the contradictions inherent in abstract space provide the opportunity for oppositional groups continually to play a part in the production and reproduction of social space through acts of resistance, their everyday practices and through unusual and dramatic events that can challenge the dominant representations central to that space. The Egyptian State authorities and people's acts of resistance intertwined and together produced a particular type of conflictual public space. Protesters exercised an unusual power through acts of resistance that countered the

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<sup>465</sup> Taher, M. (2012).

<sup>466</sup> Taher, M. (2012)

<sup>467</sup> Retrieved <http://egyptianchronicles.blogspot.it/2013/03/when-iraq-invasion-echoed-in-tahrir.html>

<sup>468</sup> Hassan, A. (2003, March 31).

<sup>469</sup> Farag, F. (1999).

<sup>470</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1979). p.293

<sup>471</sup> Gregory, D. (1994). p336

regime powers in a lived space. This shift in protesters' perception and their resistance to the state powers is a social dimension of production that relates to Lefebvrian concepts on the production of space, which include social production and the right to the city, in which people exercise their power to transform and re-produce their spaces as spaces of resistance. Alternative tactics through reactive revolutionaries witness phases of growing until it succeeded in the reproduction of insurgent space through acts of resistance that were finally concentrated in Tahrir Square.

An act of resistance has come to mean not just a space of the State repression but also a public space of transformative political action and radical progressive change by people. The occupation of public squares is an act of resistance with a number of motivating factors, most notably the intense desire to reclaim public space, thereby reclaiming rights both practical and symbolic.<sup>472</sup> The continually changing nature of public space and the rights people have to act in certain ways have increasingly been seen to produce various levels of resistance, from graffiti art to street riots.<sup>473</sup> It is widely acknowledged that public spaces in Egypt often constrain the actions of people through regime oppression. The resistance to dominant public space in which each opposition group is able to participate is constrained by numerous factors -previously mentioned, including spatial tactics and laws. As a result, resistance worked in order to take space and contestation of ownership of Tahrir Square in particular. As Mitchell shows, this spatial politics allows marginalized groups to create "spaces of representations" through which they can represent themselves to the wider public and insert themselves in the discourses of the bourgeois public sphere.<sup>474</sup> Acts of resistance were always deploying tactics to fight the regime focusing on Tahrir Square as a sole public sphere. Yet, a complex process of acts of resistance influencing spatial patterns and shaping of Tahrir Square was decentralized through new logics on different public spheres by diverse agents. When protesters began their build-up of a critical mass through new spatial tactics, they had first to take back the space the state claimed as its hub of its power and centrality, as a physical structure and political authority. The critical mass through its new spatial order needed to occupy the geography of the authoritarian state and the terrain from which it controlled the lives of the citizenry and represented the hegemonic power of regime. This space was reorganized into utopian city, forums for democratic articulation, displays of solidarity, and the communication of universal messages of rejection of authoritarianism. The act of resistance as part of Tahrir Square's spatial order was responsible for the deterioration of the structure of its contemporary society and dominance of structured patterns. New layers of spatial patterns and living style have interchangeably appeared.

## **6.6. A shift: Reactive Revolutionaries and Alternative Tactics towards Public Space**

### **6.6.1. Streams of Contemporary Public Protests by Youth Political Opposition**

In recent decades, youth activism emerged in Egypt's public life. In consideration to political dissent, young activists became an important and powerful part of Egypt's pro-democracy movements through phases of evolution since early-2000s. Youth activism was preceded by a long period of demobilization, the "black 1990s," as one activist puts it, as the Egyptian government waged its own "war on terror" against Islamic groups, which also effectively restricted the public activities of the more secular-oriented opposition.<sup>475</sup> Yet, streams of youth public protests since 2002 tackled many issues including solidarity with Palestinians to demands for democracy,

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<sup>472</sup> Heinrich Böll Stiftung. (2014).

<sup>473</sup> Cresswell, T. (1996).

<sup>474</sup> Mitchell, D. (1995).

<sup>475</sup> Onodera, H. (2011).

the war on Iraq in 2003, constitutional reforms, and stop police brutality witnessed remarkable collective experiences alerting youth in universities and high schools, young professionals and also unemployed youth to public protesting. Since then, there was a remarkable transformation in public protests that gradually lost their fear, and accordingly, Egypt's political opposition grew in strength and diversity.

The first phase emerged through the establishment of 'Kefaya' (Enough) movement in 2004 that unified protesters and gave a chance for a young political movement to appear. 'Kefya'!, was formed from a grassroots coalition that included over 300 public figures and intellectuals with a wide range of political orientations.<sup>476</sup> The movement criticized Mubarak's regime and gained wide popular support for its open opposition to Mubarak's re-election in 2005. In order to draw more participants, the movement created several subgroups such as Mothers for Change, Women for Change, Youth for Change, Students for Change and Writers for Change, as well as local neighbourhood based committees.<sup>477</sup> These groups sought opportunities for broad alliances and mobilization and supported strikes by judges, university students and workers throughout Egypt. These strikes benefited from the participation of grassroots organizations such as 'Kefaya'!, Socialists for Workers Rights and the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>478</sup> Significant protests in Cairo were also organized in 2006 and 2007 around proposed constitutional amendments, with people calling for more freedoms and an end to the state of emergency. Also in 2006, Egyptian youth held demonstrations that accompanied judges' protests. Most of these protests ended up with activists beaten and arrested by the police. Act2 described that, "civic organizations played a dissident role with professionals, relentlessly documenting and publicizing state violations, from police brutality. Activists and opposition groups cultivated insurgency technology skills by documenting the response of security forces recruited, trained, and mobilized to respond to the protesters." (Int2, Act2) The efforts of this coalition culminated in the initial call for protesting police brutality on January 25 and shaped the insurgent space of Tahrir Square for eighteen days.<sup>479</sup>

The second phase for the evolution of youth activism was through youth mobilization as a response to the workers' strikes in Egypt's industrial city in El Mahalla El Kubra north of Cairo that generated series of strikes. On 6 April 2008, a nationwide call for a strike was responded by many people who wanted to express their disappointment of political and economic development in Egypt and show their solidarity with El Mahalla workers planning a walkout. In the meantime, left-oriented activists, including former Youth for Change members, established 'The Solidarity' (Tadamun) network with the aim of providing logistical and media support for the various localized protest groups across the country, including farmers, fishermen, landless peasants, and local residents, who faced forced evictions.<sup>480</sup> In the same year, April 6<sup>th</sup> Youth movement emerged in support of the textile worker's movement in the Delta city of al-Mahalla al-Kubra, which established the potency of horizontal network through social media, Internet activism and mobilization through Facebook against police repression. While the secular liberal and socialist opposition were growing, the way 6<sup>th</sup> of April movement emerged an alternative protesting culture. The April 6<sup>th</sup> movement was initiated by liberal activists, but later attracted new members with no previous experience in public politics. The third phase of evolution marked the arrival of Mohamed El-Baradei, the former head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, to Egypt in February 2010. Act 15 explained that his appearance on the political scene mobilized a number of young people and liberal activists, including large group of youth Muslim Brotherhood who were officially banned and frustrated with their conservative leadership. Later in 2010, the Egyptian National Association for Change (campaign supporting Mohamed ElBaradei) Justice and freedom groups, the Popular Democratic

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<sup>476</sup> Kamel, N. (2012).

<sup>477</sup> Kamel, N. (2012).

<sup>478</sup> Kamel, N. (2012).

<sup>479</sup> Kamel, N. (2012).

<sup>480</sup> Onodera, H. (2011)

Movement for Change (HASHD), the Democratic Front and other independent leftist groups emerged. (Int14, Act15)

The last effective phase of the evolution was marked by the death of Khaled Said at the hands of the Alexandrian police. The crime started when two policemen dressed in casual wear entered an Internet Café in Alexandria on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2010 before midnight and attacked a young person called Khalid Said, beating him to death in front of other customers and people on the street. This brutality was not unusual in the policing regime in Egypt at the time. Several days after his death, a Facebook page “We are all Khaled Said” was created, picturing Khaled as the symbol of many other Egyptian youth that have to fight against police brutality. The anonymous administrators of a Facebook group said “For me, Khaled Said’s image offered a terrible symbol of Egypt’s condition. Creating Facebook page -We Are All Khaled Said- was kind of demanding justice for Khaled Said and to help expose his story to vigorous public debate.”<sup>481</sup> Through the page there were demands that all should work for a common cause. The event injected dynamism into street protests and youth activism was differently organized through series of Silent Stands. These ‘cycles of protest’ in the wider pro-democracy movement involved a number of political groups and did not only embrace young people.<sup>482</sup> However, the sustained presence of youth-based opposition groups involved creative an unusual spatial order in the public space entailing social change in Egypt’s public realm. On January 1 2011, a bomb attack on a church in Alexandria stirred a series of anti-torture protests. Coptic protesters clashed with security forces expressing dismay at discrimination and the lack of protection of their community. This introduced a new group of Egyptian society that was never part of political activism to be actively involved.

### 6.6.2. Cyber Space as an Alternative Public Sphere for Promoting the Cause

Recently, we have witnessed the power of social media help citizens appear in public spaces freely and change the regimes that govern them. In deliberations about social media and the public sphere, many authors have highlighted the potential of the social media and the physical public space relate directly to the concept of the public sphere.<sup>483</sup> Townsend suggests that mobile technology changes the urban metabolism by accelerating the exchange of information to the point that it can bring about a ‘real-time’ city.<sup>484</sup> The media’s suppression of the physical world made the virtual world a critical alternative for promoting the cause.<sup>485</sup> The Internet is seen as helping marginalized groups –those groups associated with discourses excluded from the mainstream public sphere– develop their own deliberative forums, link up, and subsequently contest dominant meanings and practices.<sup>486</sup> These services allow new kinds of information to flow into public spaces and, as such, can rearrange social and spatial practices.<sup>487</sup> This is how social media provided a platform away from repression and police brutality at a certain period. The democratizing impact of social media is particularly relevant in nations with authoritarian regimes because state censorship of social media is a particularly difficult task.<sup>488</sup> Investigating the potentials of social media in Egypt’s revolt through its relation to social networks and mobilization mechanisms for public space, the research demonstrates the social media’s complex role that has influenced the spatial patterns and shaping of Tahrir Square. The Egyptian uprising demonstrated how online social networks facilitated by social media have become the main part of contemporary popular movements. Social media are

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<sup>481</sup> Ghoneim, W. (2012).

<sup>482</sup> El-Mahdi, R. (2009). pp.87–102.

<sup>483</sup> Nanabhay, M. and R. Farmanfarman. (2011), Parkinson, J. (2012).

<sup>484</sup> Townsend, A. (2000) Life in the Real-time City: Mobile Telephones and Urban Metabolism, *Journal of Urban Technology* 7(2): 85–104.

<sup>485</sup> Ghoneim, W. (2012).

<sup>486</sup> Dahlberg, L. (2007). Pp. 47-64.

<sup>487</sup> Humphreys, L. (2010). Mobile social networks and urban public space. *New Media & Society* , 12(5).

<sup>488</sup> ŞEN, F. (2012).



not simply neutral tools to be used or adopted by social movements, but rather influence how activists form and shape the spatial pattern.

There are four functions of social media that can show how social public space involved in public sphere for promoting the cause and influencing spatial order in space. First, potential of social media was helping *to raise collective awareness*; it was a stage that occupied narrations. It was an essential initial action in any democracy practice that can be followed by performance. According to Parkinson narrating interests and experience should help to form public opinion.<sup>489</sup> The genesis of online activism in Egypt can be traced to the rise of the 'Kefaya' movement in 2004, followed by the emergence of oppositional activists in the Egyptian blogosphere. For an unemployed youth to participate in an oppositional movement against Mubarak, she or he first needed to recognize that many other individuals shared the same grievances, the same goals, and a common identity in opposition to Mubarak.<sup>490</sup> This emerging communication system has profoundly transformed the Arab public sphere by increasing citizens' ability to document and share, by greatly increasing the odds that misconduct by authorities will become widely known, and by overcoming barriers to individual political participation and the coordination of collective action.<sup>491</sup>

Second, *narrating interests and experience* role took place in virtual form where Social media played a crucial role in making public the incidents of police brutality in Egypt, particularly the Khalid Said incident. The photos of the crushed skull of Khaled the victim along with his personal photo as a decent well-educated person were widely circulated over social media like Facebook and on online media. Several days after his death, the Facebook page 'We are all Khaled Said' created various videos of torture by members of the police forces have been posted. The barriers of fear were slowly being torn down through diverse actions. 'We are all Khalid Said': Facebook page attracted 250,000 members in less than 10 days which was a remarkable sign of unprecedented anger and the will to take an action. A process of awareness anger and frustration was clear from people's replies and willingness to join in any actions. Via Facebook page 'We are all Khaled Said', a series of activities and silent stands were coordinated calling for justice and for an end to the regime's brutal police. For the social opposition the internet is first and foremost a vital source of alternative critical information to educate and mobilize the public – especially among progressive opinion leaders, professionals, trade unionists and peasant leaders, militants and activists.<sup>492</sup> Parliamentary elections in November 2010 were preceded by a crackdown on the opposition, including mass arrests and repression of the media.<sup>493</sup> Citizen journalists and alternative media in general faced targeted attacks by police in order to repress awareness or any information about police brutality. Social media being alternative press giving the access to uncensored information. It allowed denouncing the misdeeds of the Egyptian regime. Social media provided rapid flow and access to uncensored information to mobilize the social opposition.<sup>494</sup> As Facebook page "Kullena khaled Said" exposed the story to vibrant public debate and vividly trans-nationalized not only the Arab world but across the large spectrum of the counties extended including more members. Before January 25, according to Act2, "Activist groups had successfully coordinated training courses for technical knowledge, technical know-how, and practical on-the-ground experience. It was mainly about how to use cell phones, blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube to document police brutality, and obtain legal representation for members arrested by security forces as well." (Int11, Act2) These training courses were essential factors for preparing protesters to instantly spread the events while demonstrating via social media by filming, photographing, twitting, and bump using.<sup>495</sup> Social

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<sup>489</sup> Parkinson, J. (2012).

<sup>490</sup> Lim, M. (2012). pp. 1-18.

<sup>491</sup> Şen, F. (2012).

<sup>492</sup> Şen, F. (2012).

<sup>493</sup> Amnesty International, 'Shouting slogans in the wind': Human rights concerns ahead of parliamentary elections  
://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE12/032/2010/en.

<sup>494</sup> Şen, F. (2012).

<sup>495</sup> Bump is an application created by Bump Technologies for the Apple's iOS and Google's Android operating systems.

media have clearly continued to be a platform where key voice of the people in sit-in can be heard through mediated news by citizen journalists.

Third role, by creating a *link* between citizens where an insurgent network was initiated. Castells argues that in the society we live in today, which he calls the network society, social movements have a greater chance to enter the public sphere. By means of mass self-communication, their images and messages can be disseminated via multiple outlets, ranging from social media to the mainstream media. Castells' analysis of communication in the network society suggests that mass self-communication can foster social movements, due to its autonomy and its horizontal structure.<sup>496</sup> This clarifies how social media was able to expand the sphere of participation in Egypt uprising. Facebook page 'Kullena Khaled Said' was an instant sphere of communication and interaction. It established the potency of horizontal network through youth movements. Invitations for the event were also sent to local and international media to cover the event."<sup>497</sup> Accordingly, the Internet provides communication spaces for members of groups associated with marginalized discourses to develop counter-publics– 'alternative' discursive arenas constituted by a number of participants engaging in debate and criticism that strengthens and develops oppositional discourses (identities, interpretations, social imaginaries and languages) to those dominating the mainstream public sphere.<sup>498</sup>

Fourth, social media helped to *coordinate* street mobilization. Facebook accounts and social media were a platform for coordinating events and debates about alternative tactics towards public space. The role of social media in projecting the public sphere into the urban space was through Twitter as alternative press, planning and discussion room, and announcing new initiatives. Therefore, social media was responsible in transforming the traditional forms of protests being repressed by the police into effective ones. It was able to let tactics succeed in the emergence of this repertoire of mass movements in urban space. Accordingly, it played pivotal role in creating spatial system to effectively challenge the state. The "We are All Khaled Said" Facebook group had hundreds of thousands of followers and played a key role in organizing and disseminating calls for the 25 January 2011 protests.<sup>499</sup> These networks developed and expanded while deploying spatial strategies and tactics unusual for Egypt urban spaces.

### 6.6.3. New Tactics for Obtaining Unusual Spatial Order in the City

Series of public crimes and wave of torture and brutality by police were agents for reactive revolutionaries, with alternative tactics towards public space and police brutality. Recent demonstrations ended with violence, prevention from reaching Tahrir Square and intensive targeted attacks on media personnel to prevent police brutality from being disseminated. For years, unrest had been charging youth with resistance, occasionally spreading into open revolt. Each public display of opposition and creative initiatives defied repression, however brutal the state's response. In meantime, old and new forms of political opposition were spatially developing. New order of the city for social display was effectively proceeding the 25th Jan. This contest over space is defined as 'culture in action,'<sup>500</sup> a process that aims to destabilize an established meaning and history of structure. New spatial practice appeared in space, by turning the place to be 'the place of the other.'<sup>501</sup> On 13 June 2010, in front of the Ministry of interior, a protest to denounce khaled Said's murder was organized in Cairo by the April 6 Youth Movement, among other groups and activists while the public funeral was in Alexandria. Act15 described that, "A request was posted on the page for its members to join the protest, which

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<sup>496</sup> Castells, M. (2009). p302.

<sup>497</sup> Ghoneim, W. (2012).

<sup>498</sup> Şen, F. (2012).

<sup>499</sup> The group can be found at: <http://www.facebook.com/ElShaheeed>, accessed: May 2013.

<sup>500</sup> Brenson, M., Olson, E., Jacob, M. (1995).

<sup>501</sup> Bhabha, H. K. (1994).

was planned to take place outside the Ministry of Interior. But the security forces were prepared and decisive: they arrested many protesters and surrounded the rest with double their number of police officers, nearly making a perfect circle.”(Int14, Act15) (See Fig. 6.8) Accordingly, traditional tactics were performed by police in order to hinder any public protest were effective. Opposition youth groups’ perception to the ineffectiveness of older styles for protest was crucial. Dr1 described that “Standing on the stairs At Dar el Hikma: Egyptian Medical Syndicate and Egyptian Journalists Syndicate weren’t effective anymore.”(Int21, Dr1) During this period, Egypt has witnessed many demonstrations mainly prepared and mobilized by social media in particular Facebook. The power of mass as physical tool through tackling two new spatial orders in the City was performed. Two different spatial orders happening in parallel, one was on water fronts and the other inside narrow informal settlements were an opportunity to perceive the critical mass that can turn demonstration into a revolution.

### *Silent Stand as New Spatial Order*

The Khaled Said group of Facebook initiated a campaign of ‘silent stands’ in Alexandria, Cairo and other cities along the Nile and the Mediterranean coast. On June 15, Mohamed, 26, Alexandria posted on Facebook page “We are all Khaled Said”: *how about if we all gather along the Alexandria coast on Friday? We would face the sea with our backs to the street holding hands in silent expression of our disapproval on the injustice inflicted upon Khaled Said. We should try to cover the stretch between the Alexandria library and Muntazah. It’s not a demonstration, but a silent expression of disapproval.*<sup>502</sup> A silent stand was proactive with remarkable sense of space. It was clear from its name “A Silent Stand”, that participants were not supposed to chant or wave placards or banners while their appearance in space was enough. Each person would take a book, usually the Quran, and read it in silence on the waterfront, at a safe distance from the others, as a tribute to Khaled Said and other victims of police violence in Egypt.<sup>503</sup> It was a clear message that although they were both sad and angry, they were nevertheless nonviolent. This was a conscious tactic, which avoided the ban on public meetings involving more than five persons. It created an attractive pattern in the city where thousands of people joined this longitudinal order, and an individuated yet collective act of public dissent appeared. This new practice as an act of resistance entailed different new social relation and spatial order of people in space. The difference was that the Silent Stand was designed to avoid a physical confrontation with security forces. There was clear awareness by members of how to focus the courage to take action to the street, not just to put pressure on the ministry of Interior. The Silent Stand stretched along the waterfront not only in Alexandria but also in Cairo along the Nile corniche at the same time. They focused on the safety of the participants and the unusualness of the idea, which would make it a strong message to the Ministry of Interior. (See Fig. 6.9)

According to Ghoneim, the second Silent stand event was scheduled for June 25 and geographically expanded, based on members’ requests. It took place along the Nile and Mediterranean cornices in ten cities in Egypt. (See Fig. 6.10) This time media coverage was part of the event after coordination with media crews. Several political factions such as ‘Kefaya’, the national association for change, the youth of Justice and Liberty and the April 6 Youth Movement, announced their participation. It was again just a silent stand, not a political one.<sup>504</sup> It is a humanitarian stand in solidarity with victims of torture in prisons. As for politicians, they were not allowed to take political advantage of the situation.<sup>505</sup> It was a nightmare for security forces, but for the second time they did not harass any of the participants. Their idea was to spread spatially, and this time it was directly connected to oppositional political forces. It achieved huge success. Security forces were intensively spread they countered it with traditional tactics that could not prevent it from spatial appearances. The effect of silent stands

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<sup>502</sup> Ghoneim, W. (2012).

<sup>503</sup> Salvatore, A. (2011).

<sup>504</sup> Ghoneim, W (2012).

<sup>505</sup> Ghoneim, W (2012).

on police strategies was fast. Two days before the second silent stand, the NDP announced a children's march in Alexandria "coincidentally" scheduled for 5 Pm along the Alexandria Corniche. It was a new tactic by the regime: perhaps they could control the voices of the new youth movement by competing with them rather than crushing them.<sup>506</sup> It was a sign for a powerful impact of protesters' new spatial order forcing the police to change their order and tactics in approaching streets. The difference was that their participants were not self-driven while ours (revolutionaries) were.<sup>507</sup> Traditional police methods had proven ineffective with the first stand-maybe even harmful.

The third silent Stand of July 9 was the first at which tightened security measures were targeted at participants.<sup>508</sup> Apparently the spatial success of the previous two stands was a challenge for the intensive presence of police forces, and especially because political activists had taken part in the second stand. As Wael Ghoneim mentioned in his book, "Security forces were beginning to realize the true danger of our stand: we may not have been chanting and carrying signs, but we were able to convert silence into strength."<sup>509</sup> Eventually, the police began to disperse these silent protesters, thus making its contested role as enforcer of emergency powers and status quo further evident to the public.<sup>510</sup> The third stand was more interactive in patterns, instead of looking to the water front they are addressing people in streets with their faces. The stand was accompanied with instructions through Facebook. It was joined by a larger number that led to more (See Fig. 6.12) longitudinal spaces to be occupied in the cities. Participants conceived how the physical appearance and visual access was crucial since the first stand. Not only this time the police appearance was significant but also they cordoned off the participants and forced them to sit in a circle, surrounded, in a manner reminiscent of typical demonstrations in the past. There was high resistance by people to keep their longitudinal order and raising their hands in order to allow pedestrian to see them while being besieged by the police masses. This time the stand was not limited to water front spaces. Instead it occupied gardens and public space but with same longitudinal pattern around green areas where people were sitting. The idea of appearing in longitudinal pattern was very creative as it was able to occupy more spaces and so approaching more people in urban spaces to pay attention. This longitudinal order was growing without becoming centralized and their movement was expanding, helping them to promote the cause further, faster and to the largest number of people. This new spatial order by protesters reflected how the mass action confronted the perception of traditional massing that was easily oppressed by the police.

### *Mobilizing Demonstrations from Popular Neighbourhoods in Cairo*

In contrast to the accustomed protest sites of central Cairo, activists organized several protests in the popular areas of Greater Cairo. Since then opposition youth groups tackled a new initiative: "sudden demonstrations and Street fighting" tactics. The idea was to keep downtown streets in tense and focus point for police riots and media crew while opposition youth groups got involved to perform their tactics in other neighbourhoods. Youth protesters focused on popular neighbourhoods by going to people in their places. Act8 remarked that, "The idea of mobilizing demonstrations from popular neighbourhoods such as 'Sayyeda Zeinab, Shubra and Imbaba', was a new initiative. Every time it was receiving more success than before, by engaging more people in the demonstrations." (Int7, Act8). According to Act15, a leader of the 6 April Youth Movement, "*Victims of the State neglected in popular districts and informal settlements were of our interest to mobilize, encourage and aware them how organized protests. We were working on mobilizing huge masses from popular neighbourhood to ask for their social and economic demands. One of these sudden demonstrations in Shubra was only for allowing locals to demonstrate against the*

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<sup>506</sup> Ghoneim, W (2012).

<sup>507</sup> Ghoneim, W (2012).

<sup>508</sup> Ghoneim, W (2012).

<sup>509</sup> Ghoneim, W (2012).

<sup>510</sup> Onodera, H. (2011).

*frequent power cuts and blaming the Egyptian government and Mubarak for that while they are exporting gas to Israel instead of providing it to them to generate electricity.”(Int14, Act15)* He added that, “We were able to develop our strategies and later to bring media crews inside these unusual locations for them in order to guarantee visibility.”(Int14, Act15) They believed that locals of such popular neighbourhoods should take part and that their appearance will be effective in these demonstrations. And that opposition groups should not be limited only to usual participants and locals in downtown Cairo. Training locals how to march and protest along their main street, chant and ask for basic demands was a rehearsal for a bigger event. Act8 explained that, “this initiative started spontaneously was kind of preparation in order to enable them to effectively join bigger demonstration outside their neighbourhood asking for their demands not only police brutality but civil justice as well”(Int7, Act8).

Online activists organized demonstrations calling for the day of anger that was a call for peaceful demonstration on 26 November 2010 across the country to express their anger and refusal to police brutality. We are All Khaled Said’ page on Facebook had called on all opposition groups to participate in a ‘Day of Anger.’(Int3, Act4) This day was an indicator for the efficiency of recent spatial order and mobilization tactics via social media and informal settlement. According to Act18, “demonstrations were spread in 6 governorates at least and intensively covered by media. Inhabitants of Informal settlements like Imbaba played a significant role in sustaining the act of resistance of that day.” One month before January 25 6 April youth activists group in coordination with Youth for Justice and Freedom (YJFM), and the Popular Front for Freedom and Al-Baradei Campaign organized demonstrations in some popular district as Shubra and Boulak. They were encouraging locals to demonstrate for their social and economic demands not only for political ones. Awwad, another young leader of the Egyptian activists, recalled the ‘decisive’ and innovative tactic employed in that period, “*We decided to divide ourselves into groups composed of at least 30, and up to 50, people ready to go out onto the street in the poorer areas of the outskirts and centre of Cairo. Only one of those groups, the lead group, knew the real location of the final rally. From a handful of young people they developed in a seemingly spontaneous way a few mini processions which had the objective of collecting as many people as possible and bringing them to the location of the sit-in. I remember once, in mid-January, we experimented with this system: about 30 of us went in to an area, and two hours later we came out with about 1000 people behind us.*”<sup>511</sup> In addition to that, Act15 explained that, “This repeated actions gave us better impression to decide from where the secret and largest demonstration should start on January 25<sup>th</sup>.”(Int14, Act5) (See Fig. 6.13)

## **6.7. Re-conceptualization process through diverse Resistance Shifts**

### **6.7.1. The challenge: Acts of Resistance as Part of Tahrir Square’s Spatial Pattern**

The Tunisian uprising gave Egyptians -the victims of state repression- the confidence and courage to act physically. The overthrow of Tunisian dictator Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali after four weeks of protests on 14 January 2011 translated these growing frustrations into action. It represented for them a vibrant act of resistance and its impact. It was clear for Egyptian that President Ben Ali and his regime was removed by societal action succeeded in yielding a critical mass, and peaceful demonstrations and mobilizing people, so too could Hosni Mubarak. They successfully employed former tactics in mobilization from popular neighbourhood and “divide and rule” as protests in Tunisia spread in provincial towns then shifted to metropolitan centre as a marker of solidarity and unity in resistance and the pursuit of a common goal: ousting the dictators. Moreover, Act15 described that, “April 6 movement had been preparing for their ‘annual celebration’ of National Police Day on 25 January since late 2010.”(Int14, Act15) Their aim was to change this national holiday into a day of protests

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<sup>511</sup> Trombetta, L. (2013). Pp.139–144.

across the country. That is a national holiday that marks the 1952 struggle by the Ismailia police force against the British Occupation. Instead this time on 25 January 2011 young activists including protest movements such as 'Kefaya,' 6 April Youth Movement, the Left and the National Association for Change, distributed leaflets and mobilized networks through Facebook and Twitter in order to organize a big demonstration. Act4 recalled that, 'We are All Khaled Said' page on Facebook had called on all opposition groups to participate in the big demonstration."(Int3, Act4)

### 6.7.2. The Test: January 25 Demonstrations as an Initial Spatial Trial

Re-conceptualization process through diverse resistance shifts initiated with a preliminary test. January 25th demonstrations was an initial spatial experiment through abnormal experience, challenging the most traffic hub in Cairo and the state's strong hold territory, spatial perception of their critical mass, actions revealing the state losing all legitimacy and sustaining visual accessibility. Jan 25 'Day of Rage', transformed Tahrir Square to contest space though spatial response to physical occupation and claim ground in the public space. Enormous numbers of protesters covered most of the ground space in the square. This was when I realized that Jan 25 had succeeded. The way the day was unfolding was spectacular- life off the square seemed to be as mundane as on any other day. The security forces had one goal to empty the square at all cost."<sup>512</sup> It was a shift of platforms from intertwined cyber space and physical one to central physical urban space in Tahrir Square. On the day, Tahrir Square was a tool for dissidence and a challenge to access public space by its society. Tahrir Square represented to protesters 'space of appearance where I appear to others and others appear to me'.<sup>513</sup>

Second resistance shift was on January 28 through claiming Tahrir Square in an attempt to prevent usual pattern of riot police cordoning off and containing protesters while gathering in Tahrir Square, protesters designated several gathering points, around 30 places mainly near mosques or squares in unusual neighbourhoods of Cairo and Giza, from where people would march towards Tahrir Square and other strategic places in downtown Cairo, such as the headquarters of the ruling NDP, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the state television, all on the Nile Corniche. Act2 described that, "Smaller protests took place around the city. At most of these points, many hundreds fearlessly gathered, filling alleyways and narrow streets, and wrong-footing the security forces. As they marched, their numbers grew."(Int2, Act2) Act7 added that, "There were other secret locations that were known only to some activists in order to mobilize people from popular neighbourhood and later join the declared demonstrations ones. One of these locations was Nahia."(Int6, Act7) Act8 remarked that, "They remained secret locations in order to avoid police tactics and obstruction and to be able to mobilize most possible number of people."(Int7, Act8) According to Act15, "On January 28 there was a general call that demonstrations shall reach Tahrir Square while the secret demonstration was supposed to reach first Mostafa Mahmoud Square as first destination plan. It was supposed to be the main demonstration responsible for mobilizing the largest numbers of people. We started 300 people from diverse members of youth groups and left Nahia thousands of people. Hundreds of protestors marched from Nahia and Boulaq breaking all cordons of armed forces towards Gamet El-Dowal Street, to join thousands of others gathering in front of Mustafa Mahmoud Mosque."(Int14, Act15) It was the moment that proofed clearly the effect of previous demonstrations on mobilizing huge masses from popular neighbourhood to ask for their social and economic demands.

Act15 continued that, "People were leading their way moving directly after reaching Mostafa Mahmoud square to Tahrir Square. Demonstrations marched in all planned routes that ended up in the heart of Egypt's capital Tahrir Square."(Int14, Act15) The processions, like many small tentacles seemingly separate from each

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<sup>512</sup> Ghoneim, W. (2012).

<sup>513</sup> Arendt, H. (1958).

other and not connected to any particular lead group, were already moving towards their goal: Tahrir.<sup>514</sup> The armed forces cordons were dispersed and they continued to run next to protesters trying to create other cordons. Act8 recalled that, “We continued mobilizing people along all these streets from their homes until they reached Galaa Square.”(Int7, Act8) Act15 marked that, “The moment we approached Tahrir Square, police riots appeared besieging all approaches and all tactics has changed into violence and brutality.”(Int14, Act15) On January 28th the police had adopted numerous strategies in the hope of preventing protesters from reaching Tahrir Square. Armed forces were brutally attacking protesters preventing them from reaching Tahrir Square as if it was a conflict on the governance and power. According to Farha Ghannam, an anthropology professor at Swarthmore College, there's this feeling ‘among demonstrators’ that ‘if we lose at Tahrir Square, we're going to lose the fight.’<sup>515</sup> Act15 explained that, “At the end after some clashes protesters were able to cross from Qasr el Nile Bridge and reached Tahrir Square.”(Int14, Act15) Tahrir Square emerged as space acquisition and single battlefield where strategic spatial victory was against SCAF. Claiming Tahrir Square was the sole goal of the day through all performed tactics. Thus, societal action succeeded in yielding both a critical mass and a tipping point, with the regime failing to successfully control the space.

Third resistance shift was through occupying Tahrir Square, Jan29 till February 1 acts for resistance were translated into public initiatives emerged for occupying, organizing, negotiations and manage the space. While February 1 night till 3 the re-conceptualization process witnessed delay in the development process, and acts of resistance were focused on defending the square and gaining more lands. In the aftermath of the Camel battle February 4 till 11 spatial accomplishment and acts of resistance were translated into refurbishment, living and sustaining the utopian city. During these shifts of resistance articulating new spatial order in Tahrir Square and deterioration of contemporary structure of society has revealed layers of complexity within the construction of large scale urban revolts through spatial practices and behaviours that can be articulated in five themes of production and consumption of public space that shall be discussed in following chapters. Public space was socially driven emerging a spontaneous spatial organization, its success in providing a vibrant, human-scaled environment is due direct human interaction with space, adapting it to their needs. Social integration in public space towards a common goal redefined its urban meaning forming the basis of a negotiated adaption of urban function to the square. Therefore tracing acts of resistance through themes of spatial practices is particularly interesting. It explains the strategies and the logic that it was trying to convey was also different from which the community launches their traditional movement of resistance. While no unified strategy was necessarily in place to organize this uprising, many of the resistance tactics being used were designed to sustain the uprising. (See Fig. 6.14)

## 6.8. Conclusion

Cairo master plan endures large traces of ruling political power on its urban space through phases of transformation. Its most celebrated and politically charged space does not abide by a plan. Rather, it has acquired significance through a build-up of gradual spatial and economic definition during political shifts. The production of space is a complex process of spatial and social configurations that evolve through time and in accordance to cultural patterns. This chapter showed the condition of public spaces in Cairo has been significant in how the city witnessed major transformations in the roles of public spaces on urban society, production of public spaces by its society and socio-spatial justice. Spatial practices under a state-driven system of power and control in public spaces emerged triggering societal conflicts and tensions. They limited the capability of the general population to practice their rights to the city. This chapter introduced social segregation, social conflicts,

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<sup>514</sup> Trombetta, L. (2013). Pp.139–144.

<sup>515</sup> Gammage, J. (2011).

increasing economic interests, and political power through urban planning and public policies as main ideologies that have captured the decline in the use and production of public spaces in Egypt. Limiting the capability of the general population to practice their rights to the city the production of space is therefore shaped based on the concept of “whoever controls the streets, controls the city.”<sup>516</sup> This leads to production of alternative public spaces –away from State power, that appeared as spaces for challenges where efficient tactics were performed in order to reclaim truly public space.

Spatial development of Tahrir Square was the product of political, economic and social forces that favour diverse methods and patterns of development, pushing the process towards its current political power and interest. However, this mode of development can’t limit the capacity for human flourishing and community-led change. It rather imposed social patterns and framed the urban fabric through acts of resistance. Tahrir Square sustained its role as a space of contestation and being known till now as the political Square in Cairo, still demonstrations are held there even if there is no defined place for people since it is always manipulated by a huge traffic jam being one of the main traffic roundabouts in Cairo. During the history of Tahrir Square, it has been a spatial symbol for people’s resistance and conflict against oppressive authorities. Logically, the occupation of Tahrir Square during 18 Days of the Egyptian revolution in 2011 represents the ultimate position. First, it was an uprising against the authority and demand for social justice and freedom which spatially fit the space. Second, it was an opportunity to charge Tahrir Square with new symbolic meanings through a process of reproduction of space that requires consideration. In that case, the State’s future plans is paused, that could have threatened Tahrir Square and its cultural and political symbolic power. After mentioning all political shifts that spatially transformed Tahrir Square as site of contestation, such a process highlights how the city’s political and economic forces have influenced urban form and public spaces in Cairo through the history. It was also important to trace how, over the course of the 18 days, Tahrir Square has shifted from being simply the location of the protest movement to being itself part of the struggle over legitimacy and visibility.

Exploring the contemporary urban condition in Egypt, it was marked by a police order managing the spatial distribution and circulation of people within brutal tactics. It was conceived as an oppressive set of technologies and strategies for ordering, distributing, and allocating people, things, and functions which required different acts for resistance by people to re-designate urban spaces. These spatial practices through police hierarchy, ordering, and distribution were significantly contested and challenged since January 25th in Tahrir Square. Preceding January 25 spatial practice, the research demonstrated how the Egypt’s political opposition grew in strength and diversity. This shifting pace installed streams of contemporary public protests in Egypt gathering reactive revolutionaries and promoting new tactics. They reflected a shifting point for protest movements composition and spatial tactics, with establishment of the potency of horizontal network through social media: firstly by organizing unlicensed street protests in the popular with unusual spatial order and activities and by reaching lower class residential areas and mobilizing them for their cause. Their aim was to articulate local socioeconomic grievances, but with the ultimate goal of democratic reform, and mobilized local residents to the anti-Mubarak protests. They were spatially decisive rehearsal for the real act. Second youth opposition succeeded to occupy public space through new spatial order, the power of this longitudinal pattern was significant in how difficult the police couldn’t control. A silent stand maintained protesters’ power in their silence through new kind of spatial order and new social relation while claiming their right to the public space avoiding violence. This creative use of space could hinder the state’s spatial strategy to pervade the mentality of fear. Police were more prepared for larger numbers following the same pattern of protesters trying to physically besiege them and visually obstruct them from public while protesters perceived their mass. This longitudinal pattern was the only spatial form that allowed protesters reach a critical mass in the moment in which police

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<sup>516</sup> Madanipour, A. (2003). Atkinson, (2008). pp. 139-151.



failed to control and it was impossible to return to an earlier stage. This moment or mass they needed a lot of motivating factors sustain.

The potentials of social media that this sector has demonstrated, shows how social media can be seen as possible platform for a modern public where public discourse takes place and public opinion. Public opinion has been facilitated by various forms of social media that signalled new channels for political communication and public discourse. The contest over space was a deliberate process that aims to destabilize an established meaning and history of structure, by turning the place to be "the place for appearance of the other." The critical mass that can turn demonstration into a revolution was clearly prepared through these new tactics during preparatory phase.

## Urban History of Tahrir square Urban Space during Political Shifts

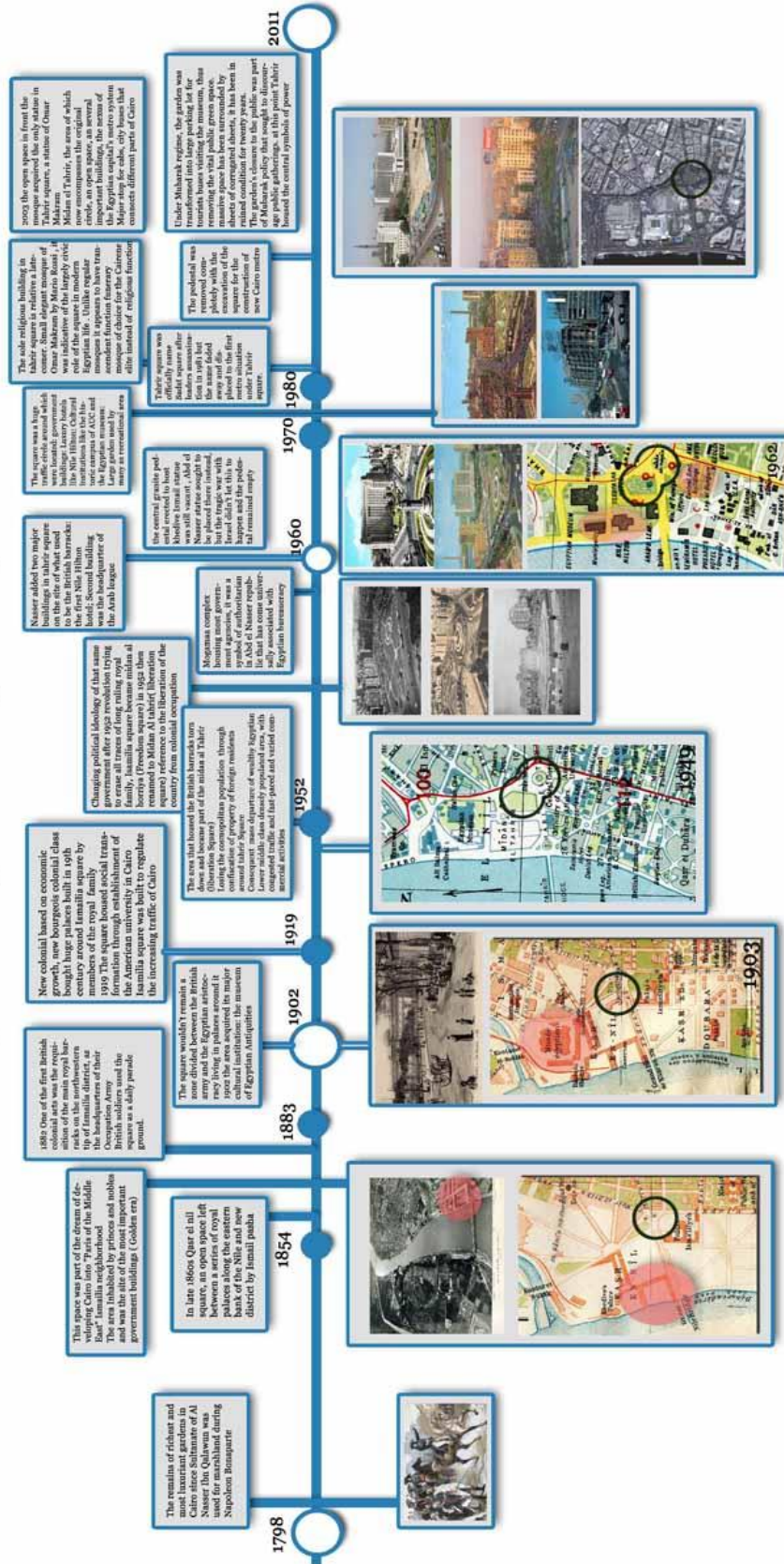


Figure 6.1: Urban History of Tahrir Square through Political Shift. (Source: by the researcher)



Figure 6.2: The British army barracks and the Egyptian Museum can be seen on the right bank of the Nile, 1904. (Source: Your Middle East [http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/features/a-history-of-tahrir-photos\\_10643](http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/features/a-history-of-tahrir-photos_10643))



Figure 6.3: King Farouk's empty pedestal stands in the middle of Tahrir Square in 1953. (Source: Your Middle East <http://www.yourmiddleeast.com>)





Figure 6.4: This postcard shows Tahrir around 1975. (Source: Your Middle East <http://www.yourmiddleeast.com>)

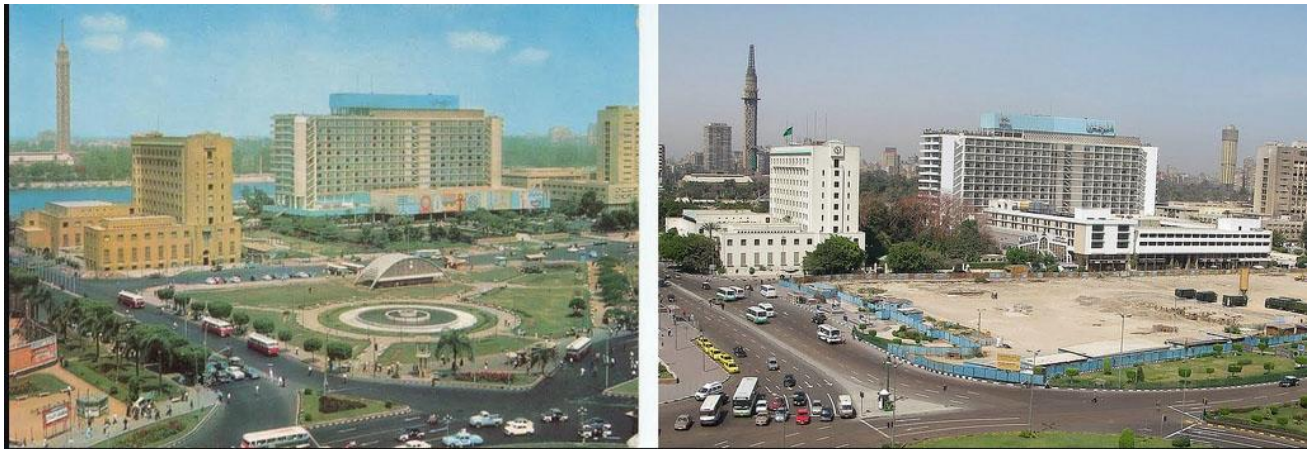


Figure 6.5: Tahrir now and before The Square with the public garden, including a large fountain and a futuristic bus terminal created in 1954 (left) The same area during much of Mubarak's presidency (right). (Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/cairoobserver/5942656000/in/photostream>)





Figure 6.6: Nasser's army in front of Museum 1954. (Source: shoun al baladiyya magazine)



Figure 6.7: Tahrir square, anti-riot policemen March 20, 2004 (Source: Apimages)





Figure 6.8: A protest to denounce khaled Said's murder, 13 June 2010 in front of the Ministry of interior.  
(Source: Facebook khaled Said page)



Figure 6.9: Silent stand Pattern in Aexandria. (Source: by the researcher, Facebook khaled Said page)

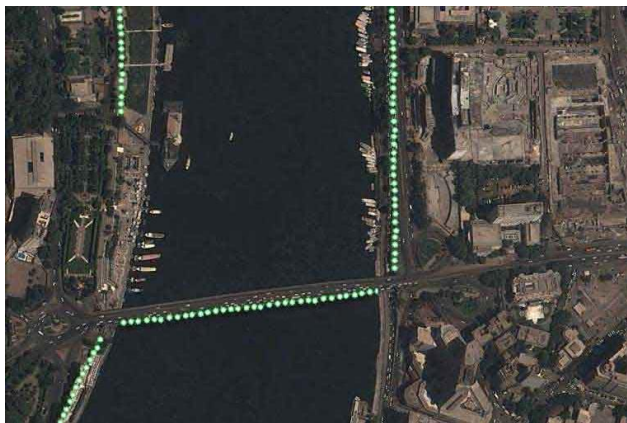


Figure 6.10: Silent stand pattern in Cairo. (Source: by the researcher, Facebook khaled Said page)



Figure 6.11: Second Silent stand, June 25 2010. (Source: Facebook khaled Said page)



Figure 6.12: The third silent Stand of July 9 2010. (Source: Facebook khaled Said page)





Figure 6.13: January 2011 demonstration in 'Imbeba' Informal settlement. (Source: Facebook khaled Said page)





Figure 6.14: Re-conceptualization process through diverse resistance shifts. (Source: by the researcher)

## **7. Revolting Arts or Spatial Democracy: Performance of Popular Arts during the Egyptian Revolution**

### **7.1. Introduction**

This chapter investigates how the spatial practice of public art performance transformed public space from being a congested traffic hub into an active and animated space for resistance that was equally accessible to different factions, social strata, media outlets and urban society, determined by popular culture and social responsibility. Among the spatial patterns of activities detected and analyzed, this chapter focuses on particular forms of mass practices of art and freedom of expression that succeeded in transforming Tahrir Square into a performative space and in commemorating its spatial events. It attempts to examine how the power of artistic interventions has recalled socio-cultural memory through spatial forms that have negotiated middle grounds between deeply segregated political and social groups in moments of utopian democracy. This chapter offers insight into the ways protesters lent their artistic capacity to the performance of resistance to become an act of spatial festivity or commemoration of events. The chapter presents a series of analytical maps tracing how the role of art has shifted significantly from traditional freedom-of-expression modes as narrative of resistance to more sophisticated spatial performative ones that take on a new spatial vibrancy and purpose.

Tracing the role of art in this transformation process, this chapter highlights, how and why protesters persisted spatially in their use of public space through their diverse modes, even in the face of extensive violence and grief. Specifically, the chapter will argue that the effective deployment of physical environments through art performances and freedom of expression practices can be outlined by utilizing four dimensions: production of 'lived space', social memory impact, internal dictatorship imposing social control, and discursive construction through symbolic representations. Lefebvre's theories of space production shall provide a theoretical lens through which this phenomenon can be examined critically.

#### **7.1.1. Art and the Authority**

The Egyptian government has long deployed visual art as part of its authoritative and ruling ideology. The Ministry of Culture controlled cultural spaces and allowed abuses of authority to continue in such a way that left its imprint on all aspects of arts and culture.<sup>517</sup> Only intellectuals who were loyal to the regime were allowed space in public media, and cultural venues through security-guaranteed permissions. Dissident artists were demoralized by the national media and loyal private outlets. Visual arts, literature, music, art performances in recent decades have been indicators of repressed energy that presented political revolt and social protest. Only with the appearance of independent poets and singers in the few years preceding 2011, such as Hisham AlGagh, whose poems were chiefly political, did the arts start to take front stage in communicating messages of dissatisfaction with the socio-political atmosphere. Actors, artists and poets started to take part in the 'Kifaya' movement and largely joined the National Movement for Change, under the leadership of Mohammed ElBradie during much of 2010, adding much publicity to the call for democratic change. As significant as these sporadic

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<sup>517</sup> Fares, P. (2012).

demonstrations were the works of visual artists. Although they were not combatting spatially in public space, yet they marked a remarkable shift in communicating political messages to the ordinary people.

Themba Lewis, an independent photographer, asserted in her blog that “Before January 25th 2011, political street art in Cairo was all but completely absent, and artists were under constant threat from agents of the Mubarak regime.”<sup>518</sup> Although many diverse challenges prevented art performance and development of art in Egypt’s streets, the challenges also provided a collection of independent opportunities which embodied the aspirations for freedom from state repression. This was reflected in the presence of alternative cultural spaces such as the ‘Sakiat el Sawi’ culture wheel or Darb 1718, etc..., for hosting protest street art that took different forms such as art practices, musical performances, independent theater and visual street art that focused on ingenuity and talents with independent voices. This network of entities for ‘parallel art’ aimed to provide physical and cultural spaces that supported artistic performances and training programs, regardless of constant harassment and regime repression.<sup>519</sup> It would be no exaggeration therefore to say that art played a role in changing the relationship between ruler and subjects, and between public and public space in ways that came so spectacularly in Tahrir Square during the 18 days of uprisings.

Cairo is subject to a series of logics, one of which is that the Egyptian Government has long recognized the power of art, through the use of visual arts and media power to reinforce its grip on power and public space.<sup>520</sup> Yet, before the 2011 uprising, art was rarely to be seen on the Egyptian streets. Under Hosni Mubarak, public spaces were tightly controlled and decorated largely by posters and pamphlets endorsing the government and its leader.<sup>521</sup> The relation between art performances and public space is not a novel feature for Egyptian culture. Particular celebrations include Mulids, which are traditional festivals taking place in the public streets of Cairo, celebrating culture and traditions.<sup>522</sup> Despite these and other festivities displaying cultural folklore, the middle and upper class regard them as chaotic events representing a distorted image, as they are commonly led by lower class citizens.<sup>523</sup> Existing social conflicts have forced to push these art performance practices away from significant spaces since they were not accepted by the elite population, who eventually separated themselves in a sphere away from the public. The logics of social disjunction, and the way public art and freedom of expression have largely shaped interventions during which the ordinary citizens celebrated their interest in the arts and practice their freedom of expression in Tahrir Square.

### **7.1.2. Art Intervention and Public Space**

During 25 January 2011 revolution political dynamics in Egypt has severely changed, giving street art a new role as a key form of expression. It was used for a variety of purposes: political demands, criticizing the regime, memorializing martyrs, targeting oppressors, expressing solidarity with other Arab revolutions and commenting on current affairs.<sup>524</sup> The power of street art in a democratic society has been debated by social theorists, in particular as to whether or not they were the main instigators of urban unrest and the subsequent change of power. Deutsche introduced Public art and the architecture act as an intermediating agency in visual culture and hence as a powerful yet elusive player in spatial politics.<sup>525</sup> Over the past few years many scholarly works have aimed particularly to illustrate how the uprisings brought to public space these artistic

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<sup>518</sup> Themba Lewis Photographer website accessed 2 January 2014 <http://thembalewis.com/street-art>

<sup>519</sup> Fares, P. (2012).

<sup>520</sup> Tripp, C. (2013). pp. 185-199.

<sup>521</sup> Van de Bildt, J. (2013)

<sup>522</sup> Attia, S. (2011). p p10---15.

<sup>523</sup> Singerman, D., ed. (2009).

<sup>524</sup> Khatib, L. (2013).

<sup>525</sup> Deutsche, R. (1996). pp. 299 - 301.

interventions, focusing especially on Graffiti and murals.<sup>526</sup> Others like Nancy Demerdash have analysed how the ethics and art of the Arab Spring deals with graffiti on the streets of Cairo in order to grasp how these artists and their works are received by different audiences through this artistic consumption.<sup>527</sup> In view of the fact that art practices are considered as a remarkable product in urban space during the Arab Spring and its immediate aftermath, John Lennon points out the ways revolutionary desire was articulated and interpreted through graffiti in Cairo.<sup>528</sup> How art became part of every day practice in the aftermath of the 18 days in Egypt has been discussed by Elisa Ravazzoli.<sup>529</sup> An additional function of contemporary Egyptian graffiti is underlined by sociologist Mona Abaza, that of creating a 'memorial space.'<sup>530</sup> Highlighting significance for the visual and artistic narration of the revolution was considered by Luke Dickens as an "attempt to directly engage with urban audiences through using critical, intriguing and often humorous graphics in order to challenge their visual understandings and appreciations of the city."<sup>531</sup> Introducing Art practices as means of communication, Charles Tripp focused on the notion of aesthetic communication. He explains how artistic interventions have drawn attention to the power of artistic resistance as well as social memory.<sup>532</sup>

The 18 days of the revolution offered an unprecedented occasion for an influx of art performance to converge towards new ways of imagining and practicing democratic advocacy. In this context, art practices can be seen as having the potential for offering powerful catalysts for transformative forms of politics, 'providing new sets of resources for urban and spatial thinking.'<sup>533</sup> Art and freedom of expression can be considered as spatial modes of resistance against the city as a system. In this regard, and according to Cauter and De Roo, art was commended as a mode of critical exploration that may contribute to re-imagination of urban geographies, edges are pushed, imagination is freed, and a new language emerges - trying to impede, promote or direct change.<sup>534</sup> When applying this approach then to sit-in in Tahrir Square and critically engaged art practices, these should not be construed simply as a reaction to or a means to fix a ready-made urban space, but should be seen as performative modes integral to creating, analysing and understanding space spatiality. As Harvie states, the practising of art does more than merely demonstrate urban process, it may also produce urban meaning.<sup>535</sup>

## 7.2. Art Performances as Spatial Practices

### 7.2.1. Textual Arts From the Political to the Sacred in Tahrir Square

Holding home-made placards and hand-made signboard had been the principal mode for expressing opinions with regard to the state and regime from January 25. Only in Tahrir Square during the first few days of the revolution, this right was granted and protected without reservation, allowing individuals, regardless of their class, gender or education to be creative in doing so. According to Pro12, "We defaced posters and banners of Egyptian presidents Hosni Mubarak from all approaches and inside Tahrir Square." (Int42, Pro12) Having been allowed this right for the first time, protesters looked at Tahrir Square as a land of liberty with intrinsic

<sup>526</sup> Abaza, M. (2013). p.122-139. E, Klaus (2014). pp. 14-33(20), C. Findlay, (2012). p. 178-182.

<sup>527</sup> Demerdash, N. (2012). Consuming Revolution: Ethics, Art, and Ambivalence in the Arab Spring. *New Middle Eastern Studies*, 2  
<<http://www.brismes.ac.uk/nmes/archives/XXX>

<sup>528</sup> Lennon, J., (2014). pp. 237-75.

<sup>529</sup> Ravazzoli, E., Toso, S. (2013). Pp. 29-31.

<sup>530</sup> Abaza, M. (2013). p.122-139.

<sup>531</sup> Dickens, L. (2009). pp.474

<sup>532</sup> Tripp, C. (2013). Art of the Uprisings in the Middle East. *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, 19 (2). pp. 185-199.

<sup>533</sup> Hawkins, H. (2012), Marston, SA. (2009). pp. 271-280.

<sup>534</sup> Cauter de, L., de Roo, R. & Vanhaesebrouck (eds.) (2011).

<sup>534</sup> Cauter de, L., de Roo, R. & Vanhaesebrouck (eds.) (2011).

<sup>535</sup> Harvie, J. (2009).

political position that is tolerant towards contrasting viewpoints; a formal civic space turned into an outright political arena. Art practice had become essentially political in contesting existing power systems that had changed the social realities of a place. It was an act of iconoclasm and of defacement that was deployed to signal a new order and the entry of a new actor in Tahrir Square and in the political sphere as well.

Art and freedom of expression were one of the spatial means as were other dynamics of inclusion that allowed protesters to participate as fully fledged subjects in urban life. According to Lynch in 'Image of the City', 'We need an environment which is not simply well organized, but poetic and symbolic as well. It should speak of the individuals and their complex society, of their aspirations and their historical tradition, of the natural setting and of the complicated functions and movements of the city world.'<sup>536</sup> In this context, art and freedom of expression tackled the responsibility of spatial reconfiguration and production of people's space. Act5 recalled Graffiti as an initial traditional mode; 'Since the first day, Graffiti dominated with anti-Mubarak messages on walls, mainly of public buildings and military tanks which weren't allowed to access sit-in terrain without being marked with 'down with Mubarak.' 'Façades of shops, offices and residential buildings were covered with graffiti that were spatially meaningful. The activist added 'Concrete fences of the Egyptian museum were decorated with graffiti 'No to Stealing,' 'Overthrow Mubarak,' 'No to terrorizing the country.' While Graffiti adorned Kentucky Fried Chicken faced with "No to Mubarak." (Int4, Act5) (See Fig 7.8)

The liberation of Tahrir Square from the State apparatus allowed art to take on a new spatial vibrancy that was full of spots for preparation of banners with donated tools that appeared on the edges of several group-zones. (Int3, Act3) (See Fig 7.9) Preparation was in groups, display of the banners was spatially planned with protesters carrying banners being more concentrated in the center and as a human chain around the roundabout, addressing the crowd and flying helicopters with loud chants of 'Leave.'" (Int5, Act6) And similarly around the Army tanks there were loud chants of "the army and the people are one hand, and peaceful! Peaceful!" Meanwhile banners were developing in ideas, content, size and composition depending on the time (stage of revolution) and the space (location). It appeared as an unregulated potential for aesthetic creation and communication that was spatially available. Pro2 mentions that, "following the first speech of Mubarak and the early sign of accumulating pressure, the demands for his ousting became dominant to encourage larger banners that started to grasp media attention; "Big banners on a monumental scale were prepared collectively to fit the proportion of the urban surrounding." (Int32, Pro2) The spatial festive moods and rituals were associated with the process of production of big banners: running and chanting around the roundabout in a big procession while raising big banners after they were done and before being hanged. (Int3, Act3) According to Pro12, "On February 1st, the roundabout was still the main spot for hoisting different types and sizes of banners, inside and around its periphery, while the Omar Makram Statue was a secondary vital spot for hanging smaller banners." (Int42, Pro12)

Some of the objects involved in such a surreal display of messages, and texts used burned police vehicles, army tanks as a background to communicate messages and embedding creative mentality. As Lyman G. Chaffee noted that, "Street art in essence connotes a decentralized, democratic form in which there is universal access, and the real control over messages comes from the social producers. It is a barometer that registers the spectrum of thinking, especially during democratic openings."<sup>537</sup> Spatially, Tahrir Square with its vast urban space facilitated further connections with surrounding buildings, which started to see "more big banners unfurl from some balconies on the eastern side of the Square with a great cry going up from the Square "Irhal! Irhal!" (Leave! Leave!)." (Int40, Pro10) The monumental size of the banners was perfect for displaying people's demands with high visibility and for attracting the media's attention - a symbolized gesture for reclaiming the sphere of power.

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<sup>536</sup> Lynch, K. (1960).

<sup>537</sup> Chaffee, L. (1993). p.4.

Pro6 recalled that, “the concentration of protesters with banners around the roundabout and military tanks in first days has spatially reconfigured, with lines of protesters chanting and standing with banners emerged in front of the Qasr el Nile approach welcoming visitors and other different spots.”(Int36, Pro6) This spontaneous act was later on transformed into a welcome parade at each entrance of the Square. (See Fig 7.10)

On February 6 ‘Sunday of the Martyrs’, banners and posters tackled new responsibility in sit-ins, in commemorating spatial events with “Banners with the names of the over 300 people killed during the uprising [.....] raised near the makeshift screen and main stage and in other visible locations.”(Int42, Pro12) According to Tech1, “A shrine was erected near the roundabout with framed photos of martyrs in the middle of the street and it was surrounded by barriers.”(Int47, Tech1) A wall of martyrs along the entrance of Qasr el Nile Bridge, according to Dr3, “turned into a small gallery and introduction for preparing visitors for what they were going to experience inside’ becoming a sort of ritual procession to become a member of the community.”(Int22, Dr3) The performative pattern associated with banners, posters, walls of martyrs and photos in shrines were acts of commemoration, consolidating the collective memory of society that rendered Tahrir Square a sacred space for liberation and democracy. (See Fig 7.12)

### **7.2.2. Musical Circles and Performative Stages: Means of Democratic Performance**

Musical performances were arguably the most decorated and democratic none-hierarchical acts during the mass protests. In mass protests that endure long hours of standing extending to 12-18 hours, such entertaining performance is what turns the urban spaces into an enjoyable festival of live performance. It offered room for the unprofessional, non-celebrity individuals to express their talents in friendly manner with a sometimes vast audience. Act9 explained that, “They were informal, spontaneous and people were joining in with some playing music and chanting, while others were dancing.”(Int8, Act9) Act7 observed that, “On 31 January and 1 February while helicopters were flying over Tahrir Square, protesters were sitting on the floor forming the words “Down Mubarak” with their bodies and continuing to sing and dance.”(Int6, Act7) According to Art1, “Circles of musical performance sent their messages through a variety of collective performances such as group singing that intensified during the night-time which was appreciated by lots of the sit-in participants.”(Int18, Art) The informal pattern of these performances allowed spatial disposition to adapt to frequent changes in spatial order, in response to the political situation without causing disruption. Being democratic, these groups of protesters were from diverse social sectors, which were always told not to debate or talk about future plans, but only to focus on one demand ‘Mubarak to leave.’ (Int5, Act6) (See Fig 7.9)

At an advanced stage of control over the Square, an improvised moment occurred. According to Act5, “Main stage at Hardees facing the roundabout was built early by protesters to be used to calm protesters and announce plans of action of revolt.”(Int4, Act5) Another wooden stage on the southern side of the Square in front of Mogamaa was erected (Int18, Art1). According to one of the leading artist-protesters, “It was the first time we performed on stage after some days of singing between circles of people or singing on the edge of the roundabout.”(Int18, Art1) Popular chants, slogans and poetry took more a formal pattern on stage. It was a venue for many protesters to come up and express their views, especially representatives from groups arriving from other cities. (Int18, Art1) In addition, fabricated platforms with green fencing and microphone next to the white screen to project Al Jazeera was installed to display the news channel, to deliver speeches by some intellectuals, youth activists and ordinary citizens. According to Act 5, “The erection of this stage was to prepare a sit-in for the first ‘Million Man March’ day as the platform aimed to provide a venue of appearance and management, which later emerged as a venue for political performance and collective pronunciation of prayers by different religious groups.”(Int4, Act5) The spatial consequence of these stage platforms was spatially sound at a later stage of the revolution and more profoundly so, following the ousting of Mubarak. Each stage started to become dominated by its sponsor, whether religious Islamists or liberals.

Following the aftermath of the camel battle, the pivotal turning moment during the revolution, the art scene developed a lot qualitatively, quantitatively and spatially, with many observing a shift towards a more confident control of space, hence enhancing its facilities to enable more formal performances of art. (Int35, Pro5) Spatial reconfiguration of power relations between stages occurred then. Act5 recalled that, "The 'National force' stage, as they called it, at Hardees corner was considered the main tribune while others were secondary stages for speeches." However, in fact, the stage was not that inclusive to art performances throughout. On certain stages, singing was undesirable or even banned on the main stage, leading it to become another exclusive voice of certain political groups and not a venue for liberal art performance. Pro6 explained that, "They were totally dismissive to the people in the sit-in. It was not for a whole sit-in society any more. Instead it was attractive for conservative religious protesters." (Int36, Pro6) It wasn't declared that the main stage was controlled by the Muslim Brothers, but it was evident through their control over what to display on the main stage. (Int8, Act9) Spatial reconfiguration of the main stage was a clear sign of the existence of internal political power between diverse arrays of society. This internal power was reinforced, according to Pro7; "It was a location where all local and international media camera were focusing on crowds." (Int37, Pro7)

While one stage controlled by religious groups was politically motivated in its rejection of art performance, the other one at Mogamaa Tahrir complex was an opportunity for all art performances to take place in a more tolerated manner. Dr7 mentioned that, "From February 4th stages were so crowded and the stage near Mogamaa was focusing more on celebrities and formal musician bands." (Int27, Dr7) Big art performance and cultural events took place engaging with most of the sit-in crowds without segregation. Other stages appeared during the final week of the protests on the edge of Tahrir Square to serve sit-in groups dispersed towards Abdel Moneim Rhyad. (Int13, Act14) It was an act to solve spatial discrimination and internal dictatorship that emerged during earlier stages. The appearance of multiple stages inside the sit-in areas allowed these diverse social arrays of society to express themselves freely in the same space. A clear spatial distribution of these performances emerged, according to their types, at different points in space to serve different purposes, yet helping the same demand. Pub1 explained that, "On February 8th the Culture Resource center 'AlMawred AlThaqafy' put up a stage in front of the Omar Makram garden, with a good sound system for cultural performance, debates and popular folk groups such as El Tanbura from Port Said." (Int44, Pub1) More stages were erected; one next to the original Mogamaa stage, another next to the radio station at KFC and a third next to the Hardees stage." Int3 observed that, "A stage erected in front the construction site was mainly hosting people from other provinces who didn't have the chance to express themselves on other stages." (Int30, Int3) There was a notable difference in the social groups which had their own spaces and stages as well – the arts crowd, the Muslim Brothers corner and the Salafi crowd, with individuals and groups free to tour around them in carnival-like displays. (See Fig 7.12)

As Act14 observed, "Some intellectuals, poets and writers from Merit publishing house - calling themselves 'Writers and Artists for Change' - took the initiative to erect their own stage away from the roundabout crowds, after failing to perform on the existing stages." (Int13, Act14) It was a sign for internal political power reflected on the social control over stages by organized groups. Act14 added that, "In the last days, the main stage was trying to take control of the other stages' performances, either by banning national music and motivational chants by leftist activists or spatially by erecting small stages with loud speakers presenting religious speeches, facing newly erected ones, as happened in Shambelyoun Street." (Int13, Act14) The main stage emerged as an internal dictating entity through its command of space and attempts to control the sit-in terrain. In addition to that, this formal pattern of art and expression performance from stages was not appreciated by campsite inhabitants. Act1 explained that, "It wasn't nice that someone was talking to us from a higher level while we were asking for democracy." (Int1, Act1) Act7 explained that "It was very disturbing and especially while trying to sleep since not all the inhabitants slept during the night." (Int6, Act7) When stages gave rise to widely spread



activity in the sit-in, it was considered a violation and a nuisance. They started to disturb even one another; Pro5 recalled that "it was difficult to recognize from which stage the voice was coming." (Int35, Pro5)

### **7.2.3. Art Corner as an Organized Spatial Pattern**

Art corners for the practice, production and display of art appeared with the establishment of the Revolutionary Artist's Union. Art2 explained that the initial group composed of artists - calligraphers, poets and painters - formed on the KFC pavement in front of the roundabout." He added that "On February 5 a wall of visual art spontaneously emerged from a selection of works plastered on the outdoor glass wall of a KFC." (Int19, Art2) Due to limited tools and resources on the first day, Art2 described that they "relied on gathering used plastic tea cups, bottles and boxes from garbage spots in order to create works of art, as if Mubarak's was taking flight and to write "leave" on the floor. These works of art were produced and displayed at street level between the roundabout and the KFC." According to Art2, "Local resources from recycled materials such as rocks were deployed for producing works of art." (Int19, Art2) Spatial production of visual art represented a process of resistance and demonstrated a creative adaptation of the materials available. (See Fig 7.10)

The development of these groups witnessed expansion in size and space that was cordoned off and preserved for artists to work and sleep in. The original zone for the art corner was occupied by 20 artists. Art2 described that, "On February 8 a new extension of the art corner was assigned for artists near the Omar Makram mosque with a huge white tent able to contain 200 persons. It was devoted to art production and training, while art displays remained in the original art corner spot. They taught protesters how to express their words and feelings through brushes as well." (Int19, Art2) The art corner, like the rest of the sit-in areas, was influenced by spatial events that included sections for portraits of martyrs with artists starting to draw their martyred friends or martyrs they knew." This expanded to become a series of training workshops and entertainment for children. "In the final week, many families arrived with their kids and due to the festive mood; the art corner witnessed a special section devoted to kids." (Int19, Art2) It was clear how the art corner was like the rest of the spatial patterns, highly affected by the general mood of the sit-in and spatially transformed to recall and commemorate the most recent events. (See Fig 7.12)

The 'Revolutionary Artists' was another group that deployed rocks - located at sit-in entrances for defence, to spatially narrate the camel battle events through works of art. Dr7 remarked that, "Utilization of rocks for defence in producing art was not before security prevailed in the sit-in terrain." (Int27, Dr7) It was an act of commemoration and representation of events spatially through effectively using battlefield space and the remains of the battle and rocks that rained down over the Square. This time art production was spatially dynamic and artists were forced to produce their art work on the ground of the sit-in approaches that were drawn with graffiti and rocks. Arm1 observed that, "From February 8, works of art with rocks extended outside the sit-in areas from the Abd el Moneim Rhyad side. It was a tool for narrating past events and allowing visitors to follow up the story while moving in the battlefield." (Int17, Arm1) (See Fig 7.11) By the end of the 18 days all approaches hosted works of art made from rocks and posters for martyrs. They revealed the control and the high extent of security of the sit-in while spatially recalling events that remained in their memory. (See Fig 7.12)

### **7.2.4. Revolutionary Museums as an Act for Spatial Commemoration**

The representation of events through spatial exhibition initiated from February 3. According to Pro5 "Protesters collected remains of the Camel battle from horse saddles and some weapons and exhibited them on the corner at the traffic light in front of the roundabout." (Int35, Pro5) A growing number of exhibitions and galleries for memorializing spatial events expanded in the last week. Dr7 explained that, "On February 6 part of the field clinic - in front of the Franciscan school in Abd El Moneim Rhyad Square - was transformed into a martyrs'

museum. (See Fig 7.11) It included some of the bloodied clothes of protesters who were killed in the clashes and doctors' coats. It developed day by day including new collections donated or found – elements of other martyrs, newspapers with martyrs' photos or notes for martyrs' memorial and glorification." (Int27, Dr7) It was a clear spatial evoking of the events that this field clinic had witnessed in particular. Pro12 observed: "There were many museums of the battle collections, such as one called 'museum of the revolution' that exhibited a police officer's helmet, a martyr's jacket and a police baton. Another one was for older banners and handmade posters which represented diverse factors and political actions influencing these expressions." (Int42, Pro12) Spatial patterns of festivity or commemorations through art and freedom-of-expression modes spread through all the sit-in terrains and adaptively re-used its components. Elaborate murals memorializing martyrs or charging the military with infidelity, performative art practices and creative visual art on the ground, all showed a substantial shift in the way people were interacting with their dwelling space. They presented the sit-in as a battle field reclaimed by its society and representing its events in their memories through spatial practice. All surfaces and every physical element inside the sit-in area constituted an opportunity for art and freedom-of-expression modes to tackle its mission for commemorating events. (See Fig 7.12)

### 7.3. Analysis of Performances of Arts

#### 7.3.1. Production of Lived Space

Art and freedom of expression was an aesthetic product of resistance. It was a way of reclaiming and re-appropriating space, and providing a new understanding of the terrain as rightfully belonging to the people. Lefebvre's complex view of socially produced space as it recognizes the material spatial dimensions of social life, the symbolic meanings of space, and the imposition of, and resistance to, dominant socio-spatial orders, can significantly enhance the understanding of the dynamics of art and freedom of expression in Tahrir Square. Tracing the nature of Tahrir Square during the 18 days using Lefebvre's dimensional conceptualization which examines the space of representation "lived space"<sup>538</sup> offers an analytical approach to understanding the transformation process of Tahrir Square, through which protesters claimed their autonomy and their right to the city. Art and the freedom-of-expression spatial experience in Tahrir Square was a part of a model of space production that featured surprising forms of social coherence, public organization and administration. Lived-in space refers to the ways that space is experienced directly, bodily and outside of verbal systems of representation.<sup>539</sup> Protesters occupying the sit-in terrain as a lived space were able to break down a variety of everyday spatial barriers and make bold new connections across space. They were able to do so because of their ability to physically and communicatively link unconnected social sectors. So, for protesters Tahrir Square turned out to be a place of collective performance, social discourse and freedom of expression. It became the symbol of democracy, justice and liberation. Tahrir Square was as representational space with a construct of collective imaginaries and "space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols"<sup>540</sup>

As art and freedom-of-expression practices were part of the everyday practice of sit-ins, such spatial practice lead to a new implicit set of norms in relationships between the sit-in spaces that were experienced as entirely separate from the surrounding area. The area's architecture and urban elements were consumed precisely for this. In Gibson's theories of ecological psychology, affordances are what the environment offers, provides, and furnishes.<sup>541</sup> Protesters perceived sit-in thresholds, centres, surfaces and edges as quite different, entailing new

<sup>538</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1974). pp. 33, 38–46.

<sup>539</sup> Dharman J. (2013). pp. 1–16.

<sup>540</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p39.

<sup>541</sup> Gibson, J.J. (1979).

spatial practices to generate in space. Social groups in sit-in areas challenged and thus altered the way in which spaces were consumed. In fact, their use of the space contradicted the projected representations. They loosened up the fixed character of the physical environment by traversing the boundaries of built architecture, pathways controlled by green fences, adding new values to streets and green areas, and privileging mundane urban furnishing which provided a wide range of freedom and creativity for protesters to produce. They even re-used the rocks and stones of the pavements and other urban fixtures - that had been extracted for reasons of defence - in their production of art. As the space was actually composed of lived material and symbolic experience, it could become "terrain for the generation of 'counter-spaces,' spaces of resistance to the dominant order...."<sup>542</sup>, where alternative orders of material and symbolic space were imagined and struggled over. Sit-in terrain in this case was space which was "broken up into a series of independent elements and then reconstructed into new mental schema of spatial orientation"<sup>543</sup> As such, protesters created a material space that fitted in with their unique uses and memories. This material space became a lived space inscribed by protesters' aspirations and demands.

In the protesters' mental map, the sit-in terrain was made up of a space for art and freedom-of-expression production, decorated with a series of façades for displaying and tagging their demands and experiences in their memories, formal and informal art performance spots, memorials and exhibitions. These all defined this terrain instead of the existing widely known landmarks. The existing built environment with several governmental buildings was already embedded with symbolic meanings. This made the addition of any art product or freedom-of-expression pattern inside the terrain a clear statement of challenging state domination - the reclamation of public space by the people. The suspension of monumental banners with collective demands dotting the façades of downtown Cairo as an outer enclosure within the public space replaced and imitated commercial advertisement billboards that interrupted the skyline. Moreover, different landmarks emerged such as the main stage, the art corner at the KFC store, the martyrs' shrine and the big banner, "The people demand removal of the regime" at the roundabout. Therefore, the pattern of art during occupation featured the production of new landmarks that were emerging in the production of 'lived Space'. Clearly, a spontaneous spatial arrangement evolved through art and freedom-of-expression practices that were part of a collective action in the perceived domain. This indeed clarifies how art and freedom-of expression practices during the 18 days highlighted a wide transition in the accessibility of public political expression as well. Lyman Chaffee noted: "street art as an essence connotes a decentralized, democratic form in which there is universal access, and the real control over messages comes from the social producers. It is a barometer that registers the spectrum of thinking, especially during democratic openings"<sup>544</sup> Therefore art and freedom-of-expression practices constitute a process of political, spatial, and aesthetic transformation in people's reality, in this case "a site at which a discursive formation intersects with material practices."<sup>545</sup> It is the active involvement of protesters, to participate in the production of space, and claim these new meanings.

The uprising unleashed an endless array of banners and signs, many of which were long, elaborate and constantly changing. This awakening of an individual and collective spirit represented the rebirth of a public consciousness that was reflected in the production of countless banners. In general, the traditional role of the protesters' signs and banners is to articulate demands of the individual holding it. However, the ways in which protesters in sit-ins also used this tool as a collective means of responding to actions and dominant narratives, relating to one another and galvanizing support, reflected the conscious participation in a specific culture of resistance.<sup>546</sup> It appeared as collective responsibility and emerged with the highest social interaction during the

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<sup>542</sup> Soja, E. (1996). p68.

<sup>543</sup> Tolman, E. (1948). pp. 189-202.

<sup>544</sup> Chaffee L., (1993). p. 4.

<sup>545</sup> Crary, J. (1992). p.31.

<sup>546</sup> Rayya E., Ortiz, A. (2011). Pp.1-38.

whole process: brainstorming, preparation, providing supplies, transferring, hanging and representing to media. The significance and importance of banners in Tahrir Square was reflected in the diverse sizes and composition in multiple spots, influenced by cultural factors and social memory. Accordingly, banners and signs functioned as organizational tools. They played a role in preserving the internal social coherence of the lived space, as well as allowing for diverse, individual interests to be expressed collectively. This achieved several aspects; on one hand, signs were wholly about self-expression, collective demands and an outpouring of emotion. On the other hand, they functioned as a communication tool within the area of the sit-in and to the outside world. Visual art was a tool for imposing social control by protesters on the Army mentally and physically since no army tank was allowed to access the sit-in area without being labelled with "Down with Mubarak!", "No to Mubarak", "Step down, you tyrant" graffiti.

Another form of art that appeared in a formal pattern through art performance on stages witnessed protesters conglomerating around performers with the least interaction. In contrast, a second alternative of performance was represented by circles of discussions that reached an elevated level of social interaction and which were highly appreciated. This was the informal pattern that resisted the imposed social control where discussions were more fruitful with individual diverse expressions and opinions being exchanged. In any setting, people prefer the environment where they can maximize their ways of using space.<sup>547</sup> Accordingly, protesters and specially sit-in participants preferred circles of discussion where they could all discuss on the same ground level. In this case circles were closer to the notion of spatial practice characterized by Lefebvre, as this "ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion, and this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of competence and a specific level of performance."<sup>548</sup> The continuation and development of these informal spatial patterns of circles for art and freedom of expression performances involving folk, traditional or rural performances depended on the extent of the protesters' interaction and support that directly involved them physically and mentally. In this context art and freedom of expression was a significant example of how mundane people produce a lived space. The sit-in terrain was shaped exclusively by social orders and solidarity among the performers resisting the conflict they endured between the two patterns of performance – formal and informal.

Art was deployed as an activity through which the sit-in attracted the attention of the local and international media. Specifically, journalists captured some remarkable performances, also disclosing the main stage. It was occupied by many cameras on top of it. The location of media cameras in relation to the stage really makes sense, since they were able to capture the euphoric crowds addressed by speakers on stage. It was a strategic location since you don't see the stage but what appears is whatever crowds were there. There was surely some sort of syncretism between the stage location and locations of the cameras, insomuch as you can see people's reactions as well. From videos and photographs, this imagery of protesters tends to demonstrate the power that was gained to spatially order the actions and their representation.

### **7.3.2. Social Memory and Art Practices in Tahrir Square**

Associated artistic interventions have drawn attention to the power of artistic resistance as social memory. These collective memories refer to the shared information held in the memories of groups that was continually being negotiated and subjected to social interaction during the 18 days. The 'Social Memory' theory in the work of the sociologist Maurice Halbwachs was commented on as follows: "It is in society that people normally acquire their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories"<sup>549</sup>

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<sup>547</sup> Proshansky et al. (1976).

<sup>548</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991).

<sup>549</sup> Halbwachs, M. (1992).

Accordingly, everyone's memory is formed out of social norms. The social memory term calls attention to the social contexts in which people shape their group identities and debate their conflicting perceptions of their past experiences. People in the sit-ins witnessed solely, particular experiences that remained in their memories and which were creatively expressed through art and freedom-of-expression patterns in memorials, museums, events commemorating martyrs, and performances. Significantly, they developed a collective sense of opportunity through spatial practices, reminding people of what they are capable of as citizens holding power and asking for rights. In this context, art privileged its performers with a position in which they were spatially able to recall their memories through various modes. Socially constructed symbols and signs of sit-ins through commemoration and memorials reflected social memory that does not preserve the past in a way that allows for the disengagement of historical fact and later understanding and interpretation. Therefore it was a matter of a social agreement about how the past should be re-conceptualized and discussed. The end result was purely relative to their culture and layers of conflicting experiences.

### **7.3.3. Internal Dictatorship Imposes Social Control Expression**

The freedom of expression of people's demands, hopes and aspirations was at its greatest; however, it was controlled through the formal patterns of performances and specifically on the main stage. First, singing was considered as one of the non-conventional uses of the main stage space. Yet, the limitation of freedom of expression across different stages was not consistent. The social norms cultivated by this autonomous society in the sit-in made art and freedom-of-expression practices allowable either through informal patterns of performance or on other stages away from the main stage. In the second place, it was the non-intellectuals or non-Islamists who were not allowed to go on the main stage. Yet, there were stages that were solely erected for the population and people who did not have the chance to express themselves on the main stage. Dictatorship thus appeared internally in the form of social control and discrimination patterns. The main stage committee controlled new activities while deciding their location and acting as mediator for their supplies. Their interference was not limited to what should be displayed on the main stage just while their spatial control was targeting other stages. This social control indicates that even in a liberated terrain, with lack of regime control, art and freedom-of-expression patterns witnessed internal segregation. The main stage experienced an internal dictatorship. Popular protesters in the sit-in lacked the space on the main stage that suited their culture, backgrounds and knowledge. This fear and manipulation to the choice of who could go on stage set up an environment of spatial order and segregation, as well as an unstable form of social arrangement; thus changing the nature of freedom of expression. However, this internal power was spatially limited and protesters succeeded in putting up other stages in order to give voice to their ideas.

### **7.3.4. Discursive Construction through Symbolic Representations**

Occupied Tahrir Square was symbolically and materially crucial as it sat as the heart of the State power and control. Protesters were considered as rebellious, through their spatial practices of art and freedom of expression, refusing to accept a city as it is produced. They deployed these spatial patterns of complex modes of art and freedom of expression in order to transform Tahrir Square into a space of resistance. In this context, the artistry of the uprisings contributed to the development and strength of these aspects while banning any themes supporting the previous power to exist inside the sit-in terrain. They challenged the established logic of architecture and redefined the urban space. Thus, such physical elements in a built-up environment were stripped of their symbolic values and given new values and symbolic meanings. The act of defacement and iconoclasm not only signalled that public space had been reclaimed through art performance, but also played a crucial role in signalling a new order and the presence of a new actor on the political stage which was the public. As Dario Gamboni points out, such acts of apparent iconoclasm can be variously interpreted but they have also

been historically associated with political change.<sup>550</sup> In this context, such acts of defacement graphically and physically demonstrated the breaking-up of a sense of fear of sit-in societies.

Visual representation thus became a mirror that reflected the protesters' collective production of space and construction of resistance through high visibility. In performing art and freedom of expression, whether young or old, Muslim or Christian, rich or poor, protesters displayed solidarity, affirmation of peace and representation of high security. These images represented the pluralism that the sit-in witnessed, where everybody accepted the other's differences. Art in all its forms became a means whereby citizens sent messages to multiple audiences, and, in doing so, represented their own political preferences. This aspect remained powerful, in the aftermath of the camel battle as one of the ways artistic interventions were thus enmeshed in the commemoration of martyrs and registering for events. These interventions that took many forms articulated a culture of dissent across the space and the built-up environment. This was a representation of unstoppable power, symbolically as well as materially. In this context, art amplified that power, commemorating martyrs and asserting the victory and pride of people who reclaimed their rights. Therefore, art and freedom-of-expressions symbols and representations were not just indicators of the politics of challenge, but they were also deployed to represent and shape the tactics of urban revolt while transforming from traditional patterns into more performative ones.

Art and freedom of expression also symbolized the spatial confrontation that was taking place with the Mubarak Regime and thugs. They even represented the symbolic violence of dismantling striated space, smoothing by deconstructing the pavement. To differentiate them in their functions was to discredit them entirely of their significance in the sit-in. These built-up environment resources were represented through their new meanings and functions by art as evidence for the battle and its brutality. Protests shifted Tahrir Square from being part of the normative space of everyday life under the Mubarak regime into a space with martyrs' memorials and shrines, thus adding new symbolic representations and values to the existing ones.

### 7.3.5. Mulid Pattern as a Symbolic Capital

Despite the ongoing violence, Tahrir Square has become a familiar space for art and freedom-of-expression practices that redefined its role, meaning and morphology. This was significant in the diverse categories of art and freedom-of-expression performers and their competence in order to be the most creative they could. The sit-in appeared to be a 'cultural field' as in the sense of Bourdieu who calls a field of power<sup>551</sup> the place where various cultural fields and artistic fields emerged. Art performances like traditional, popular and ritual ones from diverse cultures were considered a tool to glorify and signify everyone's culture, tradition and lifestyle. Protesters were able to represent their diversity in their origins. They imported performances from diverse cities, rural and traditional places. These art performances were a sign of the optimism of the sit-in community and pride in their identity.

This cultural production developed a dynamic autonomy. A notable general order and pattern of performers brought some of the Mulid festivity performances and sensations. Mulid is a popular form of festive that has been celebrated in Egypt for hundreds of years and rituals, similarly enacted by a mass phenomenon where carnival meets pilgrimage through trance dancing, followers perform the zikr, chanting the name of God at an ever-increasing tempo and some achieve a trance-like state, spiritual focus and a sense of togetherness where social classes mix, removing all the usual boundaries of class and wealth.<sup>552</sup> A mix of all these performers,

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<sup>550</sup> Gamboni, D. (1997). pp 31-40, 51-70.

<sup>551</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1993). pp. 37-38.

<sup>552</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/picture\\_gallery/07/middle\\_east\\_egypt0s\\_biggest\\_moulid/html/6.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/picture_gallery/07/middle_east_egypt0s_biggest_moulid/html/6.stm)

practices, material and imaginary resources were arranged and spontaneously politicized during the sit-in to sustain the cultural production process and transform the motivation and impact of revolt into a productive side of everyday routines.

Once the sit-in was completely secured and protesters achieved a critical mass with the reclaimed Square, it needed to be sustained over an extended period of time. The experience and spirit of the Mulid in Egyptian culture became very noticeable and was a most efficient one for tackling this mission. The Mulid-like festivities in a sit-in terrain were instrumental in attracting thousands of families with children. Accordingly, the Mulid spectacle in the sit-in became not just a mobilizing cause but also a revolutionary one. Anna Madoeuf emphasizes that these celebratory Mulid spaces are "characterized not only through dialogue and contact, but also through the remixing of categories, social types, spatial codes, and norms."<sup>553</sup> Exclusively, festivities in sit-ins included members of different religious communities: Muslims, Christian and Jewish - people of different classes, and genders attended celebrations. This unique diversity was one of the main modes for displaying national identity and the unified concept of citizenship. Mulids continued to shape the revolutionary imagination to inspire aesthetic and creative production.

The sit-in acquired new signs, meanings and additional rituals to Mulid festivities in the aftermath of the camel battle. Shrines and memorials for martyrs were part of pilgrimage destinations in the sit-in spatial rituals. Mulids are normally celebrated around the site of the venerated person's body, relic, or shrine. Instead, Tahrir Square obtained dual particularities; it was the space that witnessed martyrs and clashes and in the meantime it was the space where shrines were located and performances were grounded. Normally, the popular Mulid then is thoroughly grounded in a particular symbolic and significant space and the place that becomes the focal point for its energy.<sup>554</sup> Similarly, in the sit-in participants mixed freely between the spiritual and the earthly, simultaneously partaking in this performance. The diverse activities, moods and emotions that constitute the Mulid create an atmosphere of chaos and disorder. Similarly, they were found in the sit-in, disrupting and redefining public order as well. Mulid effectively attained a space of significance where space was physically and symbolically re-conceptualized. While Mulid rituals were developing, the sit-in was undergoing profound social, political, and cultural transformations that influenced its practices as well. The act of resistance through this ongoing celebration, commemoration, performance, solidarity, and festivity was believed to be sustained until political change was achieved. Tahrir Square and the events associated with it certainly gained new significant meanings.

Deploying creative rituals of familiar popular cultural practices like the *zaffa* -wedding march or Mulid procession, protesters revived these popular practices within a revolutionary context. They emerged through new meanings and spatiality. Every Mulid, or wedding celebration is preceded by a *zaffa*, a procession leading through the area where the Mulid or wedding takes place. Similarly, in the aftermath of the camel battle, sit-in approaches witnessed *zaffas*; for the incoming and departing visitors, where they would be received by a welcome makeshift group with chants such as "welcome, welcome the revolutionaries." The *zaffa* as a functional necessity in Islamic tradition for the public announcement of the event, and similarly, the *zaffa* of the sit-in were spatially performed for the same function within a radically different context. (See Fig 7.12)

These general manifestations of the dynamics of Mulid formed the way the art and freedom-of-expression practices proceeded during the sit-in. Certainly the appearance of the performative festivities of Mulid and its symbolic representations in the re-conceptualized public space – Tahrir Square - was a familiar dynamic force that imposed what started to be referred to as the urban Utopia, the epicentre, the independent republic with

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<sup>553</sup> Madoeuf A. (2005). p.466.

<sup>554</sup> Gribbon, L. and Hawas, S. (2012).



similar complexity, chaos, informality, festivity. The sit-in continued to acquire new signs and practices day after day that exploited more familiar rituals of Mulid. During the 18 days, Mulid in Tahrir Square was a translation of the profound spatial transformation that the Square was undergoing, entailing political change. However it was clear that for this transformation to be sustained, for the sit-in to continue in a critical mass, for revolutionary demands to be met, and for millions to be mobilized daily, Tahrir Square would have to host a Mulid pattern, to be a platform for celebration, commemoration, protest, solidarity and festivity.

## 7.4. Conclusion

This chapter focuses on particular forms of mass practices of art and freedom of expression that succeeded in transforming Tahrir Square into a performative space and commemorating its spatial events. In this chapter, the performance of art indicates how lived space provided unpredictable opportunities to collectively act with some power. These social interactions showed how participants were bodily involved in producing lived space and making it 'come into being'<sup>555</sup> Moreover, art performances became tools for remembering all events and actions witnessed within the space. This unique instant performative representation highlighted a wide spatial transition in the accessibility of public political expression. Such lived experiences of space constitute the clear defiance of the dominant representations of space. This process occurs through the dissolution of old spatial relations and the generation of new ones which Lefebvre calls 'differentiated space'.<sup>556</sup>

Producing art was dependent on the security situation and the events witnessed in the sit-in terrain. Modes of art and freedom of expression developed significantly from traditional disconnected and media-led engagement into more directly engaging spatial performance and creative modes of expression: from banners and political chants into expressive, narrative, creative, produced works of art from spatial elements, memorials, cultural and Folklore art performance, and museums for spatial festivity and commemoration. These patterns imposed spatial disorders and chaos that were found in the Mulid system. The general disposition of complex patterns bore many traces of the Mulid celebration, a popular form of carnivalesque festivity that has been celebrated in Egypt for centuries and rituals, enacted by protesters, were politicized and revolutionized during the last week to sustain the acts for resistance and the momentum of revolt.

Art performance completion was decentralized. This entailed active unconnected networks of spaces for art practice and performance. These creative tactics intertwining social, cultural and psychological factors were able to freely produce lived-in space. This demonstrated how protesters resisted in their sit-in regardless of clashes, political changes, martyrs, internal segregation and manipulation by some groups. The protesters' deployment of public space demonstrated some tactics about their space reproduction that comprised protesters' unique demands, creativity and social relation in a space which embodied perceptions and lived experiences. Even in the face of a high degree of grief on behalf of the martyrs and social control from internal groups, social discrimination and internal dictatorship, protesters resisted, managing to deploy stages and walls and spaces for collective-representation, self-representation and cultural expression. Moreover, the power of artistic interventions recalled socio-cultural memory that was influenced by present incidents and recent memory; "the interplay of present and past in socio-cultural contexts."<sup>557</sup> Art was an act of spatial commemoration and memorial for contextual events through diverse modes.

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<sup>555</sup> Arendt, H. (1958). p.199.

<sup>556</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1974). p 52.

<sup>557</sup> Erll, A., Nünning A., eds. (2008). pp. 1-24.

The performance of art allowed to gain insight into the ways in which experiences had been visualized and represented. It brings us closer to understanding the vital imaginative aspects of power and resistance. The originality and particularity of these artistic interventions, through performances and representations within space and time have helped in producing and defining a stage for the public protests to emerge and develop a repertoire of challenge, identity, rights, and liberation. The arts in revolt had to be reinforced by the discursive practices of the media and international pressures within spaces of democracy. Mass-media images of art and freedom-of-expression practices all confirmed a sense of emerging utopianism. The sit-in terrain appeared as though it was free of any ideology, as if transformed into a model society in its ideal architecture that had discarded all hierarchies and forms of discrimination based on class and religion. It was as if a new reality had suddenly been discovered by protesters and superimposed on an old one. It symbolically represented the pluralism that the sit-in witnessed, where everybody accepted the other's differences. By performing art and freedom of expression, protesters effectively appropriated themselves of the area through the symbolic projection of qualities in public discourses and in public spaces.



Figure 7.1: Egyptians pray around a makeshift memorial for people who were killed during protests (Source: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/UI/Front/>)



Figure 7.2: Egyptian anti-government protesters carry a huge banner with names and pictures of victims killed during protests in Cairo's Tahrir Square on Feb. 11. (Source: <http://news.nationalpost.com/>)



Figure 7.3: Political street art in Tahrir Square February 2011. (Source: [www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2011/jul/19/egyptian-uprising-art-revolution-culture](http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2011/jul/19/egyptian-uprising-art-revolution-culture))



Figure 7.4: The Association of the Revolutionary Artists. (Source: <http://www.elkhamis.com/News-55606771.html>)

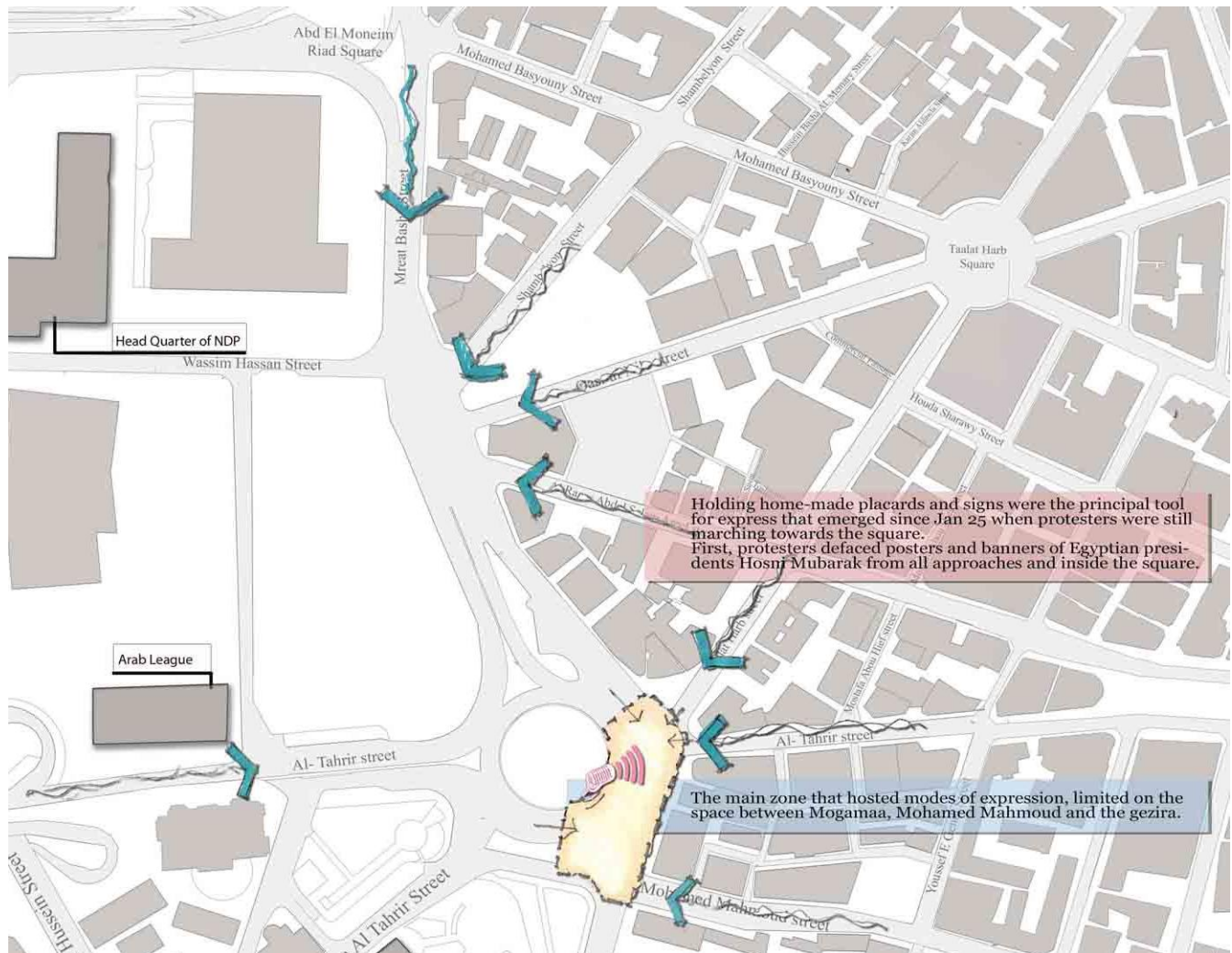




Figure 7.5: Artists hang another political drawing on the shop front of a closed fast food outlet, in Tahrir Square, Feb. 9. (Source: [www.ap.org](http://www.ap.org) Photo/Ben Curtis)



Figure 7.6: Facebook has become one of the main tools for activists to mobilize protests and share information. (Source: <http://www.nytimes.com>)





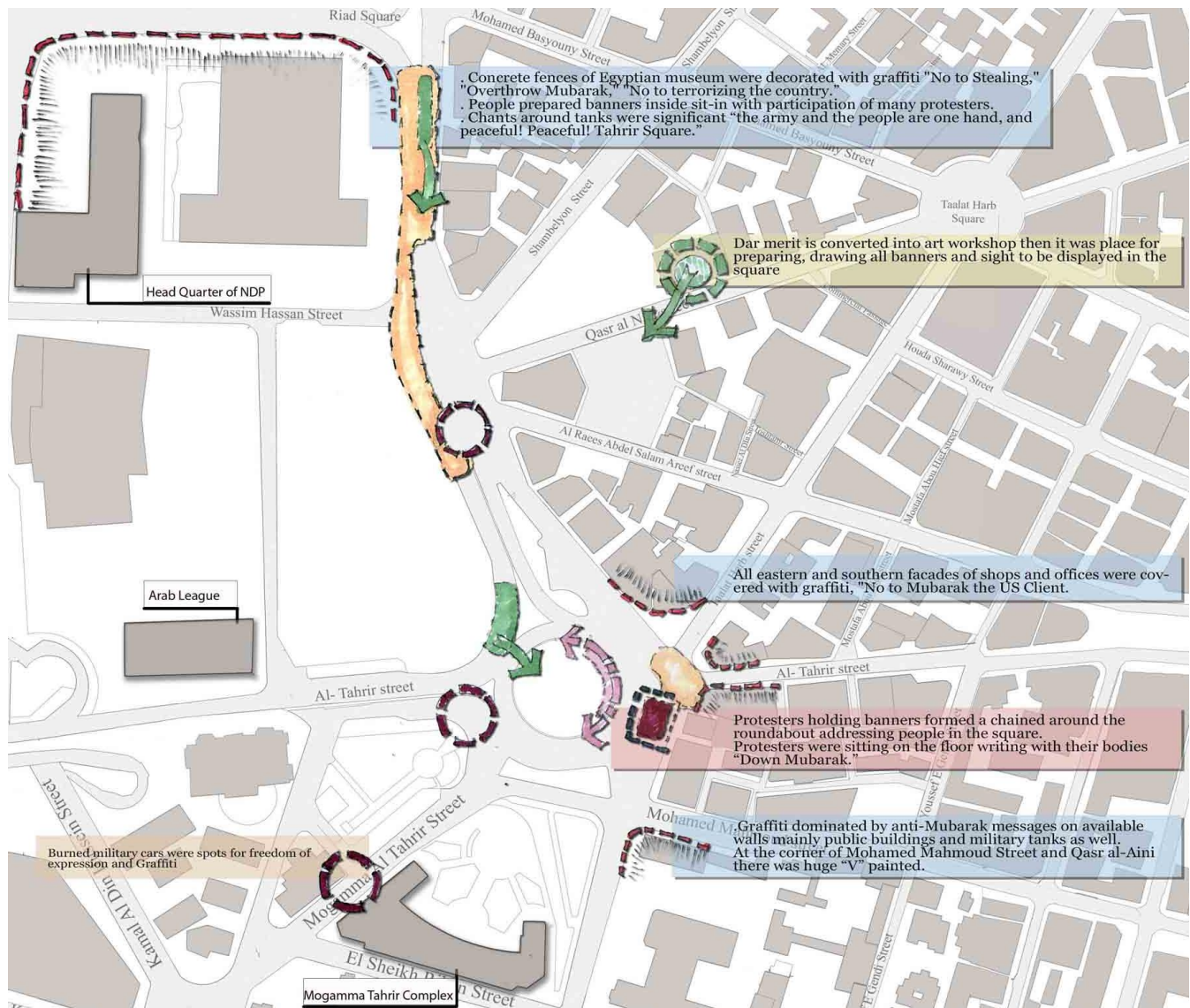


Figure 7.8: Mapping Art and freedom-of-expression spatial practice on January 28 -30. (Source: By the Researcher)



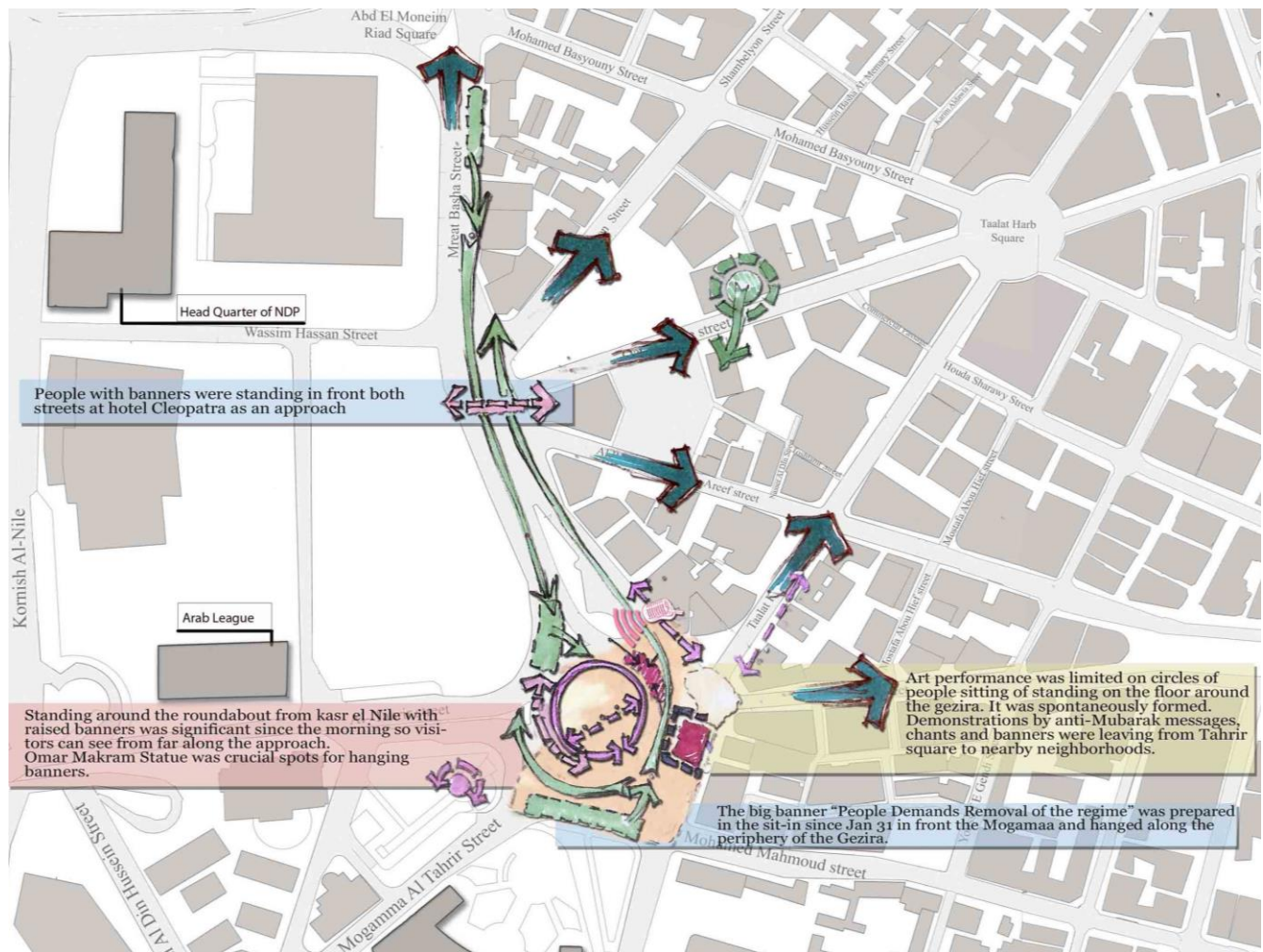


Figure 7.9: Mapping Art and freedom-of-expression spatial practice on January 28 -30. (Source: By the Researcher)

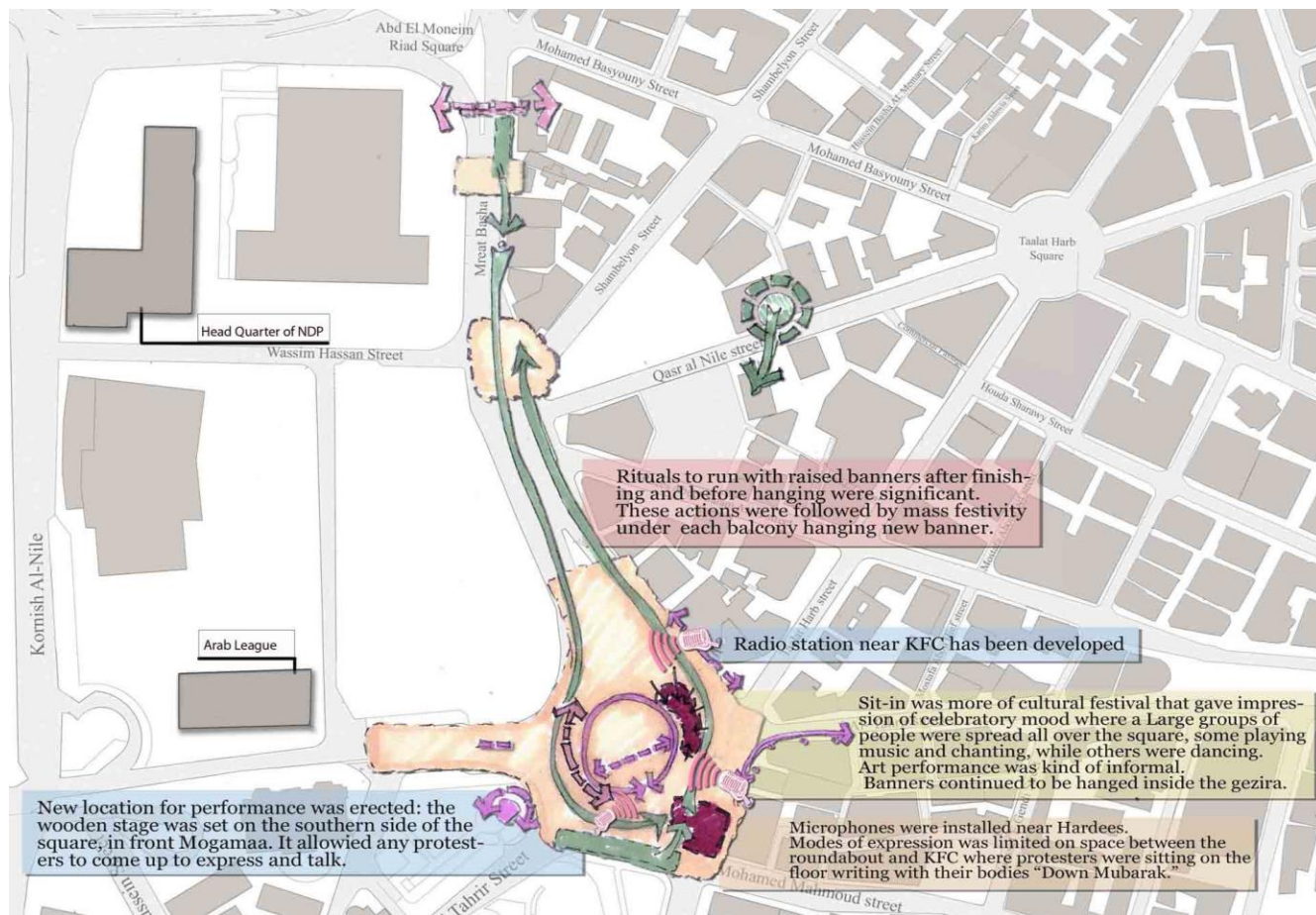


Figure 7.10: Mapping Art and freedom-of-expression practice on February 1. (Source: By the Researcher)



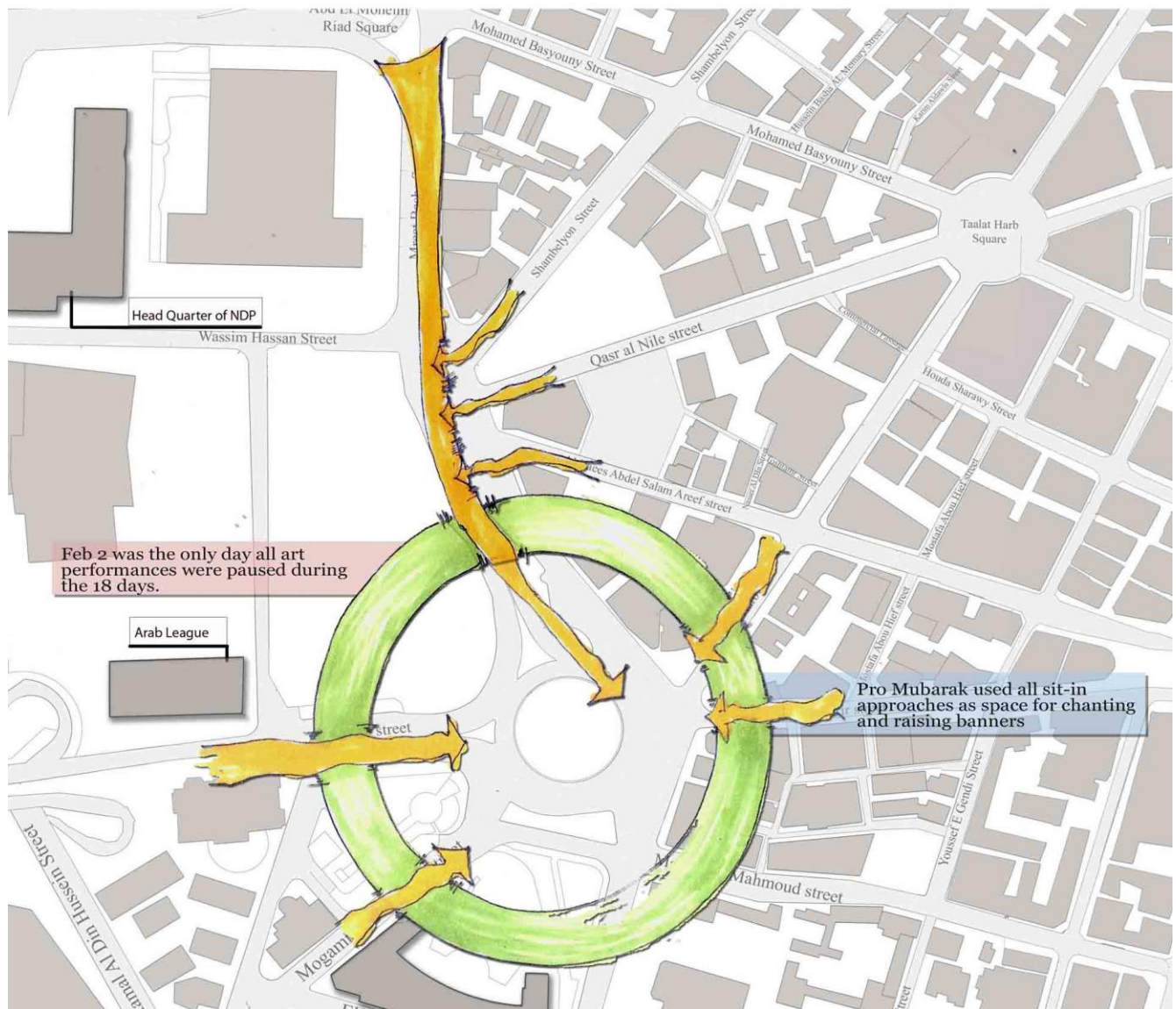


Figure 7.11: Mapping Art and freedom-of-expression spatial practices on February 2. (Source: By the Researcher)

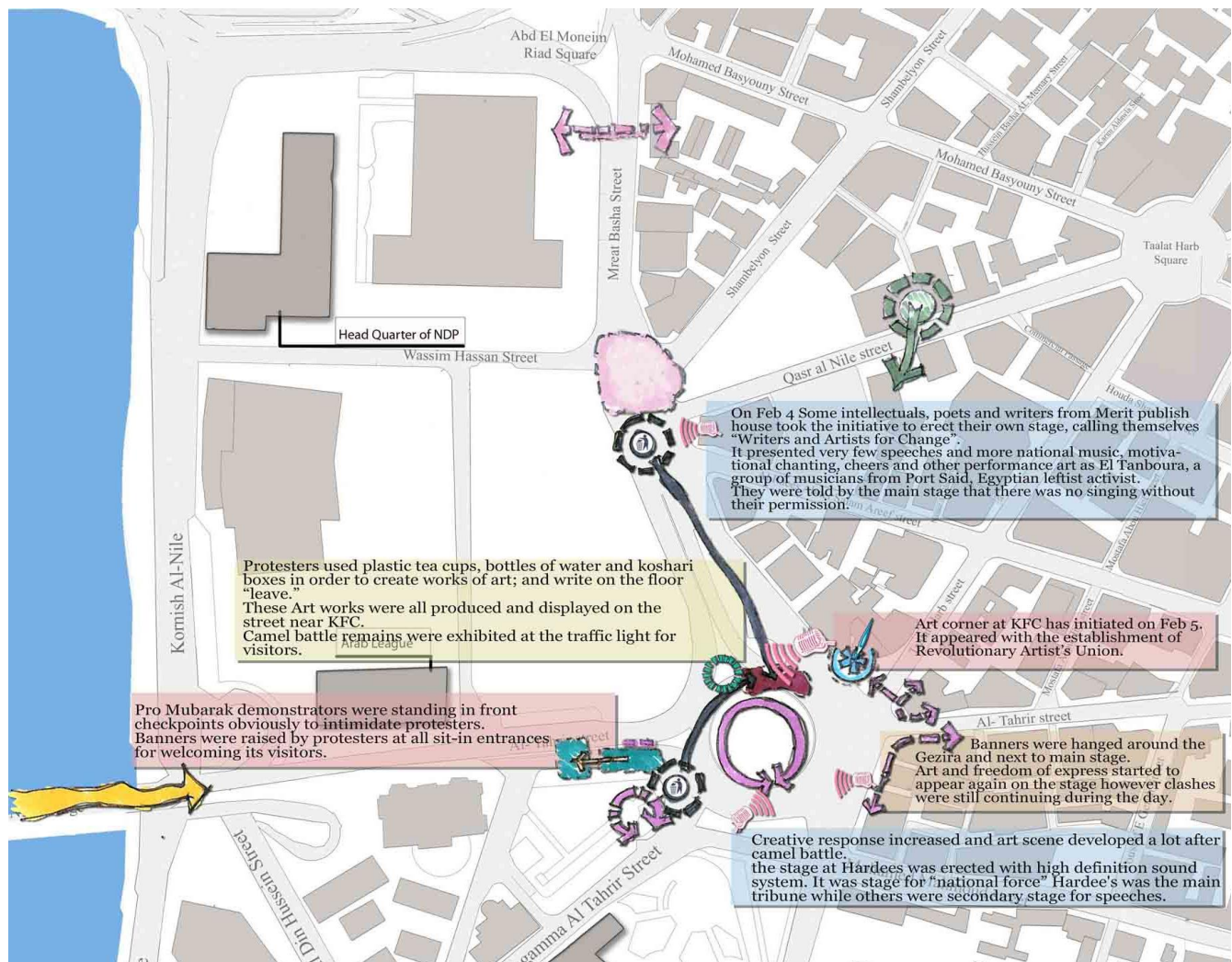


Figure 7.12: Mapping Art and freedom-of-expression spatial practice on February 3 till 5. (Source: By the Researcher)



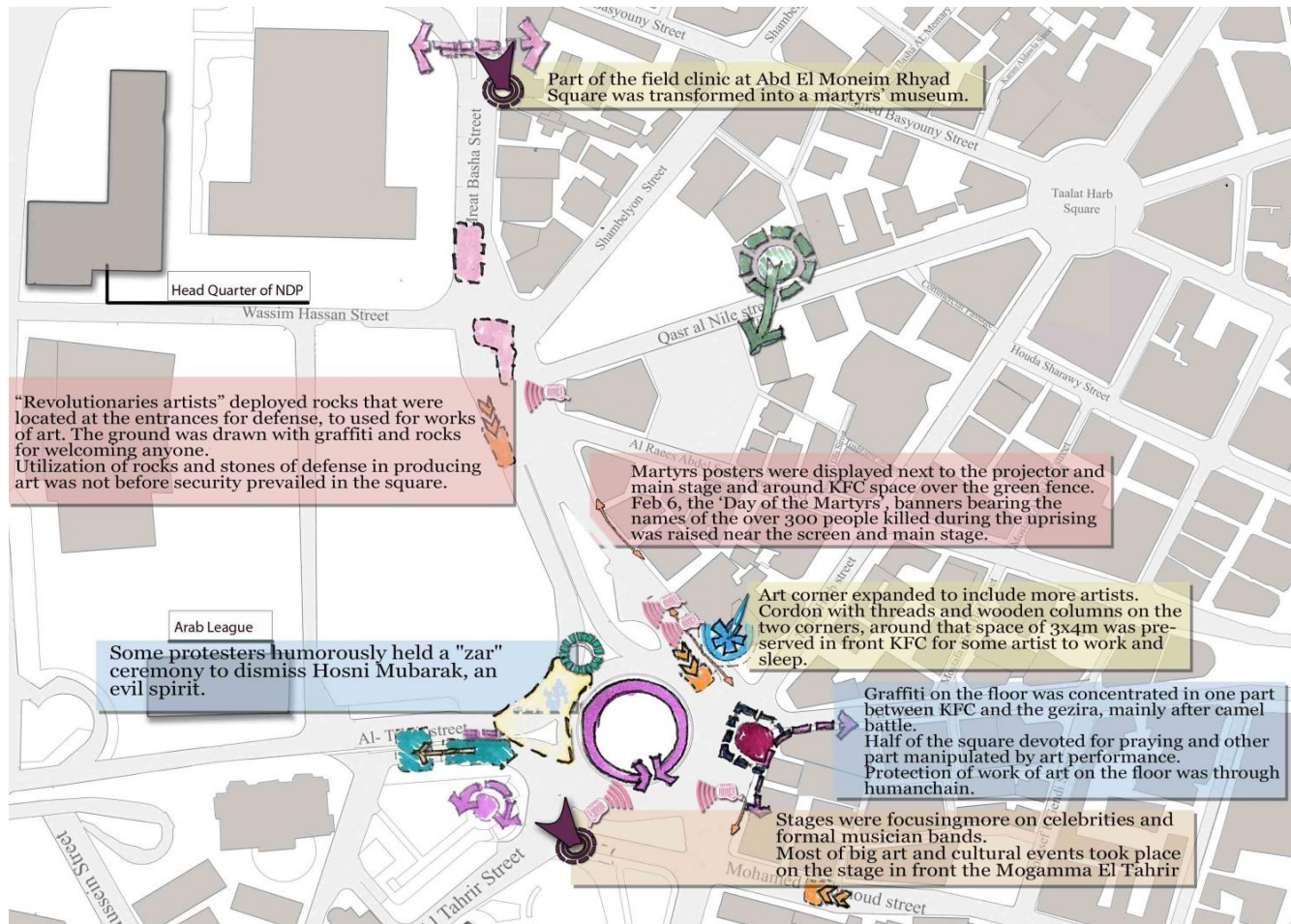


Figure 7.13: Mapping Art and freedom-of-expression spatial practice on February 6<sup>th</sup>. (Source: By the Researcher)

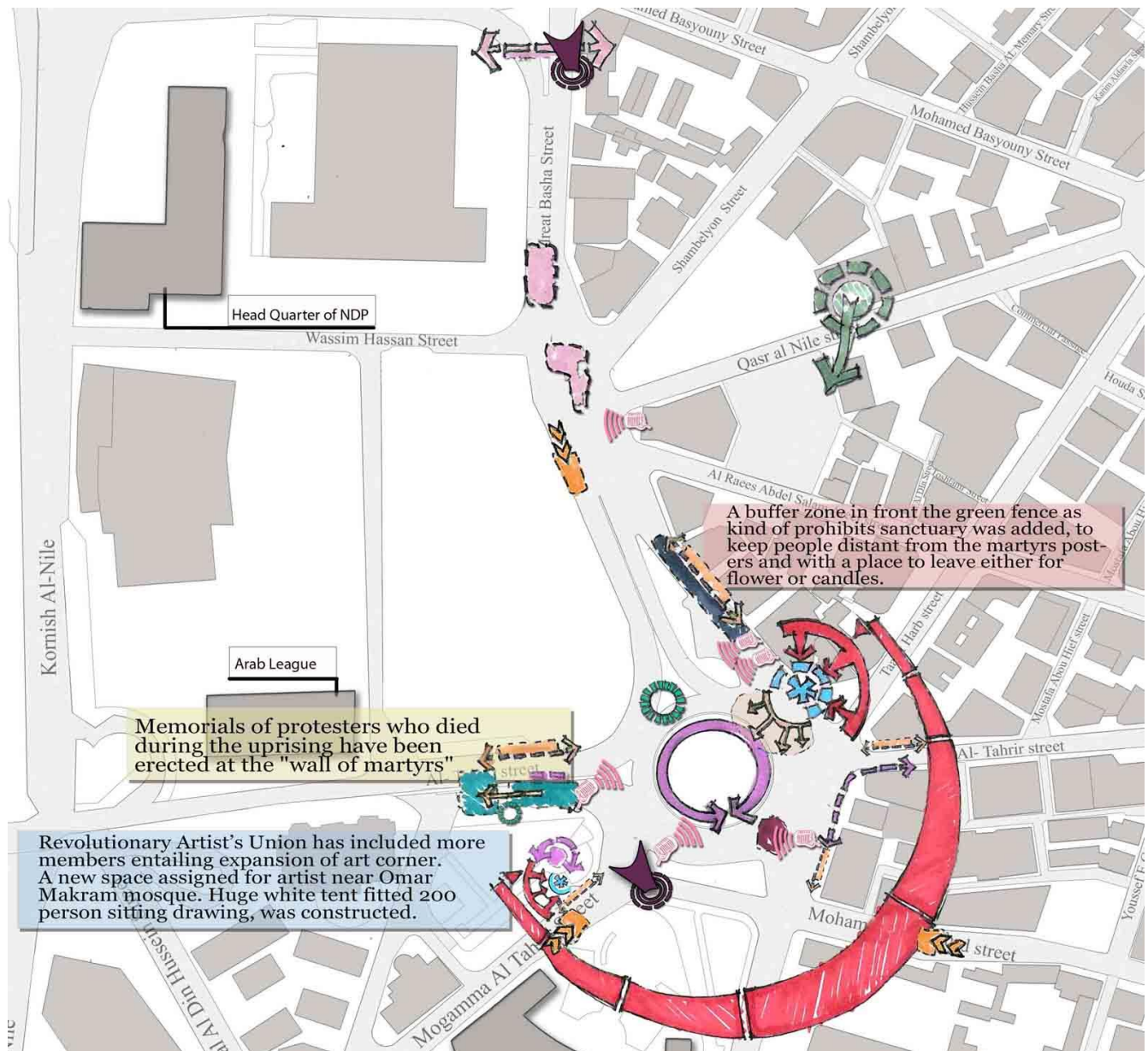
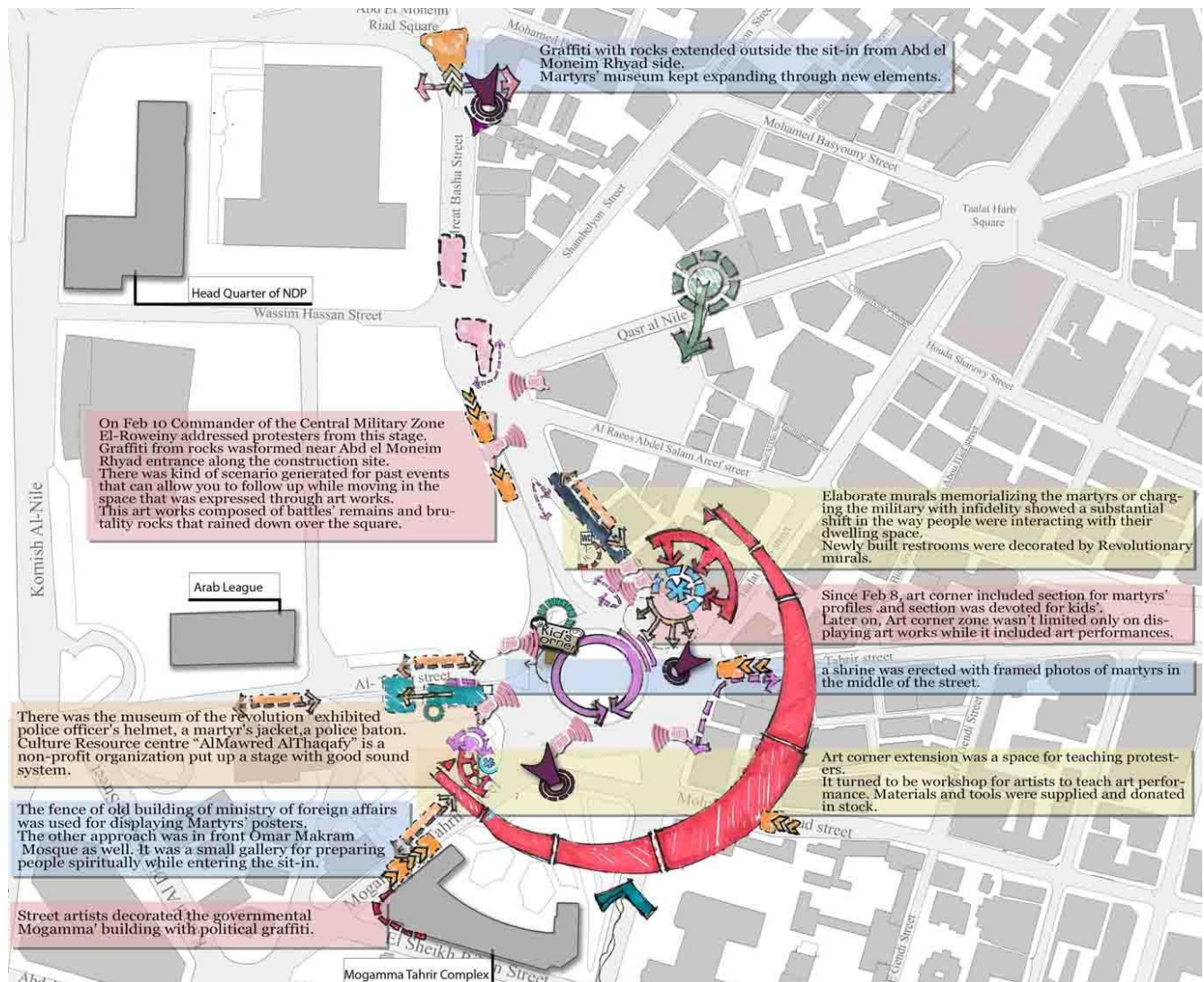


Figure 7.14: Mapping Art and freedom-of-expression spatial practice on Feb 7. (Source: By the Researcher)







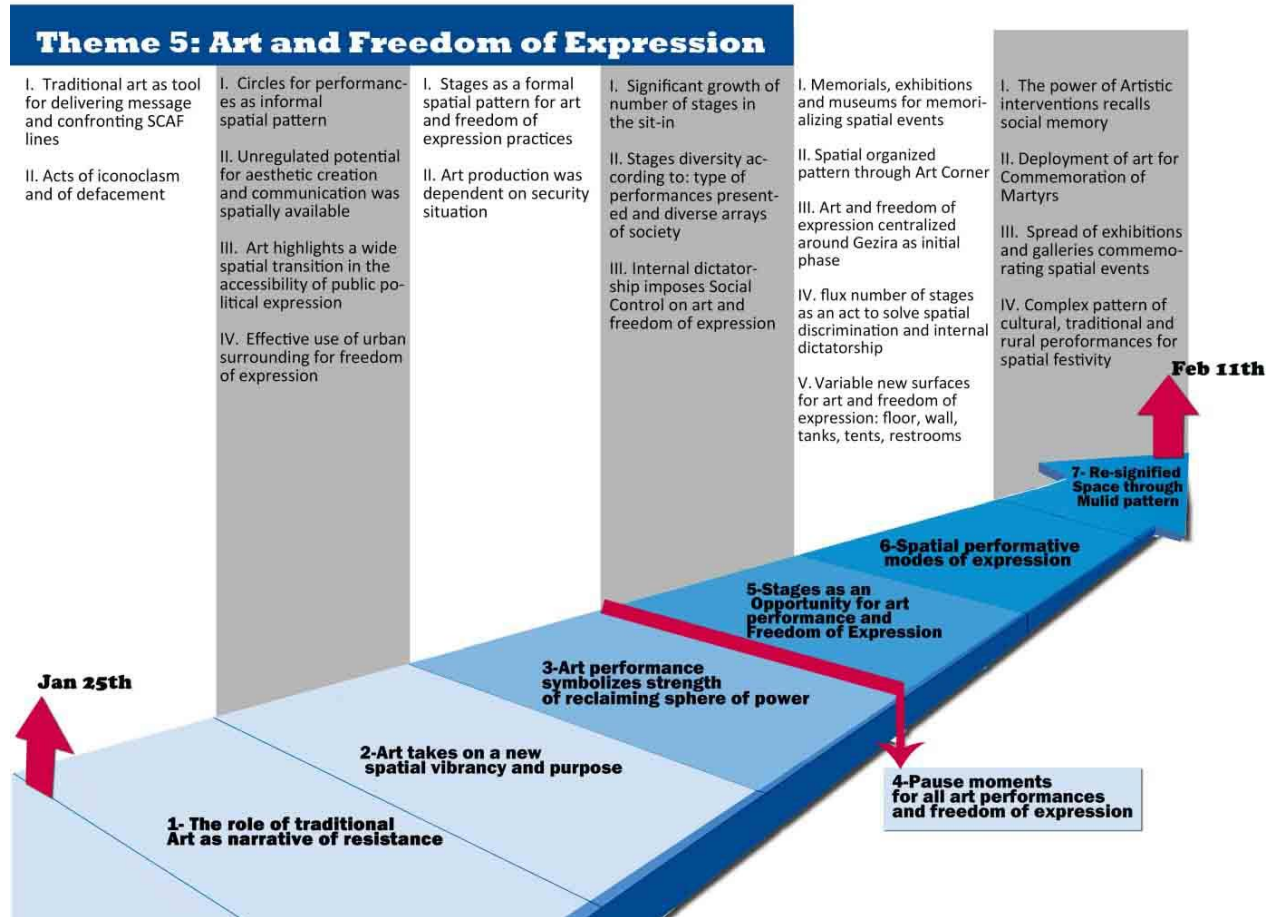


Figure 7.16: Evolution of Art and freedom-of-expression theme. (Source: By the Researcher)

## 8. Media Coverage and Display: Tahrir Square as a Stage for Spectacular Performances

### 8.1. Introduction

Among the spatial patterns of activities detected and analysed while investigating how socio-spatial practices had transformed Tahrir Square to an active and animated space for resistance that was equally accessible to different factions, this chapter focuses on particular forms of mass practices of media display and coverage. This chapter offers insight into the ways protesters lent the full capacity of their skills to the cause and performance of resistance to become citizen journalists unfolding spatial event and amplifier, which marks the testing phase for media coverage and display as part of Tahrir Square's spatial practices. The chapter shall present series of analytical maps tracing how the inter-relation role of media has shifted significantly the testing phase to spectacular phase as citizen media and mainstream media took new spatial modes to act through collective spatial pattern -which coincided with the shutdown of the internet in Egypt. Looking at Tahrir Square as a stage for performing revolutionary spectacle to all the world and a space for displaying it in meantime, the chapter shall give deep understanding of the implications of everyday way of living of performers, producers and audiences, their roles as collective spectacle making and the impact of this representation of urban space for political activism. In particular, it attempts to respond to the questions: How the power of citizen journalist attracted mainstream media; how these spatial forms could have gazed the attention of the world; and how journalists and citizen journalists' performance can then be understood as revolutionary acts in temporary moments of utopian democracy.

Many commentaries on the role of social media in a democratic society, their power of creating a public sphere and the rise of social opposition through social media have been debated on latest examples of global social opposition by social theorists. And over the past few years many scholarly works have aimed particularity to illustrate how the uprisings resulted from the new power of the social media.<sup>558</sup> Others like A. Fulya Şe<sup>559</sup> discussed the political impact of social media focusing on the power of mass protests. While, more in- depth work by Nezar AlSayyad and Muna Guvenc<sup>560</sup> have explored the cyclical and reciprocal relationship between social media, traditional media and the urban spaces in which the uprisings took place. They argue that, during the Arab spring, social media played an important role in articulating not only a new model of protest based on virtual communications, but also a spatial model of mass demonstration. They believe that in order to understand these uprisings, it is necessary to analyse how insurgent networks were formed both in social media and in cities and analyses the role played by mainstream media coverage of the ensuing events as well. A more quantitative analysis was devoted to examine the impact of the media during the Egyptian uprising of 2011 and the extent that amplification occurred between the inter-related spaces of the physical (protests), the analogue (satellite television and other mainstream media) and the digital (internet and social media) by Mohamed Nanabhaya and Roxane Farmanfarmanian.<sup>561</sup> This type of interplay between media and activists was not new, as Bruce D'Arcus has documented in his study of the Zapatistas, and which he called 'spectacles of dissent.'<sup>562</sup> Yet,

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<sup>558</sup> Iskander, E. (2011). pp. 1225–1237. Dickinson, E. (2011).

<sup>559</sup> Fulya Şe, A. (2012). The Social Media as a Public Sphere: The Rise of Social Opposition, ICCMTD 09-11 May 2012 Istanbul - Turkey 490.

<sup>560</sup> AlSayyad, N. & Guvenc, M. (2013). p.7.

<sup>561</sup> Nanabhaya, M. and Farmanfarmanian R. (2011). pp. 573-603.

<sup>562</sup> D'Arcus, B. (2006). p. 34.

this research shall deal with media practices and people's tactics to where it happened- in Tahrir Square interdisciplinary.

This chapter shall analyse the spatial system in lived space where rapid formation of these collective spatial patterns by media citizen and mainstream media, their roles in the formation of new urban dynamic: and the linkages between protesters, and the local and global audience reception and response. Specifically, it highlights the spatial patterns that drove citizen media and mainstream media to amplify the space and turn it into a spectacular 'internationalized space,' and, how this spectacular form of imageries affected significantly the performances and enthusiasm of protesters.

### 8.1.1. Mainstream Media Condition and Blogosphere in Egypt

Egypt between early 1950s and till the uprising of 2011, under three successive Egyptian presidents: Gamal Abdel, Nasser, Anwar Sadat and Hosni Mubarak, exercised tight control over media ownership and content, albeit to varying degrees, and used state-owned, national media to disseminate local and regional public opinion campaigns.<sup>563</sup> The margin of media freedom allowed under these three leaders was constantly stretching and shrinking, leading to a highly ambiguous state-media relationship.<sup>564</sup> During Mubarak era, an ironic situation of relatively expanding margin of freedom granted to the opposition press was not matched by an equal margin of real democratic practice. Accordingly, Seib contended that the media were being used as 'safety valves' to allow the public to vent their anger at dictatorship, corruption, and violations of human rights, without having to resort to more radical measures, such as protesting, demonstrating, or revolting.<sup>565</sup> Even as satellite and private TV channels began to penetrate the Egyptian market in the last decade, the government has kept tight control over terrestrial broadcasting, which depends directly upon the Ministry of Information for its content.<sup>566</sup> The State TV always focused on local news and played to audiences' feelings of loyalty. The country had been under a nearly constant state of emergency since 1967, allowing the government to censor the media for long periods of time.

Yet, a substantial access to social media among Egyptians was available largely because of government efforts to expand the nation's information technology capabilities as a tool for socioeconomic development.<sup>567</sup> According to Internet marketing research firm Internet World Stats, in February 2010, more than 21% of Egypt's population of 80 million had access to the Internet, and more than 4.5 million used Facebook.<sup>568</sup> Additionally, more than 70% of the population had a mobile phone subscription.<sup>569</sup> A 2009 study by the Harvard Berkman Centre showed that Egypt had the largest cluster of blogs in the Arab world and that there existed two sub-sets of bloggers – 'secular reformist bloggers' and Muslim Brotherhood bloggers, who both used their blogs for political and social discourse.<sup>570</sup> This can show the early roles of social media in democratic performance process. Several bloggers were journalists, enabling 'cross-fertilization between journalists and bloggers.'<sup>571</sup> Radsch identifies three phases in the growth of the Egyptian blogosphere: first, an experimentation phase wherein early adopters started using blogs and formed an elite base that would occasionally influence the media; second, an activist phase during the rise of the Kifaya Movement and the uptake of blogging by younger members of the

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<sup>563</sup> Boyd, D.A. (1999), Mellor, N. (2007), Rugh, W.A. (2004).

<sup>564</sup> Khamis, S. (2008). pp.259-277.

<sup>565</sup> Khamis, S. (2007). pp. 39-52.

<sup>566</sup> Lindsey, U. (2012).

<sup>567</sup> Hamdy, N. (2009). pp. 92-112.

<sup>568</sup> Internet World Stats. (2011).

<sup>569</sup> Arab Republic of Egypt Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, 2010

<sup>570</sup> Etling, B., Kelly, J., Faris, R., and Palfrey, J. (2009).

<sup>571</sup> Radsch, C. (September 2008).

Muslim Brotherhood. It had a "horizontal structure."<sup>572</sup> 'The rise of Kifaya' coincided with the emergence of a vibrant group of online activists and bloggers who documented the regime's brutalities, particularly police torture and human rights' violations.<sup>573</sup> 'Kifaya' utilized the bloggers' help to disseminate its message while its activities took place on the ground. Third, a diversification and fragmentation phase consisting of bloggers from across the political, social and religious spectra.<sup>574</sup> This phase established a group of bloggers who remained connected and influential to influence the 2011 Egyptian revolution. Bloggers were playing a significant role in the preparatory and primary phases of the revolution. They promoted blogging as tool for resistance and fighting repression, and gaining high visibility. The core bloggers became central nodes in the Egyptian blogosphere because of their visibility and activity.<sup>575</sup>

In the early 2000s, the Egyptian blogosphere grew; activists began utilizing other communication technologies, including social media like Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, and cellular phones.<sup>576</sup> April 2008 marked the first Egyptian- instigated cyber activism attempt, in which activists created a Facebook page to join textile workers in Mahalla on a general strike. Although the Facebook page attracted 70,000 supporters, the strike was harshly defeated by State security forces.<sup>577</sup> The experience and knowledge gained in these early social media trials, however, proved useful in the 2011 protests and subsequent revolution.<sup>578</sup> It marked a start for deploying social media in changing the dynamics of social mobilization. The number of individual activists with sufficient knowledge of social media resources created Facebook groups, personal blogs, and Twitter accounts to engage supporters and followers in discussions on current conditions in Egypt was increasing. In the summer of 2010, the Facebook group "We are all Khalid Said" was created following the young man's death.<sup>579</sup> The group gradually attracted more young political activists and non-activists, and expanded to include political discussions. Multiple Facebook pages provided outlets for interaction, information exchange, and encouragement among users. The Internet has allowed large masses of Middle Easterners to solidify their efforts and organize protests in a short amount of time.

The Internet had been crucial to the activists behind these, allowing them to navigate between the virtual space of organization and the physical space of demonstration.<sup>580</sup> They had learned to use all the tools of social media—blogs, email, Facebook and Twitter—to articulate political claims, co-ordinate the actions of different groups and organize demonstrations. Social media also played an important role in bridging civil and political society to shape and cultivate a new type of urban citizenship.<sup>581</sup> Underlining the main functions of the new technologies in social media; first, they have helped to raise collective awareness. In the authoritarian context with little freedom of the traditional media, Internet provided new opportunities to the people, giving them access to uncensored information, which allowed them to discover the misdeeds of the regime; second, social media in specific made it possible to create networks between citizens in such an oppressive regime: "These social networks inform mobilize, entertain, create communities, increase transparency, and seek to hold governments accountable."<sup>582</sup> The challenge to sustain an effective role for technologies was when protesters appeared on physical ground. In this manner, certain claims circulated and recirculated over diverse communication networks, allowing the cycle of 'collective enactment'<sup>583</sup> described by Tilly to expand to ever

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<sup>572</sup> El-Mahdi, R. (2009). pp. 87-102.

<sup>573</sup> El-Mahdi, R. (2009). pp. 89-90.

<sup>574</sup> Radsch, C. (2008). p. 1.

<sup>575</sup> Radsch, C. (2008). p.4.

<sup>576</sup> Hamdy, N. (2009).

<sup>577</sup> Hamdy, N. (2009).

<sup>578</sup> Eltantawy, N., & Wiest, J. B. (2011). p.18.

<sup>579</sup> Eltantawy, N., & Wiest, J. B. (2011).

<sup>580</sup> Fahmi, W. S. (2009). pp. 89–107.

<sup>581</sup> AlSayyad, N., and Guvenc, M. (2013).

<sup>582</sup> Ghannam, J. (2011). p.4.

<sup>583</sup> Tilly, C. (2008).

larger numbers of people. Rather than being responsible only for mobilizing people, new technologies are to be thought as modes drawing the attention of media press to the location of spectacle as well.

## **8.2. Media Coverage and Display: Spatial Practices of Tahrir Square**

### **8.2.1. Communication and Dissemination Tactics for New Urban Dynamics on Jan 25**

On January 25, people mobilized, as simultaneously, demonstrations were broadcasted across the world and social networks lit up with activity. To understand the event that unfolded, the real sit-in and its representation must necessarily be seen as a phenomenon that has preparatory process with tactics on social media and urban space. As mentioned before, few years before the 2011 revolution, a small but influential group of urban young activists, coordinating and operating through multiple social media platforms, formed an array of loosely affiliated grassroots activist networks throughout the country.<sup>584</sup> Over the time, these networks developed and deployed strategies, which were effective for preparing sufficient demonstration on Jan25. Preparing for January 25 as big demonstration, Act2 stressed on, “considerable activities aimed at organizing and disseminating mass demonstration on Jan 25 had their origin in technical and physical initiatives by youth activists.”(Int2, Act2) These activists have later taken up and propagated strategies of resistance for encountering blackout media and including practical exercises. Using technology tools was important as well for disseminating news before and during demonstration. This made activists think of holding training courses for technical knowledge and practical one on-the-ground experience (Int2, Act2). Act2 described that these training courses were an essential factor for preparing protesters to instantly spread the happening while demonstrating via social media by filming photographing, tweeting, or bump using.<sup>585</sup> These tactics can explain the efforts on guaranteeing the highest number of journalists and attendees inside each demonstration, capable enough to propagate news quickly to the world through different mediums. As Malek stressed that, “Trainings and preparations were intended for 25 of January 2011 demonstration as big and different demonstration that required high and effective documentation.”(Int2, Act2)

### **8.2.2. January 25 as a Testing Phase for Media Practices**

In the first day of demonstrations, influx number of photos, videos, blogs and tweets were circulating through social media. Social media provided first-hand coverage of events in the square itself.<sup>586</sup> It was a kind of resistance and encountering the State’s tactics. Providing a direct link between on-site activists and international audiences, it provided new understandings of urban protest, as protesters used it both to narrate the event and direct crowds in physical space. Many tweets have made from its sender a citizen journalist dedicated to sustaining a steady flow of videos and pictures describing conditions and events, in the process creating a new type of activism disseminated via social media. According to a Tweet by Traveller W Mo-ha-med, “Violence on the Galaa Bridge, We pushed through but now we are stuck on the bridge.”(15:14, 25 January)<sup>587</sup> Twitter messages were effective for quick updates, description for the situation, and the extent of violence. As these tweeters in Tahrir navigated between virtual and actual space, their updates sustained the uprising.<sup>588</sup>

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<sup>584</sup> Ishani, M. (2011, February 7).

<sup>585</sup> Bump is an application created by Bump Technologies for the Apple's iOS and Google's Android operating systems. It allows two smartphone users to physically bump their phones together to transfer contact information, photos, and files to each other over the Internet.

<sup>586</sup> AlSayyad, N. & Guvenc, M. (2013).

<sup>587</sup> Idle, N. & Nunn, A. (2011). pp. 33–36.

<sup>588</sup> AlSayyad, N. (2013).

Despite the crackdown on communication, people of Egypt were still able to deliver videos, pictures from the demonstrations. Responding to the fact that demonstrations were able to reach Tahrir Square, 08:0pm: network coverage in Tahrir Square was shutdown.<sup>589</sup> Yet, many residents around Tahrir Square left their personal Wi-Fi modems unlocked in order to let protesters access the internet. (Int47, Tech1) Protesters were able to vanquish network blockage for uploading photos and videos. (Int47, Tech1) The established network on social media fellows of activists and non-activists, either inside Egypt or outside helped in uploading any materials and disseminating tweets from inside Tahrir Square, during the five days of internet blockage. (Int47, Tech1) On Jan 25, activists in Egypt were able to access the most powerful elements of both the broadcast and internet models.<sup>590</sup> This strengthened the initiative, initially over the media and eventually onto the streets as more Egyptians and more journalists poured out on January 28. Egypt witnessed transformation of role, when social media became the main source of information with full coverage and it was the main source by mainstream media. Act2 confirmed that "Citizen Media was a good provider for materials used by Al Jazeera and other press who attracted millions of viewers around the world with broadcasting Tahrir Square on January 25." (Int2, Act2) The majority of media being produced was citizen-led and citizen-distributed from inside Tahrir Square and along its approaches. They deployed it to run a citizen journalism campaign by providing materials to display a clear vision of what was going inside the sit-in and to the mainstream media. To understand the events that unfolded, the 18 days must necessarily be seen as M. Nanabhay and R. Farmanfarmaian described "as working in concert with the interplay between social media and mainstream media."<sup>591</sup>

### 8.2.3. Defiance Tactics for Internet Shutdown and Mobile Network Blockage

On January 28 in a desperate effort to halt public revolt, the Egyptian regime shut down the country's mobile phone services and the Internet for one week. However, activists adapted their tactics in diverse ways to keep connected and disseminating news. Many initiatives revealed as an alternative to overcome internet blockade by providing other means of communication. Repressive tactics such as blocking the internet and mobile phone access in Egypt only served to push more people out onto the streets of Cairo and build a greater sense of solidarity especially among those following the protests through social networking websites.<sup>592</sup> Part of the activists' ability to carry on with their initiatives and disseminating them without social media can be attributed to the well-organized Egyptian civil societies and human rights organizations that had been active for years before the revolution, on the ground level and the virtual one as well. Act2, who was a media officer at the Hesham Mubarak Law Centre, mentioned that, "Hesham Mubarak Law centre was one of the base-stations ready for communication either by receiving news or disseminating them through active network with people abroad." (Int2, Act2) In some human rights organization as Hesham Mubarak Law centre, they comprised multiple methods for mediating news and reports either through fax or dial up modem, satellite phone, dial up modem, international phone calls, and available journalist crews. This emphasizes that protesters abroad played a crucial role in disseminating news and information during this period. One of the organized tactics to overcome communication blockage was to organize groups of activists with cars commissioned to trace specific territories where demonstrations shall be marching on January 28. Then each group had to keep updating Hesham Mubarak law centre through telephone calls –landline– with the situation and latest news of the demonstrations by; reporting number of protesters and their increase, the conditions and extent of violence and clashes if occurred. (Int12, Act13)

The demonstrations that took place on Jan 28 have witnessed initiatives to bypass internet shutdown. Main demonstrations that included large numbers of activists, mobilizing larger number and starting from poor urban

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<sup>589</sup> Raoof, R. (2011, February 9).

<sup>590</sup> Nanabhay, M. & Farmanfarmaian, R. (2011).

<sup>591</sup> Nanabhay, M. & Farmanfarmaian, R. (2011).

<sup>592</sup> Judy, L. (2012).

settlements, included foreign Journalists, (Int14, Act15) who were almost all coming in armed with Thuraya satellite phones and Bgan receivers that enable you to get online from anywhere.<sup>593</sup> The occurrence of these satellites enabled them to get online from anywhere as it is responsible to switch from terrestrial communication to satellites. Demonstrations starting from 'Imbaba', according to Act7,"deliberately tackled the role of mediating information from some demonstrations while marching towards Tahrir Square."(Int6, Act7) Therefore, protesters continued operating in virtual space without internet access, by sending Tweets. Another tactic for stay in connection, authorities kept one of the main providers open – the Noor group, whose clients include the Egyptian stock exchange and the National Bank of Egypt. Some activists and journalists were using it until they cut it off on February 1. Act13 stated that protesters relied significantly on using phones of many accessible apartments. The absence of connectivity did not knock out the broadcasts of the foreign media nor did it significantly impede the protests' momentum.<sup>594</sup> The blockade was short-lived, however, and spectacularly unsuccessful.<sup>595</sup> Banned reporters from Tahrir Square in an effort to prevent news from spreading to the world,<sup>596</sup> social media technologies enabled protesters to become citizen journalists.

#### 8.2.4. Media Tent as an Agent for Collecting and Disseminating Multimedia

The internet blockage has spatially affected the sit-in spatial composition since its early evolution. Media tent was one of these initiative spontaneously organized by a group of activists feeling the importance of collecting and sharing all kinds of multimedia materials from protesters inside sit-in and make them available online via different means. Pro9 one of the initiators of media tent, stressed on how it was crucial to disseminate the news to the whole world and to prove that the government was spreading lies and unreal images for the revolution. (Int40, pro9) Pro9 remarked that "January 29 was the day they brought their two hiking tents, personal laptops, hard desks, cables. It was one of the first tents set. A board was hanged on the edge of the roundabout, says; 'point to gather pictures and videos.'"(Int40, pro9) He described that their day was divided into three shifts, each for 8 hours since they were three technicians. Their mission was developing according to the spatial events that was mainly caused by the internet blockage. (See Fig. 8.11)

During the first four days when the internet was still shut down, Pro9 recalled: "We had to collect material from protesters in the sit-in and then share this data on mass media from outside. One of us had to leave the square to find a way to upload data and to back up materials outside since we were expecting any attack at any time." He explained that "there were two options either to send these hard desks with someone travelling abroad or give them to journalists or trustworthy private TV channels."(Int40, pro9) Protesters who were living around them in the next tents were responsible to inform people in the sit-in about their initiative for collecting available multimedia materials from mobiles or cameras. (Int40, pro9) As a second phase: when internet was back, in the aftermath of the camel battle, media tent was able to upload materials by themselves via YouTube. Pro9 said that they were able to upload directly the footages they had on a channel, newly created and called "thawraegypt" Revolution Egypt. (Int45, pro9) He clarified that the uploaded data were raw without an editing or text to be trustworthy. Yet, media tent remained with the same system; collecting data from protesters while selection, backing up and dissemination of data was outside. Apparently media tent emerged as a destination for many of foreign journalists, for taking materials or recording what was happening. (Int42, pro6) The third phase of media tent mission was when there was general media attack; Pro9 explained that, "We had to prepare footages recorded for protesters in the sit-in for awareness and knowledge campaign. This initiative was an opportunity for protesters to address people at home and present their demands and goals of being there. These short films prepared in the square and presented on social media and TV channels as OTV channel on 8<sup>th</sup>

<sup>593</sup> Khalil, A. (2011).

<sup>594</sup> Lindsey, U. (2012). p. 55.

<sup>595</sup> Gregory, D. (2013). pp. 235-246.

<sup>596</sup> Fisher, M. (2011, February 2).



Feb.”(Int40, pro9) The appearance of media tent initiative inside sit-in witnessed high spatial interaction that was crucial for disseminating news. (See Fig. 8.8)

### **8.2.5. Sustaining Social Media as their Alternative Press**

After the internet was reactivated, Tahrir Square was turned into a hub of bloggers. Several significant spots inside the sit-in were deployed by bloggers to keep reporting on the latest events and news inside the sit-in, inviting people to join them. The zone around media tent was one of the spots. (Int6, Act7) Act 9 recalled that next to KFC, bloggers were sitting with their laptops, where some shops were donating their electricity suppliers and some residents volunteered to unlock their Wi-Fi to be accessible for protesters. (Int8, Act9) Pro2 explained that “bloggers relied on some entrances of residential buildings to use internet, one significant entrance was of the first building in Qasr el Nile Street, which was nearest to the main stage. They were responsible for mediating news.”(Int38, Pro2) Since the second week, according to Pro11, bloggers were found intensively behind the stage when Safir travel donated their place to be used for meetings. They were responsible for sharing news, events, declaration and speeches. (Int42, Pro11) The other significant kind of internet spot for some bloggers and journalists was private apartments in Tahrir Square –Res1 or Int2 apartment. According to Res1, “My apartment was accessible to people I know and the circles of people around them, which was quite big.” These spots appeared as an effective factor in the process of uploading and dissemination of the latest footages for events via mainstream media or social media. (See Fig. 8.16)

### **8.2.6. The Role of Formal Media in the Sit-in**

The triumph of the revolution was accompanied by a discrediting of government-controlled news, a flourishing of ‘homemade’ media of all sorts and a validation of outlets such as Al Jazeera and other pugnacious satellite channels, some privately owned.<sup>597</sup> Journalists and crews of many independent local media – as El Masry El Youm and El Shorouk- and international reporters as Associate Press journalists, were part of the demonstrations as protesters and as journalists covering events in the meantime. (Int12, Act13) Since demonstrations were dispersed in diverse location, so the responsibility on media crews were much difficult to trace the events, however social networking was helping to spread news from every demonstration instantly. Journalists used Twitter to report on the ground in Egypt by posting their direct observations in real time.<sup>598</sup> Al Jazeera played a leading role by tweeting and posting links to photos and video that was then also used by other mainstream news sources.<sup>599</sup> The social media coverage for a “Day of Rage” on January 25 led to many changes concerning mass media and their strategies.

On January 28, Tahrir Square was the definite final destination for everyone. Therefore, some media crews were planted around its approaches. Around Tahrir Square were several imposing buildings, which formed a diagram for disseminating the Egyptian revolution that day. Mainly, hotels were the most attractive and logical location for journalists and armed military intelligence officers with cameras. Two large hotels—the Semiramis Intercontinental, and Sheraton hotel —on the Eastern side of the square were used as locations for broadcasting main events of the day from the upper floor balconies with Nile front view. According to Res1, “the most visible and influential display was the rallies of protesters crossing Qasr El Nile Bridge to reach Tahir Square. That was impressively covered from its two edges by media on three hotels.”(Int46, Res1) Instead, from the Northern side, Hilton Ramses and The City Hotel near the corner of Tahrir Square and Bustan Street were other two

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<sup>597</sup> Lindsey U. (2012). pp. 53-54.

<sup>598</sup> Bohler-Muller, N., Van der Merwe, C. (2011).

<sup>599</sup> Bohler-Muller, N., Van der Merwe, C. (2011).

locations.<sup>600</sup> They were crucial for uncovering clashes at Abd el Moneim Rhyad Square and the burning of NDP building. Apparently the architecture of downtown Cairo with its intense number of hotels and lodgings around Tahrir square, have made events more visible. Other hotels on side streets like Systel hotel in Mohamed Mahmoud Street were spots for media shooting 24 hours. It was an operation quartier and crucial location for capturing incidents near the Interior Ministry of for 3 days. (Int29, Int1) (See Fig. 8.10) 28 January marked the start of 24/7 protest coverage by mainstream media.<sup>601</sup> This marked the start of the media spectacular, the second phase of media coverage, where the mainstream media played a pivotal role.<sup>602</sup> Through all these potent spots, the main media and citizen media in particular were keen on displaying the scenes while accessing Tahrir Square. The media in the hotel was the only medium to record the incidents with all their details and make it appear fast with high visibility.<sup>603</sup> A jump is reflected in Al Jazeera's own live streaming data, where the channel made available a video stream of its channel online for anyone to view.

Since protesters successfully claimed the square, "journalists and reporters –local and international- were spreading on the square where they believed that Egyptian Army tanks occurrence on the edges of sit-in is a sign for protection." (Int3, Pro12, Dr4) Pro10, a photographer in 'Masry elyoum' highlighted that, "Several publishing and journalism houses in Downtown and their proximity from events have facilitated the action of receiving multimedia materials from journalists and even protesters inside sit-in." (Int41, pro10) Mona el Kaoudi mentioned in her report that one protestor commented on the regime's decision to shut down Al-Jazeera bureaus in Egypt by saying: "They have stopped the reporters of Al-Jazeera from reporting to the world their crimes ... today we are all reporters for Al-Jazeera."<sup>604</sup> Int1 emphasized that, "protesters took responsibility of sending footages to Al Jazeera office in 4 Abd el Moneim Rhyad Square to be broadcasted instantly." (Int29, Int1) Maintaining the visibility through this spatial pattern revealed a level of trust emerging due to instant active reactions by Al Jazeera journalists while encountering repression that was targeting them in specific. (See Fig. 8.12)

Tactics used against media workers include repeated arrests and detention, harassment, the seizure of equipment and intimidation was significant around sit-in approaches. The fact that many channel offices suffered from violent attacks and had some equipment seized by the government, was an overt attempt by the regime to break the protest network. Yet, not only did this attempt fail but it fed further drama into the nature of the spectacle and created another tactics and spatial practices in order to sustain broadcasting and Al Jazeera's live stream. (See Fig. 8.13) Al Jazeera channel journalists' attempt not to surrender and continue to cover events and was spatially achieved inside sit-in terrain. Act 7 observed that "one of the first and few strategic locations that hosted journalist camera since early time was Res1's apartment with 10th-floor balcony high above Tahrir Square." (Int6, Act7) As Res1 explained, "On Jan 30 Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya crews came to my door asking to shoot from my balcony." (Int46, Res1) It was an action taken due to the fact that they could not shoot footage on square anymore because they couldn't feel safe. On Feb 1 -first million men March day- with this huge crowd filling the square, more journalist and photographers relied on his apartment as significant location to be able to capture the whole scene. Res 1 added that the rooftop deck and the balconies were utilized by more journalists since then. (Int46, Res1) The images that the television crews recorded from Sioufi's rooftop terrace were the images of the Egyptian revolution that the world saw.<sup>605</sup> Inside sit-in terrain, Journalists and reporters were welcomed and protected by people inside. (Int17, Arm1) Act 8 explained that "protesters inside sit-in provided Al Jazeera crew new strategic spot over an electric box at KFC pointing at the roundabout to lively stream from

<sup>600</sup> Journalist mentioned that his location on jan 28 was The City Hotel <http://humanrightsegyppt.wordpress.com/uprising-photographs/>

<sup>601</sup> Nanabhay, M. & Farmanfarmaian, R. (2011). p. 591.

<sup>602</sup> Nanabhay, M. and Farmanfarmaian, R. (2011).

<sup>603</sup> Trombetta, L. (2011).

<sup>604</sup> Elkouedi, M. (2011). p. 25.

<sup>605</sup> Oehmke, P. (2011).

there.” Act 8 stressed that “There were tents provided for journalists to rest and sleep instead of leaving the square.”(Int7, Act8) (See Fig. 8.3)

On February 2 when sit-in turned into a battlefield, very few journalists were able to remain there. As Pro10 stressed out, “they have received high protection and care from protesters.”(Int41, Pro10) Protesters were aware of the value of these footages as evidence for their resistance. Pro10 explained that “photographers were sheltered by barricades in protesters’ hands while capturing photos and sending them to one another who was responsible to protect him. I experienced how he preferred to protect me rather than protecting himself from the rain of rocks.”(Int41, Pro10) (See Fig. 8.2) Reporters and journalists were relying mainly on phone calls to protesters in the square to keep everyone updated. The chance to mediate and transmit the news was very difficult from inside the sit-in. (Int28, Int1) Pro4 stressed that “Covering the events of the day was mainly achieved through focusing on Abd el Moneim Rhyad square from Ramses Hilton as the nearest secured spot”, which Pro10 added that Al Jazeera was streaming live from there. This sudden actions on sit-in entailed sudden change in spatial pattern of media inside sit-in that was still showing high persistence and ability to keep disseminating events from different spots and through different tactics. It was clear from the footages of the two days that Abd el Moneim Rhyad square was considered as part of the sit-in while gaining the main focus by the media. (See Fig. 8.14)

While the State’s security apparatus was still targeting foreign journalists and journalists at hotels overlooking Tahrir Square had their cameras confiscated by hotel management,<sup>606</sup> Arm1 stated that, “Army soldiers around sit-in entrances were instructed to assist foreign media and help protecting them from groups who have been attacking and beating journalists around the sit-in.”(Int17, Arm1) Throughout all the challenges and spatial tactics that protesters have been performing, sit-in revealed as the safest place for journalists to cover events from. Art2 observed that “in the second week Journalists were keen on roaming around in sit-in terrain where many social activities and new initiatives needed recording.”(Int19, Art2) (See Fig. 8.15) Art1 added that, “Since Feb 4 Journalists took place at Main stage towards the audiences, where national figures and celebrities were frequently addressing people from there.”(Int18, Art1) Pro11 described that, “Al Jazeera International crew was permanently located next to the main stage.” He believes that, “the location of media cameras in relation to stage makes really sense, since they were able to capture the euphoric crowds addressed by speakers on stage. It was a strategic location since you don’t see the stage but what appears is whoever crowds is there.”(Int40, Pro7) A sort of syncretic between stage location and cameras locations, that you can see people’s reactions as well that served the spectacular making process. (See Fig. 8.16)

In the aftermath of the camel-battle, capturing the crowds from bird’s view was attractive for many media crew. Buildings in eastern side of the square were the only way however not every residents accepted to have journalists shooting from their balconies” (Int41, pro10). More journalists accessed Res1’s building and roof top that was full of media crew from different press as Reuters press, Association press, Al Jazeera Chanel, Al-Arabiya and other famous channels. The second significant accessible upper location for many journalists was Ismailia hotel over Hardees building. Resilience in Tahrir for third week inspired journalists with new initiatives. Pro10 stated that, “Al Masry Alyoum started to record videos from inside the sit in by asking protesters to present their demands. It was then uploaded on YouTube and later was broadcasted by television channels.”(Int41, Pro10) (See Fig. 8.8) These spectacular events entailed more unusual spatial practices to occupy the square. Act7 marked that, “A crane with camera inside sit-in appeared in last days was moving around the Gezira.”<sup>607</sup> (Int16, Act7)

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<sup>606</sup> Lindsey, U. (2012). p. 55.

<sup>607</sup> It was Channel 25 crew, owned by Ibrahim Issa.

### 8.2.7. Internal Media display and News Broadcasting in Sit-in

#### *Internal Radio Station and Field Stage*

On January 25, people were completely disconnected from any formal media, broadcasting latest updates of demonstrations held in other cities, addressing people's worries and to announce for the sit-in required installing microphone and speakers by connecting them to traffic light at the edge of the roundabout. (See Fig. 8.9) (Int1, Act1) Again, on the night of January 28 when people claimed the square, a need for microphone for prominent activists and celebrities to address the crowds -that were bigger in size was desired. Alaa Al Aswany was one of celebrities who addressed protesters and tried to calm them, while standing behind the green fence where the main stage was erected later. (Int46, Res2) Next day, the initiative to install microphone and speakers at Hardees pavement again was effective, Act12 clarified that, "Since large crowds of people filled Tahrir Square peacefully, but violent clashes in Mohamed Mahmoud Street since some protesters were fighting to reach the Ministry of Interior. They were addressed by microphones advising them to return back to Tahrir Square sit-in." (Int11, Act12) (See Fig. 8.11)

When clashes diminished and the sit-in appeared to be calmer, Act12 stated that, "Since January 30 bigger speakers and microphone were brought to establish field-radio station next to KFC. It was responsible mainly for broadcasting some recent news and national songs." (Int11, Act12) While near Hardees, a microphone and speakers were installed that later served the projection TV screen. Act3 observed that "these speakers were influential in presenting advice, for guiding protesters in sit-in and organizing primary initiatives as makeshift-checkpoints." (Int3, Act3) On Feb 1 when the sit-in appeared more organized and controlled to host the first 'Million Man March' day, at Hardees corner a "fabricated platform" was for delivering speeches by some intellectuals, youth activists or ordinary citizens especially after Mubarak speech was broadcasted. They turned it into an improvised theatre while standing on the floor behind the fence. (Int4, Act5) A cordon of human chain was formed at the backstage of the stage, especially during 'Million Man March' day. Art1 added that "Another wooden stage with new microphone was erected at the southern side of the square in front Mogamaa looking towards the Gezira." (Int18, Art1) During Camel Battle, broadcasting was limited on: announcing latest attacks on different entrances, alerting, and requesting human supports required joining clashes during the day. (Int11, Act12). It was a source of instigation for protesters on that day. (See Fig. 8.14)

In the aftermath of camel battle, the main stage at Hardees started to play an influential role, tackling specific responsibilities of being autonomous local media station for the square; broadcasting media limited on people in the sit-in; requests for supplies and human resources and volunteers to stand at check points." On February 4 Int3 stated that "the wooden stage was erected at Hardees and one day after; it has been extended significantly to occupy more cameras and journalists." (Int30, Int3) It was the stage where protesters addressed locals and the global world from and later in same location included projector to display Al Jazeera channel on white screen. Since this moment, it maintained its spatial power and influence through the concentration of media broadcasting and display together in one location. Both stages facing the roundabout were visible to many protesters and sit-in visitors entailing continuously gatherings and the slowest flow of people spots.

Mogamaa stage continued its main objective for giving information about sit-in logistics; Act12 added: "It was a landmark in the space for visitors to donate supplies as well." (Int11, Act12) The Coalition of the Youth of the Revolution that was composed in 6th February was giving its declaration from over the stage. In the last days, the sit-in witnessed more stages; some appeared just next to older stages and the KFC radio station, while others spread along the extended part of the sit-in towards Abd el Moneim Rhyad Square." (Int18, Art1) Pro10 observed: "On February 10 Commander of the Central Military Zone El-Roweiny addressed protesters from the stage at Abd el Moneim Ryad." (Int41, Pro10) Huge gatherings of Protesters were concentrated there.

Declarations by Army general from Stage on the square has vividly trans-nationalized to the whole world. It was a clear manifestation that the stages and sit-in in general were powerful enough to voice not only the people's voice but also the Military force as well. (See Fig. 8.17)

#### *Internal Field TV Display Screen*

During the 18 days, the world was watching the sit-in impressively transformed, developed day after day. Yet, viewing revolutionary power and knowing the effect of crowds on the State's decision was the merely desire by protesters to watch and follow since their first night in Tahrir Square. On January 25 protesters in the Square were keen on watching what formal media was saying. Pro5 explained that "the only way to watch TV was either in; cafes; friends' apartment; or political parties near Tahrir Square. Many protesters relied on Merit publishing house to watch TV." (Int36, Pro5) Since January 28 when the square was reclaimed Res2 observed that "people were watching Mubarak's speech in political parties; opened shops with TV, Merit publishing house, human right organization were opened with TVs." (Act3 Res2) Due to the high sense of responsibility and persistence to remain in the sit-in, protesters managed to set TVs inside sit-in by connecting them to public telephone booths around sit-in terrain.

Contrary to the traditional model of revolutionary that focuses on the use of brute force and contestation over physical space, these groups sought to use Tahrir Square to screen their own spectacles.<sup>608</sup> Since February 1 night Protestors set up a field TV screen broadcasting Al Jazeera's live coverage next to Hardees. It enabled the crowds to unite and watch together Mubarak speech and themselves as well. (pub1, Int3) This was important to confirm the sovereignty of protestors over Tahrir, as they are challenging the regime's decision to shut down Al-Jazeera and here are the protestors refuting this decision by broadcasting Al-Jazeera only.<sup>609</sup> The way protesters experienced Tahrir Square wasn't only that they followed the dynamic changes of media news displayed but also they were inside of it. As Duncombe described them experiencing a unique state where, "the spectator also becomes a producer"<sup>610</sup> It was a clear state of full empowerment. The insistence on watching Mubarak's speech together in front the screen entailed impressive collective reaction with same demand and same gestures. (See Fig. 8.16) A Significant increase in crowds in sit-in terrain on February 10, Dr1 observed that, "Huge gatherings of protesters and rallies of visitors arriving to watch Mubarak's speech from inside sit-in." (Int21, Dr1) Pro8 clarified that, "Other two projectors were installed at the other side of the sit-in: one at the corner between Qasr el Nile Bridge and Merit Street; and other one was erected near Shambelyoun Street facing the crowds in front the construction site at the Egyptian museum." (Int39, Pro8) While Mubarak's speech was screening, a huge crowd and Tahrir Square shook with rage in front of the screens. Protesters' reactions were all the same in front the screens, after Mubarak refused to resign. Impressive collective reactions by people have been uniquely witnessed there. Act 6 explained that, "Many took off their shoes and waved them in the air. Protesters united and launched one chant: with a single word; Leave "Irhal." (See Fig. 8.17)

#### *Internal Newspaper Wall*

In order to monitor revolutionary power and its effect on the Regime's decisions, another initiative for displaying news was by displaying daily newspaper and sharing them in the sit-in. This act of display was limited on independent local journals –Al Masry Alyoum or Al Shorouk- that were trustworthy. (Int47, Tech1) Spatial reordering of this pattern was significant, on Feb 4 when thread of newspapers was displayed on the floor at the edge of the roundabout facing KFC and at the edge of the construction site pavement. (See Fig. 8.16) While on February 6 with this massive crowds and sporadic rain, Newspaper wall had its defined location. Res2

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<sup>608</sup> Gunning, W. (2013). pp. 11-43

<sup>609</sup> Elkouedi, M. (2011). p. 26.

<sup>610</sup> Duncombe, S. (2007). p. 73.

stated that, “Newspapers were pasted on the walls of closed shop near KFC-15 Tahrir Square- and it extended till the façade of the next building.”(Int46, Res2) One day later, another new Newspaper wall was erected with a part that was devoted for news about martyrs.

#### *Internal Independent Journals and Declarations*

Displaying protesters’ opinion and declaration inside sit-in was not only on stage but also it had the chance to be collected and published throughout several independent journals as “Liberation Square.” Act 12 clarified that, “They were prepared and published just to be distributed inside the square. (Int11, Act1) *Voice of Revolution* was circulated after February 6th and three editions were distributed inside the sit-in.”(Int11, Act12) It was one of the latest spatial modes that allowed people to contribute to the news with their own observations, pictures, videos and commentary. A sense of entitlement that was gained through claiming the space –Tahrir Square- by people, did not stop to send their voice through mass media but they also creatively initiated new forms to sustain the spectacle- making process.

### **8.3. Analysing Tahrir Square as Stage for Spectacular Performances**

#### **8.3.1. Lived Experiences through Media Coverage and Display inside Sit-in**

It was obvious that the relocation of politics to Tahrir Square provided the essential link between the performance and the spectacle. The unregulated representation of the sit in during the 18 days was joined with no control by the regime that was never experienced, especially in such a place. The 18 days of the sit-in Tahrir Square marked one of the first times protesters were able to use collectively: physical space, media coverage, technologies of coordination such as social media for recording, and the screens in Tahrir Square to display a utopian political spectacle. The media in all its forms had been transformed into a platform for the portrayal and performance of resistance, giving substance to the mobilized public.<sup>611</sup> Through media covering and display practices, the sit-in was actively transformed into space of performance for spectacle and observing, with diverse inputs; which divided the roles of protesters into performers and audience, however in practice was almost distorted. Sit-in community was responsible for the spectacle, as Guy Debord claims that, “the spectacle is not a collection of images, but a social relation among people mediated by images.”<sup>612</sup> Protesters in Tahrir Square in the same space were the actors and producers of the show that is viewed to the world and were the observers of the screen projection in same space, which simultaneously link the act of production to the representation one. The common feature between both roles, being performers and audience, was the spectacle.

While many cameras were trying to capture different views by standing in different locations, media recording turned sit-in events into a spectacular performance. Certain moment, the main target for every journalist inside sit-in was to reach the highest location for birds’ view for all this mass of crowd. Pro10, one of the journalists, said that “it was a cliché but the dream and life experience for any journalist or photographer was to take this mass together from the best location in the sit-in day and night.”(Int42, Pro10) Birds view was more collective with infinite physical elements and streetscapes were ever-changing and overwhelming. In this respect, media practices are closer to the notion of spatial practice characterized by Lefebvre, as it “ensures some degree of cohesion, and this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of competence and a specific level of performance.”<sup>613</sup> In this way, media practices inside the sit-in were a significant example of how journalists and

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<sup>611</sup> Khamis, S. & Vaughn, S. (Summer 2011).

<sup>612</sup> Debord, G. (1994). p. 7.

<sup>613</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991).



citizen journalists produced a lived space. Media recording gave the chance for Tahrir Square to be contested through spectacular imagery rather than brute force. It was a criterion of measuring the extent of power and tool for judging on the progress of the revolution instead of the standard conception of protesters clashing with police for physical control of space.

The triumph of the revolution and the definition of the stage of power is where the media would follow the actors and broadcast their actions to larger audiences. The coverage of the sit-in by international and national media of protest in real public space magnified the effect. In 'Virtual Geography,'<sup>614</sup> the geographer and media theorist Mckenzie Wark showed that media coverage of certain events often defines the events themselves and brings them into being. In this case, Tahrir Square had powerfully operated as dual functions: a stage and screening space. This was due to the presence of diverse local and international news media streaming live; the ability to disseminate images and updates through social media, and texting; and the display of news and protesters' reaction in front makeshift screen inside sit-in, where protesters had become both producers and observers of the revolution. The audiences were in all parts of the world. The repetitious media representations served to fix the sit-in as a theatre of action, whose public was revealed to the globe through anti-violence and spectacle. In this respect, media and its gaze of attention made a significant role in amplifying the performance that place and dramatize it within systems of recognition, of the ideology of framing itself. Media practices were spontaneously responsible of the lived spaces production and representing its experiences. Here, in the context of the Egyptian during uprising, there was a generic powerful call for non-violence that resonated, placed and dramatized their performance. A striking conscious decision by Egyptians was to answer this political violence with the performance of nonviolence. Political violence in this sense was a performative act, communicative but also theatrical, geared to specific settings and audiences. It aimed at reaching certain goals through the amplification of its effect. Indeed, considering how to generate such an effect became one of the major aspects of protesters and using it as integral part of their political project. Violence in this sense was also essential: it helped to foreground the spectacle in a way that suggests drama in the reinforcement of power. The performance of nonviolence was thus a key part of their political formation, as well as of their strategies, its techniques studied and communicated from one country to another.<sup>615</sup>

Media display practices inside the sit-in were another level of protesters' empowerment. It was part of the spatial patterns for sit-in autonomy, stability and persistence. Media inside sit-in appeared powerful through coverage and display practices and an example of a new type of spectacle representation. The internal media display particularity was clear of what to display on screen; distribute and hang on journal walls; shared Journals were limited on private ones and prohibited government ones; and makeshift screens and improvised TV were solely previewing trusted channel. At the beginning, it was a spatial individual act that appeared through TV installation by some groups or mobile screens, while later it turned to be a collective highly interactive spatial practice of screening Al Jazeera channel. This white screen makeshift practice entailed kind a theatrical force where audience, cameras and performers were actively and spatially participating in its formation. The fact that audiences –protesters in front screen- were the focus of the cameras even in this moment has effectively influenced their reactions that were communally performed in spectacular representation.

### **8.3.2. Amplification through Media Practices: From Testing Phase to Spectacular Phase**

Tracing spatial media practices in the first day illustrates how citizen journalists and their videos led the initial coverage before mainstream media. This marked the testing phase, where media by citizen journalists

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<sup>614</sup> AlSayyad N. and Guvenc, M. (2013), Mackey, R. (2011), Wark, M. (1994).

<sup>615</sup> Tripp, C. (2013). pp. 203-216.

allowed for spatial self-representation during the first day of protests. Castells theorized that power resides within networks, those broad structures of linked knowledge and communication.<sup>616</sup> Protesters were able to establish their own media network instead of relying on existing physical networks and to redesign mainstream media strategies and network as well. On January 25 citizen journalists were mainly responsible for the whole process of coverage and viewing on the first day of the protests. Accordingly, they succeeded to sustain social media as communication medium through the 18 days that were interchangeable according to the circumstances. This phase clearly demonstrates the resistance of citizen journalists' practices and their ability to directly reach the public without relying on mainstream media. The production of multimedia materials and dissemination of these footages was spatially performed via social media. Ibrahim says that "citizen journalism and activism become the only way for information [to get out] because you see it with pictures and videos from the ground."<sup>616</sup> Yet, this responsibility was shifted when events captured not only the audiences' attention but also the mainstream media's attention as well. Natasha Tynes, director of the International Centre for Journalists' Middle Eastern Programs, stated: "Many mainstream media outlets were caught off guard as they realized that citizen journalists were filling major holes found in the coverage of professional journalists."<sup>617</sup> It was a shifting point from being an event via social media only to spectacular performance attracting other kinds of media. It signalled the second phase of media display and coverage practices with the start of spatial media practices to turn the event into a spectacular one, available to be followed via mainstream media as well.

The second phase was the transformation of events into spectacular imagery. It marked the access of mainstream media in Tahrir Square and the start of sit-in. It was a clear manifestation of exact moment of shifting powers on January 28 when the capacity of displayed materials by Al Jazeera and other news agencies increased dramatically and became what Doreen Massey once called 'a global sense of place.'<sup>618</sup> This was an indication of the integration of mainstream media's spatial practices with citizen media ones in order to cover events that were concentrated in Tahrir Square, "The international coverage of the Egyptian uprising wouldn't have been that detailed and around-the-clock without the work of citizen journalists who documented events including the attacks on protestors and demonstrators' reactions on the streets of Cairo,"<sup>619</sup> It was clear how media coverage practices became part of the sit-in spatial practice and fully engaged with the acts of resistance. The spectacular nature of events emerged since the moment that citizen and mainstream media decided to involve their audiences through live videos for the access of Tahrir Square and its updates.

The regime's trials to spatially oppose and disrupt media network and communication entailed an amplification of events by all means and even set media spatial practices as part of the sit-in acts of resistance. These amplified events witnessed media practices struggling to provide constant capacity of the events via citizen media and the mainstream media that was significantly re-enforced by citizen one. These counteracts by the regime against media networks appeared as failure tactics, since it generated a dynamic form of media system in which all its bodies were ready to replace one another until they reached the last phase with full consumption of all its bodies together. El-Hamalawy, who tweeted from the field every day, says that, "A lot of my tweets had been broadcasted on Al Jazeera."<sup>620</sup> What were unique in Tahrir Square during the 18 days were the particularities of complex media network that emerged through different mediums interchangeably and collectively performing and gaining critical masses on diverse network levels. Tracing the rapid formation of this collective spatial form of media citizen and mainstream media dynamic role and: the linkage between local protesters and the local and global journalists revealed significant performance and active transformation process. Instead, live streaming from inside sit-in buildings by news agencies' cameras and tracing daily,

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<sup>616</sup> Rabie, P. (2011, March 1).

<sup>617</sup> Rabie, P. (2011, March 1).

<sup>618</sup> Massey, D. (1994). pp.146-156.

<sup>619</sup> Rabie, P. (2011, March 1).

<sup>620</sup> Rabie, P. (2011, March 1).

provided 24/7 broadcasts. This amplification by mainstream broadcasting collectively with social media signalled a spectacular phase. It was a massive shift in live observing spatial patterns of sit-in as they unfolded. Fixing the camera in locations and live streaming one spot without relocating is a clear evidence for the centrality and significance of the space and what is happening. It reflects the power of the place and its content. It demonstrates the extreme attractive dynamics occurring in one space entailing the zoom in and focuses on one location. This spatial transformation of media practices caused changes on the political level. It entailed a significant effect on the protection and security of protesters. Moreover, the effect of continuous live coverage on the public sphere had great impact on the performance patterns of protesters in sit-in. 24/7 representation has created a qualitative shift in the way that performance works and the ways in which traditional passive, consuming public was constituted.

The spectacular phase was a start of new interdisciplinary nature and rules for media that amplified the event and maximized the spectacle. The conjunction of social media and satellite television ensured that what took place in Tahrir Square was relayed around the world.<sup>621</sup> Media practices emerged with a blurred distinction between producer, performer and audience as new culture of media sharing was constituted inside the sit-in. The remarkable shift in the number of media followers was likewise occurring with raw video footage. It was a clear need by both audiences and performers to obtain the access to the most real information without any editing. The potentials and characteristics of digital media and mainstream media were effectively deployed in order to obtain the fastest and highest authentic information and disseminate them. Tactics and spatial practices of media through the 18 days inside the sit-in showed different principles for copyrights, sharing, and reusing of multimedia materials. Lots of citizens' videos and photos were re-uploaded and recopied by other citizens and by mainstream media as well. This unusual trend of circulating multimedia materials marks the responsibility of media practices' resistance to amplify the event.

### **8.3.3. Media Coverage and Display Practices Create New Social Patterns**

In Tahrir Square sit-in, journalists or anyone holding a camera were highly appreciated by protesters either during clashes or in festive and celebrative moments. Protesters were valorising journalists and keen on protecting them. According to Pro10 who was one of the journalists who received direct protection from frontline defenders saying, "Since you have camera, then you are archiving and you are considered the most important person in the incident, so they feel responsible to protect you." (Int41, Pro10) It revealed a social relation of high dependency by protesters and trust on anyone with a camera or trying to record the happenings. Moreover inside the sit-in, even Journalists from different agencies were relating differently. It was no longer about who captures first the event or about who takes place in strategic location solely. Instead it was a high social interaction by sharing spots of recording events, and advising one another with the available spots to access inside the sit-in terrain. According to Res1 who allowed journalists to access his balcony from early moments; "I think one of the nicest things in the Revolution was that I had Al Jazeera and Arabia cameras side by side here in one location." (Int46, Res1) His rooftop was just full of journalists from different agencies together as: AP, Reuters, RT Italian, Al Jazeera, Arabia, Masry Alyoum and many other non-famous and famous channels. Another significant spot witnessed unusual social relation between journalists was Ismailia hotel where Journalists had to book rooms overlooking Tahrir Square to gain visual access. These rooms were labelled by the name of press agency: Room for Al Jazeera, room for Reuters, room for French channel, etc... Pro10 recalled that "these rooms were opened and everyone knows the other and they were sharing these spaces together with another journalist visiting them." (Int41, Pro10) This social relation through unusual spatial order of media crews entailing neutral relationship while equally gaining access to the event was collectively

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<sup>621</sup> Gregory, D. (2013). P. 243.

maximizing the spectacle. These spaces witnessed bodily interchange in order to achieve the highest spectacular imagery by different media agencies.

Media display practices enabled house audiences to watch the crowds and their daily life, entailing new distant social relation one that spatially affected sit-in development. It has unfolded an astonishing position for both audiences and protesters –performers- in sit-in. “House protesters” was an expression heard from several interviewees and according to Dr5, “House protesters were signifying the active audiences at their homes who became as important as the protesters sitting-in Tahrir Square.”(Int25, Dr5) They were highly appreciated since they showed an active role even while being home. Representing the dramatic confrontations of Battle of the Camel transformed them into active audiences who were as revolutionaries and taking part of revolution. Active audience was not only limited on spiritual support and visual social relation but physical one as well. Tech1 remarked that “house protesters some were frequent visitors to the sit-in and providing supplies for protesters frequently.”(Int47, Tech1) This media representation motivated audiences to connect with protesters inside the sit-in directly, entailing social relation to change by transforming audiences into performers.

This spectacle representation of sit-in in Tahrir Square was produced through unusual social patterns that emerged from unique type of relation between performers and audiences. These patterns emerged in front of the white screen inside the sit-in where the dichotomy of performer and audience vanished and where dual roles emerged; protesters were keeping control over their physical space; and their spectacular representation one as well. A unique dynamic interaction between protesters in front of the white screen sharing a common range of gestures, holding similar subjectivities and asking for same demands is the process that - performers- created the mediated subjects who filled Tahrir Square and their act of coming to the white screen of Tahrir –as audience-made them into genuine performers. Holding the audiences’ attention through spectacular representation would be key to sustaining the sit-in society of spectacle<sup>622</sup> born in Tahrir Square and allowed an ever-expanding audience to relate to themselves, and others, in completely new ways. Instead, the social relation between protesters while they were managing their own internal journalism system and media represented significant implications of the everyday way of living of the Cairenes in their informal settlements or urban poor. They have social relation that is based more on participating and sharing things in their public space and exchanging objects between each other. This was demonstrated in the way to provide newspaper for all sit-in terrain through an internal Newspaper Wall. Through this habits and social ties all protesters were able to follow latest news. There was a clear development in the people’s relation with an evolution as kind of coherent communities that come out of their needs, traditions, and communal status.

### **8.3.4. The Social Control Imposed on Media and News Display Spatial Practices**

#### *Tactics for Protection and Control inside Sit-in*

Besides the brutality and general violence around Tahrir Square, the levels of social control those journalists and citizen journalists encountered in the streets and at Tahrir Square approaches were also different. The precautions and tactics for the control of media by the State and dissemination of events, originated from before January 25, Res2 declared that, “The prohibition of anyone to reach rooftops or get out from balconies of apartments around Tahrir Square terrain was imposed by the police some days before January 25. They were ordered to lock their building entrances and not to allow any stranger inside their apartments or on rooftops.”(Int47, Res2) Public buildings around Tahrir Square were all closed and controlled by Special Forces policemen. They were completely inaccessible for any local or international journalists or citizen journalists.

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<sup>622</sup> Gunning, W. (2013).

Another source of controlling and policing was by the Egyptian army, marking every sit-in approach. Arm1 interviewee from the army explained: “We integrated with the sit-in community in protecting journalists. We agreed with protesters on which media crews were allowed to enter and cover the event from inside the sit-in.” (Int17, Arm1) The provision of tactics of protection and security for journalists reveals military support to media practices and sit-in spectacle. As Arm1 remarked that “we were differentiating the level of protection of journalists according to their nationalities as well. We were ordered to assist and join any foreign journalist entering the sit-in.” (Int17, Arm1) The protection of media crew inside the sit-in developed to be protesters’ and army forces’ responsibility entailing international media to be so closely cover the events through cautious protection strategies. The spatial contestation and the two different patterns of social control; either for suppression or protection for journalists, clearly emerged media broadcasting and display spatial patterns as crucial spatial practices in sit-in.

### *False Representation by the State Media*

Since the first day of demonstrations, the government started to crackdown on communication and online platforms aiming to limit the flow of information on what was happening and despite the crackdown, people of Egypt were still able to deliver videos, pictures from the demonstrations all over Egypt.<sup>623</sup> Network coverage in Tahrir Square specifically was shut down<sup>624</sup> which demonstrated how State government was deploying its control over social media spatially through media blackout mode. Another technique of hindering the visibility of the spectacular imagery of the evolution was used by the regime in order to not only restrict and block international media from reporting, but also to broadcast a false representation of the revolutionary public space. By making use of state owned television channels, the regime, had started a campaign to alter the representation of Tahrir Square from a revolutionary one to a public space that is being infiltrated by foreign powers. Even on February 2 while “Battle of the Camel” —Mubarak supporters attacked protesters on horses and camels was televised globally as an iconic moment in the Egyptian revolution. The Egyptian State TV channels were on a different universe, showing pictures of pro-Mubarak protesters all over Egypt and asking protesters in Tahrir to evacuate the square. Abdel-Latif El-Minawy, head of the news department at state television, revealed that a “higher authority” had given him strict orders on what to cover, adding that they had asked him not to have any cameras pointed towards Tahrir Square on Black Wednesday.<sup>625</sup> Arm1 explained that, “State television has cameras already recording all incidents from inside sit-in by 18 cameras over the Egyptian museum and from over Maspero, but it didn’t broadcast any on television. It remained showing same footage of river Nile view.” (Int17, Arm1) This continued till a certain moment when Maspero decided to shift its camera from Nile view, since it was impossible to deny the scene anymore, and Arm 1 added that, “they broadcasted the event even through it was zoomed out. (Int17, Arm1) The coverage was so disingenuous and disconnected from reality that it prompted defections.<sup>626</sup> Protestors were being portrayed on state television as a small group of Egyptians who does not represent the majority of the Egyptian people and who works as secret agents to foreign powers that seeks a destabilization of Egyptian political system.<sup>627</sup> Moreover, the state-owned television was focusing on the images of pro-Mubarak protests, while ignoring Tahrir Square completely. It was clear how the Egyptian state used the fact that they owned television in distorting the image of Tahrir Square.

<sup>623</sup> <http://advocacy.globalvoicesonline.org/2011/02/09/egypt-sequence-of-communication-shutdown-during-2011-uprising/>

<sup>624</sup> The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights encourages freedom of information <http://eipr.org/en/blog/post/2011/02/15/1138>

<sup>625</sup> Rabie, P. (2012, March 11)

<sup>626</sup> Lindsey, U. (2012). p. 56.

<sup>627</sup> Elkouedi, M. (2011)

As the government attacked the protesters and tried to bamboozle Egyptians sitting at home, it carried out a simultaneous and concerted campaign of intimidation against the press.<sup>628</sup> Tactics used against media workers, local and foreign journalists include repeated arrests and detention, harassment, the seizure of equipment and intimidation was significant around sit-in approaches. By trying to disrupt this public space, they tried both to restrict the access to Tahrir Square and make it less visible by removing all cameras and media from it. They stopped all reporters, especially foreign ones, they took their cameras, even the small ones that were placed in foreigner reporters' rooms in Hilton Ramsis hotel that overlooks Tahrir Square, were removed, leaving Tahrir Square with no live images at all on February 3 2011.<sup>629</sup> Journalists fitted the risk profile as they were attacked by police and thugs, arrested and tortured in order to prevent any media practices to be part of sit-in spatial practices. These strategies were encountered by people's and military force's tactics as explained before, while protecting journalists that encouraged dual control from citizens and the army forces at the edges of sit-in. Hence, the fear actually came less by keeping journalists inside the sit-in terrain and especially in private spaces as apartments, rooftop or balconies. When the sit-in was still under threat and fear from attacks, journalists were obtaining certain protection and security treatment for journalists keen on transferring events. They were protected with their tools in upper level from sit-in. But when the sit-in was completely controlled and secured as a liberated spot, they had a legitimate reason to exist around sit-in terrain freely.

*Spatial Exclusion of the State Journalists and Reporters*

The inclusion of journalists inside the sit-in was not the same for the State's ones. Egypt's state media which comprise eight TV channels, numerous radio stations, dozens of newspapers and magazines were all unwelcomed inside the sit-in by protesters. The spatial prevention of State Media in the sit-in was a result to State media blackout on sit-in news and being seen as dishonest and false journalist who disseminated false information, so they fell roughly into the category of anti-social behaviour, as it was not a conventional practice in sit-in. One way in which we can explain this phenomenon is that the ideology of deceptive and hypocritical behaviour was actually a fairly famous trend for Egyptian state's journalists. For decades, public channels and journals could not show any loyalty or support to citizens. Successive Egyptian presidents exercised tight control over media ownership and content, albeit to varying degrees, and used state-owned, national media to disseminate local and regional public opinion campaigns.<sup>630</sup> Moreover, the social norm cultivated by sit-in community makes sense by tracing the history of Public channels' and journals' actions till the last moment. State-run television and newspapers such as the iconic *Al-Ahram* initially dismissed the mass demonstrations against President Hosni Mubarak as non-events.<sup>631</sup> Therefore, whenever journalists or broadcasters from public channels were found inside they were kicked out of the sit-in directly. The dim coverage by the State Media to the sit-in entailed active patterns of exclusion from the sit-in that reflects multiple fears: fear of falsification, fear of blackout, and fear of un-amplification of events and fear of un-spectacular performance.

## **8.4. Conclusion**

The 18 days of the Egyptian revolution had many cameras trying to capture different views by standing in different location, media recording turned sit-in events into a spectacular performance. The sit-in in Tahrir

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<sup>628</sup> Sowers, J. and Toensing, C. (eds) (2012).

<sup>629</sup> Elkouedi, M. (2011)

<sup>630</sup> Boyd, D.A. (1999).

<sup>631</sup> Leila F. & Londoño, E. ( 2011, February 9).

Square and its live broadcast indeed can be seen as the loss of power that breaks the symbolic ordering of the space that we lived in as the heart of the regime power. The mental and visual representation by media was a significant evidence for the happenings. It was obvious that the relocation of politics to Tahrir Square provided the essential link between the performance, and the spectacle. Through an analysis of media display and coverage as part of spatial patterns in Tahrir Square, this chapter recognizes that a spatial inter-relation of citizen media and mainstream media patterns were fundamental in the extent of amplification of space and events that occurred during 18 days of sit-in. Specifically, it highlights the spatial practices that drove citizen media and mainstream media to amplify the space and turning it into a spectacular 'internationalized space.' The findings on how spectacular imagery were produced to provide a new insight on the complex relationship between spaces of physical, space of the digital and space of the mainstream media that affected significantly the performances and enthusiasm of protesters. Existing five stars hotels provided vivid display base for events, human rights centres acted as base station for communication, media tent collecting and disseminating multimedia, social control and security imposed for media crews protection, etc... were all spatial tactics for performing spectacle and amplifying revolutionary space. This revolution can never resort to a single communication medium. Social media played a speed and interactive role throughout the planning and organization phases, and also throughout the testing phase during the 18 days, but other means of communication contributed to the complex spatial pattern for media coverage and display. Journalists and citizen journalists' performance and the integrated media spatial practices between citizen media and reinforced mainstream media can then be understood through the phase of spectacular. It is logical that the studies and analyses of spatial practice in Tahrir Square during the 18 days should not be detached from understanding the importance of social media and main stream media as collective spectacular making.

Moreover it is a contention of this chapter that spatial practices by citizen journalists constituted the transition from testing to spectacular phase and allowed protesters to not only bypass the traditional media in conveying their message but to lead the media coverage. This chapter found that media display spatial practices helped to accomplish the spectacular as well. Tahrir Square became more complex, being a stage for performing revolutionary spectacle to all the world and a space for displaying it. The act of watching the sit-in of Tahrir Square on a screen inside Tahrir Square as part of a spatial pattern affected significantly the performances and enthusiasm of protesters and demonstrated the emergence of a new "society of the spectacle"<sup>632</sup> and the end of the regime. In this case, Tahrir Square had powerfully operated as dual functions: a stage and screening space. The 18 days of the Egyptian revolution had many cameras trying to capture different views by standing in different location, media recording turned sit-in events into a spectacular performance. The sit-in in Tahrir Square and its live broadcast indeed can be seen as the loss of power that breaks the symbolic ordering of the space that represented the regime power. The mental and visual representation by media was a significant evidence for the happenings. It was obvious that the relocation of politics to Tahrir Square provided the essential link between the performance, and the spectacle.

This chapter showed that the importance of media spatial practices in mobilization of protesters and gazing attention of audiences all over the world cannot be separated from the reality of contemporary urban condition during the 18 days marked by the State censorship of traditional media through their fake representation of Tahrir Square and dealing with journalists and media crew as risk profile. These Regime's strategies to spatially oppose and disrupt the media network and communication was encountered by protesters', military force's and journalists' tactics entailing an amplification of events. This spectacular contestation has set media spatial practices as part of the sit-in acts of resistance. The act of protection of journalists and citizen journalists by locating media crews in such secured background was to ensure full coverage of events. All hotels around sit-in were locations for viewing sit-in and its approaches as well. Managing where the crowds were in relation to camera locations and protected journalists was a symbol for empowerment. The mental and visual

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<sup>632</sup> Gunning, W. (2013).



representation by media was a significant evidence for the happenings. In the second phase was the amplification of people's voice and practices with a shift of global audiences to 24/7 live coverage via full power of citizen media and mainstream media that turned sit-in events into a spectacular performance. It witnessed a significant ability of spatial coverage with high capacity of footages that captured a large amount of viewers' attention. Tracing spatial practice of this phase explains how unedited and raw footages with natural sound were always preference in order to let imageries to spatially express. This had significant implications on how audiences interact with information and its nature. This representation of events was able to transform normal audience into active- audience "House revolutionaries." This instant spatial production and dissemination offered, reveals a transformation in the modes and rules of presenting materials, copyrighting and sharing materials in order to amplify events.

The decentralized bodily experience of journalists and citizen journalists was crucial in first days in order to be able to record different experiences and events along each approach. Their outputs worked as strong evidences for the general trend of brutality and how police dealt with protesters along different spots. Yet, the body dynamics changed in the second phase in order to encounter other spatial challenges. These spaces witnessed bodily interchange in order to achieve the highest spectacular imagery intense by different media agencies. As the bodies assembled inside sit-in to create a space of appearance reinforced by "the extended social space [...] Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and e-mail [...] amplified by mass broadcast media."<sup>633</sup> The fact that media agencies decided to turn the sit-in into spectacular imagery entailed permanent bodily appearance during the 18 days. By choosing strategic birds view locations, streaming live, sharing and uploading experience instantly through traditional media or YouTube and Facebook, this creative appearance intensity, significantly affected the protesters' acts into more performative act, communicative but also theatrical, that geared to specific settings and worldwide audiences. The 24 hours focus on sit-in was kind of reinforcement for protesters' actions and gaze more attention of the world. In short, it was through both protesters performance and the media workers and their spectacular imagery and representation of space that both collaborated in a series of political performances that were also performances of space. This was an indication of the integration of mainstream media spatial practices with citizen media ones in order to cover events that was concentrated in Tahrir Square.

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<sup>633</sup> Mitchell, W. J. (2012).



Figure 8.1: Riot police force protesters back across the Qasr Al Nile Bridge as they attempt to get into Tahrir Square. (Source: [www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk))



Figure 8.2: Protesters protecting journalist during clashes (Source: <https://www.facebook.com/video.egypt/photos/a.507966782580771.122111type=1&theater>)



Figure 8.3: Live streaming from inside the Square, 4 February. (Source: [www.demotix.com/news/579884/friday-departure-cairo#media-579855](http://www.demotix.com/news/579884/friday-departure-cairo#media-579855))



Figure 8.4: Christian Songs at Tahrir.Square. People on stage from Qasr el Dobara Evangelical Church, 3 Feb 2011. (Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/39150031@N03/5625400710/in/photostream>)





Figure 8.5: This platform has become a kind of "Speakers' Corner" for protesters to call comrades to action and pay tribute to those who have died during the demonstrations. The white screen is used to project televised speeches by the government and the army. (Source: [www.bbc.com/news/world-1243477](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-1243477))



Figure 8.6: Every morning Egypt's main newspapers are pasted up on the shutters of this shop, allowing protesters who cannot afford to buy a paper can still follow the latest reports, says our correspondent. (Source: [www.bbc.com/news/world-12434787#newspaper-wall](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-12434787#newspaper-wall))



Figure 8.7: President Hosni Mubarak's latest appeal to the Egyptian people fell on deaf ears in Tahrir Square.  
(Source: [www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/02/01/a\\_wounded\\_father\\_figure](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/02/01/a_wounded_father_figure))



Figure 8.8: Journalists recording documentary for awareness. (Source: taken by Ahmed Zaazaa)



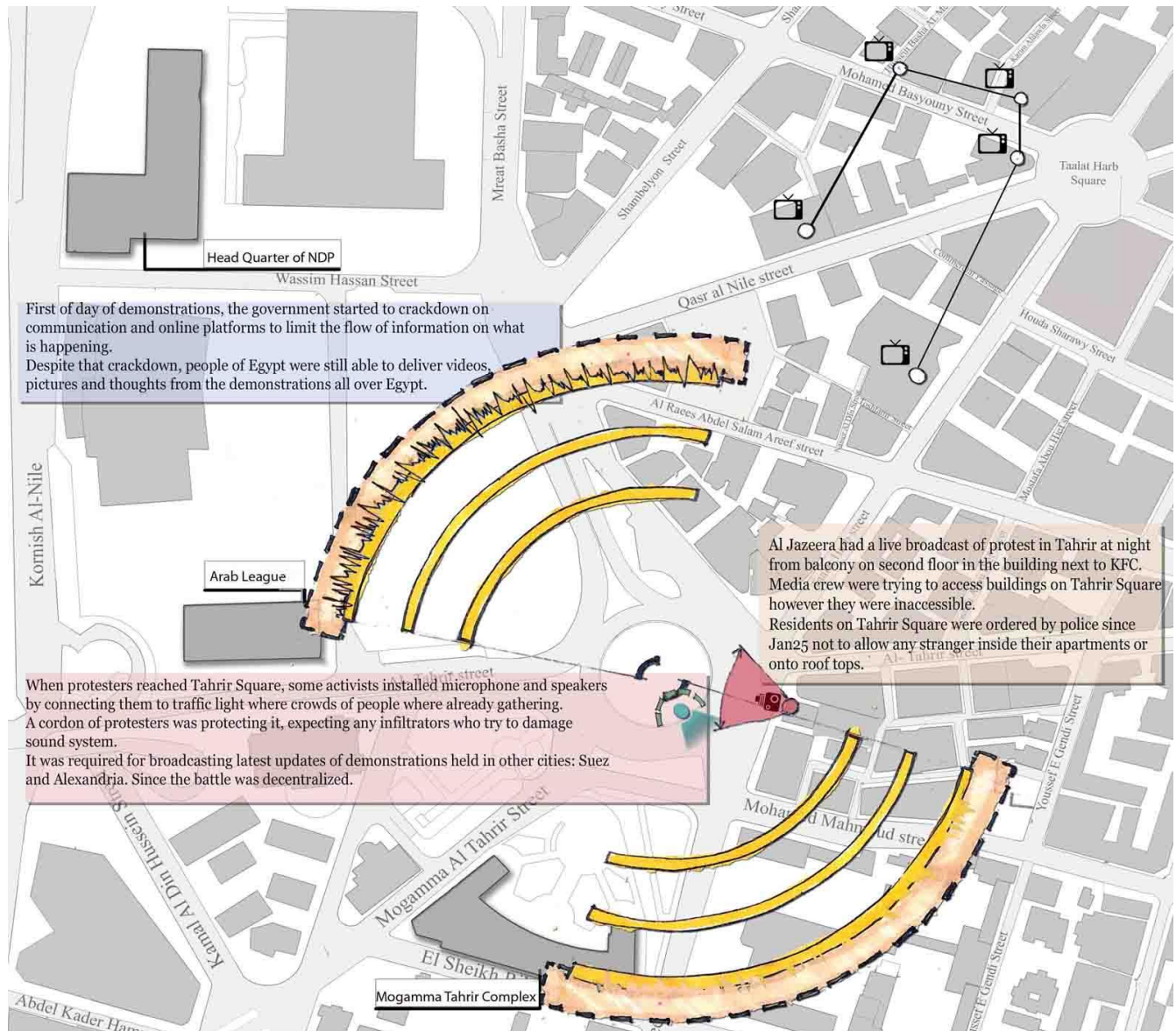


Figure 8.9: Media and News display spatial practices on Jan25. (Source: By the Researcher)



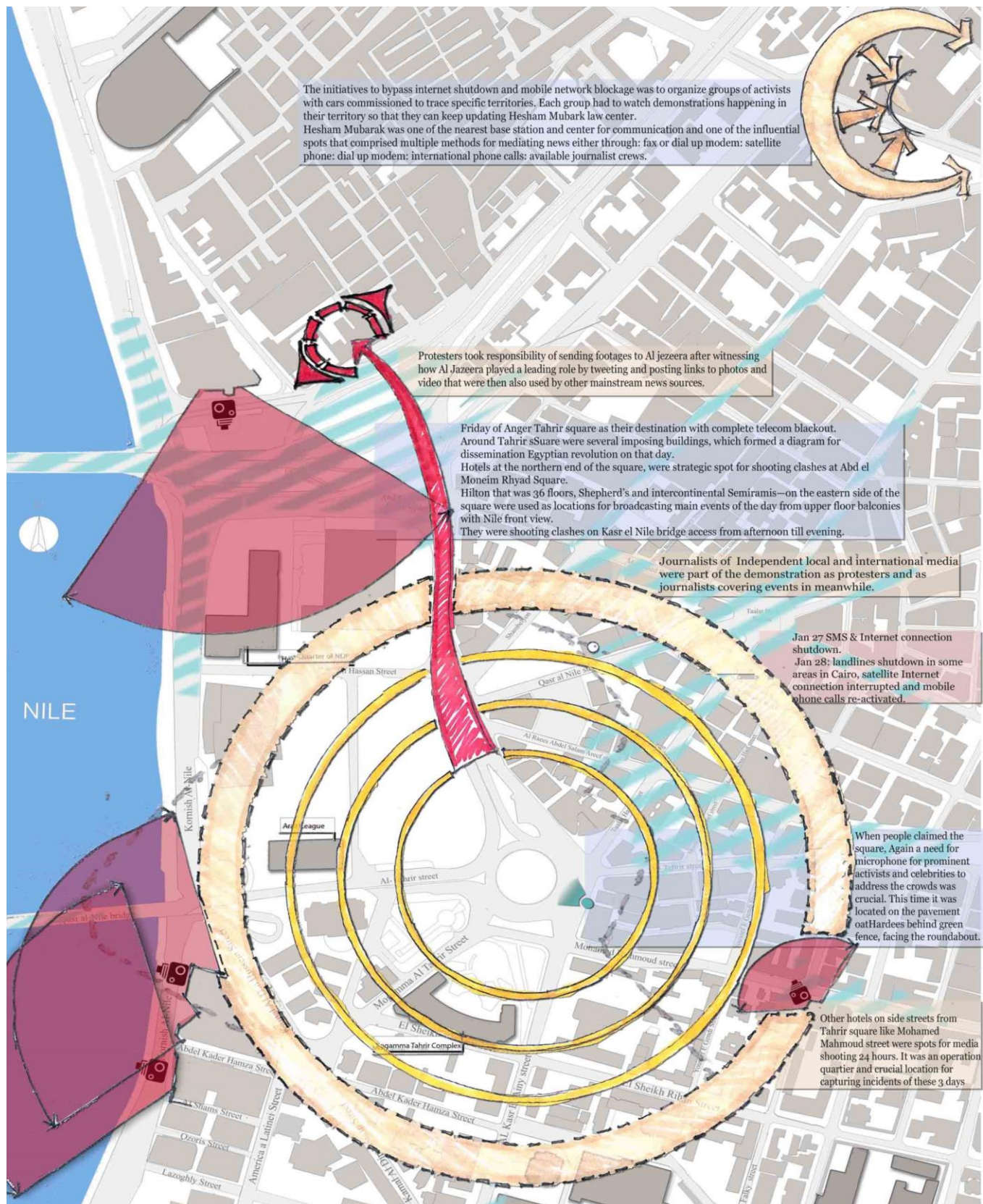


Figure 8.10: Media and News display spatial practices on Jan28. (Source: By the Researcher)



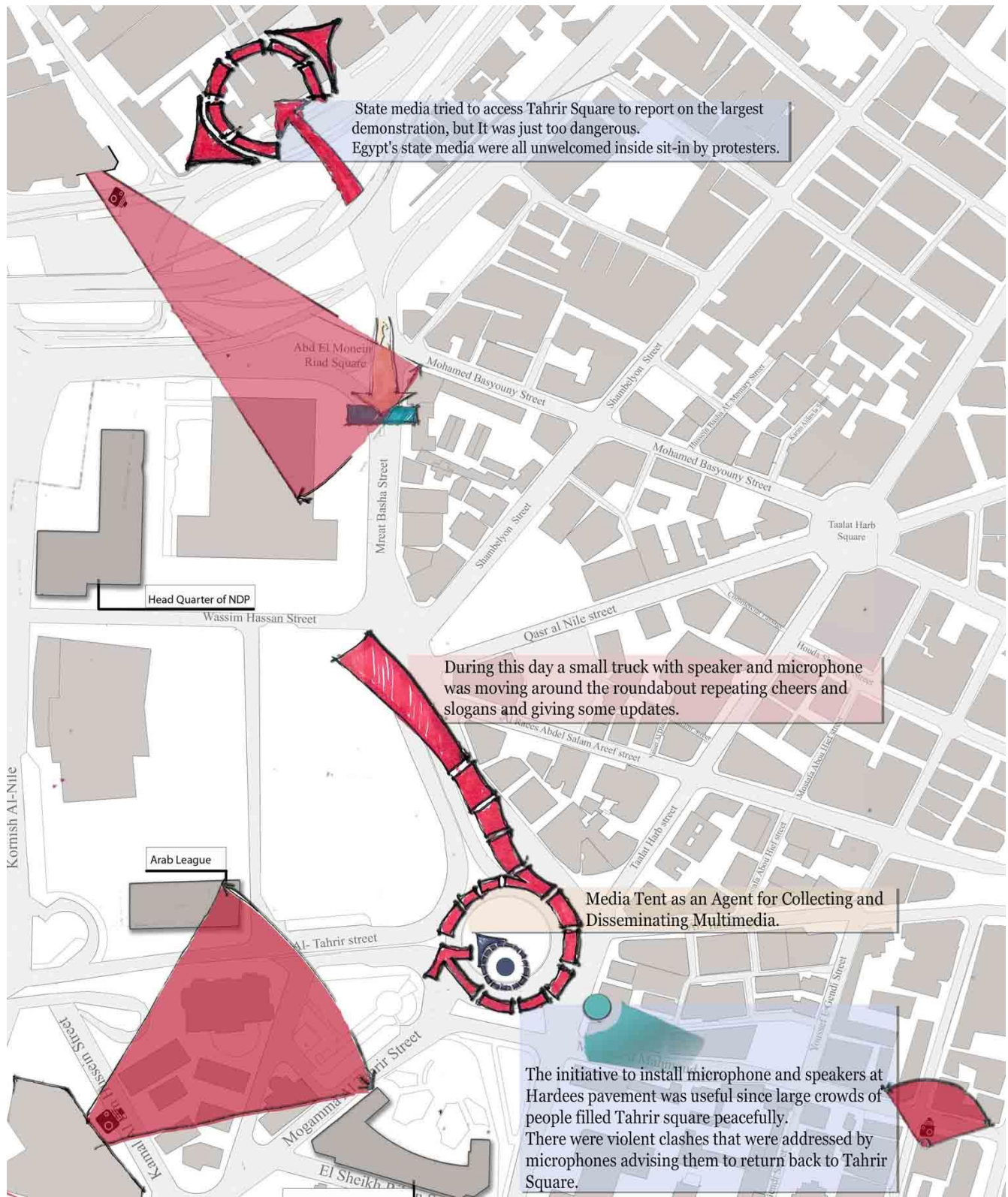


Figure 8.11: Media and News display spatial practices on Jan29. (Source: By the Researcher)



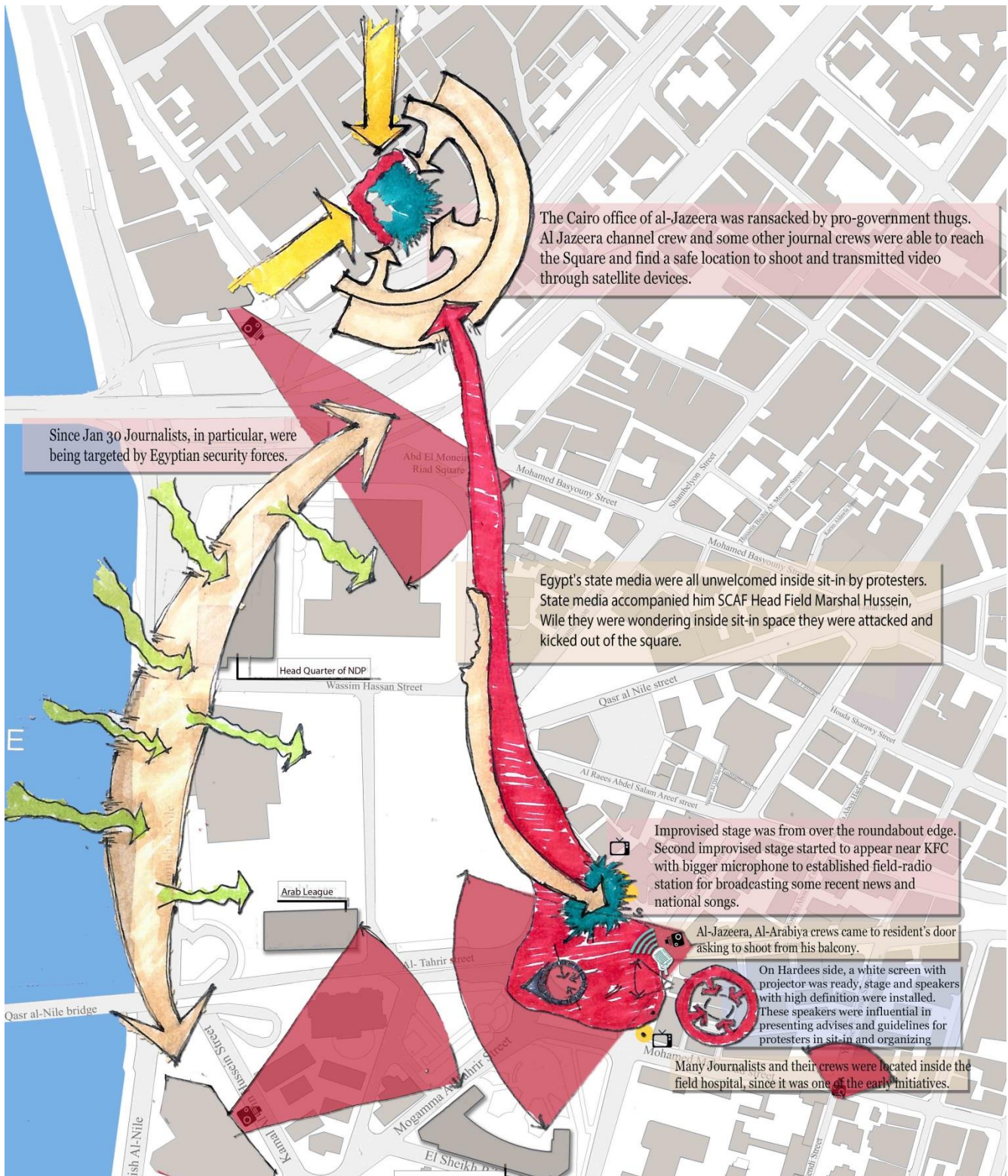


Figure 8.12: Media and News display spatial practices on Jan 30 and 31. (Source: By the Researcher)



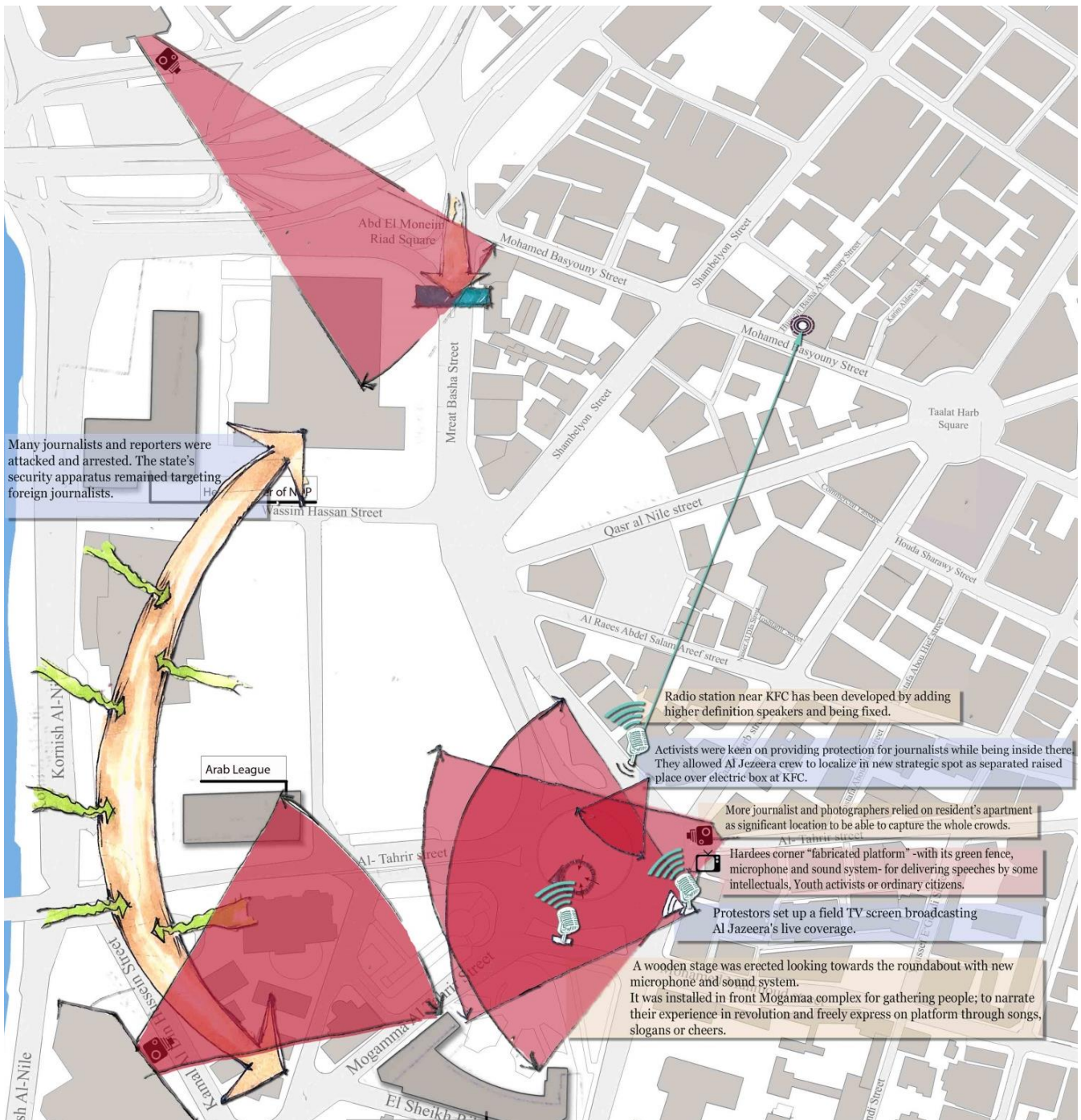


Figure 8.13: Media and News display spatial practices on Feb 1. (Source: By the Researcher)



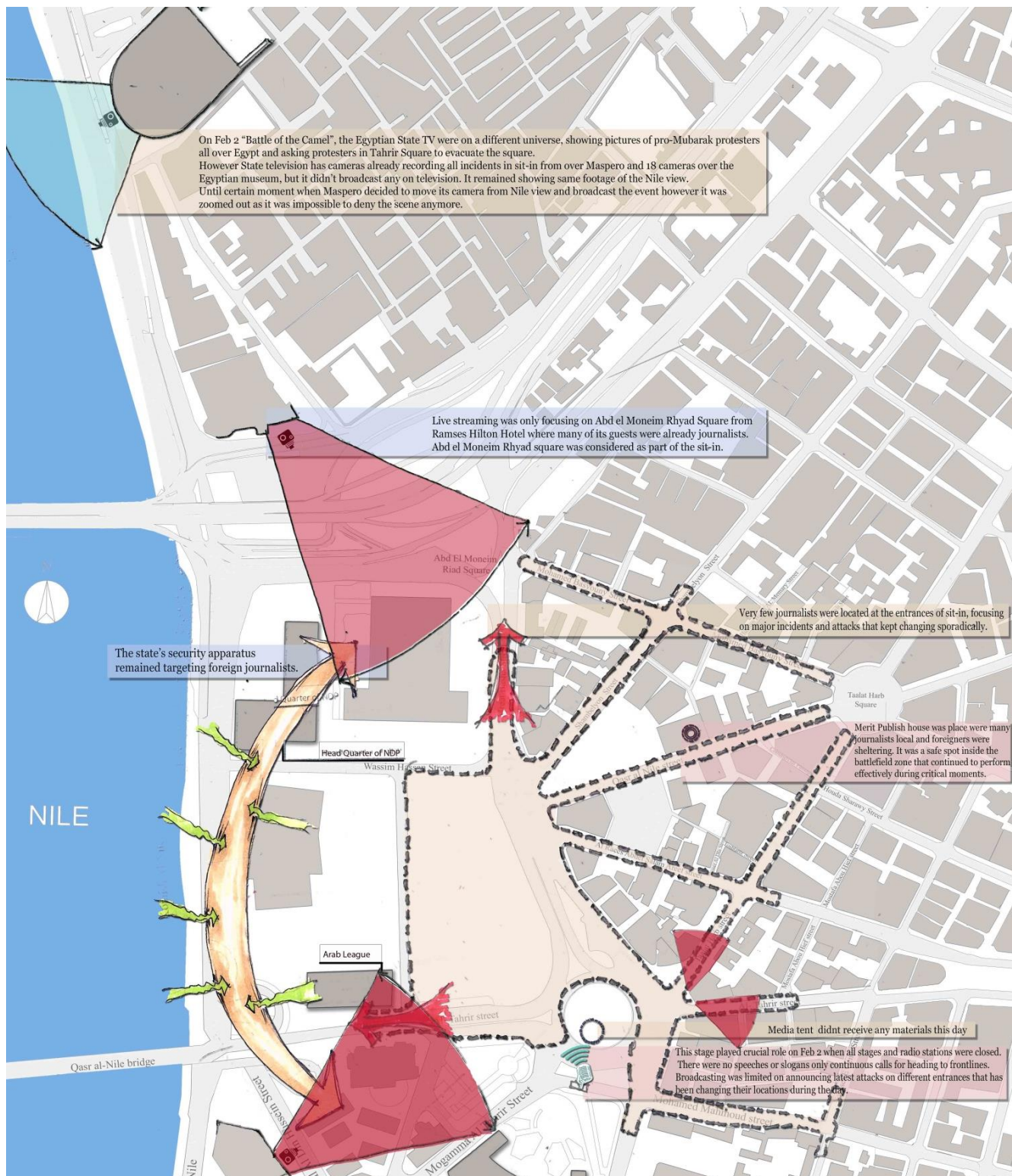


Figure 8.14: Media and News display spatial practices on Feb 2. (Source: By the Researcher)



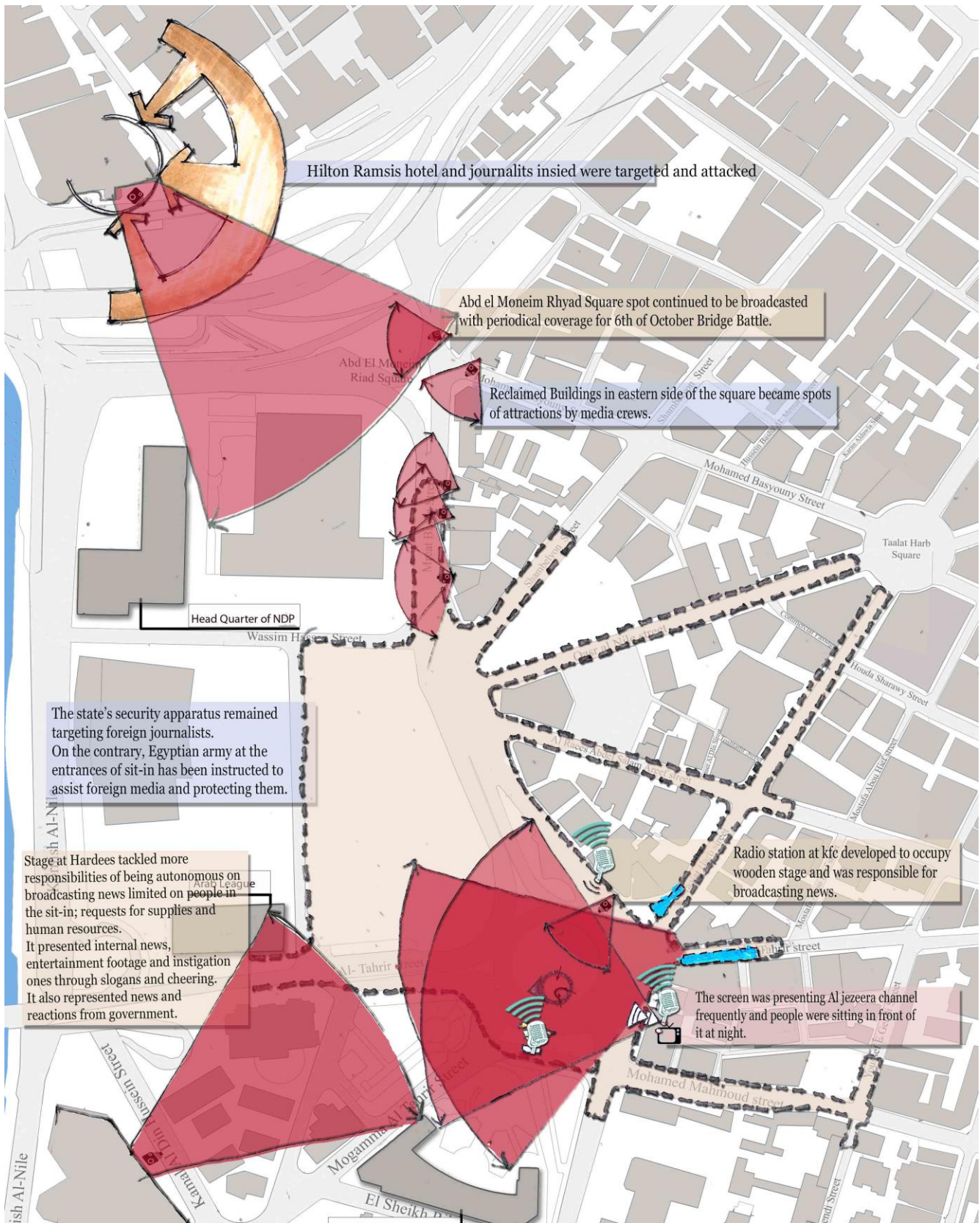


Figure 8.15: Media and News display spatial practices on Feb 3. (Source: By the Researcher)





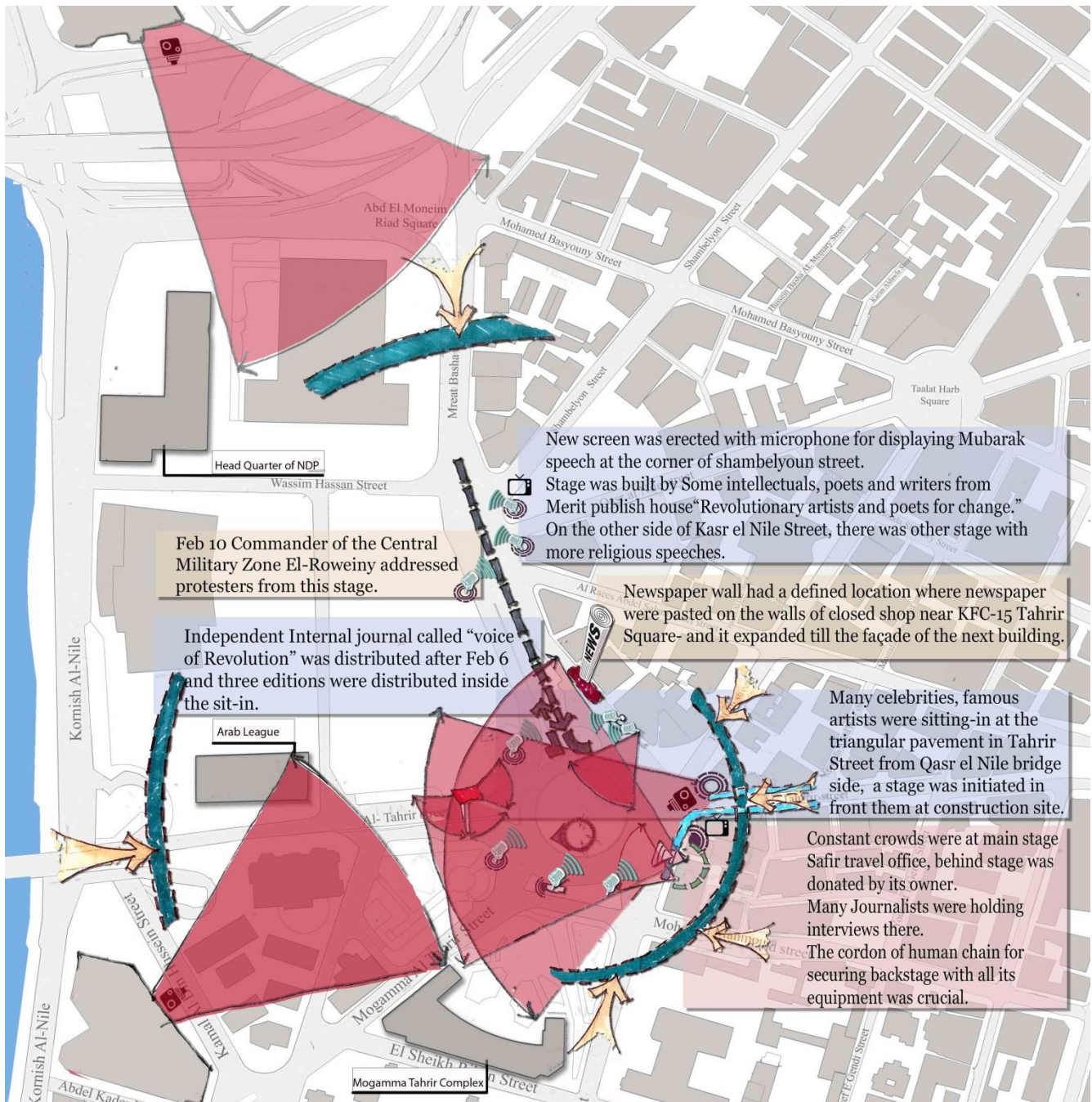


Figure 8.17: Media and News display spatial practices on Feb 7 till 11. (Source: By the Researcher)



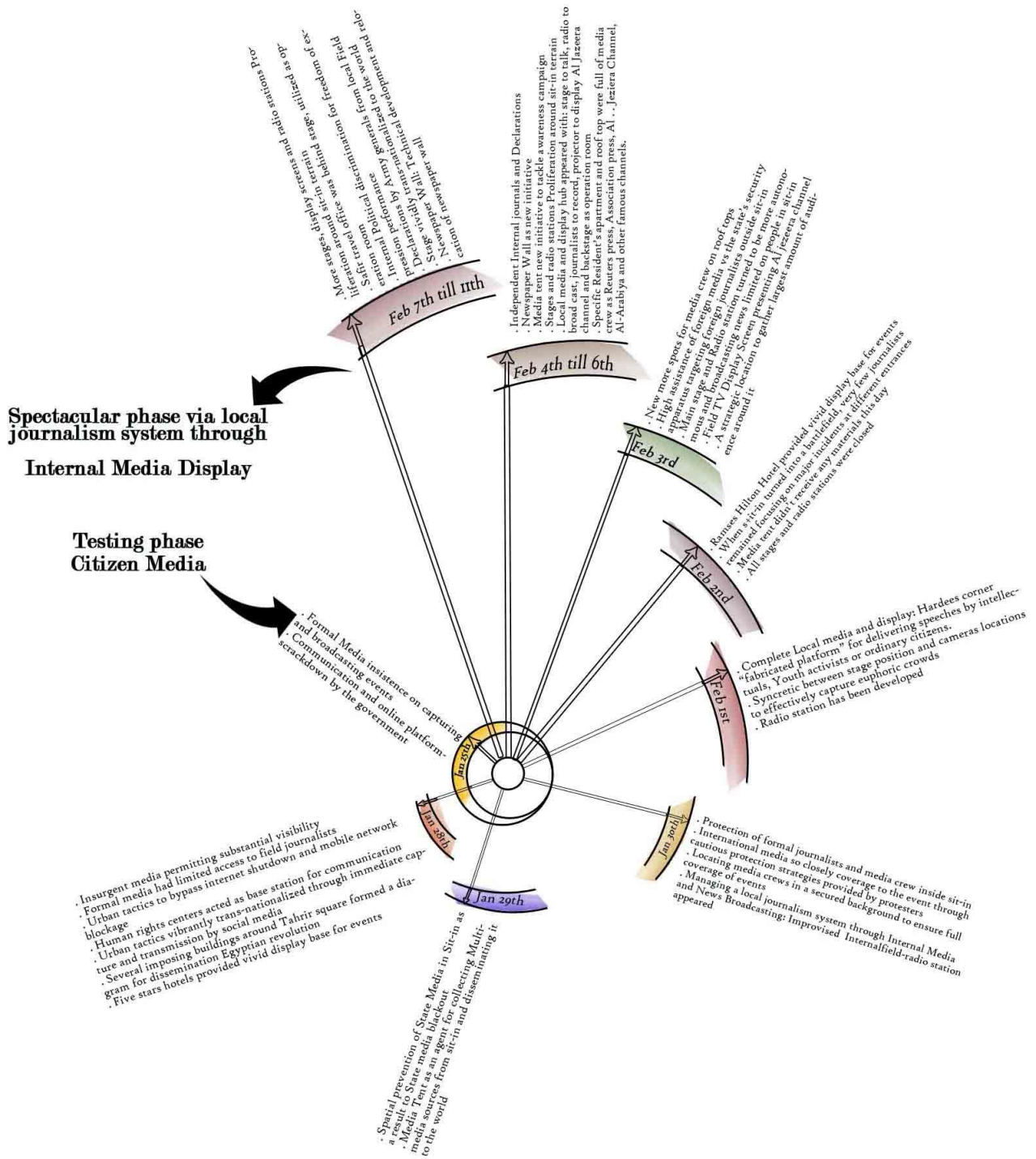


Figure 8.18: Media and News display spatial practices development. (Source: By the Researcher)

## 9. Hospitalization and Emergency Support in the Medical Colony

### 9.1. Introduction

In Tahrir Square, during the public occupation which re-designed an infrastructural sit-in into a force that overwhelmed a government, medical personnel too were part of this community, and part of the spatial organization of the protest as a medical colony. Hospitalization and emergency support were practiced in the 'lived space' offering potential new experiences with medical treatment through different social interactions among medical personnel. Tahrir Square sit-in embodied these shifts and relations while becoming an 'instant city' in itself, demanding alternative hospitalization and medical treatment. They challenged the established logic of architecture and redefined medical treatment norms and systems by utilizing alternative spaces and wide network for supplying and ambulance. Hospitalization and medical treatments emerged as a kind of spatial colony for service systems, challenging all traditional systems imposed in formal hospitals. Moreover, it was an alternative restructure of medical personnel in relation to the system and contesting the perception of a medical professional as being part of the regime and not against it.

This chapter adds to the discussion a study of spatiality regarding medical care and hospitalization through different spatial reconfigurations, organizational reconfigurations, and the reconfiguration of processes of ordering and routines. The chapter does this through exploring the medical colony as an alternative medical treatment space, offering a unique manageable variation of process and spatial configuration. Tracing hospitalization and emergency support practices shall explain how people during the sit-in persisted in their use of space to complete their medical colony. Alternative medical treatment entailed instant change of the use of space, social relations, the spatial system and other networks shall all be explored in this chapter in order to reveal something about their production of space. This can capture the particularities of the medical colony while escaping from formal hospital "multi-formality."<sup>634</sup>

#### 9.1.1. Heterotopia: Space of Multi Orderings

In this way, the notion of 'heterotopia' can be useful for thinking through hospital spatiality. Alice and Street claimed that Foucault's concept of heterotopia usefully captures the complex relationships between order and disorder, stability and instability that define the hospital as a modernist institution of knowledge, governance, and improvement.<sup>635</sup> They expand Foucault's focus on the disciplinary, heterotopic qualities of the field hospital to explore the heterotopia as a space of multiple orderings.<sup>636</sup> These orderings are not only biomedical. Rather, hospitals are notable for the intensity and heterogeneity of the ongoing spatial ordering processes, both biomedical and other, that produce them. Hetherington uses the notion of "orderings"<sup>637</sup> rather than orders to draw attention to the incompleteness and contingency of any socio-spatial arrangement. In this regards, alternate orderings through performances can bring together of physical spaces, technologies, representations, and persons in new configurations of the social. After fieldwork on the surgical ward of a public Bangladeshi hospital, Zaman argues, "The hospital is not an isolated subculture or an "island," rather it is a microcosm of the

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<sup>634</sup> Coleman, S. and Street, A. (2012). PP.4-17.

<sup>635</sup> Coleman, S. and Street, A. (2012).

<sup>636</sup> Hetherington, K. (1997).

<sup>637</sup> Hetherington, K. (1997).

larger society in which it is situated. A hospital ward is therefore a mirror that reflects and reveals the core values and norms of the broader society.”<sup>638</sup> Through the notion of heteropia, a field hospital or medical colony can be demonstrated as a space of contestation where the image of ‘hospital’ is contested and the culture of ‘hospital’ challenged by the appearance and spatiality of a formal hospital as a “tight little island.”<sup>639</sup>

One of the main focuses of this is that the influence of spatial configuration may not come in the form of correlations between movement flows and integration as in any traditional hospital. Instead, it comes through what spatial configuration does — as it made use of through spatial ordering — where order is considered both in its functional sense and as daily routines and habits. One way to understand this is to perceive the space as a layered space, produced from actions and social relations. This illustration of ordering space processes thus appear important to understand better and describe with more precision the completion of a medical colony in Tahrir Square. Hospitalization and emergency support patterns will not thus only be seen as illustrations of Henri Lefebvre’s notion of spatial practice and lived space,<sup>640</sup> but also shall be presented through three dimensions which the heterotopic and contingent qualities of hospital spaces which might be explored, namely: the production of Live space through multi-orderings space and new social relations; the social control for maintaining spatial boundary for hospitalization and Emergency support; and the discursive construction of hospitalization and medical treatment. The dimension of social control in the medical colony shall be illustrated in how it preserved the boundary through spatial practices. Symbolic meanings associated with alternative space for hospitalization and social control shall also be discussed to provide insight into acts of resistance.

### **9.1.2. Formal Hospitals Role around Tahrir Square Terrain**

When events of 28 January were violently repressed by police forces, doctors in formal hospitals and especially around Tahrir Square, witnessed first-hand the violence committed against the demonstrators that day. Qasr El Eini University Hospital, Qasr El Eini French Hospital, Al Demerdash Hospital, the Coptic Hospital, Al Munira Hospital, Ahmed Maher Hospital, and Al Hilal Hospital Naseer Hospital all received a flux in the number of casualties being brought to their units from the Tahrir square area. (See Fig 9.8) In an attempt to hamper protesters from organizing demonstrations, there was an almost complete disruption of the internet, cellular, and most landline phone communication services by the regime.<sup>641</sup> This greatly inhibited mobilizing more medical personnel.<sup>642</sup> Disruption of communication services affected all inter-hospital communication services as well. According to the information gathered by FIDH, this first day of clashes killed 232 people in Cairo.<sup>643</sup> According to Dr Ahmed M. who was on duty on the 28 at the Qasr El Eini University Hospital (Intensive Care Unit), 49 people died, 31 of who were dead on arrival.<sup>644</sup> Qasr El Aini hospital Cairo University Hospital was the largest hospital in the Middle East and the tertiary referral center for all hospitals in Egypt, it also happened to be the closest to Tahrir Square.<sup>645</sup> Cairo University Hospital’s inter-hospital communication services were intact and fully functional, as this is a totally independent internal system.<sup>646</sup> Dr7 explained that, “All stuff was requested to present, all operating rooms were open and all refrigerators were full. The situation continued to be the same for 3 consecutive days.”(Int27, Dr7) Nineteen surgeons from different specialties were on duty on January 28, 2011, and 22 volunteer surgeons who were participating in the demonstration at Tahrir

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<sup>638</sup> Zaman, S. (2005).

<sup>639</sup> Coser, R. L. (1962).

<sup>640</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991).

<sup>641</sup> Nahlieli, O., Baruchin, A. M., & Neder, A. (1993).

<sup>642</sup> Sarhan, M. D., Dahaba, A. A., Marco, M., & Salah, A. (2012). p.1093-1097.

<sup>643</sup> Egypt - After 15 days of pro-democratic revolution. (2011, February 11).

<sup>644</sup> FIDH - International Federation for Human Rights (2011).

<sup>645</sup> Sarhan, M.D., et al. (2012)

<sup>646</sup> Sarhan, M.D., et al. (2012)

Square at that time, rushed to Cairo University Hospital after noticing the pattern of the organized escalating violence.<sup>647</sup>

Cairo ambulance transportation services belong to the “Central Ambulance Service,” which is an independently operating organization responsible for patient emergency transportation.<sup>648</sup> It basically works on the simple strategy of transporting casualties on a case- by-case basis to the nearest suitably equipped available hospital.<sup>649</sup> The Assistant to the Minister worked on SWOT analysis which showed that the ambulance system was providing notoriously poor service. The 123 call-in service was manned by often inattentive local operators and there was no central call centre and no GPS tracking system.<sup>650</sup> Understandably, Egypt’s traditional Ambulance service was famous for its unreliability. Yet on that day, State security commandeered ambulances to arrest the unsuspecting injured, and hospitals were pressured into falsifying the cause of death for demonstrators who were shot at close range.<sup>651</sup> Obviously, there was a need for an alternative ambulance system during the 18 days of clashes.

Although Tahrir Square is surrounded by the biggest hospitals in Cairo, there was significant collusion between the Egyptian government and hospitals which paralyzed their performance. It was clear in their tactics inside the hospital and even in streets through the lack of ambulances. There are various reports of arresting the injured from public hospitals.<sup>652</sup> While demonstrations were violently attacked by the police, Dr5 explained that, “Formal hospitals were ordered by police to register protestors and send them after treatment to the State security office unless doctors decide to smuggle them after treatment.”(Int25, Dr5) Dr7 added that, “Qasr El Aini hospital remained very effective and crucial to the whole revolution as doctors were able to pass casualties without registering them at reception first.”(Int25, Dr5) Dr5 described that, “Al-Munira General Hospital was sending casualties to the police after treating them. Instead, Al-Hilal Hospital was sometimes sending protestors to the police and sometimes not, depending on which doctors were on shift. Some doctors decided to treat casualties and smuggle them, while other doctors sent them to the police”(Int25, Dr5) Dr Mahmoud S., Assistant Manager at Mounira Hospital, mentioned that, “On Tuesday 25 from 5 p.m. many patients were brought in from Tahrir Square. SSI and general police were in the hospital waiting for people to be treated before taking them to an unknown place. At least 10 patients were taken from the hospital in a blue closed police van. The medical staff succeeded in preventing the security forces from taking four demonstrators, claiming they had a concussion and needed to remain under strict observation in the hospital and 10-15 policemen in the corridor and SSI officers.”<sup>653</sup>

In short, Medical treatment was crucial since the first day but, protestors suffered in the state-affiliated hospitals to which they were delivered. Hospital revealed as an insecure and inadequate place to visit during the 18 days. Alternative hospitalization and medical treatment was required then. “Without the help of those doctors and the medical volunteers at the Tahrir makeshift hospitals, the injured would have been left in the throes of despair,” Wahid insisted.<sup>654</sup> On January 28 therefore, according to Dr6, “Casualties transferred from Tahrir terrain were advised to go private hospitals or the Coptic Hospital or Al Demerdash hospital in Ramsis St or Qasr El Aini hospital where doctors were supportive to demonstrators.”(Int26, Dr6) While on February 2<sup>nd</sup> Dr3 recalled that, “Formal hospitals around sit-in terrain were ready for receiving influx number of casualties,

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<sup>647</sup> Sarhan, M.D., et al. (2012).

<sup>648</sup> Sarhan, M.D., et al. (2012).

<sup>649</sup> Sarhan, M.D., et al. (2012)

<sup>650</sup> Bossert, T., & El Rabbat, M.(2012).

<sup>651</sup> El-Ghobashy, M. (2011).

<sup>652</sup> O.T.R.O, N. (2011, November 21).

<sup>653</sup> FIDH - International Federation for Human Rights (2011).

<sup>654</sup> Shahine, G. (2013, January 23).

however not many casualties arrived in comparison to Jan 28.”(Int23, Dr3) On 2 Feb the Zawia Field Hospital faced lots of cases continuously that needed to be transferred to hospitals. Dr6 explained that, “Doctors were aware of the police tactics and decided not to transfer any casualties to public hospital directly. The Coptic Hospital in Ramses St and public hospitals as Al Demerdash were near and received casualties after arranging with some colleagues to smuggle them after treatment.”(Int26, Dr6) Due to all these traditional patterns -of being with the Regime- in formal hospitals left them not main destination for casualties in comparison to field clinics and hospitals in sit-in that played major role.

Dr7 remarked that, “Some formal hospitals in the aftermath of the ‘Camel Battle’, such as Qasr El El Aini Research and Teaching Hospital, were like Al Demerdash — very effective. Many doctors were counting on near formal hospitals for obtaining life needs; resting; for using the washroom and changing their clothes and for provisioning of medical supplies.” He added that, “Ambulance cars driven by pro-revolution supporters were helpful to send doctors from and to the hospital quickly and securely.”(Int27, Dr7) Dr2 described that, “Qasr El El Aini Research and Teaching Hospital was one of the major sources for supplies.”(Int22, Dr2) The proximity of multiple hospitals to Tahrir Square played a dual role during the 18 days. They were risk destination, unsupportive however informal actions by doctors —either treating casualties or taking supplies- and their adherence were effective as well. There were evident distrust between protesters and hospitals as State institutions, however, doctors were able to spatially proof their autonomy and capability of taking decisions for treating demonstrators on their own responsibility outside formal hospital parameters. This shall be explained while tracing their activities in sit-in terrain.

## **9.2. The Growth and Narratives of the Medical Colony**

### **9.2.1. Temporary Medical Treatment Spots**

The necessity for medical treatment and hospital provision was apparent from the first day of the demonstrations. It was essential due to violent confrontations between demonstrators and police which resulted in some casualties. Dr4 was one of the individual doctors treating injuries. He explained that, “These practices appeared initially as a spontaneous reaction of medical personnel taking part in demonstrations.”(Int2, Dr4) This sense of responsibility for treating and transporting casualties allowed medical practices to appear on-site. On January 25<sup>th</sup> when demonstrations reach Tahrir Square, Dr4 recalled that, “Non organized, individual doctors and medical personnel equipped by First Aid tools for medical treatment spread in and around the roundabout where casualties were surrounding them. Later on, collective initiatives emerged from individual protesting doctors through a temporary medical treatment space on one side of the square at Koshri restaurant next to KFC -which was visible with wide pavement- initiated. (Int24, Dr4) This reasonable spot had less foot traffic than the previous location. Tahrir restaurant offered its front space for medical treatment with outdoor furniture, a source of light and available supplies for treatment.”(Int24, Dr4) Treating casualties by the same system continued until 12.30am when the police decided to evacuate Tahrir Square. The January 25<sup>th</sup> demonstrations witnessed a kind of shift from individual initiatives for medical treatments to one of a collective initiative. It was clear, however, that spontaneous care among initial medical points emerged in specifically zoned space; i.e., doctors were trying to attain spatial isolation and safe for treatment for their patients from the beginning. (See Fig 9.9)

Spatial responsibility by medical personnel on that day generated a sense of teamwork and the need to be better organized for big event planned for January 28. (Int24, Dr4) On that day, all communication services were blocked; therefore, Dr4 recalled that, “Many protesting-medical personnel were forced to participate in

demonstrations as individuals again.”(Int24, Dr4) On this day, clashes were located all along the approaches to Tahrir Square, while Police was fighting with deadly force to prevent demonstrations from reaching Tahrir Square. Dr4 explained that, “Temporary medical treatment spots were erected in residential building entrances or in shops from the Downtown-side approaches.”(Int24, Dr4) Instead, Dr1 remarked that, “On Qasr el Nile Bridge, it was too difficult for temporary medical treatment spots to be initiated, so the nearest opportunity for medical treatment was only at the beginning of the bridge. Due to the difficulty of finding places to treat injured protestors, volunteers were transferring casualties from confrontation hotspots to behind the frontline, i.e., to where cars could stop to take them to the nearest hospitals.”(Int21, Dr1) For Qasr el Ainy Street, where most of the buildings are government offices, Act1 explained that, “The use of residential building entrances for medical treatment was very few and at the beginning of the street only, since public buildings weren’t accessible and would be dangerous if used. In addition, green fences along two sides of the street were significant barriers while transferring casualties.”(Int1, Act1) The events of the day were marked by resistance to treat casualties on site. (See Fig 9.10) Doctors insisted on treating protestors with all the risks and dangers they faced. Differences in modes of treatment while dealing with space and built environment, shaped each experience and the appearance of medical spots. In addition to that, Dr7 described that, “Doctors between demonstrators were advising protestors not to deal with any public hospitals and to go to private hospitals to avoid being arrested.”(Int27, Dr7) These directions by medical personnel affected significantly the social relationship between doctors and protestors on the sit-in and encouraged a feeling of trust between them.

When protestors reached Tahrir square, the temporary medical treatment spot at KFC appeared in its same previous location; however, clashes were everywhere and from all approaches. A secure isolated place was essential for medical treatment, Act2 recalled that, “Public buildings and the AUC campus inside Tahrir Square were inaccessible for even any medical support.”(Int2, Act2) Dr6 explained that, “Ibad El Rahman Zawia “Prayer space” was found by protestors while trying to transfer casualties to a safe place.”(Int26, Dr6) Then, Dr4 recalled that, “People taking care of the place allowed people in the Zawia to use its microphone for calling doctors and asking to transfer casualties inside this enclosed space behind Hardees, where many casualties have been transferred there already.”(Int24, Dr4) (See Fig 9.10)

### 9.2.2. Field Hospital Ibad El Rahman Zawia

Ibad El Rahman Zawia is a space that was not originally designed as a space for prayer. It is a Zawia, ‘Urban Phenomena’<sup>655</sup> which is any corner or space that can be changed into a place for people to pray inside. Its original function is for prayer and as a resting space, with a washing room mainly used by locals. It is located in one of the unique architectural features of downtown Cairo — pedestrian passages that run between or through buildings. It is a pathway linking two main streets and a direct passage to Tahrir Square. This enclosed space is a purely local initiative due to a need for place to pray, to rest, and sometimes to socialize. It does not have its own walls as a typical enclosure; however, it is surrounded by shop facades from two sides. Its spatial isolation was an effective and opportune venue for establishing site for medical treatment, known and controlled by its locals. The area is around 8m x 20m. (See Fig.9.11) On January 28, the decision to host casualties inside Ibad el Rahman was supported by locals who took care of the space. Dr4 explained that, “Donated supplies were brought by neighbours around the Zawia.”(Int24, Dr4) Most doctors and medical personnel arrived at the Zawia individually, and there was no management yet. Dr4 remarked that “At this point, the space required a leader to give instructions.”(Int24, Dr4) Under supervision of Dr4, he described that, “The space of the Zawia was divided into three different zones: red point one, relaxed, or less critical zone for treating casualties. Supplies were collected in one corner nearby microphone. The space had two entrances one from Mohamed Mahmoud Street and the other from Tahrir Square Dr4 explained that, “Casualties were entering from Tahrir Street, with access

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<sup>655</sup> Fleishman, J. (2007, July 9).



to the Zawia and passing by the reception point, two doctors were ordered to stand at the entrance to check casualties. Then, doctors at reception were sending them to one of the two zones according to their condition. Doctors were divided as well; consultants and elder doctors were in placed in the red point zone while younger doctors were in the other. The red point was near to the entrance and the supply store in the corner. The relaxed zone was divided into two parts: one near to the shop facades with two walls where less critical cases concentrated: second near to the centre. Supplies were collected in one corner nearby microphone.”(Int24, Dr4) (See Fig.9.11) This spatial emergency pattern that divided the space continued until the next day to support the frequent delivery of casualties and their common injuries. When armed forces recognized the location of this field hospital, Dr4 explained that, “the Zawia space resisted to function as field hospital, since it was under threat from direct police teargas attacks from Mohamed Mahmoud who were trying to besiege them as well.”(Int24, Dr4)

On January 29, as clashes continued between protesters and police from Mohamed Mahmud street side (at the Ministry of Interior), Ibad El Rahman Zawia continued to receive casualties from Mohamed Mahmoud Street side while Tahrir Square was quiet. (See Fig.9.12) Since all shops around Zawia were closed so the space according to Dr1 was completely dominated by field hospital activities. Dr1 described that, “the internal furniture of Ibad El Rahman Zawia was effectively used for hosting a pharmacy, for a field hospital and medical tools.”(Int21, Dr1) For maintaining security and protecting field hospital space inside the Zawia, Dr6 describe that, “The two accesses of the field hospital were controlled by a group of protesters responsible for blocking its two approaches with a human chain until January 31 when the sit-in was much better controlled.” (Int26, Dr6) Dr4 recalled that, “Massive amounts of medical supplies were received by the field hospital in Ibad El Rahman Zawia. And excessive numbers of doctors and other medical personnel volunteered to join the effort.”(Int24, Dr4) Under less stress and without clashes, a field hospital would have developed differently — not as an ad-hoc response to a series of emergencies. (See Fig.9.13) On February 1, a remarkable concentration of hospitalization and medical treatments at the field hospital in Ibad el Rahman was spatially consolidated through convergence of all medical supplies and personnel.

After Mubarak delivered his last speech on the night of January 1, Dr4 recalled that, “reacting to the speech, doctors were divided into groups with their medical supplies packed and ready for any sudden decision by protesters to expand the sit-in to another spot.”(Int24, Dr4) In addition to that, many doctors dispersed to outside of the field hospital since the morning of that day in order to serve people sitting-in. The field hospital was not receiving any new casualties. This action was a test for future disperses - during the ‘Camel Battle’- and decentralization in space. Significant change in the hospitalization spatial system had occurred since February 2. In a besieged terrain where casualties arrived from everywhere in the sit-in, the field hospital was the only destination for injured people. (Int27, Dr7) Since clashes between ‘thugs’ and protesters occurred mainly at sit-in approaches. Dr6 explained that, “protesters formed human lines towards the field hospital entrances as a guiding route for volunteers carrying casualties. (See Fig 9.7) It ended with checkpoints at the field hospital’s entrances where locals were keen on protecting the area around Zawia by forming a rudimentary security system for checking identity cards and to be sure that there were no thugs or infiltrators.”(Int26, Dr6) Dr7 described that, “After 6pm the field hospital’s approaches were used as well for medical treatment since there was not enough space in the Zawia to treat this flood of casualties. The space was performing haphazardly without any proper division and emergency cases were everywhere.”(Int27, Dr7) (See Fig.9.13)

### **9.2.3. Spatial Diffusion of Medical Colony: Field Clinics under Instant Need**

By February 2, the spatial centralization of medical treatment in the field hospital was no longer capable to provide efficient medical treatment for protesters at the sit-in space. There was an intense attack from all approaches entailing a flux in casualty numbers who were in need of transfer to the field hospital. Dr7 explained

that, "There was not enough space inside or around the field hospital for doctors to treat protesters so the first field clinics near KFC and Hardees and Omar Makram mosque -all very near to the roundabout and field hospitals- already erected." (Int27, Dr7) (See Fig.9.14) This spontaneous and individual decision by many doctors who faced the same difficulties to treat casualties inside the Zawia were still dependent on the field hospital being the center for providing supplies and doctors. Instead, when most approaches were controlled, thugs congregated along one approach, called Abd el Moneim Rhyad. Dr6 explained that, "By the night, casualties were arriving from one big approach: the Abd el Moneim Rhyad side, while Downtown approaches were almost controlled. From then on, the battlefield was far from the field clinics and hospital locations -around 600 meters in distance." (Int26, Dr6)

The spontaneous diffusion of medical treatment points emerged longitudinally along Abd el Moneim Rhyad approach -Merit Street. Dr7 recalled that, "My first trial for erecting treatment point there was in residential buildings' entrances however it wasn't sustainable because of the green fence along the whole pavement, preventing casualties from being transferred easily and the fact that they got blocked inside, whenever the confrontation line changes its position." (Int26, Dr7) Dr6 described that, "Doctors were trying to remain just behind the confrontation line that kept shifting backward and forward along Merit Street, entailing the erection of several medical treatment points." (Int26, Dr6) He added that while confrontation line was advancing, established treatment points continued to function due to intense violence and current actions while advancing. During these moments, medical points behind the front lines proved their efficiency in treating casualties while it was difficult to transport them to field hospital anymore. Dr7 marked that, "The evolution of medical treatment points following the direction of battle lines entailed their diffusion behind and outside of sit-in's conflict zone." (Int26, Dr7) The consequences of these acts by doctors through following protesters to treat casualties were the start of decentralized medical centres for the sit-in and from which the medical colony evolved.

Later on, by 10pm, thugs retreated significantly from Merit Street until Abd el Moneim Rhyad Square where the battlefield remained to the next day. Outside the barricades erected for protecting the sit-in, Dr4 explained that, "Doctors reached the Franciscan school building at Abd el Moneim Rhyad Square while following confrontation lines. A big medical treatment point was erected with many doctors. It received the largest number of casualties and martyrs." (See Fig.9.15) Dr7 observed that, "This field clinic was exclusively surrounded by a human chain around an area of 3x7 and a checkpoint was initiated by two volunteers responsible for allowing casualties inside. It was the only field clinic that was barricaded with corrugated sheets and urban furniture as well." (Int27, Dr7) This different treatment of its edges showed how important this field clinic was to protesters and the extent of the risks it faced since it appeared outside the sit-in's controlled space. (See Fig 9.5) Dr6 recalled that, "The group of this point composed of security for controlling traffic flow of casualties, a pharmacist, doctors, and protesters responsible for logistics, protesters responsible for collecting medical waste and a lawyer for registering received cases." (Int26, Dr6) By midnight, seven consecutive field clinics were initiated; they were set up in space where doctors were treating casualties while following the confrontation lines. Dr4 explained that, "the last field clinic was erected in the middle of the Merit Street approach under a lamppost after the second barricade was built. As a result, it was completely secured and controlled. The lamppost's podium was crucial in these moments as there was no other source of light available. It was used for ordering medical supplies and tools." (Int24, Dr4) (See Fig.9.16) The evolution of the field clinic demonstrates the resistance to hardship and stress of the participating medical personnel. The conclusion was the transformation of the space into a real battlefield where people were defending their territories.

#### 9.2.4. Factors Affecting Field Hospital and Clinics In the Aftermath of Camel Battle

According to Act1, “The evolution of field hospitals and clinics was joined by a shift in the understanding of medical neutrality and the formation and adaptation of the sit-in’s space.”(Int1, Act1) Since there was a high probability of government counter-attacks to recalm lost terrain, the doctors decided to remain and never to move before protestors themselves had left. Therefore, protestors were sure of receiving medical treatment whenever required. Statistical reports according to Tahrir Square Field Hospital web page show the number of volunteer doctors in various specialties and field from 28 January until the evening of Sunday, February 6<sup>th</sup> composing 510: 230 specialist doctors, 60 doctors in their last year of professional training, 81 surgeons, 23 consultant physicians, 14 students at the Faculty of Medicine, 41 pharmacists, and 19 of various non-medical professions.<sup>656</sup> Since February 4<sup>th</sup>, the field hospital and field clinics started to have different spatial systems and forms for medical treatments. Dr6 explained that, “The sit-in movement had become a society and as such it was in need for daily medical treatment, not just emergency triage.”(Int26, Dr6) Dr7 described that, “The field hospital remained a catalyst and bulwark for protestors to remain at during the sit-in; it was divided into separate clinics with various areas of specialization, such as a sterilizing unit, a bones unit, and a general practitioner unit; and later, a nose and ear unit, a dentistry unit were all included.”(Int27, Dr7) Even a psychiatry unit started due to the critical cases that appeared especially after Mubark’s speeches. (Int26, Dr6) Since medical services by field clinics and hospitals were less serious, many medical personnel therefore turned their mission into a medical convoy for serving the huge crowds participating in the sit-in.<sup>657</sup>

On February 3, Dr6 explained that, “The Franciscan field clinic at Abd el Monein Rhyad square — nearest to the clashes — and the field hospital were still receiving casualties and martyrs.”(Int26, Dr6) While other field clinics that appeared instantaneously, the need was much less than the day before. He described that, “Similarity in composition, components and system appeared in these field clinics; defined edges through ropes and blankets while the Franciscan one remained with barricades due to its critical location; a corner for individual pharmacy; tents or blankets for allowing doctors who were keen to remain there 24 hours to sleep; and another part of each field clinic was devoted for logistics and one person responsible for receiving and preparing food and drinks for field clinic group.”(Int26, Dr6) Dr6 recalled that, “Human chains were formed occasionally around any field clinic during ‘Million man March’ days or massive crowds.”(Int26, Dr6) In addition to this, Act7 recalled that, “Field clinics at the sit-in edge faced the risk of being demolished when army units tried to shrink the sit-in space from the Abd el Moneim Rhyad side on more than one occasion. Consequently, human chains were formed around the two field clinics; one under a lamppost: the other, the Franciscan, in order to prevent the army from taking any action.”(Int26, Dr6)

Since February 6, the dependency on hospital and medical treatment provision across different field clinics was not consistent. Pro12 observed that, “Field clinics near to the roundabout predominantly serve campsite inhabitants, while other ones developed in another way. Two field clinics at the sit-in’s edge at Merit Street were reshaped through other uses and spatial orders. Part of the Franciscan field clinic was devoted to the Martyrs’ museum on the memorial of being a departure points for funerals and witnessing maximum number of martyrs. Instead, the field clinic under the lamppost was surrounded by ropes from all sides with central space for medical supplies and hosting artistic exhibitions along its edges.”(Int42, Pro12) Dr7 added that, “The surrounding zone- lit by the lamppost- was hosting art performances and freedom of expression during the night as well.”(Int27, Dr7) These new spatial practices attracted street vendors to occupy one side of the field clinic as well. Thus the medical colony spatially reconfigured in order to sustain its spatial appearance within the sit-in society’s territory and its medical treatment efficiency to sit-in society’s citizens, the protestors.

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<sup>656</sup> ElTahrir Square Field HospitalFacebook group Retrieved from: <https://www.facebook.com/Tahrirsq.FH>

<sup>657</sup> Video documentary for Ibad el Rahman Zawia ( handed by: guarder of the Zawia)

### 9.2.5. Non-incidental Field clinics In the Aftermath of Camel Battle

Hospitalization and Emergency support spots emerged for the first time due to instant need under critical conditions. Yet, the growth of the medical colony was not confined to just field clinics that appeared spontaneously during the 'camel battle' — medical personnel erected more field clinics in the aftermath of the camel battle. These new field clinics spread without a logic spatial system in distribution or for specific need in space. They had six pharmacies, eight hospitals and 13 medical points with first aid supplies for injured protesters.<sup>658</sup> Some of them appeared as a result of an adaptive reuse of unused private spaces as Pro11 recalled that, "A bank under construction in Qasr el Nile Street with two floors, one for storing medical supplies and an upper floor for treating protesters." (Int41, Pro11) Private spaces became field clinics without instantaneous need since February 8th. Redundant clinics included; the Egypt air travel agency; a flat in Talaat Harb street: and several flats and shops near field hospital which had been donated for medical treatment and storing medical supplies. Availability of these private spaces was significant in providing a space inside sit-in terrain in case of a flux of donated supplies.

### 9.2.6. Local Ambulance Service and Alternative Tactics for Delivering Casualties

January 28 was marked by the persistence of protesters on all Tahrir Square approaches for several hours and with continuous clashes against the police. Ambulances were scarce and often refused to take injured protesters. Act1 and Dr6 witnessed the ambulances driven down Qasr el Aini and Qasr el Nile Bridge towards Tahrir which were used as a tactic to transfer ammunition for armed forces in Qasr El Ainy Street, Mohamed Mahmoud Street, and Shiekh Ryhan Street, that remained there to protect the ministry of interior. Dr6 claimed that, "While the ministry of the interior was besieged by protesters from all sides, ambulances were the only reinforcement that could penetrate the masses." (Int26, Dr6) Act1 recalled that, "Since then, no ambulance was allowed to cross between protesters before being checked and investigated by them." (Int1, Act1) Ambulances were controlled by the Ministry of Interior, bringing tear gas into the square.<sup>659</sup> Ambulances even transported the injured to the central security headquarters rather than hospitals.<sup>660</sup> M. El G., saw on January 25 in Qasr El Ainy Street that ambulances with plain-clothed policemen were taking injured demonstrators.<sup>661</sup> Accordingly transferring casualties from Tahrir Square approaches required other tactics, which Dr1 observed that, "it was purely voluntary by cars and Taxi drivers." (Int21, Dr1)

Instead, when protesters reached Tahrir Square, Dr7 recalled that, "Transferring casualties through volunteers was mainly from or to Ibad El Rahman Zawiya, where casualties were treated. Volunteers with motorcycles were transferring casualties from Mohamed Mahmoud and the Interior Ministry's zone to Ibad El Rahman Zawia from the Tahrir Street access." (Int27, Dr7) Dr4 explained that, "There was a crucial need for ambulances to transfer critical cases to hospitals through alternative modes of ambulance, such as local residents having donated their cars in order to transfer critical cases from Ibad El Rahman Zawiya to formal hospitals through side streets." (Int24, Dr4) (See Fig. 9.11) Yet, this alternative pattern faced huge risk on Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> when the situation surrounding Tahrir Square deteriorated steadily throughout the day. Protesters were besieged while thugs were coming from all sides. Dr6 recalled that, "The only way was to rely on locals for transferring casualties. A fixed point for ambulance collections was defined to pick up casualties from the field hospital and was further controlled by a makeshift checkpoint. Locals used their cars as improvised ambulances and were already recognized by checkpoints in Bab El Louk neighbourhood. They succeeded to send some casualties outside of the conflict zone." (Int26, Dr6) By night, protesters were able to maintain a secured route for local

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<sup>658</sup> Fathi, Y. (2011, February 8).

<sup>659</sup> Baumann, N., & Mahanta, S. (2011, February 23).

<sup>660</sup> Kamel, N. (2012).

<sup>661</sup> FIDH - International Federation for Human Rights (2011).

ambulances to transfer critical casualties to formal hospitals while passing through popular committees in neighbourhoods that was controlled by locals. (See Fig. 9.14)

### 9.2.7. Medical Supplies and Tactics for their Delivery

At one point, on January 28, after transferring casualties to Ibad El Rahman Zawiya, there was a crucial need for sustaining the medical tools and medical supply provision. According to Dr4, "Locals started to donate what they had in order to supplement medical supplies." Instead, Pro11 explained that, "Others ventured out to find pharmacies to buy medical supplies." (Int41, Pro11) Act8 explained that, "Protestors used small streets and pathways in the downtown neighbourhood in order to evade the police blockade and deliver much needed medical supplies to the zawia to treat the injured." (Int10, Act11) According to Act2, "Hesham Mubarak Law Centre and the Egyptian Centre for Social and Economic Rights in the downtown were responsible for collecting donated medical supplies for sit-in; therefore it became a source of medical supplies on that day." (Int2, Act2) Since Jan 29 Dr5 recalled that, "It was the moment to start counting injuries and corpses, and to realize the crucial need to provide medical supplies for the sit-in." She added that, "Doctors in the sit-in were able to communicate with their colleagues in their hospitals to bring medical supplies - specifically Qasr el Aini Hospital, nearest to Tahrir Square." (Int25, Dr5)

Since January 30, Ibad el Rahman was the primary field hospital of the sit-in where donated supplies were collected. (See Fig.9.12) Dr6 explained that, "It was amazing. When we asked for 100 packs of a certain medicine, we'd get a thousand. At a certain point, supplies filled the whole place and it was impossible to relay only on that corner. Pharmacists volunteered to order them inside existing pigeonholes which normally keeping shoes, and using also lockers and shelves on the other sides where the Quran and other books were usually kept." (Int26, Dr6) Since Jan 29 until February 1, the field hospital was receiving massive amount of medical and victual supplies, therefore, residences near the Zawia volunteered with rooms in their houses and others with their shop storerooms to store medical supplies as well." (Int24, Dr4) Act15 explained that, "Some supplies were delivered first to some political parties around the square as el-Ghad Party, Tagamoa Party, Democratic Nasserite Party, and Socialist Renewal Movement." (Int14, Act15) According to Res1, Int2, some volunteer residents who had a strategic location around Tahrir Square; from Talaat Harb Street; other in Houda Shaarawy Street; and others very close to Abd el Moneim Rhyad Square, opened their houses to store medical supplies. Many medical institutes, such as the Egyptian Medical Syndicate, became aware of the existence of the makeshift hospital system so they started to send stocks of medical supplies. Moreover, a massive number of cotton bandages and other necessary supplies were received in large amounts brought by unknown volunteers. (Int26, Dr6) It was clear by now that a diverse decentralized network of medical supply had emerged since early phase of the field hospital's erection.

Delivering medical supplies from outside the territory remained an issue during all of the 18 days, and especially from February 1 night until the February 3. There were targeted attacks on medical services at several access points into Tahrir Square either by Army Forces or thugs." (Int27, Dr7: Int29, Int2: Int12, Act13) (See Fig. 9.15) Until certain moment it remained difficult to secure and guarantee particular entrance with safe route to deliver supplies. Dr6 marked that, "On Feb 2 late night protestors were able to secure a route from sideways in Talaat Harb Street and reinforcing checkpoints along the street. So supplies arrived from this side." (Int26, Dr6) Moreover, On Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> Act1 explained that "The army continued preventing protesters from bringing medical supplies inside sit-in from all approaches." (Int1, Act1) However, medical supplies were maintained by volunteers sending supplies. The first receiver was mainly the field hospital.<sup>662</sup>

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<sup>662</sup> Amira Mikhail interviewee: interviews collected by AUC Project team, University on the square

The shifting role of the field hospital within the sit-in's territory was significant on Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>. Dr2 described that, "The field hospital acted as the headquarters for the other medical points. It became the main receiver for supplies for the sit-in territory from outside. When these field clinics and hospitals spread in space, the Zawia started to be the main provider for these units either by doctors or medical supplies or tools." (Int22, Dr2) There was new layer of network emerged internally to provide medical supply then. Dr6 explained that, "This network was partially organized. It required sort of identification for field clinics that was numbered according to their locations away from the Zawia, in order to be recognized by field hospital. These actions allowed the process of transferring medical supplies to have some spatial order." (Int26, Dr6) First, it entailed sort of network between field hospital and field clinics, second a sort of internal network between medical supplies storage places and main field hospital in the Zawia or sometimes directly to the field clinics. At least there were two houses on the square, two houses in Talaat Harab Street, one near Hurreya cafes in Bab el Louk, Merit Publishing House, all mentioned political parties and human rights centres were storage for medical supplies that worked on supplying Ibad el Rahman field hospital and other field clinics upon request. Pub1 explained that, "Youth under twenty played an efficient role in sustaining these networks and transferring these supplies to where it should go. During Feb 2 and Feb 3 intensive requests for supplies were from all field clinics which youth protestors were very active being in direct contact with these clinics that were far at Ibad el Rahman and there were not time to waste to take direct request from main field hospital in some moments." (Int31, pub1)

Since February 4 field hospital faced no scarcity in medical supplies and no threats for receiving them. A successful self-reliant system has been implemented between the medical colony medical centers. Accordingly, an organized network emerged between field hospital in the zawia and field clinics that appeared under instant need. Dr7 recalled that, "Field clinics under instant needs were numbered according to organized system for providing medical supplies from field hospital." (Int27, Dr7) Dr4 recalled that, "Medical supplies didn't stop to be received till the moment of ending the sit-in. it was always with excess and storages remained full." (Int24, Dr4) Instead new Field clinics appeared in last days according to Dr3, "They were initiated from medical personnel arrived as individuals with their own supplies. Sustaining medical supplies network pattern was crucial even after clashes." (Int23, Dr3) Sit-in was a place where a society was living and in need of medical supplies that were different from the earlier ones concerning clashes and injuries. Instead they were in need for medicines and daily treatments for headaches, diabetics, blood pressure etc.

### **9.3. Analysis of Medical Colony Spatial Practices: Hospitalization and Emergency Support**

#### **9.3.1. The Production of Lived Space: Multi-orderings Space and New Social Relations**

Alternative medical treatment space was required instead of formal hospitals. Protesters searched for hospitalization affordances from existing environment, whereas medical personnel and doctors utilized purposely the spaces that matched their requirements. Affordances are what the environment offers, provides, and furnishes.<sup>663</sup> This distinctive way of using urban space not only shape different perceptions of space and sensuous experiences, but also contributed to varied social relations among established society. Medical treatment took part in representational space that contained and was produced by contemporary spatial codes. The places that hospitalization spatial patterns occupied ranged from less accessible enclosed space such as Ibad el Rahman Zawia to open spots on street side, such as Merit Street that witnessed more than 15 hours battlefield. There was significant dynamicity and fluidity for medical treatment and its practices among the space

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<sup>663</sup> Gibson, J.J. (1979).



depending on the needs and location of clashes. Initiation of field hospital in Ibad El Rahman Zawia “Prayer space” was crucial act in order to encounter the risk of being arrested after receiving treatment in formal hospitals, which raised the spirit of resistance among protesters through instant treatment as well. The extent of experiencing spaces wasn’t limited to adaptive reuse of the Zawia only, instead for protesters alternative routes, accesses and even spaces were deployed in their tactics. Yet protesters appreciated many minor architectural details, such as small pathways, and pocket space which usually escape the notice of or seem trivial to people. In other words, the marginal spaces in this case were as effective as the selected representations. In fact, their use of the space for medical practice challenged the projected representations. They loosen up the fixed character of the physical environment by traversing the thresholds, boundaries of roads, square and pathways, adding new values to sit-in terrain, privileging mundane urban elements, designing new routes and approaches. Thus medical colony was autonomously grown by its society resembled into a cognitive map, ‘a mental scheme of spatial orientation,’<sup>664</sup> as protesters saw Ibad el Rahman Zawia prayer space differently with opportunity of being safe place for treating casualties. This fast interactive experience of space protesters created a material space that fitted in their use.

Hospitalization and medical treatment emergence was kind of spatial colony for service system. The appearance of these practices were spatially centralized in one space that later required to include other centers that emerged autonomously in parallel with the appearance of clashes in the space. Later on, the zawia faced a significant division of its space into slots. Different zones were required. The older simple division of space according to the seriousness of injury didn’t exist anymore. However it was divided into different types of clinics specialization and that was after the camel battle. According to Dr4, “Each slot according to its specialization started to create its own clinic.” (Int24, Dr4) The zawia included several columns that support the covering of the zawaia. These columns served to divide the mosque into smaller spaces, through extending threads holding blanket to be able to create a partition, where each clinic has its required tools and doctors. (See Fig.9.3) Street’s article reflected on spatial development in hospitals through constant redesign and rebuilding of hospital spaces in line with changing notions of progress and biomedical ideologies.<sup>665</sup> Her idea that a hospital never corresponds to a single, static design but consists of overlaid physical structures was experienced very fast to contend with the changing condition, generating unifying responses in those who initiated them. Hospitalization and medical treatment during the initial system resisted some of the traditional ordering of hospitals. Yet, it was imposed gradually when moments of clashes stopped. A space of multiple orderings appeared, these orderings were not only medical ones. Notable heterogeneity of the ongoing spatial ordering was both medical and other that produced this layer space.

Field hospitals and clinics were lived space referring to the ways that spaces “were experienced directly, bodily and outside of verbal systems of representation.”<sup>666</sup> Spaces mediated by living experiences that enabled volunteered doctors and protesters to unify various objects around them to make sense of alternative hospital ordering. “Like other doctors, we participated in the demonstrations,” Mena says. “However, we had a different role to play. In the evening of Friday, the January 28, many young people had suffered injuries, and everyone was fearful of a potential arrest should they approach the hospitals. Therefore, we established a field hospital.”<sup>667</sup> Field hospital presented the sensuous and located experience of volunteered medical treatment practice, which allowed a consideration of affective aspects such as medical responsibility, anxiety and fear. Medical treatment was emotional and embodied experience of practice, doctors were risking their lives while treating casualties, and they valued bodily practices first by leaving their places in formal hospital, second by leaving the field hospital to save casualties at confrontation lines and third by deciding never to leave their place

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<sup>664</sup> Tolman, E. C. (1948). p 189-208

<sup>665</sup> Coleman, S. and Street, A. (2012).

<sup>666</sup> Jeyasingham, D. (2013).

<sup>667</sup> Khawly, M. (2011, February 25). Mona Mena: The Revolutionary Doctor. *Al-Akhbar*. Retrieved from [english.al-akhbar.com/node/1849](http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/1849)

until protesters leave the sit-in. They believed in their crucial role and how important their bodily appearance. Because of the bodily awareness, hospitalization and medical treatment witnessed particular spatial pattern of expansion depending on exploration of casualties' location while following confrontation lines. For many individual medical personnel, following confrontation lines was more important than remaining in field hospital as a destination waiting for casualties to be received. Through medical personnel's space and performance making, they create their own spaces through medical colony spatial patterns.

Field hospitals and clinics for medical personnel and protesters frequently became their social milieus in which their social actions and social relations penetrates in the production of medical colony complex spaces. The perceptions and experiences of that space penetrate a person's emotions and state of mind, sense of self, social relations, and cultural predispositions.<sup>668</sup> In field hospital, local residence interacted with protesters effectively: first while offering the zawia "prayer space": second while donating supplies: third while transporting casualties from inside sit-in terrain: third while allowing them to use their houses for storing medical supplies: and fourth while protecting their boundaries. Protesters representational space in turn became a space for living experiences where new social relations revealed. Traditional social relation between doctors and public was spatially contested when Dr7 observed that, "There was instant mobilization of doctors from Qasr El Aini research and teaching hospital and Qasr El Aini French Hospital while demonstrations were crossing by." The fact that doctors started to treat casualties, and advising them to go to any private hospital and not to go any public hospital, was received by protesters with significant surprise. This physical appearance of doctors as reactive in early time entailed shifting point in the relationship between doctors and protesters, and their dependency on them. The traditional behaviour of many doctors especially in public hospitals was claimed as part of the regime oppression. Dr7 explained that, "People were always feeling that doctors are there to fabricate reports for the government. And people were thinking that doctors are with the system, so against people." (Int27, Dr7) This spatial pattern of doctors approaching protesters in demonstrations reflected how the mass actions confronted the perception of medical profession as part of the regime and not against it.

Moreover, another unusual social relationship appeared through the horizontal structure between protested doctors who resisted the patriarchal mentality in Egyptian medical profession. Individual doctors together were able to deal with each other as one collective team. These medical centres shaped exclusively by the social orders and solidarity among medical personnel as performers. It was a medical space where doctors were driven by other than job ethics and hierarchies. This was difficult to sustain while the making of medical colony then. Later field hospital was space of contestation between horizontality and patriarchal structure. In the aftermath of the camel battle, Dr6 explained that, "Field hospital in the zawia was calm and started to treat more headaches, diabetics, blood pressure...etc., rather than critical injuries. Some doctors decided to get out of the zawia and spread in the sit in terrain instead of being part of the field hospital community witnessing the exact traditional patriarchal mentality that used to exist in University of medicine between doctors and their professors. Old doctors are considered a powerful and charismatic figure." (Int26, Dr6) In effect, the patriarchal structure creates a complete and autonomous society within a society, functioning as a single unit.<sup>669</sup> The spatial confrontation between two different medical systems demonstrated the medical personnel refusal of the traditional patriarchal mentality in the Egyptian medical structure system.

### 9.3.2. Experience inside Medical Colony

Medical centres, hospitalization and medical treatment were non-conformist way of using space. The hospitalization and medical treatment's status as a simultaneously interactive and bounded space in the ways

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<sup>668</sup> Low S. & Lawrence-Zuniga, D. (2003).

<sup>669</sup> Al-Krenawi, A., & Graham, J. R. (2000).

they have spread in space means that it was necessarily constituted by multiple concurrent orderings of space,<sup>670</sup> both biomedical and non-biomedical. Since, formal hospitals role was marginalized for sit-in society during attacks and clashes, therefore doctors who left formal hospitals in order to join battle field have adaptively reused Ibad El Rahman zawia space for field hospital. Calling the hospital “heterotopias of deviance” for Foucault the hospital is the actualization of a utopian vision of scientific order, cleanliness, and rationality, existing in opposition to and separated from the messy reality of everyday social space.<sup>671</sup> Field hospital location was chosen according to instant need of isolation from outer space with clashes. Foucault describes how, through the exclusion of familiar everyday space, the hospital emerges as a site of medical surveillance and discipline.<sup>672</sup> Medical colony complex was, according to such a view, intrinsically ambiguous spaces. They involve a complex ordering of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable. In this view field hospitals were not defined by a distinction between biomedical and non-medical space but were made up of multiple internal and external spaces and networks through imposed spatial patterns, whose relationships changed over time with shifting configurations of actors.

The experience of many doctors leaving field hospital individually, and following confrontation lines entailed field clinics appearance spontaneously in these spaces where they used for treatment. Compared to field hospitals, field clinics afforded more diverse environments with variation of design because there were infinite physical elements, social interaction and circumstances that were ever changing. It was “the environment where they can maximize their way of using space”<sup>673</sup> that many medical personnel preferred. In this case, field clinics were closer to the notion of spatial practices characterized by Lefebvre, as it “ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion, and this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of competence and a specific level of performance.”<sup>674</sup> In this way, hospitalization and medical treatment experiences were significant example of how sit-in society produced a lived space in critical moments intrinsically ambiguous. It is to this issue of the growth medical colony process was ongoing interactions of social relations and multiple processes of ordering which is considered as the interplay between spatial reconfiguration, organizational reconfiguration, and the reconfiguration of process of ordering and routines.

It is not only the distinctiveness of field hospital space through multiple orderings that is contingent on everyday spatial practices, yet, the new complex networks that went outside field hospital space for the production of ‘national’ space. These new alliances between local and international institutions have enabled the flow of substantial resources into the medical colony, changing the kinds of care practices that were spatially possible. Analysing field hospital networks for medical supplies—through diverse hospitals- and alternative ambulance by locals, the research proposes that the medical colony can be seen as a site interconnecting wider societal forces. Tracing unusual spatial practices emerged for providing supplies through un-linear networks between hospitals, medical institute, medical personnel and individual volunteers can reflect the national and regional action in space making. In this view, the network for medical supplies and ambulance assembled different hospitals, technics and persons in several locations to change them, as the case, when hospital assemblages ‘hang together’ precisely because of their ‘fluid’ and ‘mutable’ ability to change their configuration in different places,<sup>675</sup> global space is established. This unusual hospitals assemblage in field hospital networks confronted the traditional network for medical supply in formal hospital. Wider network appeared as efficient alternative through which unusual horizontal organization of institutions constituted and made meaningful

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<sup>670</sup> Coleman’s fieldwork among hospital chaplaincies has explored a further variation on such ambiguous orderings of space, focusing on the congruities and incongruities between religious and biomedical discourses and practices in a large hospital in the north of England (see, e.g., Macnaughten et al.,1995).

<sup>671</sup> Foucault, M. (1986).

<sup>672</sup> Foucault, M. (2003).

<sup>673</sup> Proshansky et al. (1976).

<sup>674</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991).

<sup>675</sup> Mol, A., & Law, J. (1994).

through their relationships with places elsewhere between all these public and private medical institutes in Egypt like Egyptian Medical Syndicate, the Qasr El Eini University hospital, Maadi Hospital and others that even witnessed informal actions by their doctors to smuggle casualties or medical supplies.

### 9.3.3. The Social Control for Maintaining Spatial Boundary for Hospitalization Practices

#### *Policing and Surveillance in medical centers*

Hospital ethnographies that have focused on the existence or not of boundaries around the hospital have tended to equate those boundaries with biomedical authority, thereby reducing hospital spatiality to an issue of medical control. By contrast, an archetypal image of hospital space as isolated, tightly ordered, and populated by highly specialized technologies and authoritative experts has been demonstrated by Jessica Mesman description to the challenges to a 'safe space.'<sup>676</sup> Mesman shows that the maintenance of a "safe" spatial order not only involves static regionalization and compartmentalization but also dynamic "mobility work"<sup>677</sup> that enables the alignment of multiple care and safety practices across different spaces. Significantly, this boundary was defined through dynamics of social control and its spatial patterns that attempted to: spatially separate medical treatment space from external, disordered space outside; spatially connect medical centres with medical supplies network and ambulance network; and impose security system for these spaces and routes. Maintaining safe medical treatment spatial patterns and multi-orderings in the medical colony complex involved active social control system in battle spaces and crowded spaces.

The levels of social control that medical personnel encountered in using diverse spaces inside Tahrir Square were various and inconsistent. Temporary use and allowance of private building entrances and shops for medical treatment was effective for a while. Instead, Zawia was allowed to be used under the local's authorization. To use and to access the space for hospitalization and medical treatment through isolated space but central and permeable was significant. The level of social control for field hospital in Ibd el Rahman zawia was interchangeable according to the threats condition. Social control experienced inside the field hospital was mainly enrolled by locals, that originated primarily from the prohibition of any threats or risks that can affect their local terrain first. Policing and control system was imposed on field hospital in order to prevent non-medical personnel or non-casualties to enter the Zawia zone especially during January 28<sup>th</sup> and February 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> incidents. Checkpoints at two entrances of field hospital were responsible to control people's ids and investigate them. Control system was accompanied by defensive system that combined; the formation of human chains along field hospital approaches and communication network with nearest popular committees in neighbourhoods to be informed with any threats. Hospitalization in field hospital in Zawia was subjected to highest control from being enclosed between built environments and protected by locals. Furthermore, the reception zone was part of the social control system that separated the areas where casualties were received, checked and delivered to the required place, from the area where their families, friends, and the media were. Foucault's analysis of hospitals as spaces of discipline and surveillance has been widely taken up by social scientists interested in relationships between space and power.<sup>678</sup> Rather than seeing such disciplinary orderings as totally determining of medical treatment space, however, the contributions to this special issue emphasize the relational, contested, and multiple natures of heterotopias and their capacity to change over time.<sup>679</sup> Similarly, spatial patterns of social control emerged as determining of the instability and multi processes of ordering found in medical colony.

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<sup>676</sup> Mesman, J. (2012).

<sup>677</sup> Bardram, J. E., & Bossen, C. (2005).

<sup>678</sup> Elden, S. (2003). Philo, C. (2000).

<sup>679</sup> Foucault, M. (1986).

The spatial access of diverse patterns of network to medical colony either the casualties, local ambulance, supplies provision has been spatially interchangeable. The accesses of ambulance or medical supplies or casualties were highly defined by threats and attacks condition in medical centres of sit-in. Hillman, and Latimer explored the ways in which specialized spaces of care are maintained in a Welsh hospital through “practices of division” that “sort patients out” and determine their access to hospital resources.<sup>680</sup> They pointed out that the dual logics of efficiency and care by which access is determined shape the actions of patients who, by acting as responsible citizens, simultaneously determine their access to the hospital and become complicit in the maintenance of its boundaries.<sup>681</sup> In medical colony, this was spatially experienced by maintaining social control through spatial policing, maintaining the spatial patterns of all networks, checking and ordering field hospital terrain. These boundaries weren’t mapped onto the field hospital edges yet it extended into field clinics, formal hospitals and medical stores. Another level of social control existed was that every medical personnel had to stick a plaster to his clothes labelled with his name, medical profession, and number of the field hospital or the clinic number that he is located in. Dr7 explained that, “No one was allowed to receive medical supplies from field hospital before demonstrating his identity card and to which field clinic he was located in.”

The importance of internal boundary for medical treatment spatial patterns has been spatially conceptualized as re-configurations of material and discursive practices, to move in and out of the medical colony hospital. It was generated through social control patterns between medical space and clashes or crowded spaces. Policing and check point control has internally separated the medical and non-medical spaces efficiently through discursive and spatial practices. They separated medical and familial care practices as well and defined the kinds of work relatives and what doctors are expected to do in the space. All social control patterns and contested orderings have reconfigured the hospital’s care, isolation, safe requirements while reflecting the extent of attacks and risks spatially witnessed. Protesters involved a complex ordering of opening and closing that “both isolates them and makes them penetrable.”<sup>682</sup>

#### *Medical Colony Centers as a Risk Profile*

Hospitalization and medical places were targeted and under threat by the police from the moment they recognized its existence. Dr4 described that, “The police besieged the space from outside declaring that this sit-in will not end except this field hospital is closed, to such an end, they banned any supplies or ambulances from entering the place from its two sides.”(Int24, Dr4) This was clear evidence of the importance of spatial medical treatment as part of the sit-in composition and as such, it was continually repressed. Another time when medical treatment practices were at risk, was during the aftermath of the ‘camel battle’, when an Egyptian army commander addressed a doctor in a field clinic trying to persuade them to move. According to Dr7, the army commander said, “We need to clear the road in the square; we need traffic to flow again through Tahrir.” He stressed that, “Doctors in war or battles are always behind the army, not in front of them.” Protesters refused to move from their places. Dr7 recalled that, “They formed human chains around the two field clinics that were under threat, so as to protect us; we even slept in front of the army to prevent them from advancing.”(Int27, Dr7) These continuous direct confrontations to the medical colony spaces reflected their effectiveness as part of sit-in spatial practices to manifest their patterns of resistance. Moreover, locations of the medical centers were being considered a high-profile target by the army, who, ironically, reflected their intentions to spatially demonstrate the army and the people as together. Yet, the refusal of protesters to set back the field clinic’s location reflected the people’s perception of the army and the people as different forces within the terrain.

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<sup>680</sup> White, P., Hillman, A., and Latimer, J. (2012).

<sup>681</sup> White, P., Hillman, A., and Latimer, J. (2012).

<sup>682</sup> Foucault, M. (1986). (p.26).

From January 28, formal ambulances were scarce and often refused to take in injured protesters, and are even reported to have carried ammunition and supplies. According to Act1, "They passed between protesters along Qasr el Ainy Street and Qasr el Nile Bridge until protesters discovered these tactics in order to transfer ammunition to the interior ministry that was besieged by protesters." (Int21, Dr1) Accordingly they were subjected to special monitoring and control by the protesters before allowing them to enter Tahrir Square or pass between them. Protesters lost trust in formal ambulances and they were another risk profile. Since then these pro-State formal systems were spatially confronted by protesters' tactics through high control and alternative spatial modes that had to initiate to replace the ambulance network role in space.

### 9.3.4. Discursive Construction of Hospitalization and Medical Treatment

#### *Symbolic representation of hospitalization practices*

The previous two dimensional production of a medical colony with layered space and social controls was embedded into the culture of hospitalization practices. It shaped the public image of hospitalization and emergency support as well. Hospitalization and emergency support practices were also considered activities through which protesters felt confident to be treated while being part of the sit-in manifestation. Specifically, it was as a sign of full control by protesters and represented tactics of remarkable performance to persist any clashes or attacks. Visual representation of hospitalization thus became a mirror of protesters collective production of lived space. "... the built environment, the material physical and spatial forms of the city, is itself a representation of specific ideologies, of social, political, economic, and cultural relations and practices, of hierarchies and structures, which not only represent but also, inherently constitute these same relations and structures."<sup>683</sup> Representation of the growth of the medical colony through medical centres and multiple layers of networks, the whole world was able to recognize how effective medical treatment as part of spatial practices through which the sit-in society was able to resist and encounter any political actions or attacks. The spread of the medical convoy around the sit-in was a sign of full control and the confidence with which the sit-in could develop knowing that medical centres no longer faced scarcity of medical supplies. Understanding that medical centres are also a form of symbolic representation in their own right, the field hospital appeared as an infrastructure to maintain the viability of the sit-in but also became a sign for every future sit-in to appear, as at Maspero (the Egyptian Radio and Television Union building) on February 10, or at the Presidential palace on February 11. It was a key image that represented and advertised an attempt for sitting-in that is highly resistant through medical and hospitalization practices. Thus the medical colony became a significant symbol of resistance.

#### *Architectural form as symbolic capital of hospitalization practices*

Hospitalization and medical treatment in the field hospital was considered by protesters as an alternative efficient hospital more appropriate, secured, and inside the occupied space. It required additional complex networks and services. It reinforced the sit-in space with specific routes and accesses to reach there with particular circulation according to the security conditions. The growth in number of medical centres entailed these networks of ambulances and medical supply to develop later through complex system. The field hospital was the main center for supplies and medical personnel. While field clinic space appeared first as essential but undefined points in the space where doctors were treating casualties while following confrontation lines, later field clinics were physically defined by borders and numbering as part of the colony. Consequently, such physical elements were stripped of their symbolic values and given new values. As such, Zawia was the headquarters of the entire medical colony. Field clinics were the physical evidence for significant influential

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<sup>683</sup> King, A. D. (1996). pp. 1-19.



events — such as the ‘camel battle’ — and were witness to the doctors’ courage and persistence. A person needs symbolic, cultural, social, and economic capital to maintain his lifestyle.<sup>684</sup> This symbolic capital was essential to the discursive construction of hospitalization as a witness and form of record for the brutality of the events which likewise were manifested by physical spaces.

## 9.4. Conclusion

Ethnographic approaches that interpret the hospital as either an “island or mainland”<sup>685</sup> tend to portray hospitals as static and ordered. Yet in this chapter the research investigated a medical colony contested this highly ordered and ritualized space of the medical ward, where space is depicted as a world governed by its own complex systems of social control and order. Yet protesters challenged the established logic of a built environment and redefined the medical treatment space and system through alternative spaces being used and the wide network including diverse formal and informal actors. The emergence of field hospitals with onsite medical treatments into a kind of spatial colony for a service system challenged all traditional systems imposed in formal hospitals. Moreover, it was a restructure of the medical personnel relation system and thus contesting the perception of the medical profession as being part of the regime and not against it. This research relied on Foucault’s concept of heterotopia that ‘heterotopias spaces’ involve a complex ordering of opening and closing that “both isolates them and makes them penetrable.”<sup>686</sup> First, this chapter focused on the growth and narratives of a medical colony through multiple ordering processes to understand both the spatiality of medical practices and its situated-ness in particular places that were never exclusively medical. The hospital as simultaneous, bounded and permeable space together, is maintained through alignments between multiple practices of ordering, which might be medical, bureaucratic, religious, economic, or kinship-based. Yet this chapter shows how the fluidity and adaptability of alternative medical treatment patterns can be crucial for the generation of a medical colony complex effective even under clashes. The way protesters used and occupied public space to reveal something about their production of space that contains: confrontation to traditional state–medical institutional relations based on loyalty; confrontation to patriarchal organizational system; and a new relationship between doctor and public, in other words that embodies their perceptions and live experiences.

Tracing the relationships between services and networks is important to understand space and power as the analysis of the disciplinary and control capacities of medical colony spaces. Medical colony defended the traditional bounded places of the hospital through an un-linear network that included many medical institutes and individuals. A medical colony can be understood as a material condensation of multiple spaces, which are both contradictory and contested to and against the traditional hospital spatiality and orderings. It was isolated and permeable. The ways in which the centre(s) have expanded and stretched into new or differently zoned space were illustrated through their lived experiences, demonstrating their new ordering processes and networks. In summary, these multiple ordering processes concept succeeded in explaining how protesters persisted in their use of public space for the growth of the medical colony regardless of all political challenges, violence, and clashes. It is this intrinsic complexity of hospitalization space that made the medical colony both a prime setting for medical treatment and a crucial site for exploring relationships between planned, imagined, and lived space.

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<sup>684</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1984).

<sup>685</sup> Coleman, S. and Street, A. (2012).

<sup>686</sup> Foucault, M. (1986).



Figure 9.1: Original condition of Ibad el Rahman Zawia (small mosque). (Source: Documentary on Ibad el Rahman Zawia from the guarder)



Figure 9.2: Field hospital inside Ibad el Rahman. (Source: [www.ap-associates.com](http://www.ap-associates.com))



Figure 9.3: Field hospital divided into specialized clinics inside Ibad el Rahman. (Source: [www.aljazeera.com/watch\\_now/](http://www.aljazeera.com/watch_now/))



Figure 9.4: Doctors nursing the injured protesters. (Source: <http://sohabayoumi.blogspot.com/2011/02/egyptian-revolution-thursday-february-3.html>)





Figure 9.5: Doctors following confrontation lines during Camel Battle. (Source: taken by Dr7)



Figure 9.6: Filled clinic after the Camel Battle. (Source: taken by Dr7)

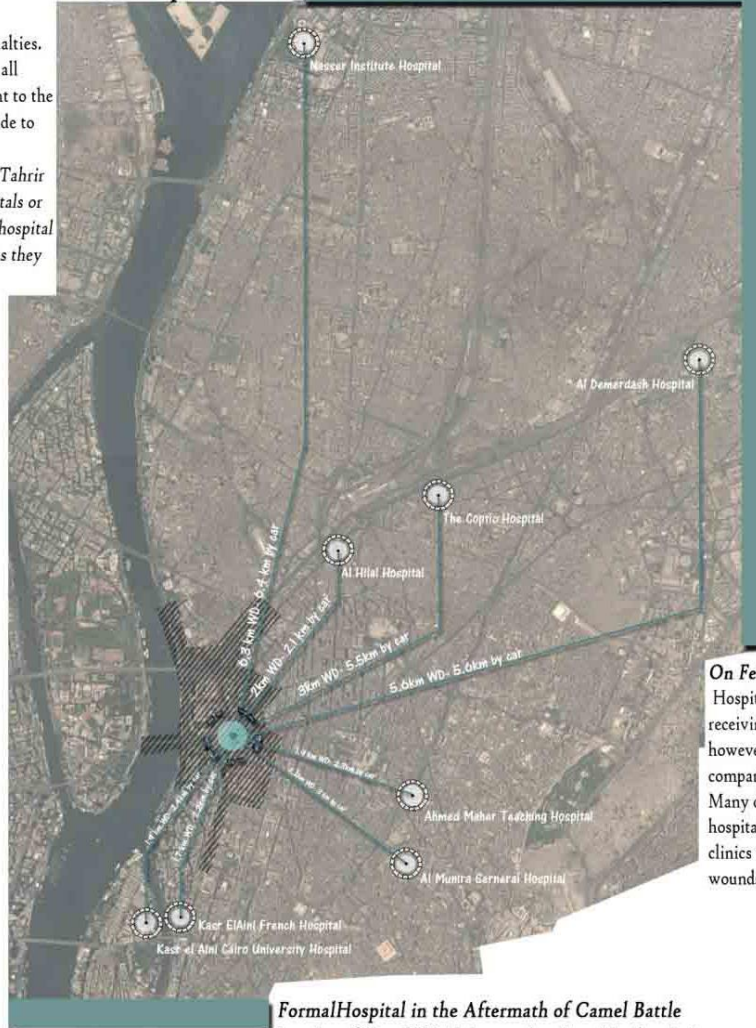


Figure 9.7: Protesters forming a human ring to guide volunteers holding casualties towards the field hospital.  
(Source: taken by Dr7)

### Formal Hospitals Role

On Jan 28th

Hospitals received huge amount of casualties. They were ordered by police to register all protestors and send them after treatment to the State security office unless doctors decide to smuggle them after treatment. Therefore, Casualties transferred from Tahrir terrain were advised to go private hospitals or The Coptic Hospital or Al Demerdash hospital in Ramsis St or Qasr El Aini hospital as they were supportive and nearest hospitals



On Feb 2nd

Hospitals around sit-in terrain were ready for receiving influx number of casualties, however not many casualties arrived in comparison to Jan 28th. Many doctors decided to leave Kasr El Aini hospital to join battlefield's hospital and clinics where most injuries were head wounds from thrown rock and trapped inside.

### Formal Hospital in the Aftermath of Camel Battle

Location of Qasr El El Aini research and teaching hospital same as Al Demerdash was very effective, many doctors were counting on for life needs as resting, using washroom and changing their clothes

Figure 9.8: Formal hospitals role. (Source: By the Researcher)



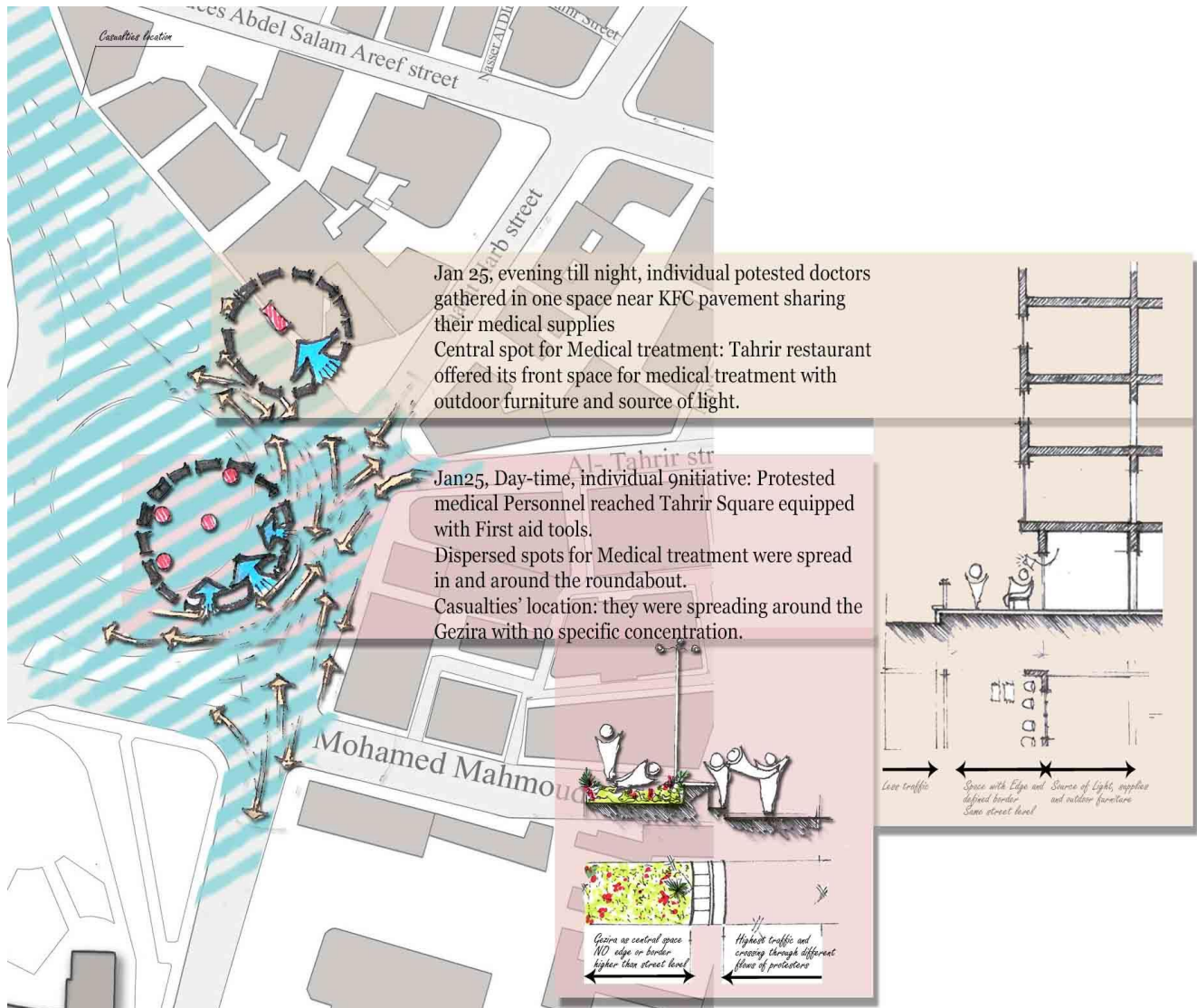


Figure 9.9: Hospitalization and emergency supports on Jan 25. (Source: by the Researcher)

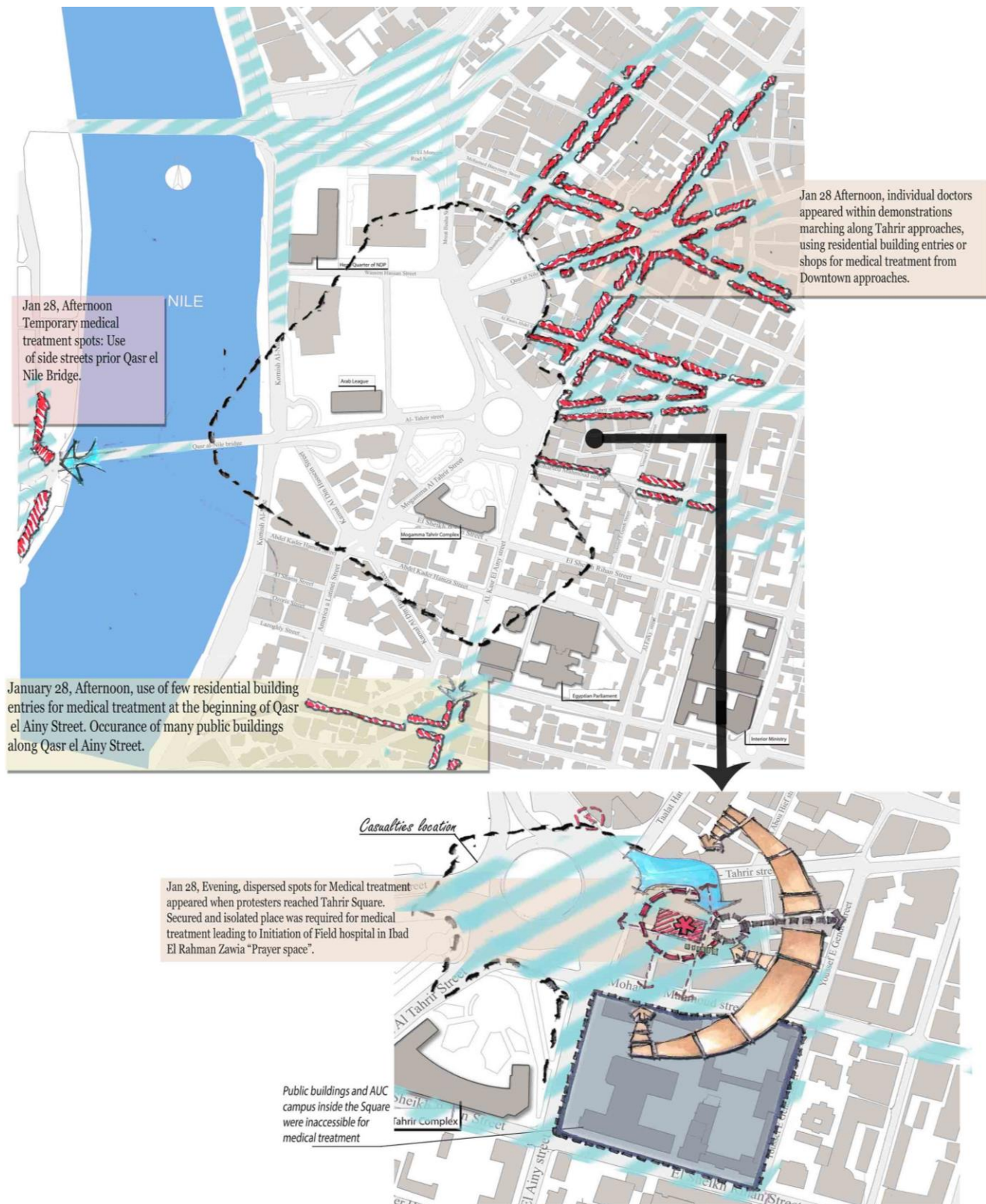


Figure 9.10: Hospitalization and emergency supports on Jan 28. (Source: by the Researcher)



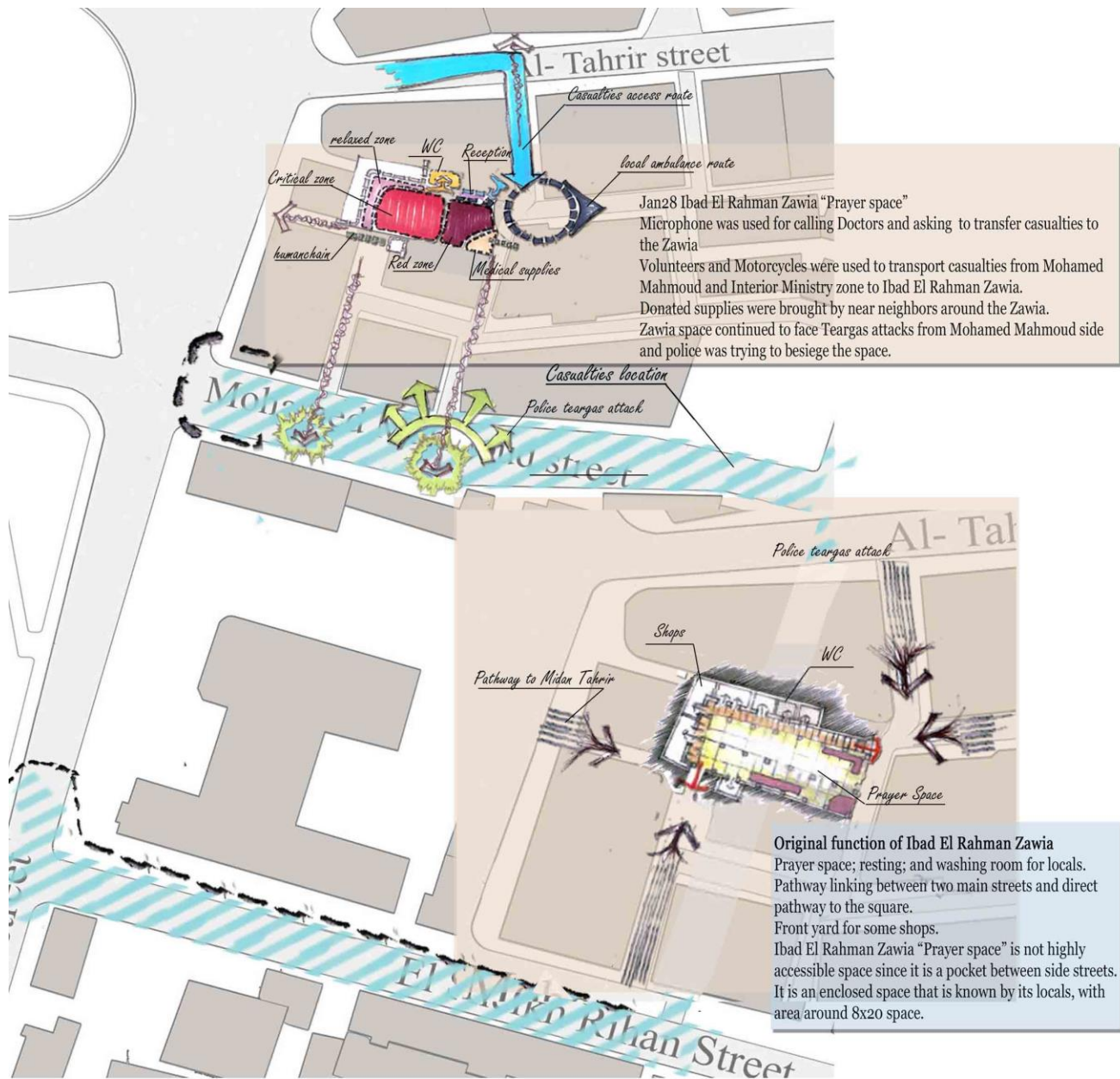


Figure 9.11: Hospitalization and emergency supports on Jan 28 field hospital. (Source: by the Researcher)

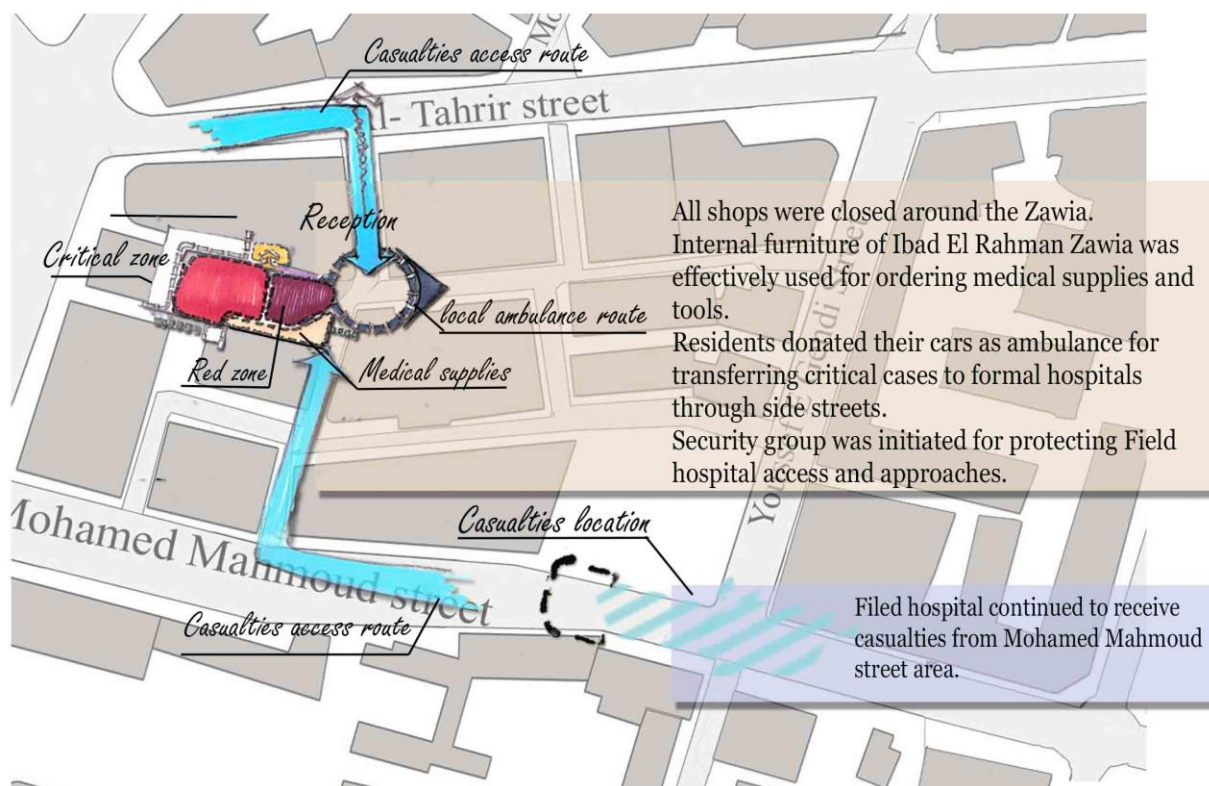


Figure 9.12: Hospitalization and emergency supports on Jan 29. (Source: by the Researcher)

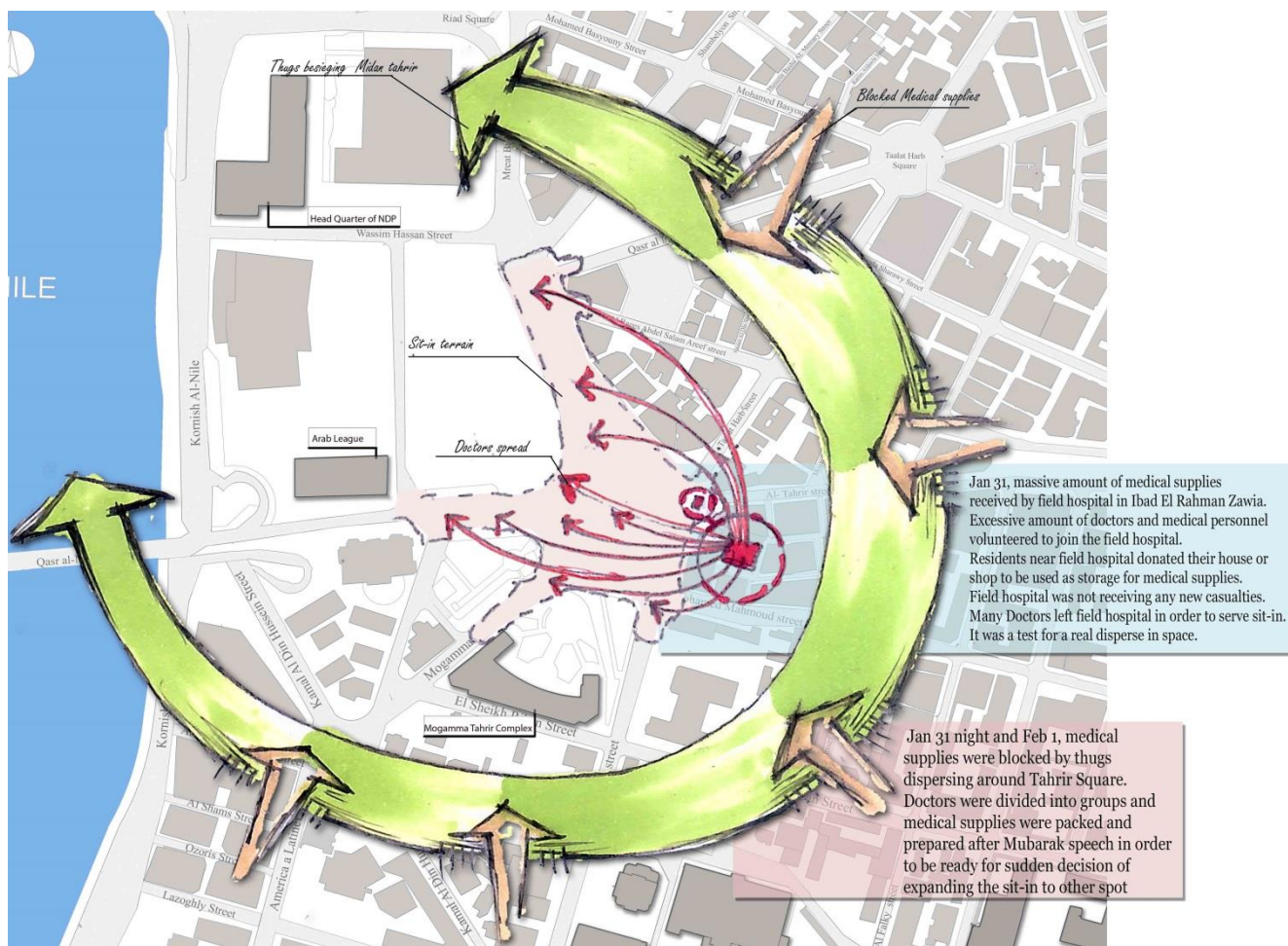


Figure 9.12: Hospitalization and emergency supports on Jan 31. (Source: by the Researcher)



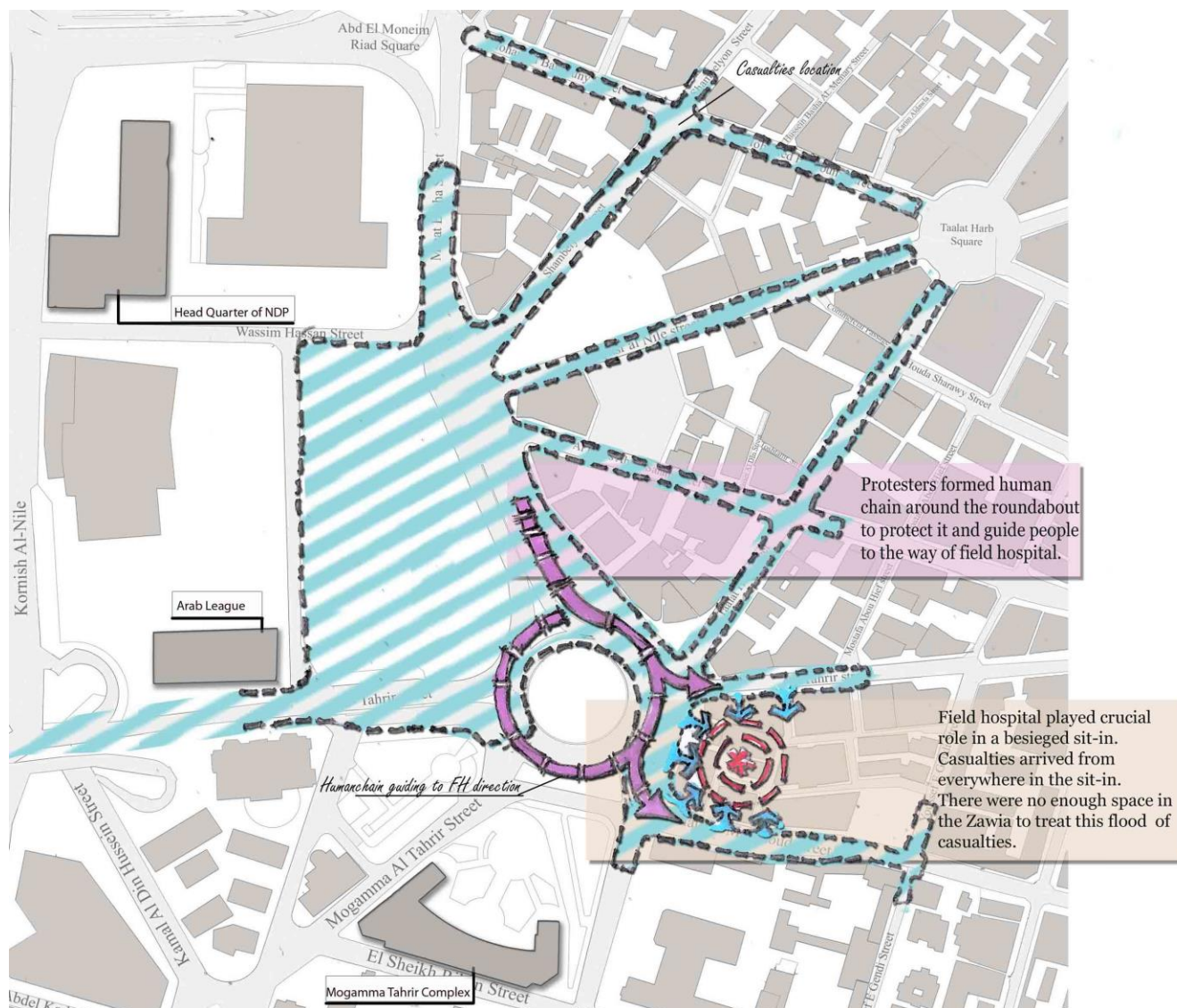


Figure 9.13: Hospitalization and emergency supports on Feb 2 Afternoon. (Source: by the Researcher)



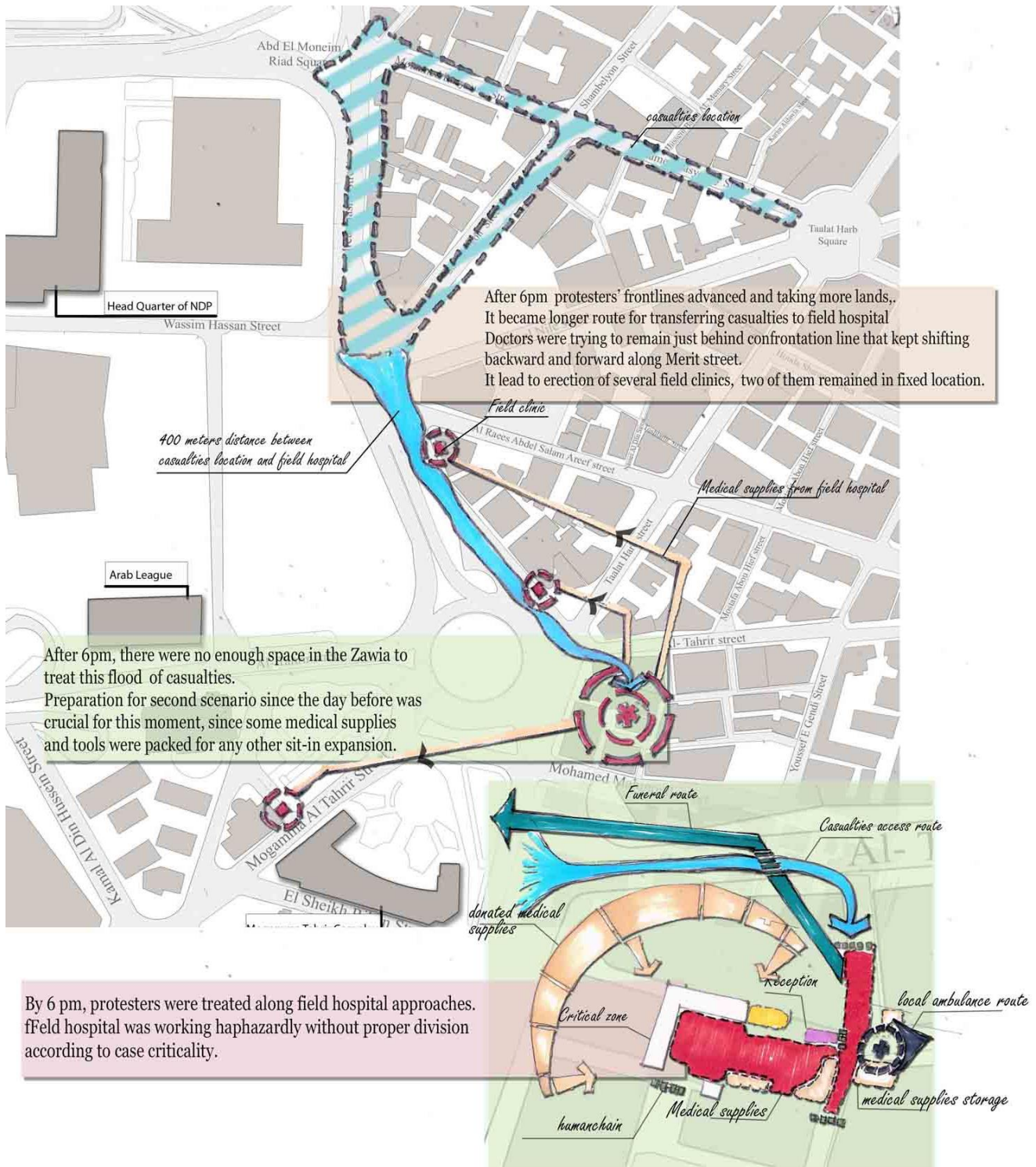


Figure 9.14: Hospitalization and emergency supports on Feb 2 Evening. (Source: by the Researcher)





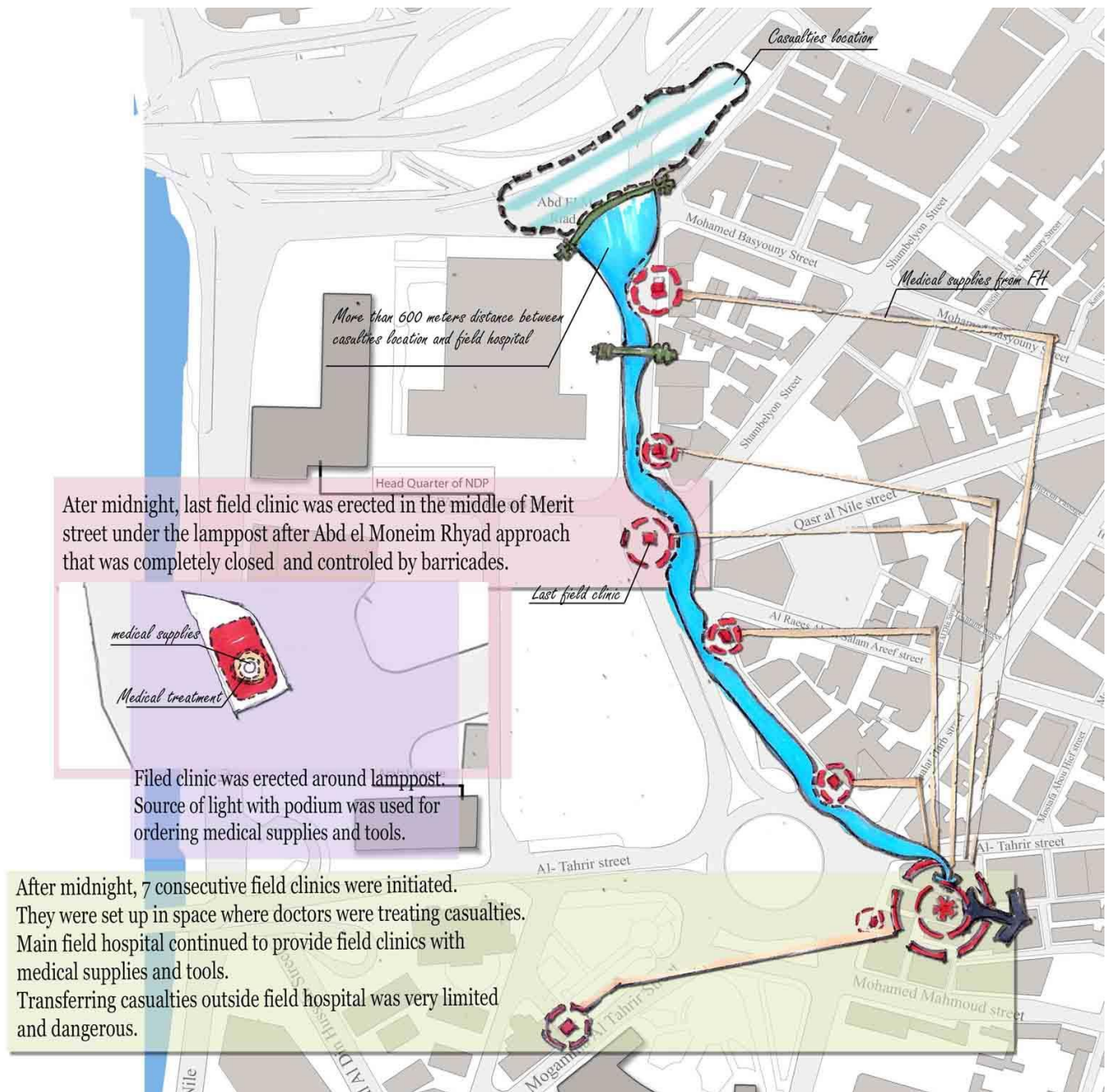


Figure 9.16: Hospitalization and emergency supports on Feb 2 late night. (Source: by the Researcher)

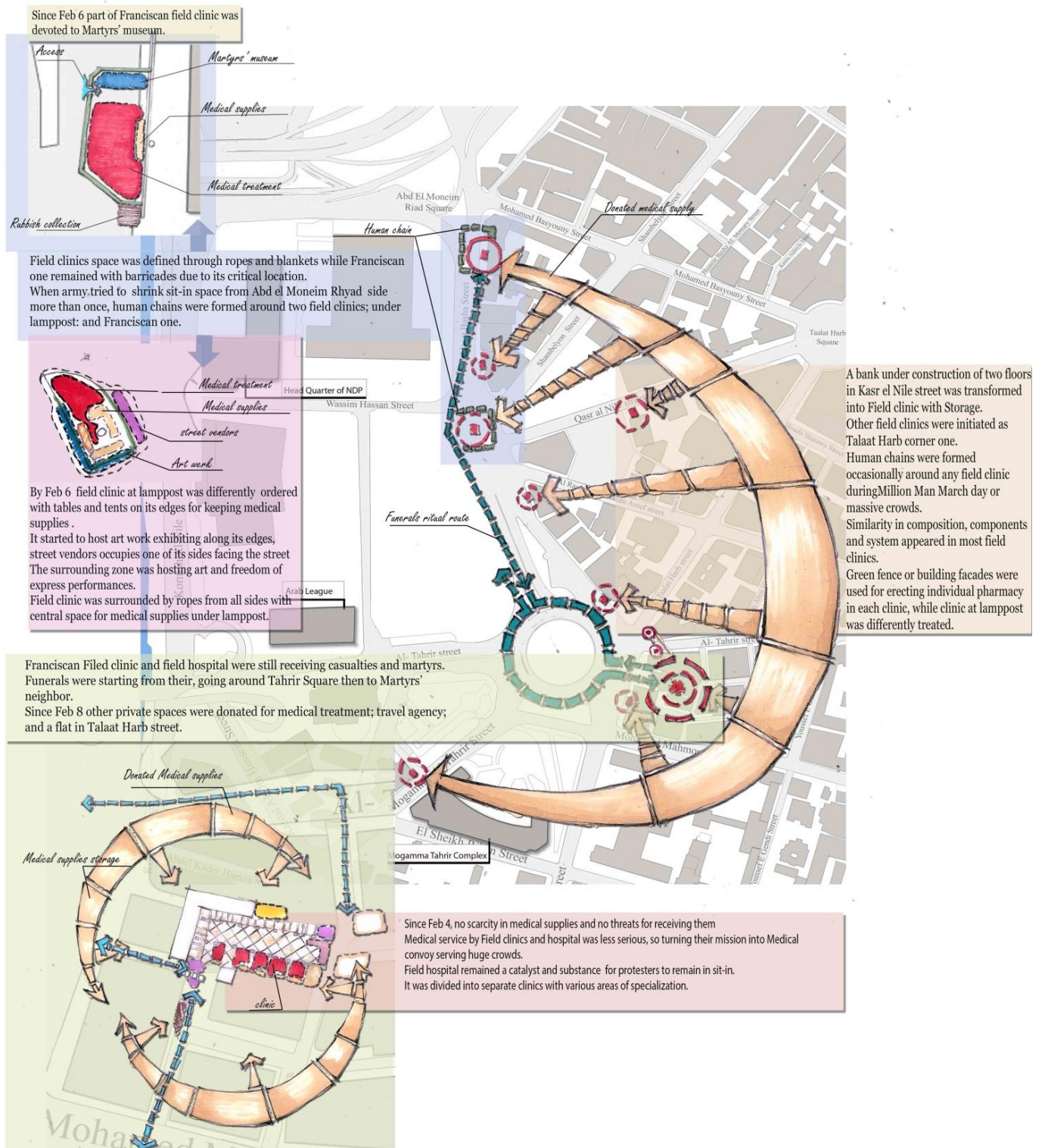


Figure 9.17: Hospitalization and emergency supports in the aftermath of the Camel Battle February 4 till 11.  
(Source: by the Researcher)



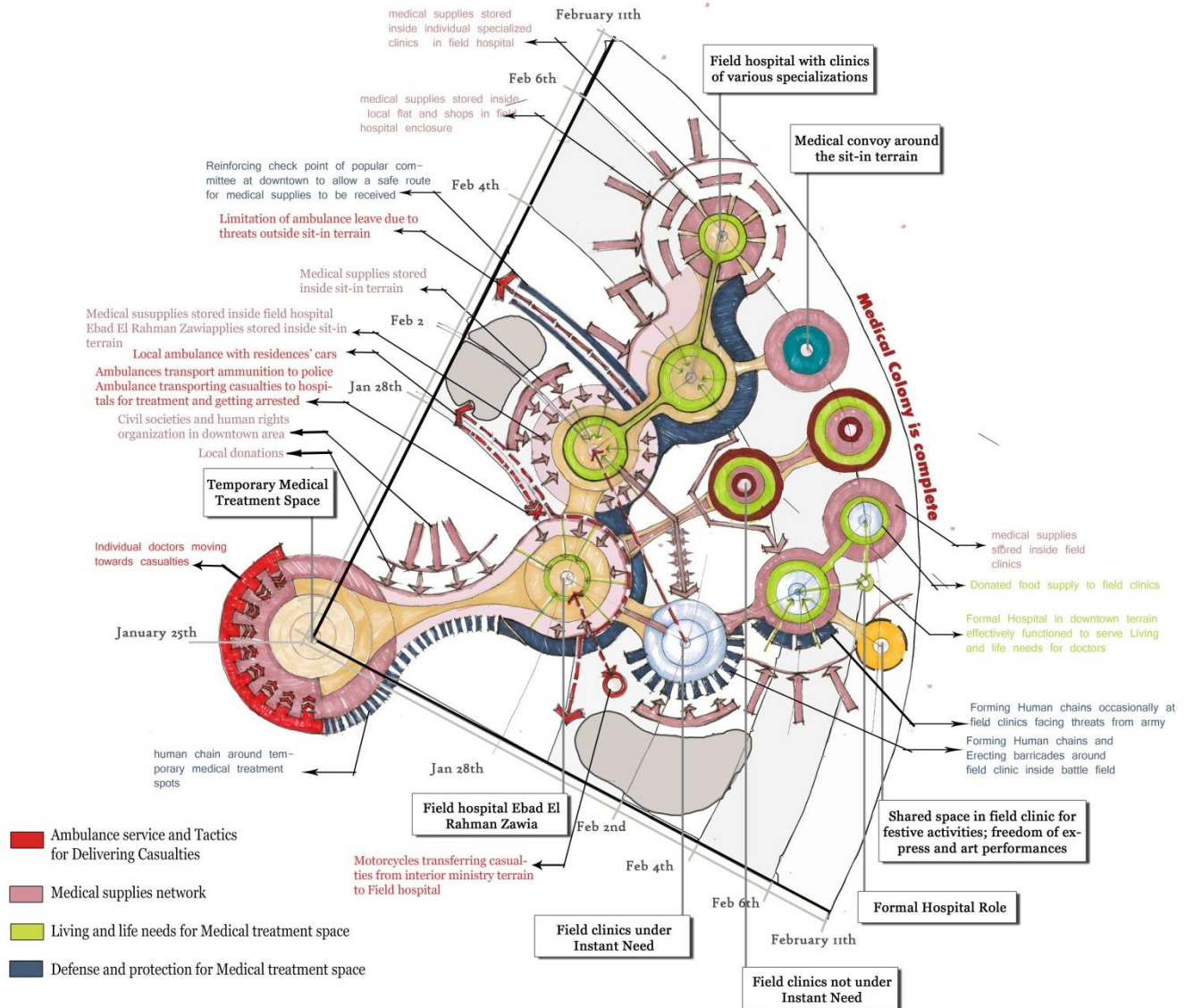


Figure 9.18: Networks emerged with medical colony evolution. (Source: by the Researcher)

## 10. Praying as Revolutionary Act

### 10.1. Introduction

During the 18 days of the Egyptian Revolution in 2011, Tahrir Square was transformed from a space of uprising to a space of religion as well, through praying and commemoration practices. Demonstrations since the first day mobilized diverse religious communities of Egyptian society. Few Islamist groups participated in the initial protests and both Egyptian and Western observers marveled that the largely peaceful Egyptian revolution appeared to be secular and uninterested in using or invoking religion to achieve its objectives.<sup>687</sup> Anyone who had followed the world news must be struck by some extremely powerful and memorable images. People were prostrating and standing up in tandem in a remarkable show of religiosity and solidarity. The collective prayer is not exclusively a religious ritual congruent with an aspiration for a particular theological or theocratic state.<sup>688</sup> Yet, it was done in the context of expressing religiosity in the midst of political dissent. It would be inaccurate to claim that this display of religious symbolism was simply an expression of religious beliefs and ideologies. Instead, praying practices in Tahrir Square during the 18 days demonstrated other ideological commitments. These practices placed into focus their role in transforming the space and its spatial practices through sacred space making process. Sacred space does not exist naturally, but is an assigned sanctity as man defines, limits and characterizes it through his culture, experience and goals.<sup>689</sup>

Analyzing the narratives introduces the sacred dimensions of Tahrir Square; this sector concentrates on the religious practices and social expressions of urban everyday life that spatially transformed this space into a sacred space. It traces the process of transformation from abstract space into a sacred one. This explanation implies that protesters through praying and commemoration practices have transformed Tahrir Square that was invested with particular social and symbolic meanings. They obviously made their different places by creative interaction, appropriation and movement between different religion communities that rarely existed together in Egypt before the revolution. A distinct and experienced place, according to Desplat's explanation, should contain at least three important features; it is socially constructed, it implies a moral quality and, above all, it could be identified by its set-apart character, as having special value which has to be protected by material and symbolic boundaries.<sup>690</sup> Praying and commemoration practices were these distinct experiences where Tahrir Square became a space of spiritual transformation. These practices shall be conceived as specific modes of sacred place-making that needs to be understood in their semantic and contextual complexity.

Praying practices that emerged in sit-ins and their spatial arrangements require tracing. And how Muslims' and Christians' diverse practices of rendering places 'sacred' were intertwined with the opportunities and constraints of urban space. Understanding the significance of social unity in protesters' spatial performances through religious practices was essential as well and in what broader cultural understandings were Muslims' and Christians' practices of sacred place-making grounded. Imagery of prayers' layout tended to present protesters' unity in performances and opinion, confirming a certain emerged model of utopianism. Further, this

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<sup>687</sup> AlSayyad, N., Massoumi, M. (Summer 2012). P.31.

<sup>688</sup> El Fadl. (2012).

<sup>689</sup> Richard H. J. & Henrie, R. (1983). pp. 94-107.

<sup>690</sup> Desplat, P. & Schulz, D. (eds.) ( May 2012).



research explores the social control on praying practices by the other religious groups, in order to respond to who controls Muslims' and Christians' diverse sacred places and who contests the claim for their sacredness.

Throughout the world, communities are reestablishing, redefining and reinvigorating religion and religious practices. Some scholars argue that these strengthened ties are an important means of resistance against the hegemonic forces of globalization, while others interpret the rise of these religious practices as articulating alternative forms of non-western modernity.<sup>691</sup> Instead, tracing praying practices during the 18 days as revolutionary act thus moves beyond interpretations that focus exclusively on the religious meanings and character of these places. The variety of socio-cultural contexts and the diverse of approaches adopted demonstrate the multiple effects of praying and religious practices. It reflects the particularities of religious, social and political meanings ascribed to sit-in of sacred significance. Public space during sit-in –through ritual practices- was a product of transformative act that reveals knowledge of its communities and their belief systems.

### **10.1.1. The Transformative Role by Rituals and Praying Performance**

Place is transformative through religious practice and performance, as Bente Nikolaisen indicated in her work on Mevlevi dervishes, that 'place is as much about doing as it is about being.'<sup>692</sup> Kim Knott echoes this point in her spatial analysis of the location of religion when she remarks that 'ritual practice itself is interesting when seen from the perspective of spatial practice, as it is none other than spatial practice transformed by religious meaning.'<sup>693</sup> The way of praying performance in Tahrir Square took place and how religions were a site of contestation among different groups and through space can be explained by Victor Turner's conceptualization of the transformative role that rituals play in societies. Turner drew from the idea that ritual is transformative.<sup>694</sup> Performances can have serious transformative purpose, challenging, changing hearts and minds and being a part of social reconciliation. Turner's concept of ritual as transformative and creative can be very useful in order to analyze the spiritual transformation while praying as rituals in the sit-ins that have created unity among people and at the same time transformed them while praying into sacred place makers. Prayer in Tahrir Square sit-in was an opportunity to collect people, to be with each other and not each one alone. For Turner, the body merely exemplifies symbols that accompany the transformative process.<sup>695</sup> Similarly, Protesters while praying this huge mass held many symbols that shall be investigated. In religious rituals, marking transformations in individual lives or in the life of the group van Gennep noted that those involved passing through the threshold of traditional or conventional behavior.<sup>696</sup> This is relevant to sit-in society, which was desegregating ritualized by performatory activity which broke social norms in order to reintegrate the individual or group back into the social norm. Praying performance was an example of Turner's 'transformative social activity'. This unusual spatial arrangement of praying practices requires investigation and the impact of its pattern on other activities. And the desegregation effect either of religion differences or gender differences while performing religious practices.

### **10.1.2. Religious Groups in Sit-in**

The plurality of protesters in Tahrir Square during the 18 days of the Egyptian revolution was striking; the secularists, the Coptic Christians, the Islamists, the non-aligned Muslims, and many others which together form

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<sup>691</sup> AlSayyad, N. (2012).

<sup>692</sup> Nikolaisen, B. (2004). pp. 91–104.

<sup>693</sup> Knott, K. (2005).

<sup>694</sup> Turner, V. (1967).

<sup>695</sup> Van den Bogert C. E. (2012).

<sup>696</sup> Van Gennep, A. (1960).

a complex and turbulent web of relations and alliances. In Doreen Massey's view, "clearly places do not have single, unique 'identities'; they are full of internal conflicts."<sup>697</sup> This cross-societal participation meant that many ideologies were present in the sit-in. It is true that the Egyptian revolution did not carry a religious slogan and did not adopt religious demands, but religious movements, with all their spectrums had a presence in the revolution and an influential role in some of its stages.<sup>698</sup> The Islamic movements over the revolution's three weeks, especially the Brotherhood maintained a strong presence in Tahrir Square. Salafis and Christians were attending the sit-in as well. These different profiles reshaped the sacredness of Tahrir Square through their different praying and religious practices.

### *The Muslim Brotherhood*

Egypt has had a long history of Islamist movements, but the oldest and most well-known is the Muslim Brotherhood: an Islamist political group founded in Egypt in 1928 by Hassan al Banna, one of Egypt's preeminent political and religious leaders. The Brotherhood is a Sunni Muslim revivalist organization. It was founded to counter the "corrupting" Western influences in Egypt through Islamic education and charity.<sup>699</sup> They do not form a single homogenous whole, regardless of appearances.<sup>700</sup> The Muslim Brotherhood remains one of the more organized, experienced and powerful organizations in Egypt.<sup>701</sup> They are famous for their internal cohesiveness and ideological rigidity.<sup>702</sup> They became stronger during Mubarak era, even though it remained an illegal organization. In his book on Cairo, the journalist Max Rodenbeck states: "religion had reclaimed the absolute centrality to Egyptian identity that had been challenged for a hundred years." Like the early Nasserites, the Mubarak regime would not allow the Muslim Brotherhood a genuine role in governing. The Muslim Brotherhood was officially banned, though it was tolerated within limits - notably being allowed to operate in mosques and within religious capacities.<sup>703</sup> The government attempted to contain Islamists by co-opting their agenda through military trials and security sweeps. Many thousands of Egyptians were arrested during waves of violence in the 1980s.<sup>704</sup> Despite these efforts, the Brotherhood kept a relatively broad support network across Egypt which they continued to build through their religious, social and charity endeavors.<sup>705</sup> They succeeded to reach the Egyptian community by approaching its youth. Local members scout for recruits at virtually every Egyptian university.<sup>706</sup> They are recruiting young people to the cause. As everywhere, they are the ones most likely to join and commit.<sup>707</sup>

Its pyramid-shaped hierarchy ensures that these members dutifully execute the aims of its national leadership at the local level. Eric Trager, described it, "at the top of the hierarchy is the Guidance Office (Maktab al-Irshad), which is comprised of approximately 15 longtime Muslim Brothers and headed by the Supreme Guide. Orders are passed down through a chain of command: the Guidance Office calls its deputies in each regional sector, who call their deputies in each subsidiary area, who call their deputies in each subsidiary populace, who call the heads of each local group 'usra', who then transmit the order to their members. This type of transmission system enabled the Muslim Brotherhood to communicate reliably and discreetly despite intense

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<sup>697</sup> Massey, D. (1994) *Space, Place and Gender*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

<sup>698</sup> Reda, N. (2004).

<sup>699</sup> Pddugu, P. (2014, Freuary 7).

<sup>700</sup> Hassan, A. A. (2012, December 12).

<sup>701</sup> Fact Sheets: Upeaval in Egypt - What Will Happen Next? (2012, June). Retrieved September from [http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/talking/80\\_EgyptUpeaval.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/talking/80_EgyptUpeaval.html)

<sup>702</sup> Trager, E. (2011).

<sup>703</sup> Fact Sheets: Upeaval in Egypt - What Will Happen Next? (2012, June).

<sup>704</sup> Knell, Y. (2013, January 25).

<sup>705</sup> Fact Sheets: Upeaval in Egypt - What Will Happen Next? (2012, June).

<sup>706</sup> Trager, E. (2011).

<sup>707</sup> Johnston, D. L. (2011, December 22).

police scrutiny under the previous regime.”<sup>708</sup> The hierarchal order maintained the formal organization that was effective in mobilizing Muslim brotherhood families from all around the country during 18 days.

The support for the Islamist message was facilitated by widespread corruption in the government ministries and severe structural problems in Egyptian society. The state policy perpetuated a socioeconomic environment conducive to political extremism and Islamic militancy.<sup>709</sup> The absence of state services and facilities in poor communities was often filled by Islamist groups which worked in these neighborhoods abandoned by the state. The Muslim Brotherhood came to manage an expansive network of schools, health clinics, and mosques throughout the country.<sup>710</sup> The lack of political participation in Egypt forced political activity into alternate venues, particularly the professional syndicates and mosques, both of which became strongholds of Islamist sentiment.<sup>711</sup>

The Dashour Earthquake of October 1992 which occurred south of Cairo represented another opportunity for the Brotherhood to show its capacity for serving the Egyptian people. The Muslim brotherhood, through the doctor's and the engineering's syndicates, quickly mobilized to respond to the crisis.<sup>712</sup> The ineptness of the state's response was contrasted with the speed and efficiency of the Brotherhood organizations in creating shelters, health clinics, schools, and providing food, clothing, and cash for the victims.<sup>713</sup> The government responded with a crackdown, included raiding the offices of Muslim Brotherhood businessmen, rounding up their leaders, interfering in elections of student unions to prevent the Muslim Brothers' candidates from running, and passing the 1993 union law which froze the boards of professional unions that the Brotherhood controlled and put them under an appointed administrative board.<sup>714</sup> The government's response was justified as a reaction against response the increasing terrorist activities of the 1990s. The direct actions and appearance of Muslim Brotherhood with Egyptian society were effective. In a 2005 parliamentary election, the Brotherhood won 20% of the seats, despite the election being purposefully rigged by Mubarak.<sup>715</sup> Moreover, strikes like in December 2006 by textile workers in the Egyptian delta, have benefited from the participation of grassroots organizations including the Muslim Brotherhood. It was another spatial direct action in the street.

The Muslim Brotherhood initially avoided direct involvement in the demonstrations, which began on January 25, because the state security agency had threatened to arrest Mohammed Badie, the Brotherhood's Supreme Guide, if its members participated.<sup>716</sup> But their youth joined as individuals from the first day. The following day, the Muslim Brotherhood announced its full support of the movement.<sup>717</sup> The Guidance Office yielded to the demands of its younger members and decided to make it "obligatory" for Brothers to join the protests on January 28 -dubbed "Friday of Rage" by organizers- and sent the message through the hierarchy.<sup>718</sup> The Brotherhood kept a surprisingly low profile during the January 25th revolution.<sup>719</sup> And although the overwhelming majority of the Egyptian demonstrators were not affiliated with any political movement, this order from the Muslim Brotherhood seems to have helped catalyze the revolt's early triumph over the Central

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<sup>708</sup> Trager, E. (2011).

<sup>709</sup> Hibbard, S. W. (2010).

<sup>710</sup> Hibbard, S. W. (2010).

<sup>711</sup> Hibbard, S. W. (2010).

<sup>712</sup> Hibbard, S. W. (2010).

<sup>713</sup> Politics and the Brotherhood in the Mubarak Era. Retrieved from: [www.islamopediaonline.org/country-profile/egypt/politics-and-muslim-brotherhood/politics-and-brotherhood-mubarak-era](http://www.islamopediaonline.org/country-profile/egypt/politics-and-muslim-brotherhood/politics-and-brotherhood-mubarak-era)

<sup>714</sup> Politics and the Brotherhood in the Mubarak Era. Retrieved from: [www.islamopediaonline.org/country-profile/egypt/politics-and-muslim-brotherhood/politics-and-brotherhood-mubarak-era](http://www.islamopediaonline.org/country-profile/egypt/politics-and-muslim-brotherhood/politics-and-brotherhood-mubarak-era)

<sup>715</sup> Fact Sheets: Upheaval in Egypt - What Will Happen Next? (2012, June).

<sup>716</sup> Trager, E. (2011)

<sup>717</sup> International Crisis Group. (February 2011).

<sup>718</sup> Trager, E. (2011).

<sup>719</sup> Fact Sheets: Upheaval in Egypt - What Will Happen Next? (2012, June).

Security Forces.<sup>720</sup> It was clear in different spatial practices like offense and defense or praying their impact on how some instant actions were organized.

### *Salafi Movement*

Another Islamist movement that appeared during the 18 days was the Salafis. The Salafis comprise the other major Islamist group in Egypt. They are, however, a larger organization spanning the Middle East, espousing ultraconservative Sunni Muslim ideology, and, in the words of the *New York Times*, “vying to define the new order according to seventh century religious traditions.”<sup>721</sup> The Salafist trend consists of a broad array of groups that vary considerably in terms of doctrinal circles and sources of theological and legal inspiration, and in terms of their views and attitudes towards contemporary socio-political issues and other Islamist groups and organizations.<sup>722</sup> Therefore, it reflected clearly on being unorganized groups. Egypt’s Salafi movement, holed up for years in its Alexandria fortress and active in Cairo’s poorest neighborhoods, remained fiercely apolitical. What distinguishes the Salafis from the Brotherhood, however, is their relative lack of organization and cohesion. They are loosely connected to each other, united only in a general desire for a government that upholds sharia law, refusing to recognize a leader as Muslim if he does not uphold the strictest form of sharia law.<sup>723</sup>

Although most Salafist leaders and clergymen refused to participate in demonstrations, not only based on religious and doctrinal excuses that forbid revolution and invalidate it, but also for political and security reasons, some prominent Salafist figures participated in the revolution from the beginning. Some of the young leaders joined the protests in Tahrir Square, drawing lots of younger men with them. However, the position of Al Daawa al Salafiyya, the official Salafist organization, towards the revolution was hesitant and unclear. In other words, there was no unified position for these groups during the revolution of January 25.<sup>724</sup>

### *Coptic Christians*

The Islamists and the non-aligned Muslims are not alone in the religious and socio-political sphere in Egypt. In Egypt, Coptic Christians are the largest minority group and account for approximately 10 percent of the population.<sup>725</sup> Coptic Christians have, since 1952, lived according to what might be considered a tacit agreement between the church and the state, one whereby the state committed itself to the protection of Copts, the principles and rules of equality before the law, and equal opportunity, and the church reciprocated by absorbing the activities of Coptic Christians within its walls. The state considered the confinement of Copts inside the church a way to distance these individuals from oppositional political activity, which the state had criminalized.<sup>726</sup> Accordingly, they limited their social and spatial practices in specific spaces that are spatially segregated from Egyptian people.

Mubarak presented himself to the Copts as the man who inherited the legacy of terrorism and extremism that threatened them, and pledged to protect them from this threat in return for supporting him and joining his ranks.<sup>727</sup> Yet, the threats that the Copts were facing had lowered the ceiling of their demands.<sup>728</sup> After repeated

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<sup>720</sup> Trager, E. (2011).

<sup>721</sup> Wright, B. (2012, August 19).

<sup>722</sup> Hassan, A. (2012, June 12).

<sup>723</sup> Pddugu, P. (2014, Freuary 7).

<sup>724</sup> Al Anani, K. (April 2012).

<sup>725</sup> Fact Sheets: Upheaval in Egypt - What Will Happen Next? (2012, June).

<sup>726</sup> Zhran, F. ( 2014, May 5).

<sup>727</sup> Zhran, F. ( 2014, May 5)

<sup>728</sup> Zhran, F. ( 2014, May 5).

attacks launched on their properties and churches, the Copts arrived to the same condition as in the Nasser and Sadat eras that their demands are limited only to demanding protection from the state.

A growing sectarian tension and distrust of the State by Copts was due to the continuation of the violence and attacks. These angry Copts began to protest loudly inside and outside the church walls. In general, Coptic activism flourished in the late years of Mubarak's rule reached the point where many were demonstrating in the courtyards of cathedrals against the will of the church's distinguished and beloved bishops.<sup>729</sup> Following the bombing on Christmas Eve in 2010 on worshippers while leaving a church in Upper Egypt, several thousand Copts took to the streets in protest.<sup>730</sup> Solidarity in Cairo was spatially expressed when about 4,000 Christians and Muslims demonstrated against terrorism in the predominantly Christian neighborhood of Shubra.<sup>731</sup> It was an unusual spatial pattern of demonstration through the mobilization of a large number of Copts. The group began, over time, achieving noteworthy success in pushing an increasing number of Copts to participate in activities, and this was perhaps the first step in rejuvenating the Coptic elite.<sup>732</sup>

#### *The Mosques, Churches and Clerics, Priests' Shift in Roles*

Explaining the role of the mosque in the Islamic city, the mosque was the premier public space in the Islamic city, the equivalent of the agora in the ancient Greek city and the public square in the medieval Western city.<sup>733</sup> The Islamic tradition of Gama'a (congregation) Prayer that takes place five times a day assured a continuous daily public flow to mosques. This was complemented by the Friday Prayer, which is the main weekly congregation for Muslims and is usually attended by the majority of males. This made the mosque one of the most visited places in the city. Because of this continuous public flow, the mosque became a major information and mass communication hub.<sup>734</sup> News was shared and announcements were made after prayers. Therefore, mosques were forever a significant part of the social and political life. In Egypt, they are historically connected with uprising and revolutions and specially Azhar mosque.

In Sadat period, a clear spatial segregation between politics and religion was proclaimed. In 1979 Sadat gave a speech in which he denounced the students' groups by name and argued that "Those who wish to practice Islam can go to the mosques, and those who wish to engage in politics may do so through legal institutions."<sup>735</sup> The Sadat regime took many actions in order to gain control of the nation's mosques. This was a reaction to the concerns on the part of the security services that the Islamic militants were using the mosques as a basis for antigovernment activities.<sup>736</sup> Therefore, the regime nationalized a large number of private mosques and created regional offices of the Ministry of Religious Endowments in each of Egypt's 26 governorates to monitor and control the sermons and personnel in all government mosques.<sup>737</sup> They were also in charge of selecting imams and sermon topics. Later, legislation required preachers in private mosques to be "approved and licensed through the ministry of Endowments."<sup>738</sup> Sadat's policies and the type of Islam that the state promoted was not liberal but rather represented a more illiberal interpretation of Islam, that helped to create a new generation of Islamic activists.

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<sup>729</sup> Zhran, F. (2014, May 5).

<sup>730</sup> Egypt bomb kills 21 at Alexandria Coptic church". BBC. 1 January 2011. Archived from the original on 1 January 2011.

<sup>731</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011\\_Alexandria\\_bombing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011_Alexandria_bombing) "شبرا" في الإرهاب ضد تظاهروا مصري ألف أربعة". Elaph. 1 January 2011. Retrieved 1 January 2011. (in Arabic).

<sup>732</sup> Zhran, F. (2014, May 5).

<sup>733</sup> Grabar, O. (1996). pp. 26–46.

<sup>734</sup> Salama H. (2013).

<sup>735</sup> Hopwoodm. (1991) *Egypt: Politics, 1945.1990*(p. 117). New York: Routledge. 3ed ed.

<sup>736</sup> Hibbard, S. W. (2010).

<sup>737</sup> Hibbard, S. W. (2010).

<sup>738</sup> Moustafa, T. (2000). pp. 3-22



The keepers of political power have always tried to deny the mosques their role as inciter and provocateur, and sought to control this role in many different ways.<sup>739</sup> When Mubarak came to power in 1981 after the assassination of Sadat, his regime tightened its grip on these places and prohibited any forms of public gatherings in mosques except during the times of prayer.<sup>740</sup> As Egyptian politics for the next thirty years, were defined by the challenge of Islamic activism and the corresponding effort of the state to designate the Islamist agenda. Therefore, Mubarak's government promoted an illiberal vision of Islam in public life. However the government's struggle with the Islamist opposition was not defined by competing visions of society but rather by a competitive religious populism.<sup>741</sup> The Mubarak government tried to segregate the Islamic mainstream from the extremists. Moderate preachers were given prime-time TV slots, the authorities extended their control of mosques and there was broad censorship in the name of Islam.<sup>742</sup> During Mubarak era, Friday sermons and Egyptian clerics were strictly dictated and monitored by domestic intelligence agents. They detached mosques from everyday life. In other Arab states, the dominant view was that mosques had nothing to do with everyday life, and that they were simply and exclusively there to host prayers.<sup>743</sup>

Elevating the practice of nationalization and control over mosques, the Mubarak regime increased the pace of nationalization of mosques and curtailed the number of permits to establish new private mosques, thus increasing the share of state-owned mosques.<sup>744</sup> Every mosque was controlled by the state; free expression of religion only flourished in private prayer spaces, hidden in garages or behind the gates of courtyards. Part of the regime's spatial control on mosques was expressed through segregation. In Tahrir Square, Omar Makram mosque was more used for celebrities and elite communities' ceremonies rather than a place for the public. While during the 18 days, it reclaimed its role as a medium of exchange of ideas, a place of socio-political discourse.

Sadat's spatial control and policies also generated deep communal divisions within Egyptian society and relegated the Coptic community to second class status. Spatial persecution of the Coptic minority was evident in Upper Egypt, where the majority of Copts live. This took the form of a series of violent attacks on Orthodox churches in 1970s and in Cairo as well.<sup>745</sup> While in social life, the Copts witnessed employment discrimination which stoked fear among them. The constitutional amendments adopted in the early 1970s triggered Christian fears of persecution and of the many other implications associated with living in a state where Islamic law was a primary source of legislation.<sup>746</sup> During this era, churches and their keepers showed a powerful role in demanding Copts' rights. Tension between the church and the Sadat regime became so frayed that Sadat arrested a number of priests and bishops in his infamous crackdown in September 1981 and even placed Pope Shenouda, head of the Orthodox Coptic church, under house arrest.<sup>747</sup>

Over the past several decades, the state had created a framework of legal discrimination against Christians. Under Egypt's constitution, Christians are free to practice their faith but the regime has structurally limited their ability to do so.<sup>748</sup> The general pattern of regime/church relations during the Mubarak presidency was characterized by bargain and compromise, in spot of ongoing disagreement.<sup>749</sup> This arrangement was predicted

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<sup>739</sup> Fetouri, M. (2011, June 17).

<sup>740</sup> Salama, H. (2013).

<sup>741</sup> Hibbard, S. W. (2010).

<sup>742</sup> Knell, Y. (2013, January 25).

<sup>743</sup> Fetouri, M. (2011, June 17).

<sup>744</sup> Islam and the State Under Mubarak. Retrieved from: <http://www.islamopediaonline.org/country-profile/egypt/islam-and-nation-building/islam-and-state-under-mubarak>

<sup>745</sup> Hibbard, S. W. (2010).

<sup>746</sup> Hibbard, S. W. (2010).

<sup>747</sup> Hibbard, S. W. (2010).

<sup>748</sup> Working Partnerships FEBRUARY 6, 2011 Retrieved from <http://connectedincairo.com/2011/02/06/working-partnerships/>

<sup>749</sup> Elsasser, S. (2014).

on the general readiness of the Mubarak regime to tolerate public dissidence on the condition that the political status quo was preserved.<sup>750</sup> The church leadership complied with this condition by desisting from agitation and mobilization and by giving public support to the regime in crucial circumstances, in any instances of Coptic protest since the 1980s, the church leadership consistently played the role of a mediator between its flock and the government, rather than the role of an initiator, as in the 1970s. Church leaders continued expressing their support and appreciation for Mubarak Regime. The main reason for the continuing patience of the church leadership with the Mubarak regime was its fear of the Islamist alternative.<sup>751</sup>

### *Worship and spiritual practices*

Focusing on religious activities of each religious group that took place in Tahrir Square can uncover the differences in spatiality while making the sacred space. In Coptic Church, *“Sunday is the main day for services, which can last for over four hours. A typical service is composed of four parts. The first is the preparation prayer. The second part is for offering. The third part consists of the preaching mass. The priests read sections of the Old and New Testament, as well giving a sermon. The fourth part is the reconciliation prayer. The fifth part is the Believer’s mass and it lasts for the rest of the service. During the service women and men don’t mix; they sit separately on each side of the church. Also during communion, they go to different chambers on the sides of the altar where the women cover their hair in respect of the ceremony.”*<sup>752</sup> Accordingly, it is challenging to imagine to spatially performing Copts prayers outside the church.

Instead for Muslims, five times daily prayer are at dawn, midday, afternoon, sunset, and evening. Prayer is always directed in the direction (qibla) of the Kaaba shrine in Mecca. Praying may be performed individually, but it carries special merit when done with other Muslims. The focal prayer of the week is the midday prayer at the mosque on Fridays: *“Prayers must always be preceded by ablutions of ritually washing the face, hands, and feet. When performing prayer at the mosque, worshippers are aligned in parallel rows behind the prayer leader (imam), who directs them through the prescribed postures and recitations. Islamic prayer begins in a standing position and moves through several simple postures until the supplicant is kneeling. Specified recitations are said in each posture.”*<sup>753</sup> Muslim prayers in Egypt are not limited to the mosques, yet, it is normal for Muslims to pray in the streets and outside the mosques especially in moments of crowds but with the same order and orientation. Both practices require clean areas, silence and sacredness in their spaces of performance.

## **10.2. Praying and Ritual Practices : Spatial Practices of Tahrir Square**

### **10.2.1. Friday Prayer: From a Congregational Prayer to an Opportunity for Mass Mobilization**

While the uprising was more secular than religious in nature, the Friday sermon served as a supplementary mobilizing mode. The mosque is still the traditional central space for orally transmitted political communication in Egypt and the rest of the Arab world, particularly the Friday prayer. The Friday sermon is the formal occasion for public preaching in which the preacher addresses not only religious topics, but also current political discourse, and gives interpretations of current events.<sup>754</sup> The revolutionary youth showed great wit and

<sup>750</sup> Elsasser, S. (2014).

<sup>751</sup> Elsasser, S. (2014).

<sup>752</sup> Iskander, L. and Dunn, J. (2007).

<sup>753</sup> Islam - The Five Pillars: Islamic Practice and Action. Retrieved from [http://hermitmusic.tripod.com/islam\\_fivepillars.pdf](http://hermitmusic.tripod.com/islam_fivepillars.pdf)

<sup>754</sup> Rinke, E. M., & Röder, M. (2011).

awareness when they symbolically made the link between demonstration, a purely political act, and Friday prayer, a purely religious ritual and duty.<sup>755</sup> Activists announced Friday, January 28, as the first Day of Anger, knowing that many Egyptian men follow the Friday sermon in the streets, and would thus be relatively easy to mobilize for participation in the protests. This effective mode successfully activated very different segments of the Egyptian population. That is why the outpouring of new demonstrators did not stop even after the shutdown of almost all electronic communication devices after three days of protest.<sup>756</sup>

Prayer spatially transformed mosques into places for organization and mobilization, places to assemble and protest against the regime. This was a strong cause for the mobilization and massing of tens of thousands of Egyptians who had never been involved in politics or participated in a political demonstration.<sup>757</sup> Muslims and Christians gathered in front of mosques to protect the people while praying and to make sure they could come out of the Mosques freely afterwards, and go together to Tahrir Square. The prayer's presence and attendance of flux number of people took crucial form as political and tactical presences. The tactical presences were the most influential on that day. It was logic tactics that preserved symbolism and guaranteed the enormous potential for mobilizing the silent masses of Egyptians. Friday Prayer timing, location and performance tackled other responsibility while deploying its spontaneous gathering opportunity of people for revolutionary act.

The choice of Friday was all the more significant and adequate for Egypt and its society. It represented in particular that of the relationship between religion and daily life, being sacred day for Muslims and resting day for all Egyptians. Friday Prayer as a congregational prayer that Muslims hold every Friday plays remarkable role in social life as well. In general, Friday Prayer in Egypt is sort of a meeting point, and point of ignition. However Mubarak regime showed significant control on mosques, they themselves are spatially collective, social, something of every neighborhood. Already spaces in front of mosques are traditionally used for socializing and gathering of people even who do not pray Friday prayer. Christians as part of Egyptian society could have refused it and insisted on Sunday, as the day for mass gathering that could have weakened the dynamic of the sit-in. Yet, the acceptance of Friday manifested itself in the involvement of Coptic. However, there were churches marked as meeting points, many Christians preferred to gather at the mosques for clearly they were the most crowded.

Tracing protest routes and gathering points where demonstrators initiated protests, many were at mosques and churches. Before Egypt shut down internet access on Thursday night, activists were posting and exchanging messages using social networking services such as Facebook and Twitter, listing more than 30 mosques and churches where protesters were to organize on Friday.<sup>758</sup> These calls stressed on starting the protests and marches after the Friday prayer while coming out from the mosques. The end destination of these protests would be Tahrir Square in Cairo and certain governmental buildings. According to Jessica Heinzelman, "optimal mosques were selected based on: Far distance from police stations to reduce likelihood of police action and location in high population areas with high road density area."<sup>759</sup> Friday Prayer proved to be a spatial opportunity and main reason behind activists' success on Jan 28<sup>th</sup> to mobilize.

### **10.2.2. Prayers as an Implement for Protection and spatial Persistence**

On Jan 28 when crowds converged and reached Tahrir Square approaches, clashes turned Qasr el Nile Bridge into battle field with lines of Armed forces preventing protesters from accessing Tahrir Square. Part of

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<sup>755</sup> Al Anani, K. (April 2012).

<sup>756</sup> Rinke, E. M., & Röder, M. (2011).

<sup>757</sup> Al Anani, K. (April 2012).

<sup>758</sup> McEwan, M. (2011 January 28).

<sup>759</sup> Heinzelman, J. (2011, May 7).

the protesters' spatial resistance and tactics was through praying practices. Prayers yield something more than a formal worship practice at moments like this. Communal praying was spatial opportunity to confront the police rows that did not stop firing rubber bullets, tear gas and water cannons. Pro12 recalled that "during high clashes there was a call for praying and then lines for praying were formed in front of the police rows directly." (Int42, Pro12) Dr2 observed that, "however, the police continued spraying water and tear gas there were static moments when protesters managed to calm and control the situation while praying." (Int22, Dr2) Rows of protesters praying revealed to be an efficient tactic. According to Pro12, "When afternoon prayer ended, protesters in first row started calling for another prayer called "Salat el khof" Fear prayer that is prayed during war. The challenge was to persist and keep gathering in same location however it went too violent after." (Int42, Pro12) Praying as practice revealed its significance in the space that it occupied, in the time that it endured, and in the meanings and symbols that it is charged with. Dr2 mentioned that, "Moments of prayer were an opportunity for protection and calming fight. We believed that police would never attack us while praying." (Int22, Dr2). Moreover, praying in front of the enemy lines has spiritual meanings, invoking the power of God and break of fear. (See Fig 10.12)

### 10.2.3. Tahrir Square: From the Civic to the Spiritual Secrets

When protesters occupied Tahrir Square, praying appeared as individual performance or small groups of protesters pocketing in between the crowds around and inside the roundabout." (Int8, Act9) Act7 recalled that, "Calls to prayers were heard from Omar Makram mosque but many protesters were praying outside in the square." (Int6, Act7) According to Dr4, "the two formal places for praying in Tahrir square terrain are Omar Makaram mosque and Ebad el Rahman zawia. Since 28 January, they weren't any more limited for praying only. Ebad el Rahman zawia hosted a field hospital and Omar Makram mosque transformed into a place to sleep and rest mainly." (Int24, Dr4) Pro6 further explained that, "prayers were held very spontaneous and individually without formal practices or rituals for preparation. While we were sitting in a circle who wanted to pray, he moved just out of the circle and pray next to us either alone or if he found other praying then he went to join them." (Int36, Pro6) Accordingly, prayers happened without profound spiritual atmosphere or formal place. But the feeling of domesticity and familiarity in the space was clear while praying in any of its corners and parts.

On Feb 1, First Million Man march was organized from Tahrir Square. Apparently, it was a tool for packing sit-in with people. It was about celebration rather than fighting, the sit-in witnessed high control and security. In Midday Prayers started, the muezzin ringing out across the square, chanting stops instantly, long green mats being laid down, men forming neat lines to pray, bowed heads, instant calm and chaotic scenes transformed.<sup>760</sup> Int1 recalled that "Part of million man March day preparation was microphone with speakers near Hardees was prepared." (Int28, Int1) According to Act7, "They played significant role in transmitting the prayers and allowing large crowds to pray in one conglomeration." (Int6, Act7) It was not Friday prayer but protesters were praying in huge congregational prayer. Pro6 described, "praying practices penetrated the gardens and the roundabout and between the tents in order to pray in straight lines towards the right orientation." (Int36, Pro6) Act4 described that "The unusual dynamics and flow of people around the Gezira was stopped momentarily during praying." (Int3, Act4) Act1 added that "lines of people were formed from the beginning of the space facing the *qibla* then it decreases gradually." (Int1, Act1) (See Fig.10.15)

Prayer practices defined a crowd as a state of absolute equality, based on collective body through unified practice that has been achieved. Praying rules and spatial restrictions like finding the right orientation entailed spatial organization of praying practices in space and imposing a kind of spatial definition for sit-in borders. Their spatial arrangement took control of the space temporarily, ceasing other activities from performing. It was

<sup>760</sup> Harriet Sherwood, the Guardian's correspondent in the city, is reporting the scene on Twitter <https://twitter.com/harrietsherwood>

the power of one mass to spatially emerge in space in such order and to pray at the same time with the same tempo entailing a static zone being main part of sit-in. A clear spatial manipulation was imposed on the whole space. The spatial unity emerged through praying practices gave rise to a feeling of solidarity. On Feb 2 prayer performances have been completely ceased. Camel battle forced congregational prayer to stop performing. (Int42, Pro12) Pro6 mentioned that, "there were continuous calls by microphone for encouraging protesters to remain in frontlines for fighting and to pray later. (See Fig. 10.16) Since they were under critical circumstance – war- and so this can allow them to shorten and combine prayers later." (Int36, Pro6) The space gained more sacred nature from the number of martyrs it witnessed.

In the aftermath of Camel Battle on Friday Feb 4 protesters prepared for the second 'Million Man March' day and traditional rituals of Friday prayers appeared in Tahrir Square. Act3 described that, "Friday Prayer has entirely filled the space with protesters listening to Egyptian-born cleric Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi speech, before Friday prayers at Tahrir Square." Pro2 explained that, "it initiated by khutbah speech then single call to prayer that was made by one Imam for the entire sit-in terrain. He took his place at Hardees where the frontage of the place in the sit-in was defined since previous million man march." (Int32, pro2) Act7 added that, "this spatial organization was marking the 'Million Man March' days more, while in other normal days protesters were praying in separate groups." (Int6, Act7) Pro6 observed that, "human chains of Christians and Muslims protecting protesters while praying were remarkable that day." (Int36, Pro6) Pro6 recalled that "Friday Prayer blocked any flow and dynamics from performing. It was the only dominating activity in space. (See Fig.10.17) Praying was an influencing activity during its performance forcing other activities to spatially adapt with it." Moreover, the space was hindered from motion since all circulations were paralyzed because of human chains protecting praying practices reached the sit-in edges while prayers' space extended till sit-in approaches. (Int32, pro2) The spatial arrangement of the day and the spatial setting continued in the other following days of the aftermath of the camel battle. Act15 described that, "since this moment number of protesters who were praying in Omar Makram mosque was not compared to the huge mass of protesters praying every day in the square." (Int14, Act15) Dr1 explained that, "Zawia after February 2nd wasn't any more space for praying. It became main field hospital of sit-in." (Int21, Dr1)

The spatial distribution of some practices like hospitalization, art corner and makeshift checkpoint around sit-in in the aftermath of the camel battle has enforced some different spatial composition on praying practices. Dr6 explained that, "Protesters with specific missions had to remain in their location without leaving for praying. Being a doctor in field clinics at Abd el Moneim Rhyad Square I wasn't able to join Friday prayer mass." (Int26, Dr6) Since Feb 5 when Army troops tried to move some of barricades and tanks near the Egyptian museum side to make way for traffic to flow again on Sunday, protesters prevented them from doing this action by sleeping in front of the tanks. This new fixed location of some groups of protesters entailed expansion of praying practices. Dr1 recalled that, "Praying practices appeared by some separate groups that were praying under the tanks near Abd El Moneim Rhyad Square." (Int21, Dr1) (See Fig.10.18)

Praying endured to be spatially shared activity between protesters in the sit-in. Since 6th February praying remained in its same location. However, it was confined to the area around the roundabout without any more intervention in campsite between tents anymore. (See Fig.10.18) Act6 explained that "green areas were all inhabited by the time with tents of campsite." (Int5, Act6) Accordingly, living and housing practices of campsite has limited the spatial composition of praying practices but praying continued to manipulate the remaining space. The performance of praying practices continued to cause temporal blockage in the sit-in. Intr1 in his interview stated that, "Christians' hands were chained to protect Muslim, so they could pray safely. Moreover, part of the sunrise pray was ritualized with the Christians surrounding."<sup>761</sup> (AUCInt1) Praying was an act of appearance which Christians were keen to spatially take part in through protection and spatial order. It was

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<sup>761</sup> Interview held with Karim-Kasim (source: AUC archive, University on the square project)

clear how particular protection system for praying practices was not only anymore for functional necessity. Yet, it remained part of its spatial arrangement till the last moment.

On 11 Friday, prayers in Tahrir Square drew massive crowds. Human chains expanded towards the edges of the sit-in that reached Talaat Harab Street and Tahrir Street on that day.<sup>762</sup> "Since in Muslim tradition any space in which a congregation prays can become a mosque. Tahrir Square became the mosque of the city on 11 February. Interestingly, President Mubarak was removed from power that same evening."<sup>763</sup> Pro12 recalled that, "With same crowds, during day and night prayers inside sit-in were performed. Mubarak Resign announcement was displayed while protesters were praying. Praying practice was not interrupted by this news. The Prayer continued and as it finished speakers have displayed the news." (Int42, Pro12) This shows how till the last moment praying performance was purely spiritual without being fabricated. (See Fig.10.10)

#### **10.2.4. Christian Mass in Tahrir Sit-in as Source of Spirituality**

The Preparation for making Christian mass in Tahrir Square started since February 5. Tech1, being one of the organizers of this event stated that, "the mass was supposed to include: martyrs service: speech with hymns about revolution's martyrs, freedom: and national unity for Sunday." (Int47, Tech1) Extraordinarily, two different religion prayers appeared in the same space. Christian mass that has different rituals from Muslim prayer entailed different spatial arrangement of space. Since it did not have strict timing during Sunday, Pro11 recalled that, "the mass was held more than one time that day and on two different stages." It was adapting with the spatial condition rather than forcing spatial setting like Muslim prayer's that required particular orientation and spatial order. Tech1 explained that "Later afternoon another mass was held on the other main stage as well. Egyptian Christians held the mass and the patron came on the stage calling everyone to share and to join their rituals Muslims and Christians with no difference. Christian services to remember those who have died in the protests included simple hymns with songs that were easily sung by Muslims as well." (Int47, Tech1) Act6 described that "the stage was surrounded with huge crowds." (Int5, Act6) (See Fig10.18)

#### **10.2.5. Prayers Practices Accommodating Spatial Improvement**

The spatial settings of different religion prayers' took place in Tahrir Square spontaneously. Their spatial arrangements were imposed to spaces in sit-in through their ritual practices, policing and protection tactics with formal organization. The fact that this sit-in witnessed dual religious prayers performances with highest solidarity that spatially ordered sit-in terrain was attractive for media to capture. In Tahrir Square, Christians and Muslims held hands and formed protective guards at each other's services in a demonstration of solidarity designed to convey that the protesters are united in a common cause and that heated debate in the west about the role of the Muslim Brotherhood is of less concern to Egyptians.<sup>764</sup> Tech1 added: "The event was significant; Al Jazeera and other channels were keen on live streaming it." (Int47, Tech1) Media capture of this public spectacle of praying was crucial. A clear message was coming out from the demonstrators- while creating these human chains and praying same terrain- that they represent all of Egypt no matter what religion. There was a real attempt to show that this was about all Egyptians not one section of society.

The development of prayers performance was significant, in order and in size. The representation of prayers with their praying practices on Feb 1 in Tahrir Square by journalists affected the performance of protesters while praying in next days. (Int36, Pro6) It was a first time experience to spatially occupy Tahrir

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<sup>762</sup> Prince, M. (2012).

<sup>763</sup> Sayyad, N. & Al Massoumi, M. (2012).

<sup>764</sup> McGreal, C. (2011, February 6)



Square with lines of prayers and without any preplanned process. Pro6 added that “they started to be too cautious while forming neat straight lines in prayers for next days. Their reference was their photos of previous day that appeared to them as their model to improve.”(Int36, Pro6). Accordingly, media capturing was part of the spatial composition of praying practices that was one of the factors responsible for the development of prayers performance in Feb 4 and next days by improving its representational space. According to Pro10, a journal photographer, “praying practices was attractive setting for all journalists since Feb 4<sup>th</sup> there were intense demands for recording moments of prayers with its highest solidarity, unity and harmony in space.”(Int40, Pro10) Praying practice did not only manipulate the sit-in space during its performances and forced other practice to adapt with its temporary blockage but also it manipulated the conceived space and the ways in which space was represented. Pro10 mentioned that, “Friday Prayers crowds were the only focus by the media during its moment.”(Int40, Pro10)

### 10.2.6. Commemorations and Memorials for Martyrs as Spatial Rituals

Since January 29 Tahrir Square witnessed many martyrs and funerals crossing through sit-in terrain. These funerals were crossing Sit-in with huge crowds. (See Fig.10.13) Mostafa Elsayy was martyred by Egyptian police on Jan 28, his funeral, like many other martyrs’ funerals started from his home in Heiteia -an informal settlement in heart of Cairo- with huge demonstration to reach Tahrir Square. (Int11, Act12) Funeral demonstration was mobilizing more people on its way while leaving sit-in from Mohamed Mahmoud Street, the police guarding the ministry of interior aimed life ammunition at the protesters and blocked them from passing its Mohamed Mahmoud Street. It was attacked severely and the funeral changed into battle.”(Int11, Act12) (See Fig. 10.9) Int1 observed that, “Other martyrs’ funerals between January 29<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> started from their homes insisting to pass through Tahrir Square and reach Maspero as well. Tahrir Square being part of the funeral processions has clearly charged it with new meaning. (See Fig. 10.14)

Since Feb 2 the sense of entitlement has been merged with the fact that Tahrir Square has taken on a sacred dimension as well; as it was where many martyrs fall. During camel battle, protesters in Tahrir Square held instant funeral for activist killed in clashes at sit-in approaches. The Funerals first started by roaming around the square several times while calling ‘There is No God but Allah, this martyr is God’s lover.’ (Int26, Dr6) Then they prepared a funeral procession with big march starting from Tahrir Square to reach martyr’s house for the next morning. Dr6 added that, “Funerals required sort of spatial protection and control since it was the way to announce and inform his family with the news. They insured that the march should be big enough to be able to resist any reaction from martyr’s neighborhood, especially if martyr was from neighborhood that wasn’t supporting the revolution as Shubra. The period between Feb 1 till Feb 3 were the most critical and dangerous days to get out of the terrain with any funerals.”(Int26, Dr6) (See Fig.10.16)

In the following days when sit-in got highly controlled and secured, commemorating martyrs was spatially obtained through other spatial practices. Pro12 observed that, “On Feb 6 and 8 or 9, symbolic funerals for revolution’s martyrs marching around the Gezira either with symbolic coffin or carrying candles at night that started from around the Army Tanks at the Egyptian museum –where camel battle took place- then rotating around the Gezira till the wall of martyrs that was erected before Qasr el Nile bridge.”(Int42, Pro12) (See Fig.10.19) For several years the steps of Cairo’s iconic Journalists’ Syndicate building had served as an informal platform for voicing political dissent against the Mubarak regime.<sup>765</sup> Act12 explained that, “On 7 February, around 1,000 journalists chose that venue to stage a symbolic funeral in protest at the killing of Al-Ahram employee Ahmad Mahmoud, who was shot by a member of the government’s ‘security’ forces while

<sup>765</sup> Sakr, N & Tauris, I. B. (2013, January 30).

photographing their clashes with demonstrators. The protest ended with a march to Tahrir Square and a speech from Inas Abdel-Alim, Mahmoud's wife, herself a journalist with Al-Akhbar." (Int11, Act12)

While February 6 'Sunday of the Martyrs' that is how it was described by many interviewees, demonstrators set up temporary memorials for the martyrs inside sit-in. Act7 explained that, "Martyrs' posters were collected at KFC and imposed with buffer zone in front the green fence as kind of sacredness that was added, to keep people distant from posters and with place to leave either for flower or candles." (Int6, Act7). On February 8<sup>th</sup>, according to Tech1, "Martyrs continued to be remembered and commemorated by their families and friends by bringing framed photographs and posters of those who lost their lives. A shrine was erected near the roundabout with framed photos of martyrs in the middle of the street and it was surrounded with barriers." (Int47, Tech1) Installations of martyrdom with flowers, Quran and barriers were destinations for symbolic funerals which have more cultural influence imported by some protesters from different cities and rural areas. These new charged meanings and symbolic sanctuary of Tahrir has transformed it into Mazar, mashhads or Makam: a place where a religious visitation occurred, a site of pilgrimage and shrine to commemorate and remember. All these patterns of commemoration and memorials associated with processions, symbolic funerals, erecting martyr's walls and composing photos in shrines emerged on different surfaces and in different part of sit-in were revolutionary act that represented Tahrir square as sacred space.

### 10.3. Analysis of Praying and Ritual Practices: Spatial Practices of Tahrir Square

#### 10.3.1. The Social Control Imposed during Praying Practices

##### *Prayer Lines Sustaining Social Control*

Congregational prayer acts had significant effects in particular contexts. It succeeded in different circumstances to achieve a kind of static condition through social control in space; first, on January 28<sup>th</sup> it held the front lines of physical space for the protesters on Qasr el Nil Bridge and other vital streets around the Ministry of Interior. This was the day an iconic battle took place on the Qasr al-Nil bridge as police forces attempted to keep protestors from Tahrir Square.<sup>766</sup> Praying was a process of galvanizing and unifying demonstrators in their actions. It served as a spatial and symbolic powerful contestation. It was an act deployed for preventing and limiting 'Supreme Council of the Armed Forces' from advancing towards protesters. It served as a simple but powerful reproach to the water-cannon shooters. Protesters believed that the police would never attack them while praying: "Here we are, on this bridge, praying. Are you truly going to continue to blast us with water as if we were dirt?"<sup>767</sup> These spatial tactics secured and held the taken territory. Its spatial arrangement was an act for confronting military formation dynamics.

Adopting this known practice and formation of prayer for unplanned defensive poses was remarkable. Protesters formed into tight prayer lines with no doubt in their mind, but that performing corporate prayer is something these protesters were very familiar with. It does, after all, take quite a bit of practice to know "almost instinctively" how to form up into those lines without pushing or shoving, and while focusing on the rhythms of the prayer actions.<sup>768</sup> Engaging systematically in familiar, small actions was a great tactic to calm panic and

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<sup>766</sup> El-Ghobashy (2011).

<sup>767</sup> Cobban, H. (2011).

<sup>768</sup> Cobban, H. (2011).

collected their thoughts. According to Dr2, “Moments of prayer were opportunity for protection and calming fight.”(Int22, Dr2) Moreover, the collective act of kneeling, and prostrating on the ground, with the forehead touching the ground, increased their contact with space and forcing police to retreat or stop advancing at least for a while on the bridge. Praying lines as spatial formation for defense appeared in other contexts where armed forces showed their violence and panic. However it did not take the same composition as it took in Qasr el Nil Bridge. It was clear that confrontation on the bridge was different from confrontations that happened in normal streets; it required effective deployment of all possible tactics for revolutionary act. Praying practices on the bridge had mental and physical effects, since it helps so much in stimulating and unifying demonstrators in their tactics to secure and hold taken territory. The strategic location of this performance represented the brutality and violence the armed forces reached at the approaches of Tahrir Square with highest visibility. Praying in front of the enemy lines was a tool for persistence, consolidating the sense of battlefield and breaking the feeling of fear while leaving it to God.

#### *Regulating and Policing Praying as an Interchangeable Role between Muslims and Christians*

Not only did the square witnessed a unique use of physical environments during praying practices, but also the ideologies of social controlling and tactics while praying that protesters encountered were different. The community control of prayers in sit-in originated from the protection of prayers in order not to face any risks from sudden attacks. It was responsible for providing the right atmosphere for performing. Inside sit-ins this control came mainly from human chains formed around prayers or other religious performances. A very deliberate performance of Muslim Christian solidarity as they guarded one another against the security forces during prayers.<sup>769</sup>

Praying practices were buffered by the crowds that were surrounding them in the first day of the uprising, and spontaneously acted as a protector. Later they required to be formally protected in the aftermath of the camel battle, “It became more defined and clear buffer of human chain cordoning around people praying with intention to protect them from any potential disruptions.”(Int36, Pro6) These rituals were initially spontaneous and purely functional. On Feb 2 Int1 recalled that, “The camel battle clashes were anticipated with direct attacks on small group of protesters from the back, while they were praying Midday that was held in front KFC. Protesters thought of forming human chains instantly around group people who were praying and under threat.” Later on, these practices were kind of statement to their empowerments and ability to create a protected and calm space for praying through human chains inside sit-ins. In addition to that, part of the euphoria of first one-million-demonstration on Feb 4<sup>th</sup> appeared significantly in the formation of human chains by Christians that reflected national unity without any religious discrimination. Since Christians’ hands were chained to protect Muslims, so they could pray safely. Similarly, Tech1 observed that, “Christian service was held on February, with a large number of Muslims coming out to protect it, in cautious.”(Int47, Tech1)

Camel battle and the on prayers from behind were also used to justify the prevailing attempts to control sit-ins around any prayers at any time and in any part of sit-in terrain. Pro8 observed that, “The performance of these rituals entailed temporal blockage in the sit-in.” (Int38, Pro8) It rearranged the dynamics and foot-traffic flow during its performance. Human chains continued to be formed for praying in small groups within huge crowds as well. This special monitoring was accompanied by a defensive system as well. Pro12 recalled that the “Same tactic for protection was deployed for prayers performed in far spots away from the central space for praying or during different timings; however it was subjected to the highest level of control by human chain formed around them completely for watching the place security and providing space for prayers away from foot-traffic.”(Int42, Pro12)

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<sup>769</sup> Tripp, C. (2013, December 2).

The emphasis on experiences of fear and insecurity were part of the emotional and embodied experience of practice that reconfigured praying practices. Considering the Christians' and Muslims' ways of interaction and in which there became important for prayers and ritual practice. Focusing on the emotional and physical impact during clashes and camel battle attacks that had on participants, through atmosphere of tension can clearly explain some of the changes that emerged in the aftermath of camel battle on praying arrangements and protection system. These changes have created the potential for new kinds of social relations between participants and audiences, such as with Christians monitoring and forming human chains, stage performers pausing all speakers, and media crews standing in required location to capture the best shots for these massive gatherings.

Sectarian unity was also emphasized.<sup>770</sup> Christians formed a cordon of their bodies around their praying, Muslim colleagues on Friday. This decision came from the youth themselves, not from any religious leadership, and places of worship did not need armed guards.<sup>771</sup> It was as if a new reality had suddenly been superimposed on an old one. As for religious differences, unusual physical interaction and direct support between Christian and Muslims has spatially appeared. Salma Ismail argues that these activities represented the emergence of new forms of civility and citizenship which were "disencumbered of the secular versus religious oppositional logic and its concomitant forms of political rationality."<sup>772</sup> Christians and Muslims had instilled a new spirit in Egyptian souls, in which was apparent an excellent example of national unity when they guarded each other's prayers after the police disappeared. Agrama suggests that Tahrir Square represented "a secular moment," a time and space in which people expressed visions of national solidarity that were largely indifferent to "the question of where to draw a line between religion and politics and the stakes of tolerance and religious freedom."<sup>773</sup>

### *Prayers as a Risk Profile*

Since February 4 when Friday Prayer entirely filled the space, made sit-in being seen as Islamic- driven revolution. Accordingly, prayer falls roughly into the category of Islamists behavior, since it was not an ordinary use of sit-in space in the rest of the world. Act7 recalled that "Foreign protesters were scared of that unified mass performance. It represented for them an Islamic revolution." He/ She went on to explain that, "It is not at all an Islamic revolution, because in Egypt Friday prayer is more tradition and massive numbers of Egyptians who pray Friday prayer did not signify any political direction." (Int6, Act7) Hana al Bayaty in her conversation about the 18 days stated that "Everyday they organized prayers. I have friends who are completely secular, who would go on purpose to Tahrir to pray together. For it was a great strength, this spiritual bonding together. It is not religious in the sense of bigotry."<sup>774</sup> Egyptians were trying to clarify as: "People please understand that mass prayers are a form of protest, not necessarily a display of religiosity, but unity."<sup>775</sup> In addition, when protesters were recognized as Islamic revolution while congregational praying, they did not worry since Christians appeared with their Mass as spatial evidences to prove the contrary. These claims were neutralized through dual religious performances and interchangeable protection between two communities. In general, sit-in terrains appeared as a space of contestation where praying practices were spatially threat and potentials in meantime. The social norm cultivated by this sit-in community made praying with massive gathering more neutral compared to other public space.

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<sup>770</sup> Agrama, H. A. (2012). Pp. 26–31.

<sup>771</sup> Cole, J. (2011, February 7).

<sup>772</sup> Hirschkind, C. (2012). Pp 49–53.

<sup>773</sup> Agrama, H. A. (2012).

<sup>774</sup> Behind the scene of Tahrir Square: a Skype conversation Hana al Bayaty on the logistics and inner workings of the Arab Awakening. A conversation with Lieven de Cauter. Retrieved from: [www.leonharddepaape.nl/?p=1853](http://www.leonharddepaape.nl/?p=1853)

<sup>775</sup> Pakinamamer Twitter account. Retrieved from: [https://twitter.com/pakinamamer?original\\_referer=http%3A%2F%2Fstorify.com](https://twitter.com/pakinamamer?original_referer=http%3A%2F%2Fstorify.com)

Inside the sit-in terrain social control and spontaneous rules especially during Friday's prayers were significant in that every protester was obliged to stop any activities or movements during prayers' time. No speakers, or stages were performing; no movements or foot-traffic flow was functioning. Act3 described that, "No motion or meetings were possible during praying, so protesters were aware of these disciplines that forced them to leave the center of sit-in and reach the approaches before, if they needed to do anything else." (Int3, Act3) Groups of Christians and people who didn't pray were responsible for regulating traffic flow -that almost reached near sit-in approaches- and forming human chain around prayers. Time was also controlled in the uses of space surrounding the roundabout specially, in the sense that a complete blockage of foot-traffic and silence of speakers ran during Friday or 'Million Man March' congregational Prayer only. On the other hand, smaller congregational prayers in other times concede the use of space through human chain formed around them. In, general sit-in terrain appeared as a place that disciplined their bodies, reformed their culture, and changed their perception of space and time.

### **10.3.2. Praying as Process of Sacred Place Making**

#### *Space for Two Religions: Experience inside Sit-in*

Praying practices defined a crowd as a state of absolute equality, based on gathering the energy and support of collective body and unified practice. Tahrir Square was a center for dual religious prayers. It formed the location where one's religious identity is enacted, while this enactment at the same time constituted the square as a "sacralized" place. The term sacralized" and "sacralizing"<sup>776</sup> emphasize the continuous process of sacred place-making. This can be related to the resistant nature of sacred place making in Tahrir Square. The view expressed in the introduction of 'Zawiya, Zikr and the Authority of Shaykh 'Al-Pepsi' by Kirin', that "sacred places are the result of a specific mode of place making; they are the product of people's investments and practices that endow physical space with diverse, religious connotations."<sup>777</sup> This concept can emphasize the sacred nature of Tahrir Square through spiritual transformation. Religious rituals performed by praying practices and commemoration of martyrs rituals constituted the enactment of the sacred whereby Tahrir Square became, however temporarily, a sacred place and its practitioners as sacred place makers.

It is particularly clear then that for Tahrir Square the praying practices and commemoration rituals has significant role in sacralizing the square. Sustaining praying practices and commemoration renewed the sacredness of the site. Pnina Werbner, in the article studying Sufi Muslims, explores how transplanted Sufi Muslims inscribe their new homeland with a "new moral and cultural surface."<sup>778</sup> They sacralize their new land by the presence of holy saints who "stamp the earth" with the Zikr, a sacred dance.<sup>779</sup> The sanctity of Tahrir Square was created and recreated by Christian and Muslim religious practices, interchangeable control and protection for other ones performances, by marching periodically through sit-in streets in symbolic funerals. Tahrir Square was a space of contestation and spiritual transformation that must be illustrated through its revolutionary act.

They made a public spectacle of praying: "On February 4 the scene of Tahrir square was incredible. Millions of people praying, Reverence, Very powerful, it looks like Mecca in Haj."<sup>780</sup> Though for individuals as well as the

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<sup>776</sup> Werbner, P. (1996) pp. 309-338.

<sup>777</sup> Willemsse, K. (2012 June 5).

<sup>778</sup> Werbner, P. (1996).

<sup>779</sup> Werbner, P. (1996).

<sup>780</sup> Egyptian blogger sandmonkey, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/blog/2011/feb/04/egypt-protests-day-departure-live>

collective, it became a sacred space. This sacred space does not exist naturally, but is assigned sanctity as man defines, limits and characterizes it through his culture, experience and goals."<sup>781</sup> Transforming the square to the quietness of a mosque, through praying performance was in this instance made visible on sit-in terrain. The size and capacity of Tahrir Square allowed the smaller groups at different spaces to gather as one big mass in one space. The crowd lined up in rows, stood shoulder to shoulder and prayed. Prayers' area was defined by the orientation towards Mekka, stage with high definition speakers, central safest place. For prayers the spiritual mood itself was more important than the environment and architecture. Protesters who involved in these practices were conceived as active participants in those production processes and emerging conventional accounts of the city as a coherent space managed and controlled by society.

Praying practices in Islam has its spiritual spatiality. The appearance of this praying performance in big mass had multiple effects. It was clear how it united people during its performances through the same body movements and gestures at the same time; and, besides, it strengthened and encouraged people in their demands and goals, by the support from God people get while praying. When this is done in public, as a group, people were incorporated 'into a single undifferentiated body of belief, utterance, motion and intent.'<sup>782</sup> The spatial arrangement and repetition of praying practices in Tahrir square with this mass was crucial for creating and sustaining unity in the space, that sit-in without these practices could have divided rather than united people. Moreover, praying in Tahrir square as Muslims together didn't only create unity among Muslims only, but also unites Muslims and Christians. Christians were also participating in the praying, through effective role but in different spatial order. They were protecting Muslims from attacks while concentrating in praying.

However, we must not forget that praying is above all also a form of personal and social piety; not reserved for or new in Tahrir Square and the revolution, but part of normal daily life of many Muslims and Christians.<sup>783</sup> Lara Deeb in her study on piety among Shi'i Muslims in Lebanon argues that 'bodies form a canvas on which personal piety can be transformed into a subtle public demonstration of faith and/or a louder demonstration of collective identity.'<sup>784</sup> Praying in Tahrir Square is one of these bodily practices where personal piety is transformed into public demonstrations of piety and, Catharina Elizabeth van den Bogert argues, also into political demands. From the first day then, the person praying was able to spend time with and to communicate with God, which strengthens and encourages people in the articulating of their political demands. Moreover, when this is done in public, as a group, people are incorporated 'into a single undifferentiated body of belief, utterance, motion and intent,'<sup>785</sup> which created the unity in Tahrir Square which so many interviewees have described. These relations of unity were crucial to maintain this space of spiritual transformation. This new space between people, who before, never have the opportunity to perform religious collectively made a space of spiritual transformation.

Prayers in sit-in terrains were not limited on a single relation between: God and a worshiper but also other modes of observations and interaction that emerged between protesters. The praying space produced through participating in a mission during praying moments; praying in these tight rows: protecting protesters in forming human chains; or even keeping calm respecting others. Every protester was feeling entitled to take part in any of these prayers and ritual practices that spatially performed. These spaces for were shaped exclusively by the social orders and solidarity among its participants, protectors, observers, and several different groups.

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<sup>781</sup> Jackson, R. H., and Henrie, R. (1983). pp. 94

<sup>782</sup> Deeb, L. (2006). p. 105.

<sup>783</sup> Deeb, L. (2006)

<sup>784</sup> Deeb, L. (2006).

<sup>785</sup> Deeb, L. (2006).



The integration of such commemoration and memorial acts like funerals, symbolic funerals, and shrines in the space that is already used like mosque and church for praying made it the most sacred complex place. The symbolic sanctuary of Tahrir Square was transformed into "Mazar"<sup>786</sup> as a revered symbolic space to visit. Sacred space is not the stimulus for ritual: rituals as sacred making behavior, brings about "sacred" space.<sup>787</sup> Similarly, praying and commemoration practices by protesters were responsible of sacred place-making, who controlled diverse places and who contested the claim for their sacredness. This complex remained spatially in the living heart of sit-in community. Real Funerals and symbolic ones were roaming the square, has sustained the rituals and symbolism in sit-in terrain. They were easily perceived by global world to present brutality and real events. The powerful symbolic, as well as spiritual, impetus in the revolutionary discourse evolved out of the remarkable imagery of the martyrs' shrine. Tahrir Square harbored many diverse collective religious activities of great social and religious importance. The regular commemoration and specially those events related to the community's history help maintain its identity.<sup>788</sup> In this case, the sense of community is strengthened through spatial organization and pilgrimage of their friends and family to visit the erected shrine in Tahrir Square. The commemoration and physical memorials are important vectors and agents of construction and maintenance of national identity.<sup>789</sup> From this perspective, Tahrir Square was temporarily re-conceptualized and served more as sacred space rather than just a sit-in.

#### *Muslim-Christian Joint Religious Practices*

Deploying religious differences reflected 'a historical tradition of Christians and Muslims joining together in political protest that dates back to banners carried by the nationalist Wafd party in 1919 when it led the revolution against British colonial rule. The subsequent history of Christian-Muslim relations has had its ups and downs. But at Tahrir Square, Sunday, February 6, was another such 1919 moment of unity. The 1919 Demonstration of Copts, Muslims against the British rule was a foundational moment for the Egyptian nation. In Tahrir Square, during Coptic Sunday Mass was a chance for Muslims and Christians to spatially appear together and hold joint prayers. A Coptic Christian priest, carrying a cross, next to him stood a Muslim imam, carrying a copy of the Qur'an, as the crowd chanted in unison, "We are one hand!" A Coptic preacher led them in the chant from the stage -instead of alter, "One hand, one hand!" referring to the unity of Christians and Muslims, who express the same demands for a change of regime. For protesters in Tahrir Square during the 18 days, their symbols and gestures of unity – as banners showing the conjoined signs of cross and crescent- and conjoined performance appeared as aspirational signs of what they hope life could be like freed from Mubarak regime. It is why there have been joint Muslim-Christian prayers in Tahrir Square performed more than one time.

By analyzing the unity in Tahrir Square that emerged through unique praying practice arrangement, it is important to think about differences. Difference and unity in sit-ins were therefore not mutually exclusive, but both in need of each other. Without differences among people, they would not have any unity or equality effect. Unity existed because there were already differences, and it appeared in the spiritual transformation in Tahrir Square. The spatial arrangement of praying and commemoration were so particular and unique from normal life because it was done with all different kinds of people from different religions together. This unity among differences in the Square the research have analyzed as tool for spatial transformation in a liminal phase, which is according to Turner<sup>790</sup> at the same time against the assertion of existing arrangement, with its segregation of religion and gender; but also the source for new societal structures, possibility and creativity, where these boundaries of religion and gender are dissolved and transformed. Difference and unity in Tahrir Square is

<sup>786</sup> A revered symbolic space to visit, a site of pilgrimage and homage to commemorate and collectively remember and preserve

<sup>787</sup> Deeb, L. (2006).

<sup>788</sup> Patrick A. Desplat, Dorothea E. Schulz (eds.) ( May 2012). p 23

<sup>789</sup> Patrick A. Desplat, Dorothea E. Schulz (eds.) ( May 2012).

<sup>790</sup> Turner, V. (1967).

therefore not mutually exclusive, but both in need of each other. Unity only existed in relation to differences, and the articulation of differences, yet equality, in Tahrir Square was crucial for its unity.

### *Gender Desegregation in Praying Practices*

Normally, religious practices witness degrees of gender, and other religions spatial segregation. Gender segregation, as seen in most mosques today, is such a limitation, for it limits women's full access. Segregation can be implemented either through a screen or a wall, or by distance, as happens when placing women behind men during the congregational prayers. Little has been written however on gender segregation in the mosque, like Turathuna al-Fikri fi Mizan al-Shar wa al-Aql.<sup>791</sup> he severely criticized the widespread exclusion of women from the mosque and defended their right to participate. The second one is Ahmad Shawqi al-Fanjari, who specifically addressed segregation in his al-Ikhtilat fi al-Din fi al-Tarikh fi Ilm al-Ijtima,<sup>792</sup> saying that, "the Koran provides interesting evidence for women's access to the mosque during the Prophet's period."<sup>793</sup> Tahrir Square was a site of contestation through praying practices that desegregated women from men in wide display.

Congregational prayer in sit-in witnessed unusual spatial composition. For the first time, it was not unpermitted to stay as being a woman. On February 1<sup>st</sup>, it was mentioned in Twitter that "in Tahrir Square in Cairo, men and women pray together just like at the Haram in Makkah, gender boundaries have been transcended and the only thing that matters is that they are Egyptians who want freedom!"<sup>794</sup> Women with different backgrounds and dress code were engaged in prayers and without gender division. This can definitely add to praying performance meaning and significance. This unique relation between men and women while praying signified a bigger change in progress. Moreover, it can force us to have other insights that might train one's eyes to see differently. Not only did it represent solidarity, or people in an un-conservative way with no gender segregation while praying but also a sacred state that was never there else in Mekka. The reason for this arrangement - in Makkah -when praying could very well have been logistical. In such cramped and uncontrolled quarters, it may simply be too difficult to organize the lines for prayer according to the standard motif.<sup>795</sup> (See Fig. 10.7)

### **10.3.3. The symbolism of Friday Prayer in Tahrir Square: Mosque for the Masses**

In the past, Friday made the mosque one of the most visited places in the city. And due to this frequent attendance by public, then the mosque became a vital source information and mass communication hub. News and declarations were shared and displayed after prayers time. Similarly, congregational prayers in sit-in were more than religious symbolism. Looking at Friday prayer in sit-in should not be reduced to its religious dimension and understood in a way that might give the uprisings an Islamic background. Instead, it became the most important day in the week for sit-ins. It evolved into a very special day for the sit-in mass gathering and power. Moreover, it became such a cause for concern for the State regime and a sign of defeat through increasing the mass. The very developmental stage of sit-in was organized around these weekly services. Friday prayers were an automatic rallying point for Muslims of various classes, various orientations, and various ideological influences. Protesters seized upon the symbolism of Fridays and the rituals of communal prayer in sit-in as a mobilization catalyst for the masses and resilience in a revolutionary struggle.

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<sup>791</sup> Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Min Huna Na'lam*, 5th ed. (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Hadithah, 1968), 185-95.

<sup>792</sup> Tajddin, M. *Encyclopaedia of Ismailism*. F.I.E.L.D. the First Ismaili Electronic Library and Database. Retrieved from: [www.ismaili.net/heritage/node/10579](http://www.ismaili.net/heritage/node/10579)

<sup>793</sup> Reda, N. (2004).

<sup>794</sup> Habib, S. Twitter account, [twtpic.com/3vjpf5](https://twitter.com/twtpiccom/3vjpf5)

<sup>795</sup> Rosenbaum, N. (2011).

After starting out as a date for demonstrations to spatially converge in Tahrir Square, it became a date for weekly units of measuring the power and spatial unity of protesters. Million Men March day for mass demonstrations, has in the meantime also become a unit of measure; with protesters counting their increase in mass, and strength of resistance and insistence; and with dictators calculating how many Fridays left they can stay in power. Moreover, It has become increasingly evident that the mosque's marginalization and the withdrawal of its political powers since the rule of the Umayyad Caliphate 12 centuries ago, has now been reassigned a role that was thought to have been lost.<sup>796</sup> Tahrir Square, in the heart of the city became something akin to "mosque for the masses."<sup>797</sup> It preserved the particular significance and status of Friday in mosques. Flows of people were converging onto the city's central square for Friday prayers. As this example shows, attending Friday prayers is not just a pious duty, but also an invitation to gather out in the open – without spatial constraints as a symbol of despotism.<sup>798</sup> The 18 days of the Egyptian revolution represented a clear example of the role of the mosque. The model demonstrated the effectiveness in deploying religious practices for mobilizing people, in which traditional tactics by political organizations did not play any leading role.

#### *Discursive Construction and Symbolic Representations of Prayer and Commemoration Practices*

The representation of praying practices in mass-mediated images of all confirmed a certain emerging utopianism. Praying practices in the sit-in were also activities through which protesters constructed civil and peaceful image. The performance of praying could be thought of in a way that, although taking place within a space filled with tension, the performance of praying reminds us of the beauty associated with the ethos of Islam as a way to peace.<sup>799</sup> Journalists were eager to take photographs especially from aerial view to disseminate this unique event and celebrate remarkable performances and individuals, and disclose central location. Visual representation thus became a mirror of prayers' collective production of space and construction of civility. Praying as other practices in sit-in has witnessed phases of development due to various influences. Praying before camel battle was charged solely by religious meanings. When praying carried other characters; of gazing attention; calming panic; collecting their thoughts; guaranteeing peace; and requiring security through big congregational prayers, it significantly appeared in a different order that was visually and spatially effective. Its concentrated mass paralyzed other practices while being performed. Since this moment, space appeared with newly charged meanings. Many protesters assigned political, religious and social meanings to the same act of praying. Similarly, ritual practice in sit-in witnessed what Munson identified as: 'the diversity of meanings leads to greater participation and a greater potential impact.'<sup>800</sup> According to Ziad Munson, these multiple meanings are the key to accomplish change in modern society, since this makes it possible for many people to identify in their own manner with this ritual: 'The very ambiguity we face in classifying events as religious or political is a basis for the power such events have to be transformative.'<sup>801</sup> Clearly praying in sit-in has been more beyond being only a religious meaning but also a political statement. Protesters who arrived for religious demands were politically active as well. Instead, others who have never prayed participated in these congregational prayers. It was this spiritual bonding together with multiple meanings. This shows the social and personal transformative power of these rituals.<sup>802</sup>

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<sup>796</sup> Fetouri, M. (2011, June 17).

<sup>797</sup> Fetouri, M. (2011, June 17).

<sup>798</sup> Fetouri, M. (2011, June17).

<sup>799</sup> Patel, R. (2011).

<sup>800</sup> Munson, Z. (2007). p. 130.

<sup>801</sup> Munson, Z. (2007). p. 128.

<sup>802</sup> Munson, Z. (2007). p.130.

Yet, displaying the unity in religiosity through praying practices in Tahrir Square had indirectly also another political aim, since 'whatever one's motives, public prayer was read by others.'<sup>803</sup> The representation of spectacle display of praying practices in Tahrir Square meant demonstrating the revolutionists' piety to the cautious people in Egypt was effective mode for demonstrating how protesters are civil, religious and trust people not thugs as Egyptian state television rumors wanted people to believe. "I always trust in the religious people, ok. So when I found them there, I have something like... convertible, that this revolution, or this change in my country, is something to a better position or a better state to my country, ok? I found there a lot of religious people, and they have the religious uniform you know, with the... they put something on their hand, they have to wear galabeyya's, and they were praying in Tahrir Square."<sup>804</sup>

Funerals and symbolic funeral marches were part of space rituals in the aftermath of the camel battle, used as collective remembrance and symbolic representation. They were generously obtaining multiple meanings, as political, religious or both together. Moreover, part of the rituals of these practices was shouting Allahu Akbar (God is great) or La illaha Illa allah (There is no God but God, Islamic creed) which can be interpreted not only as religious slogans but also acts of resistances in the war as cultural expression. These ritual practices were interpretation not only for religious ones but also as cultural expressions of war time or victory. Consequently, through collective bodily involvement in these rituals, people were united with each other, and exercised power and control over the space and their political demands. Through these religious displays they were heard by the world and regime, their action affirmed the spatial brutality of police. Accordingly it transformed the people and space involved in these practices. They were clear political sign against Egyptians regime and military forces brutality.

## 10.4. Conclusion

This chapter argues that the ways in which protesters prayed and contested public space through religious practices reflected their revolutionary acts while they claimed their autonomy and right to the city. The sit-in terrain during 18 days has introduced to the world unusual notion of public space to the forefront of discussions on contemporary urbanism. Praying and commemoration practices were performed in space not only for obeying God but also as spatial practices that are responsible for space reproduction as a sacred complex space. Tahrir Square as new social space between people became a space of spiritual transformation. It offered protesters a dramatic stage for all religions to appear and collectively perform in peace and safety. These practices shall be conceived as specific modes of sacred place-making then. (See Fig.10.21)

Focusing on praying and commemoration practices, this research concentrates on social and religious aspects in addition to the political issues that affected the rearrangement of praying practices and commemoration appearance in space during 18 days. They were conceived as specific modes of space production and the research seeks to understand them in their contextual complexity. After tracing praying and commemoration practices during 18 days through phases of development, religious practices showed their effectiveness away from religious commitments. They finally had the chance to regain their civil roles. Praying and ritual practice in this spectacle display, demonstrated a model of society structure with social reconfiguration, which was already there and oppressed through political pressures. Sit-in space was reorganized through prayers into forum for democratic articulation, displaying solidarity, equality and unity, and the communication of universal messages of rejection of authoritarianism, gender and religion segregation. Even in the face of a high degree of social

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<sup>803</sup> Deeb, L. (2006).

<sup>804</sup> Van den Bogert, C. (2012).

control and threats, protesters continued to pray outdoor with huge mass in the sit-in terrain for sacred place making, self-representation, and claim their right to the city. Protesters' persistence was also reinforced by the discursive practices of the media and the protesters' choice for highest visible space. The associated tactics and performances by Christians were effective as well. Although the majority of prayers were Muslims, the occurrence of Christian Mass and their sense of responsibility for protecting Muslims generated a sense of non-Islamist, peace, and no religious fanaticism. Particularly, praying practices has spatially rearranged the space through communal prayers or funeral marches tactics into sacred place. The very deliberate performance of Muslim Christian solidarity as they guarded one another against attacks and the very deliberate performance of men and women who joined in prayer lines reveal how Tahrir Square was a space of contestation without gender segregation. In addition to that, it evoked people in an un-conservative way with no gender segregation while praying but also sacred state that was never there else in Mekka.

This chapter focused on the body-centered experiences while praying and their differences. It gives better understanding to the fact that without the differences among participants during praying practices, they would not have any unity and equality. The space emerged during praying gained its sacredness through the performances of different religions and their unusual spatial arrangement. It emphasized through tracing the interrelationships between human consciousness, body experiences, and their impact on the whole world through representation by making a public spectacle of praying. Praying together in the largest public square in the country without the state-control, witnessing unity and peace was a dramatic event. The investigation intended to trace the patterns of clustering within sit-in while praying that featured interesting social relations. For the first time in its history, the square was reconfigured to involve this number of people conglomerate 5 times every day for praying in the center being the most secured and controlled area of sit-in terrain and space for two religions' performances. The square was transformed into a public space for piety with all its vital components and elements. The way the square was reconfigured through prayer and ritual practices uncovered an interesting harmony collage of Christians' and Muslims' unity shaping people's mental image of public space.

The way protesters used public spaces for praying transformed it into a true mosque with all its original functions that were not limited solely on a religious one. The revival of the mosque in its old period was spatially evoked and in particular on Friday as a model. It was a complex representation of its real arrangement through undifferentiated space and the particularity of mosque space being served for prayer, social gatherings, communication and sharing opinions and political discussions. It revealed something about their social production of space that contained protesters' unique demands and social relations; a space that embodied their perceptions and lived experiences. Vis-versa this praying and ritual practices in sit-in affected positively the ritual practices and people's thoughts and appreciation of the mosque within its role in liberation and power. It also liberated the ideologies and forms about mosque from being enclosed space concerned only about religions and duties instead it appeared as an open space concerned with the everyday lives of the people, and there political worries. The occurrence of praying practices as revolutionary act did not only represent the single traditional relationship between individual and his God as in a normal sacred space. Instead, it spatially demonstrated complex socio-spatial relation between people sharing same space responsible for the production of this sacred complex space while challenging the regime. Tahrir Square became a space of contestation where a reciprocal relationship between religious practices as a means to liberation and religion as a means to provoke revolt has manifested itself.



Figure 10.1: The intense and literal back-and-forth between protestors and Egyptian police on the Qasr Al Nile Bridge. (Source: <http://www.bagnewsnotes.com/2011/01/egypt-photo-of-the-day-on-the-Qasr-al-nile-bridge/>)



Figure 10.2: Anti-government protesters pray in Tahrir Square. (Source: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/1037/eg21.ht>)





Figure 10.3: Congregational prayer in Tahrir square Feb1. (Source: <http://revolt25.blogspot.it/>)



Figure 10.4: Congregational prayer in third week of the Egyptian Revolution. (Source: <http://theredphoenixapl.org/2011/08/01/a-peoples-history-of-the-egyptian-revolution>)





Figure 10.5: Anti-government protesters, and Egyptian soldiers on top of their vehicles, Friday prayers in Tahrir Square, Feb. 11, 2011. (Source: [m.spokesman.com/galleries/2011/feb/11/mubarak-resigns-feb-11/](http://m.spokesman.com/galleries/2011/feb/11/mubarak-resigns-feb-11/))



Figure 10.6: Christians protecting Muslim during their prayers. (Source: <http://peacetour.org/Egypt-revolution>)





Figure 10.7: Feb 11 Friday prayers in Tahrir Square draw massive crowd. (Source: [photoblog.nbcnews.com/\\_news/2011/02/11/6032219](http://photoblog.nbcnews.com/_news/2011/02/11/6032219))



Figure 10.8: A shrine was erected with framed photos of martyrs. (Source: <http://pecetour.org/Egypt-revolution>)





Figure 10.9: Funerel crossing Tahrir square. (Source: taken from Tech1)



Figure 10.10: Symbolic funeral with candles in Tahrir Square. (Source: [http://pro-civitas.blogspot.it/2011\\_02\\_01\\_archive.html](http://pro-civitas.blogspot.it/2011_02_01_archive.html))

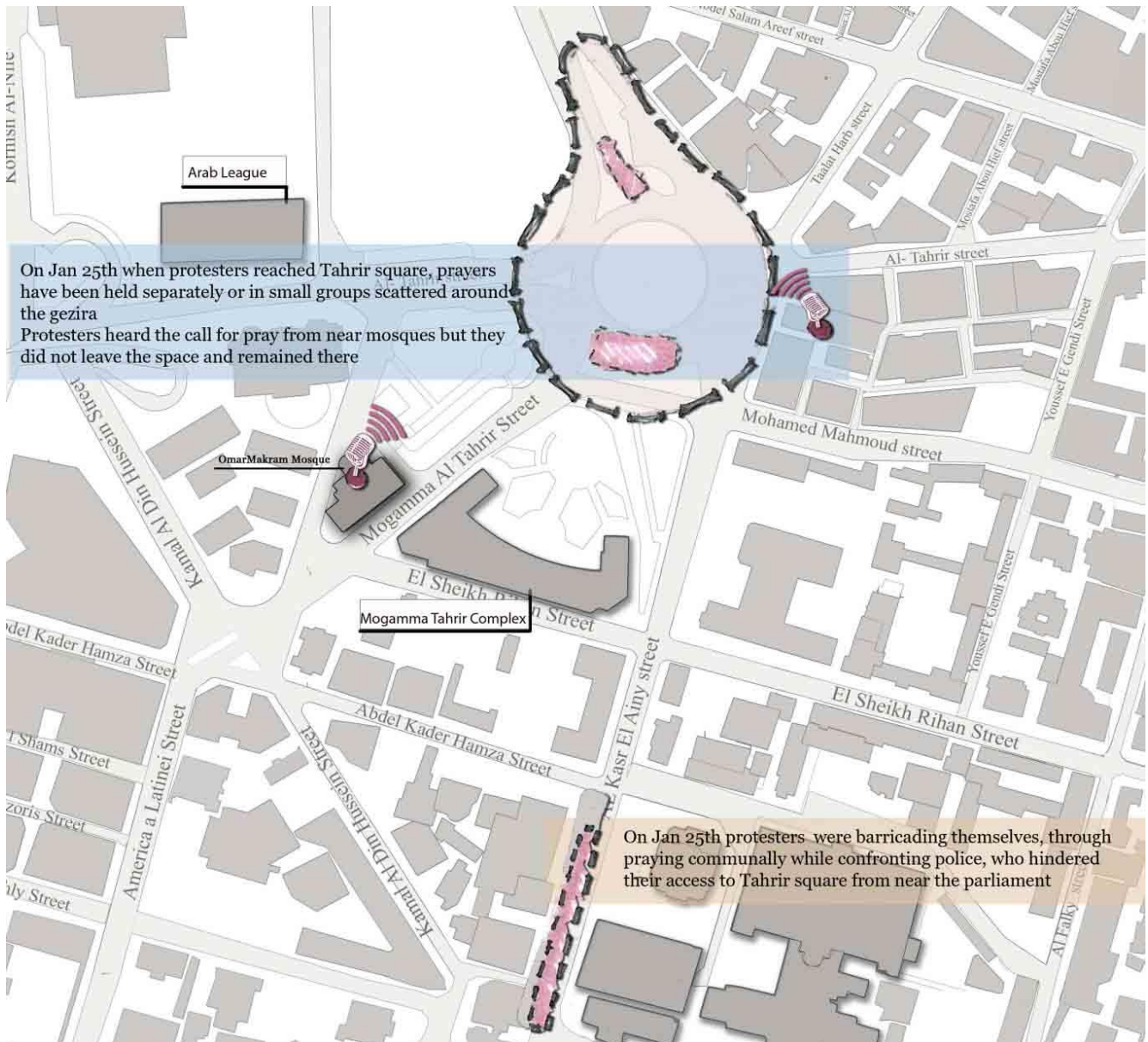


Figure 10.11: Prayers and ritual practices on Jan 25. (Source: By the Researcher)



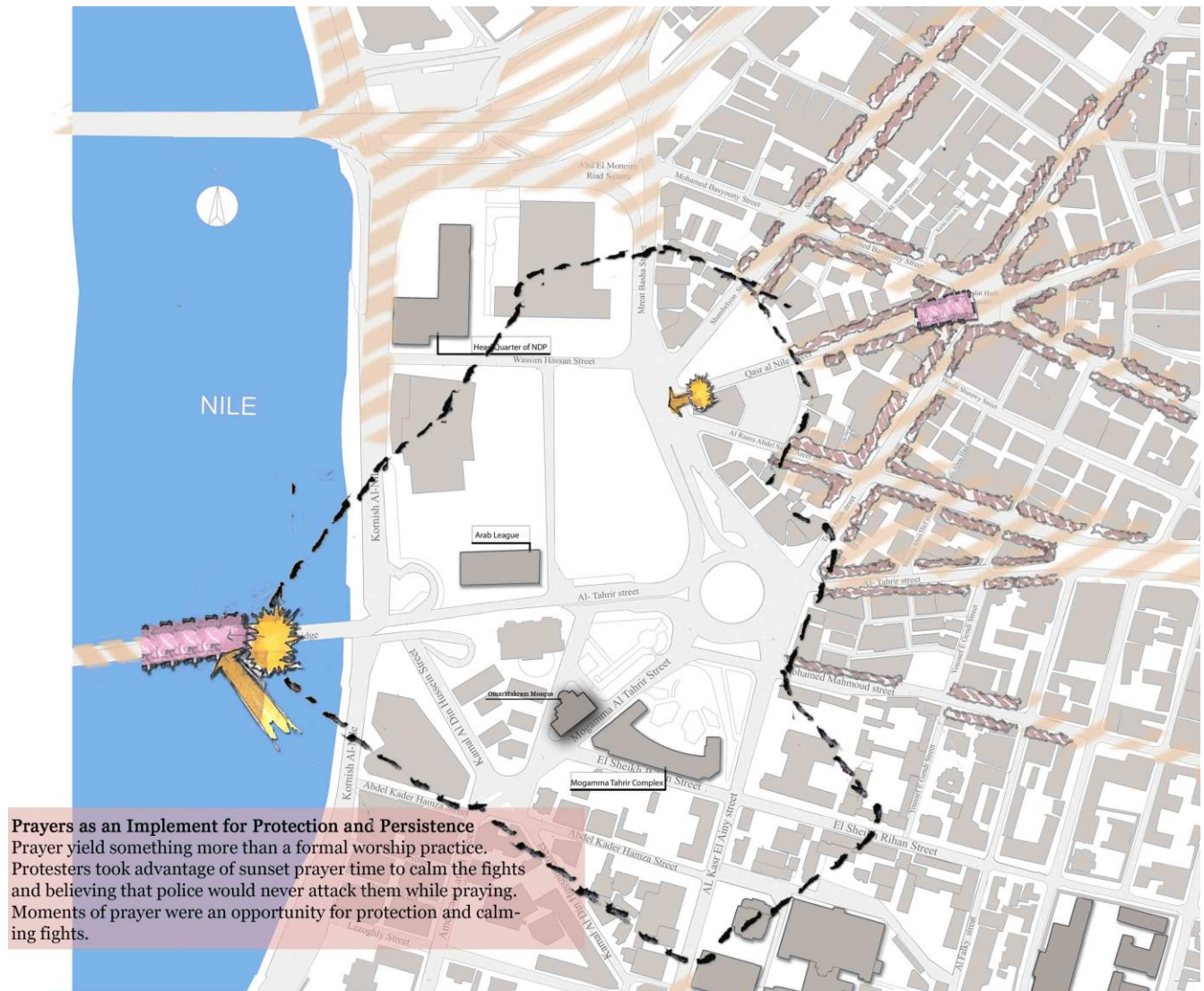


Figure 10.12: Prayers and ritual practices on Jan 28. (Source: By the Researcher)





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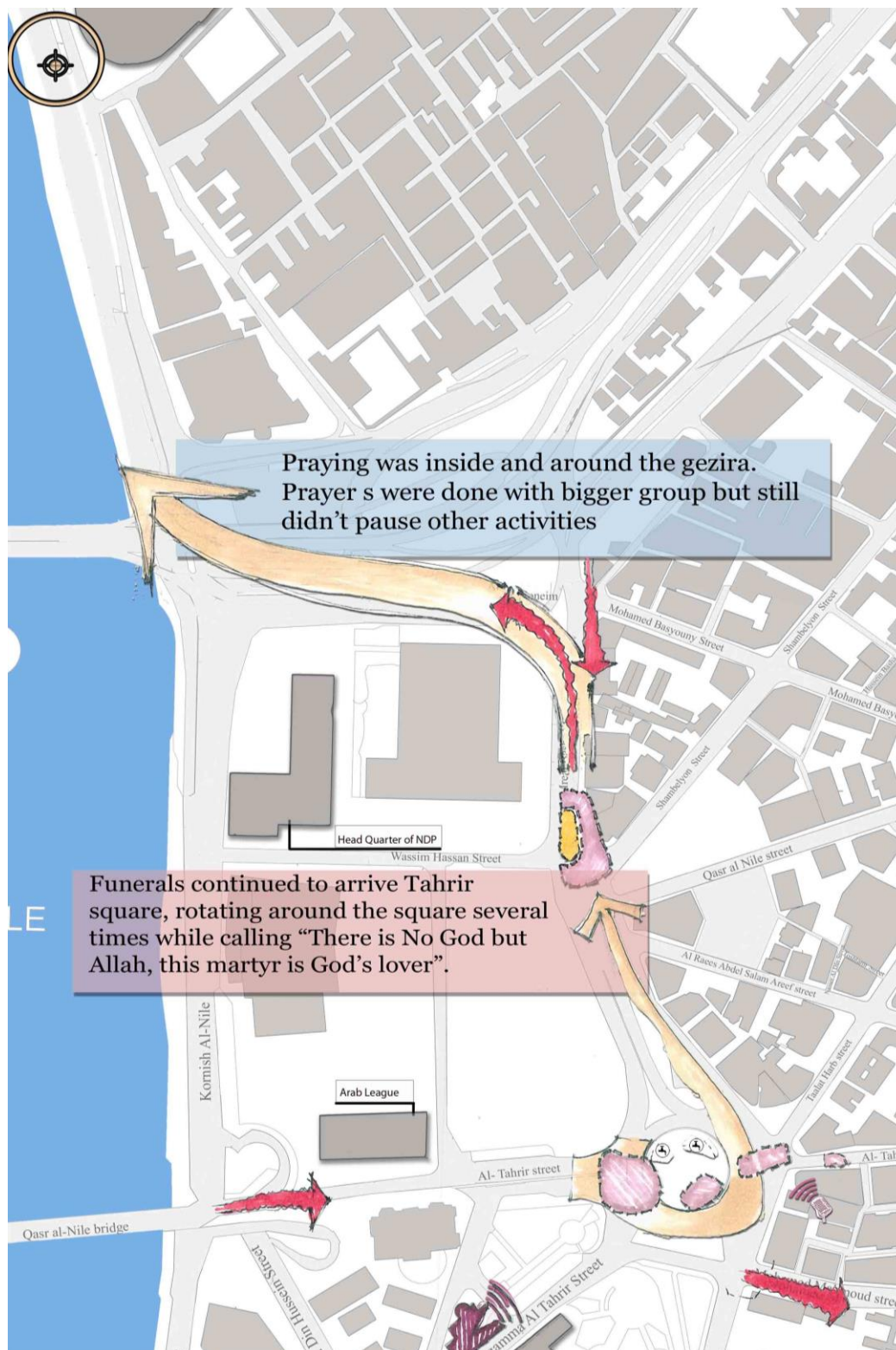


Figure 10.14: Prayers and ritual practices on Jan 31. (Source: By the Researcher)



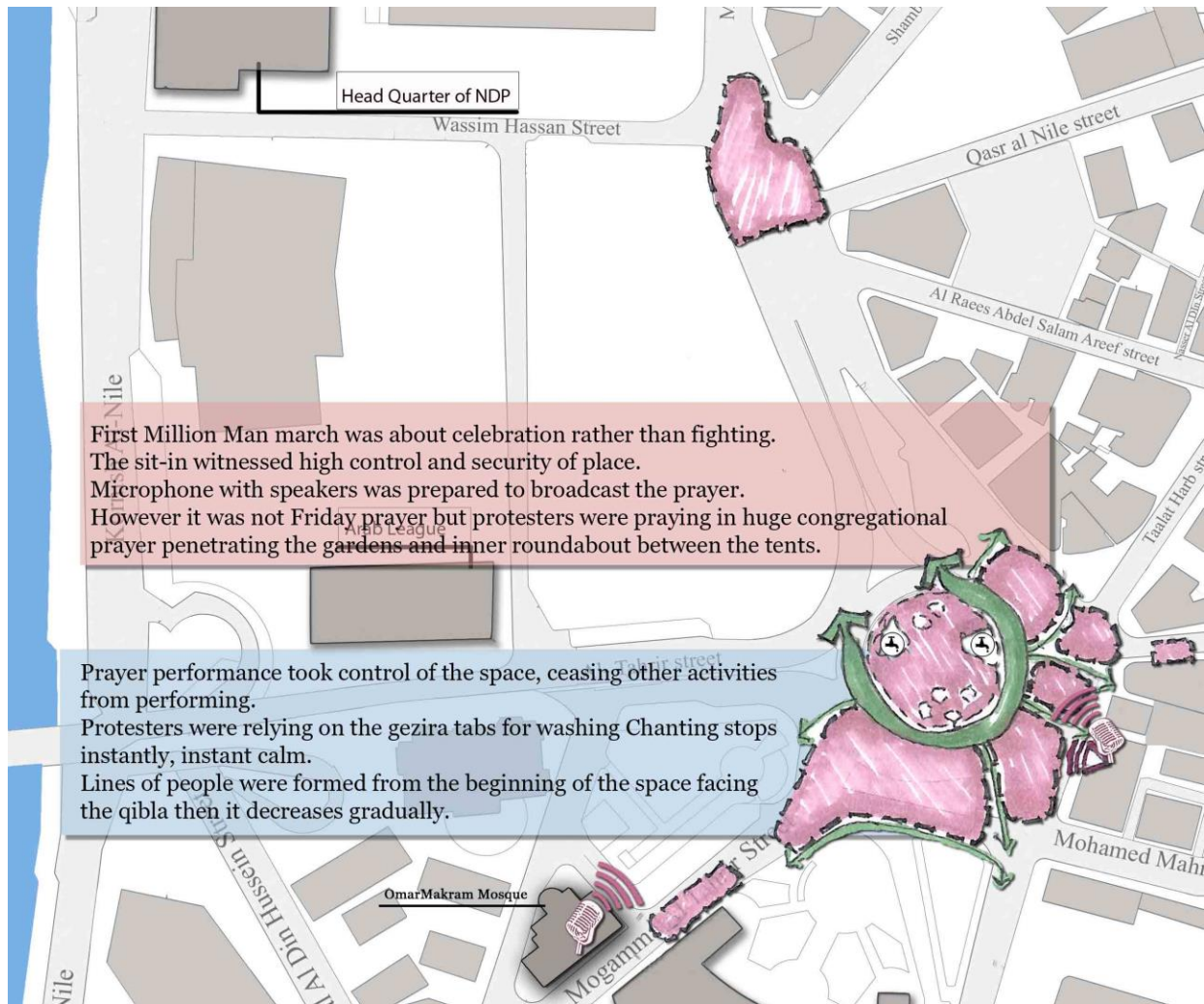


Figure 10.15: Prayers and ritual practices on Feb1. (Source: By the Researcher)

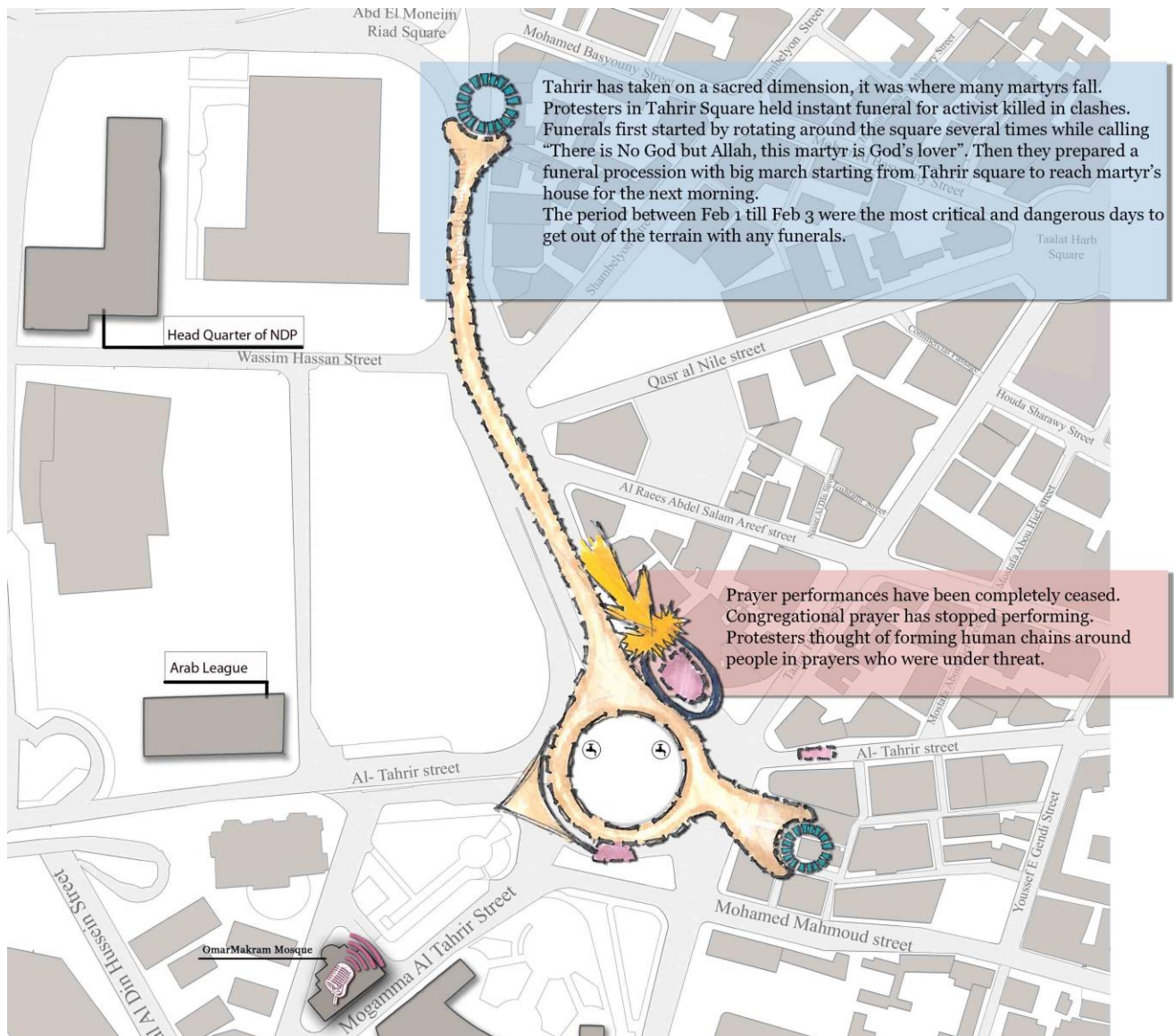


Figure 10.16: Prayers and ritual practices on Feb 2 and 3. (Source: By the Researcher)

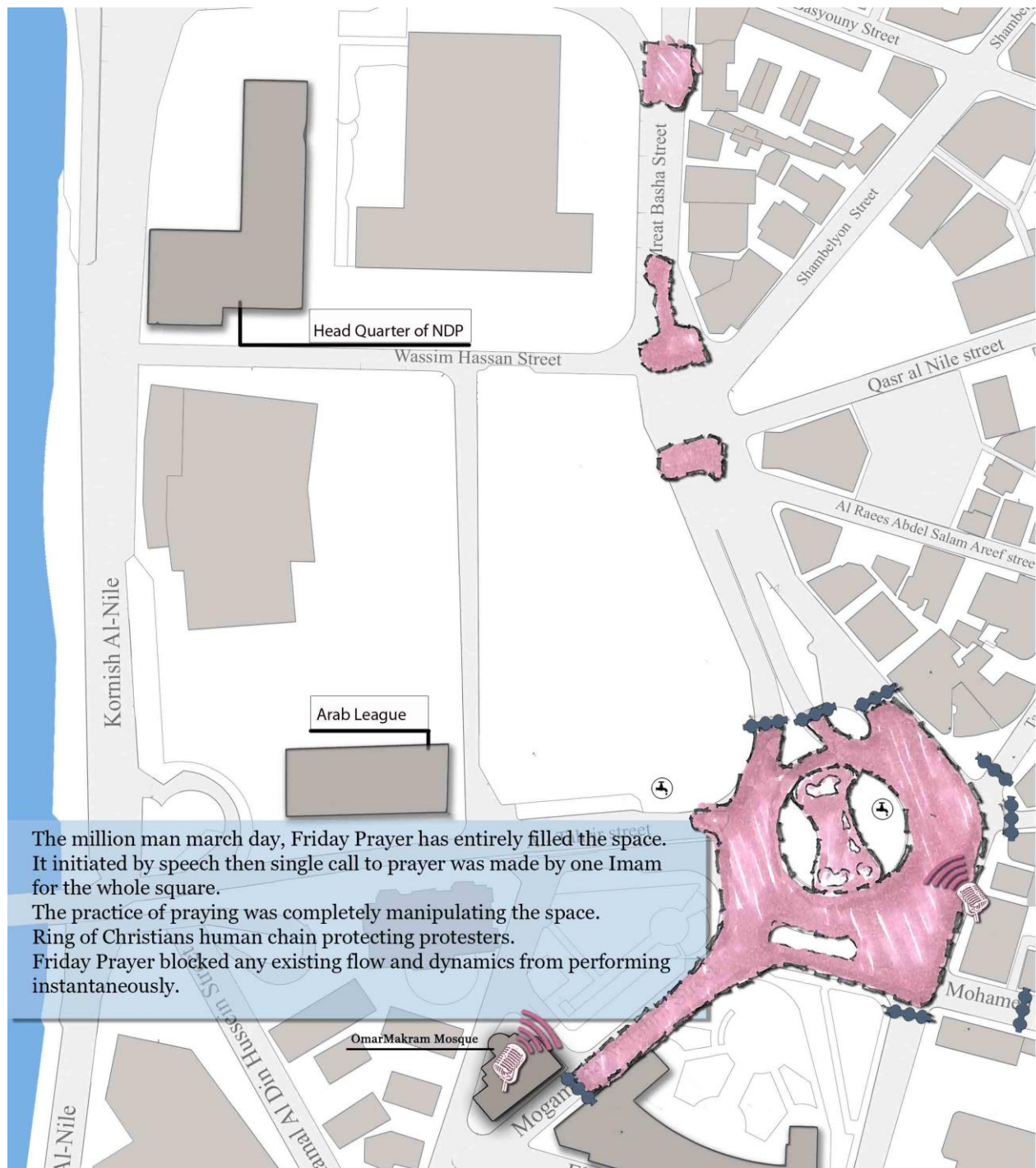


Figure 10.17: Prayers and ritual practices on Feb 4. (Source: By the Researcher)



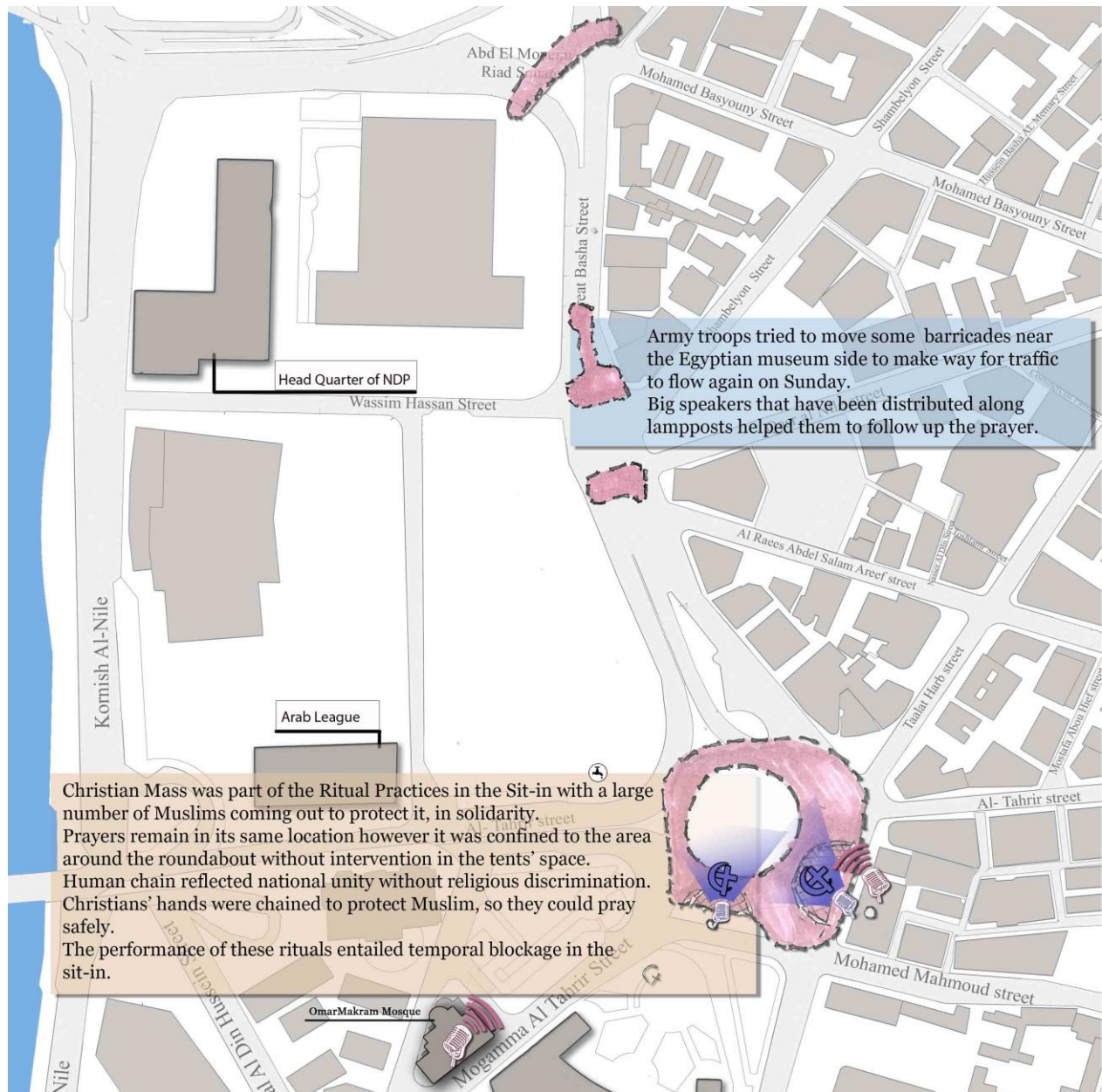


Figure 10.18: Prayers and ritual practices on Feb 5 and 6. (Source: By the Researcher)



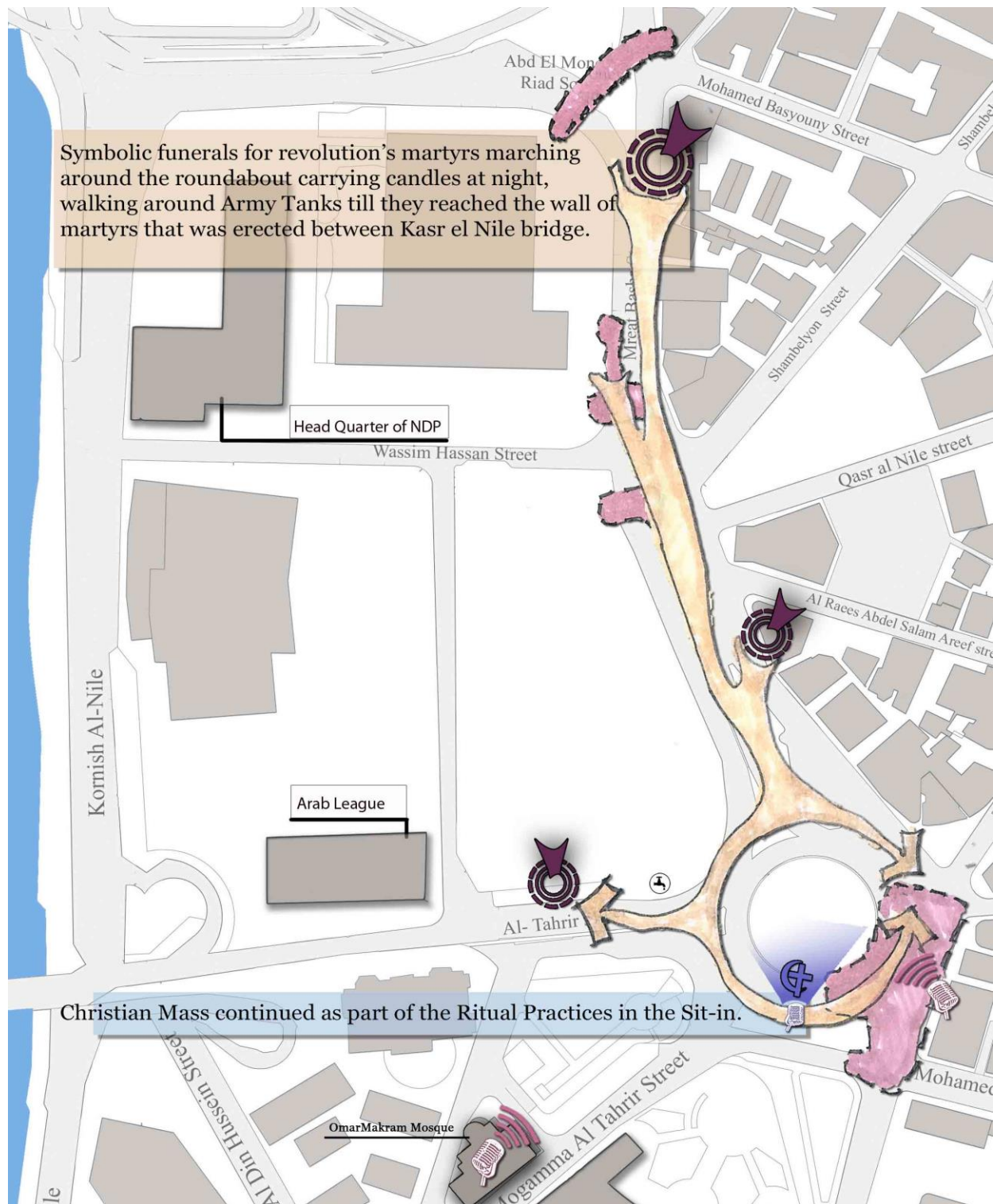


Figure 10.19: Prayers and ritual practices on Feb 7 till 9. (Source: By the Researcher)



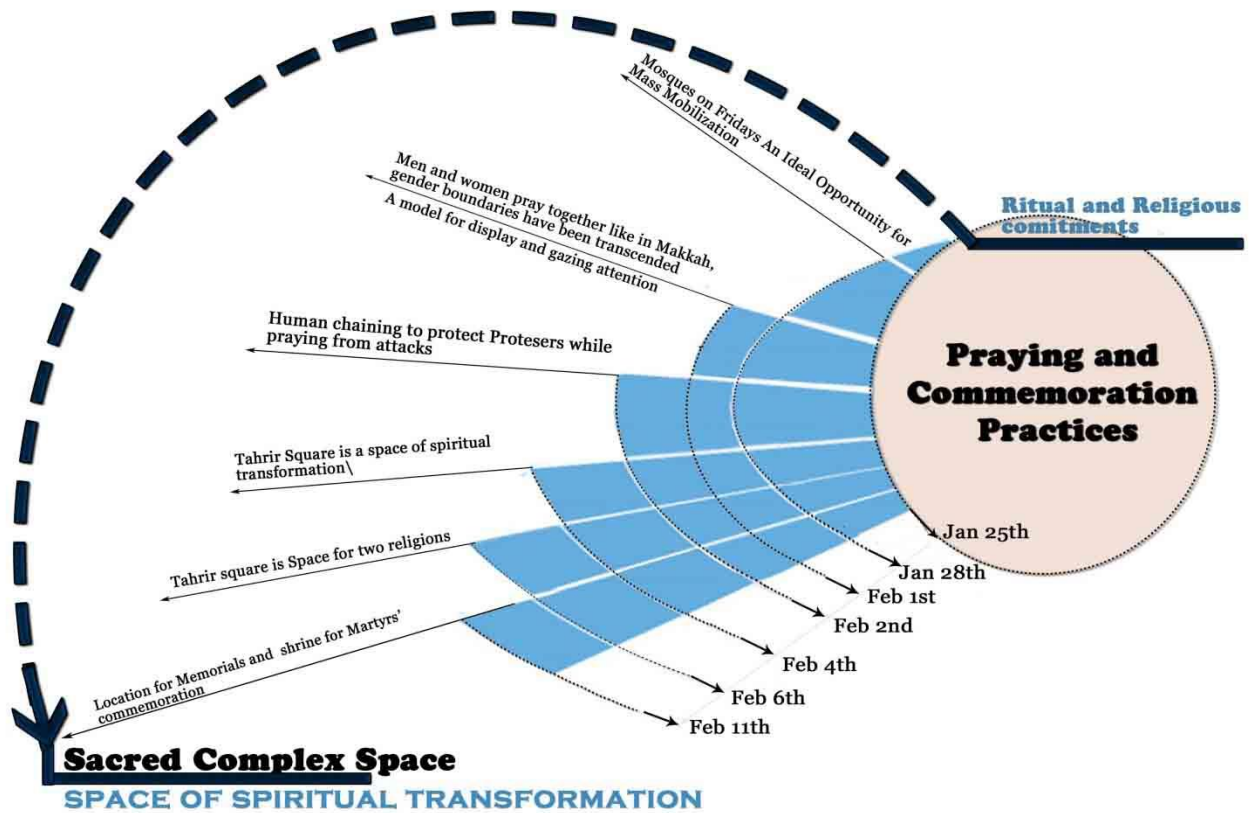


Figure 10.21: Space of Spiritual transformation. (Source: By the Researcher)

## 11. Experiencing Informality in Tahrir Square: Living and Life Needs Spatial Practices

### 11.1. Introduction

Protest camps 'campsite' are regarded by many scholarships as just one form of protest among many; they are grouped together with other strategies such as street parties, demonstrations assemblies and direct elections.<sup>805</sup> However as recent world events reveal, campsites are not just a political tactics. Campsite in Tahrir Square created temporary built environment that present a utopian form of collective political and social action. Tahrir Square was an example of the production of 'an alternative and autonomous urbanism.'<sup>806</sup> It represented an alternative housing space with its new society characterized by the development of practices around collective forms of self-determination, As Colin Ward argues in a preface Turner's book, the most important thing about housing, for turner 'is not what it is, but what it does in people's lives.'<sup>807</sup> To occupy this space, the protesters had to camp to create a spatial anchoring of opposition by constructing an enduring infrastructure for survival and political opposition.<sup>808</sup> According to Turner, 'when dwellers control the major decisions and are free to make their own contribution to the design, construction or management of their housing, both the process and the environment produced stimulate individual and social well-being.'<sup>809</sup> The spatial making of the campsite was a tactical practice of territoriality, controlling and ordering space. It was the doing and making of an alternative social and political order that undermined the very order of the state that sought to suppress it. It was the focal point of its society both organizationally and symbolically through spatial practices. It was clear that, what make protest camps unique from other modes of protest are largely their attempts to create sustainable structures for on-going protest and daily living.<sup>810</sup>

Tahrir campsite inhabitants' were developing their own living style as kind of coherent communities that come out of their needs, response to each other and communal status through informal patterns and living style. People are not simply using their streets as never done before, but they are re-inventing spaces based on their daily needs, embedded in socio cultural practices.<sup>811</sup> Therefore spatial practices for campsite formation deserve attention as a specific political act and vehicle for political and social change. Tahrir Square through spatial practices witnessed highest flexibility and informality of social production of space and reshaping to alternative home-place entailing shaping power over the process of urbanization. This flexibility shall be clearly demonstrated while tracing the un-limitation of social activities and practices imposed by different communities in campsite. This chapter shall trace these patterns of living and life needs during 18 days and how it accommodated spatial complex system in order to create an alternative home-place that was socially constructed. Accordingly this chapter can respond to the questions of how campsite as alternative home practices have come to re-imagine the city as a space of social gathering, where acts for resistance were the main factor of reshaping these practices.

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<sup>805</sup> Pickerill, J. and Chatterton, P. (2006).

<sup>806</sup> Mikkelsen, F. and Karpantschof, R. (2001).

<sup>807</sup> Turner, J. F. C. (1976). p 5.

<sup>808</sup> Ramadan, A. (2013). Pp. 145-149.

<sup>809</sup> Turner, J. F. C., Fichter, R., and Grenell, P. (1972).

<sup>810</sup> Feigenbaum, A. (2008).

<sup>811</sup> Ravazzoli, E. & Toso, S. (2013).



Campsite space involved different ways of extending informal spatial practices and patterns into space in order to create and sustain new alternative life which the research shall investigate. Dividing living and life needs into set of spatial practices: food and subsistence supplies, housing and campsite, utilities and restroom, and cleaning and maintenance, in efforts to trace how inhabitants' tactics and strategies were developed and adapted in the space, as well as how conflicts were generated through daily interactions and the challenges of building together. Tracing living and life needs spatial practices shall give better understanding of the empowerment and organization of utilities and supplies in campsite and how its community played crucial role in the development of the forms of organization that operate on the basis of 'power with' to organize their inhomogeneous networks of action in order to satisfy their daily needs without needing to resort to full or single organization and implicit structures of domination that full organization brings.

The right to the city in Tahrir Square through campsite appeared as a 'state of exception'. Agamben introduced the exceptionalities of campsite saying "The camp is the space that is opened when the state of exception begins to become the rule [...] a permanent spatial arrangement which as such nevertheless remains outside the normal order."<sup>812</sup> The campsite, to coherently follow Agamben's symbolism, 'should not be characterized as a space of exception but rather as a space of normalized exception.'<sup>813</sup> The campsite remains "outside normal order,"<sup>814</sup> but at the same time it constitutes and contains a localized 'normality.' The state of exception in Tahrir Square marked the informality with their partial organization and decentralized horizontality. Informality in Tahrir campsite as notion however can give better understanding of living and life needs spatial system and mechanism through which 'exception becomes normal.' This was through spatial innovation of campsite in Tahrir Square through informal practices. Campsite daily life practices shall be explored through how they were produced through traditionally inherited practices of everyday practice of all Cairene under partial organization entailed informality and spatial complexity. This chapter investigates complex process in which partial organization and decentralized horizontality influenced spatial practices encompass overlapped experiences of the urban fabric and confront the rigid socio-spatial segregation allowing people to flourish and create a vibrant community that challenged physical, social and symbolic barriers.

### 11.1.1. Home-Place Making

Building on the work of Bell hooks<sup>815</sup> the home-place is not something structurally static or already there, but rather something that is made. For hooks, it is a task that is shared, a task of "making home a community of resistance."<sup>816</sup> The home making becomes spatially invested with the act of making that is shared by all inhabitants but separately designed and built according to each one. They draw attention to ways in which care, security and privacy is bound up in protest campers' acts of making together, positioning the individual in relation to others, to the environment and to ways in which they became entangled in the distinct space-time of camp life. Tahrir Square campsite as a place for making, the campsite was likewise a space of production and reproduction by inhabitants through day after day of work of spatially making their own homes that was autonomously produced. Focusing on Juris adoption to Hooks' idea of the home-place as a community of and fore resistance, describing the convergence centre as a small self-managed city, a 'heterotypic space' of exchange and innovation.'<sup>817</sup> It can help in tracing the home-making process in Tahrir Square campsite being formed through spontaneous strategies and partial organization by inhomogeneous communities, where Tahrir Square witnessed sophisticated patterns and challenges due the unusual mix of all sectors of Egyptian society. That was

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<sup>812</sup> Agamben, G. (1998). p.169.

<sup>813</sup> Stavrides, S. (2012).

<sup>814</sup> Agamben, G. (1998). p.169.

<sup>815</sup> Hooks, B. (1990). *Yearning 'Race', gender and cultural politics*. Toronto: Between the lines.

<sup>816</sup> Hooks, B. (1990). p. 184.

<sup>817</sup> Juris, J.S. (2012). p.169.



found in the spatial politics of centrality and multiplicity share what Juris called 'logic of aggregation', "the assembling of masses of individuals from diverse backgrounds within physical spaces"<sup>818</sup> Moreover, what made the campsite unique was the unintentional result of other circumstances which was the case in Tahrir Square during the 18 days. It was marked by adaptation and improvisation as spontaneous practices gradually emerged.

### 11.1.2. Decentralized Horizontality and Partial Organization

During 18 days, Tahrir Square campsite required at certain time spatial systems, with instant tactics and direct actions. Here Rossiter<sup>819</sup> suggestion can be useful, calling such attempts 'organized network.' Ahrne and Brunsson's<sup>820</sup> notion of 'partial organization' is to account such phenomena. The reputation that networks are structures famous for being creative, flexible and non-hierarchical opposing the traditional hierarchically and formally structured organization is effective for social movements. However, the ubiquity of the concepts of 'network' and 'openness' have led to an increasing imprecision in definitions.<sup>821</sup> Moreover organization introduces a non-developing process, that is 'not emergent, but the result of the intervention of individuals or formal organizations which can and do make decisions not only about their own, but also about the behaviour and distinctions of others.'<sup>822</sup> If a network is seen as something open, fluid and without any organization, then there would be no need to make decisions, or for those comprising the network to govern and be governed.<sup>823</sup> For Ahrne and Brunsson, partial organization constitutes the existence of some elements of organization, which they define as membership, hierarchy, rules, monitoring and sanction.'<sup>824</sup> When a network becomes organized, elements of organization, such as decision-making do not have to follow a pre-arranged or formalised procedure.<sup>825</sup> Like protesters when they decided to camp inside Tahrir Square then this community became organized- in theoretical terms, the network became partially organized. Yet, they devised informal system of decision making to reach a decision for spatial formation and evolution of campsite. Gordon describes this phenomenon through the concept of 'power with.'<sup>826</sup> People aren't manipulated or forced into doing things; instead, we find a terrain of 'power with' where they 'influence each other's behaviour in the absence of a conflict of wills and interest.<sup>827</sup> This can explain the situation of campsites of Tahrir Square through heterogeneous communities that became organized to camp in Tahrir Square without regulation or planned agenda.

The experience of 'power with' has spatially manifested in campsite as decentralized 'organic horizontality.'<sup>828</sup> The experience of organic horizontality is significantly described by Victor Turner,<sup>829</sup> people may experience the social as 'communitas', a sociality where hierarchies and social roles, class difference and other structures that separate people from each other are dissolved in moments of liminality. The unusual social order between societies in campsite shall be investigated through horizontal organization with no leadership. Horizontality emerged as the most spontaneous and practical way to organise the resistance. Organic

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<sup>818</sup> Juris, J.S. (2012).

<sup>819</sup> Rossiter, N. (2006). *Organized Networks: Media Theory, Creative Labour, New Institutions*. Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.

<sup>820</sup> Ahrne, G. & Brunsson, N. (2011).

<sup>821</sup> Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013). p. 154.

<sup>822</sup> Ahrne, G. & Brunsson, N. (2011). p. 90.

<sup>823</sup> Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013). p. 154.

<sup>824</sup> Ahrne, G. & Brunsson, N. (2011). p. 86.

<sup>825</sup> Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013). (2013). p. 156.

<sup>826</sup> Gordon, U. (2010). pp. 39-66.

<sup>827</sup> Gordon, U. (2010) p. 45.

<sup>828</sup> Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013). p. 157.

<sup>829</sup> Turner, V. (1977). *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press

horizontality and partial organization are two concepts to understand the empowerment campsite as spatially limited spaces of political activism.

### 11.1.3. Informality in Cairo as Spatial Phenomena of Daily Life

In Tahrir Square campsite the acts of house making were social acts that had much to tell us about Egyptian society, everyday life practices and social production of space. There were many informal practices in the campsite related to the daily life of Cairenes. In order to reduce the complexity of the argument and better understand this relation as well as the implication for campsite spatial practices, this part shall introduce the informal practices, organization and participation regarding the socio-spatial complexity of: informal settlements in Cairo, Downtowns Cairo, and Old Cairo's everyday life. People experience informality in their daily life in Cairo through informal practices. Informal practices are crucial for city like Cairo to function. According to Elisa Ravazzoli and Stefania Toso, they are not only a vital element for Cairo streetscape's vivacity, but a system of sustainable living for many communities. Formality and informality no longer exist as opposite categories in two separate territories but instead they are involved in the same process of space production, which creates both spaces of dialogue and negotiation and spaces of conflict and contestation.<sup>830</sup> The definition of informality in Cairo can be seen to have moved beyond a marginal practice requiring a paradigm shift in the definitions.<sup>831</sup> It affects every day life through a network of multiple dynamics. Informality in Cairo is a phenomenon that goes beyond the classic stereotype of poverty-informality, legality-illegality, and regularity-irregularity.<sup>832</sup>

Informality is a model of Cairene's culture. It is a practice, a pattern of repetitively spatial interactions, and behaviours embedded in a historical socio-cultural construct that constitute an everyday system of sustainable living for many communities.<sup>833</sup> Due to the very heterogeneous urban fabric and the strong opposition between formal and informal areas, Cairo's streetscape constitutes a unique element of the built environment in terms of both form and content, constantly changing as a reaction of main metropolitan transformations.<sup>834</sup> The consequences of this informality empowered local inhabitants by supporting them financially and technically, to restore the structural safety of houses and reorganize their living spaces to better suit their needs. Informal practices emerged with non-formal set of practices that did not relate to the formal state arrangement; through parallel management and informal economic activities in order to associate housing, living needs, and infrastructure, recreational and commercial aspects. It was striking how these similar spatial notions of living were deployed by campsite inhabitants that will be clarified later in this chapter. They were rooted in socio-cultural practices of inhabitants that reflected the high self-dependency in Egyptians culture and self-management. Informality has been a practical mode and functional use of Cairo culture and system of relations. The particularities of informal practices were that they represent a distinct social structure and cultural identity for their community through acts of resistance. It revealed information about how people used spaces, their daily needs, organization and planning actions. Therefore, informal practices do not appear in society with the simple aim to satisfy everyday needs, but they belong to a complex system of socio-cultural constructs, and are related to the urban form of the city.<sup>835</sup>

Informality in Cairo can be found in the planned neighbourhood. Downtown Cairo of today is famous of being overcrowded with foot-traffic and car-traffic. It is famous for its commercial, recreational, touristic

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<sup>830</sup> Ravazzoli, E. & Toso, S. (2013).

<sup>831</sup> Shehayeb, D. (2009).

<sup>832</sup> Shehayeb, D. (2013).

<sup>833</sup> Ravazzoli, E. & Toso, S. (2013).

<sup>834</sup> Ravazzoli, E. & Toso, S. (2013).

<sup>835</sup> Ravazzoli, E. & Toso, S. (2013).

facilities, the most important political institutions located there and the poor maintenance conditions. The informality in everyday practices that revealed in the use of public space, sidewalks and streets through mixed activities 24 hours a day. The architecture has been evidently violated through different spatial practices that were not designed for. Ground and first floors occupied with shops, restaurants, cafes or other non-residential activities that even extended along the pavements as well. There is kind of conflict of public space entails informal spatial arrangement and chaotic atmosphere between pedestrians, car drivers and street vendors on shared spaces. This informal pattern in urban spaces of Downtown, including urban and economic activities were considered as crucial part of public daily life activities. These series of vibrant activities contributed to make public spaces safer and more alive.

Even Old Cairo did not escape form informality. Parallel management and participation were the main domains of informality. The urban fabric of Old Cairo emerged through complex and interconnected relations while people managing their daily social and spatial activities. Each 'harah' — the alleyway — is characterized by the spatial order of its shared public space as bounded by its entrances/ gates and lined by attached low-rise houses.<sup>836</sup> But it is also defined by a distinct social structure, cultural identity, and shared responsibility for local security Richard Jenkins terms, "a powerful everyday notion in terms of which people organize their lives and understand the places and settlement in which they live and the quality of their relationship."<sup>837</sup> Accordingly, it is social production that can be understood as physical product out of social decision-making. Observing the spatial patterns of; socializing, eating, smoking, or drinking tea that are the main activities performed on a daily basis, demonstrates that they happen commonly on public space and along the streets. These socio-spatial practices are significant to Old Cairo unique urban fabric, form and relation, which impose a certain use of space that allow people to conceive public space as an extension of their private one. Same, exploring the daily life in Tahrir campsite will highlight a model for unregulated patterns of living without rules or communal actions. Therefore, informal practices shall be realized in the framework of this multiple dimension; economic, socio-spatial and cultural.

Another informal pattern can be found in one of the many informal settlements of Cairo's cosmopolitan. Informality became the solution to the housing needs of the city's lower and middle classes.<sup>838</sup> People in informal settlements managed their lives on public lands similar to what we will see in Tahrir campsite. The re-appropriation of urban spaces generates new vernacular relationships between urban context and citizen's behaviours, by improving the everyday habitat and facing the needs of the poorest population.<sup>839</sup> Informal practices resulted in a form of territorial control over the space people inhabit and are associated to strong sense of power and belonging. The main types of street conflicts are between authorities and individuals or between individuals over the control of public space. These complex aspects were spatially found in Tahrir campsites as well as being informal area are the main ingredients of community building, and the physical environment that helped to maintain social production of space. Advantage of life in informal settlements can be the informality of the building schemes themselves. Dina shehayab has highlighted some spatial characteristics of informal areas in people daily life that support positive aspects of the residential environment that has similarity to the spatial characteristics in campsite during the 18days such as: first, *self-sufficiency*<sup>840</sup> in terms of daily needs. Similar to Tahrir campsite environment when protesters' tactics and spatial strategies were changing according to interchangeable conditions in order to manage their supplies and needs by themselves. Second *Participation in services* such as garbage collection, street cleaning and policing are performed successfully in their tiny streets, where narrow widths restrict the access by strangers, and through-traffic allows those streets to be appropriated

<sup>836</sup> Abdelmonem, M. G. (2012). pp: 35-50.

<sup>837</sup> Jenkins, R. (2004). p. 109.

<sup>838</sup> Piffero, E. (2009). (pp.21-28).

<sup>839</sup> Insurgent Spatiality in Informal Cairo. Recovering Vernacular Patterns in the Contested Metropolis Elisa Bertagnini, Michele Morbidoni Conference Proceedings CITIES TO BE TAMED? Milan, 15-17 November 2012. by Planum n.26, vol.1/2013. Cover Section 4

<sup>840</sup> Shehayeb, D. (2009). (pp. 35-43).

and controlled by their residents. People clean and maintain what they feel is theirs.<sup>841</sup> As Hawkes<sup>842</sup> stated, “good design supports the function of a desired use”, which proposes that lively spaces are produced through design interventions that foster public participation decision making process and spatial organization, while facilitating a spontaneous progression of social integration. Participation and residents sharing activities is alternative way in what the government should be responsible for. And so their patterns of participation are spatially limited till those streets more public. Accordingly a clear division between two territories is marked by weak social participation, the piles of garbage collection and poor urban conditions.

Third spatial characteristic of informality was *Convenience* the same stranger-free residential streets mentioned above allow these same streets to be an extension of the home: a private, protected place where children can play and women can sit in the afternoon and exchange news and knowledge.<sup>843</sup> This intimate and domestic mood was obtained within the campsites of Tahrir Square that shall be described later in this chapter. This appropriation of ‘near home environment’ serves several functions at the same time. It compensates for the limited private space. More importantly, it helps build community ties. Social solidarity was the common feature between neighbours of informal settlements and campsite as well that facilitated collective initiatives to be realized and social control to occur. Fourth, when a community’s *sense of safety* is high; the opportunity to commit crimes decreases because people are out on the streets, stronger community ties, and fewer opportunities for troublemakers to infiltrate the neighbourhood.<sup>844</sup> The common perception of informal areas’ residents and campsite inhabitants to their informal areas as relatively safe environments and their own responsibility, helped to sustain this environment and provide space of mobility and freedom for kids and women. An informal area is always less safe at the beginning of its development; during the time, however, when services, commercial uses and the number of activities increase, and when residents appropriate their residential streets, it can become much safer. The campsite gradually passed by this development phase of the place with a gradual control for the space, increase of population and diversity, and inflation in kinds of activities, services and supplies.

Fifth, was *Sense of community* through cooperation, social interaction, and liveliness are all advantages articulated by residents and it shall be discussed for inhabitants of Tahrir Square campsite. Social solidarity and community building remarked the campsite since its first day of evolution. In the lower-level inner city areas mixed spheres of spatial practice and actions is central to everyday life. The concentration of activities and high density of inhabitants in specific area were responsible for maintaining the liveliness of informal areas. People often describe informal areas as being a “popular district” in its positive sense: “lively, friendly, and alive around the clock.”<sup>845</sup> Informal areas communities deployed the mutual agreement and support between those who share the space as the central social contract in the shared space.

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<sup>841</sup> Shehayeb, D. (2009).

<sup>842</sup> Hawkes, A. & Sheridan, G. (2009).

<sup>843</sup> Shehayeb, D. (2009).

<sup>844</sup> Shehayeb, D. (2009).

<sup>845</sup> Elgendy, N. (2013). (p. 165).

## 11.2. Living and Life Needs as Spatial Practices

### 11.2.1. The Campsite Spatial Expansion

The campsite of Tahrir Square was in the heart of the city, the protesters ability to construct an encampment amongst large buildings was greatly limited by the pre-existing layout of the urban environment. It was a gradual spatial evolution through spontaneous actions. Compared to other spatial practices, campsite and housing in Tahrir Square was an intervening way of using space within a designated field. Camping since first day entailed spatial centralization in the roundabout without full organization. It was in the heart of the reclaimed space with secured space for sleeping away from confrontation. The circular shape of the roundabout as existing physical environment was an attractive spot of initial spatial evolution of campsite. (See Fig 11.9) Gradually protesters adaptively utilized there areas for campsites. On January 28, the primary phase of campsite has spatially initiated when protesters defeated The State security forces, and succeeded to re-claim the square. Since the very beginning, an informal pattern of organization and dynamics occurred that can be easily found in Egyptian's daily life. According to Dr5, "Sit-in would have never succeeded to sustain unless Egyptians were used to stay awake all night outside and in cafes without sleeping." (Int25, Dr5) (See Fig 11.10) By Jan 29 Tahrir Square was not closed, but there weren't any cars passing through it. The government-imposed curfew and incidents of previous day have limited car traffic flow from streets around Tahrir Square, leaving it with foot-traffic only entailing spontaneous enclosure and the new urban context was spontaneously defined. The evolution of campsite inside the roundabout emerged though as Act3 recalled that, "Some protestors who were already used to go hiking, got their tents and sat in the roundabout grass, they were all around 6 tents, while most protesters were with blankets looking for plastic sheets or cartoon to put it on the grass to rest or sleep." (Int3, Act3) The emergence of initial phase of campsite was a clear adaptation by protesters to current condition. Blankets and tents were occupying the central and largest grass part in the terrain.

The roundabout continued as to be the main destination for campsite, facing less dynamics than the rest of the terrain. Since January 30 and 31, campsite witnessed significant development; many protesters arrived with sleeping bags, blankets, and few tents. (Int3, Act4) Protection from cold and searching for shelter were the main reasons for the fast composition of the campsite. Camping in near small green islands facing the roundabout happened in parallel with evolution of the roundabout campsite. Dr2 is one of the youth Muslim brothers who preferred to be more isolated from protesters in the sit-in, emphasized that, "Me and other group preferred to stay in another green plot in front of the construction site at the Egyptian museum." (Int22, Dr2) Campsite started to show heterogeneous composition. One reason was a functional need of big private area, second According to Act2, "Tents were not part of the supplies in first days of camping." (Int2, Act2) The tents also differed in quality: readymade tents: tents built of cardboard, blankets and plastic and canvas with bigger areas. Campsite composition and development was internal and external feature that produced inhomogeneous urban fabric revealing layers of social relations and cultural expressions as well. (See Fig 11.11) Since Feb 1 influx number of rural protesters and others from different governorates arrived to the campsite. Act15 observed that, "Many of new arrivals erected their tents by using canvas or any piece of cloth tied with wooden columns and fixed in the muddy ground in the roundabout. Their tents were significant for their difference in; size, form and social relation inside them. They were bigger than the existing tents that used to occupy maximum two persons together. Instead, it occupied many protestors who arrived together. They were covered from three sides and the ceiling while leaving the front side open." (Int14, Act15) The morphology of campsite witnessed mix in its compositions, features and characters without formal organization or governance in decision making. Different practices and attitudes while using space demonstrated how protesters arrived with their own habits and traditions that were able take part in the partial organization, which provided flexibility in campsite elements and design. (See Fig 11.12)



On February 2 like other spatial practices in campsite, camping and housing activities faced delay in its development and evolution. Since Feb 2 an uneasy confrontation between anti- and pro-government factions that ended with retaining of the square and entailed compulsory spatial pattern of camping to emerge around all the approaches. Pro6 stated that, "Campsite reached all barricaded checkpoints while protesters were manning makeshift barriers." (Int36, Pro6) The appearance of these barricaded checkpoints has defined campsite expansion boundaries. Through, the camel battle gave protesters opportunity to reclaim more land and instigated remarkable expansion in the campsite area, especially from Abd el Moneim Rhyad Square side. It entailed more spaces to be liveable and inhabited while protesters were protecting sit-in approaches. This unregulated pattern for housing and their location through partial organization was an advantage. This spatial character maintained sense of security and lively to all spaces without limiting it on specific locations. (See Fig. 11.14)

In the aftermath of the camel battle, the evolution of the campsites emerged as an informal pattern of housing representing diversity in suppliers, and inhabitants and differences of time of erection. Many protesters managed to use blankets and plastic sheets to invent tents by themselves. (Int14, Act15) Protesters were different in their spatial treatment of their tents some preferred to obtain privacy through opening their tents on enclosed space instead of being directly on pathways. For many protesters the intimate zone between groups of tents was limited on friends and people who knew each other. Instead, other tents were directly opened to the corridors or even to Main Street where foot-traffic flow. (Int3, Act3) Since Feb 4, many inhabitants of the roundabout started to replace their blankets and sleeping bags with tents as sign for stability and 'rootedness' as Jor1 explained that, "Masry AlYoum journalists -The independent Egyptian newspaper- erected tent that fitted 5 or 6 journalist to sleep inside." (Int48, Jor1) Part of this urban transformation in home-place units according to Art1, "It was a response to the new social relationships built during sit-in." (Int18, Art1) Protesters assumed control over the space while erecting tent by tent, similar to locals of informal settlements assumes control over the space while building house by house. (See Fig. 11.16)

On Feb 4, many families and protesters from other governorates or conservative groups with their families preferred to camp in isolated spaces away from the rest of the existing space communities. Protesters deployed green area near Omar Makram mosque as an enclosed space surrounded by fences that were originally designed for expelling public. Act1 mentioned that, "Hafez Salama, Egypt's leader of popular resistance in Suez in 1973, taking part in an anti-government demonstration in Tahrir Square was one of the early reasons that mobilized many protested families from other governorates to Tahrir, especially Suez and other canal governorates on that day." (Int1, Act1) Act3 explained that, "This new social pattern of families found places in the two islands of Abd el Moneim Rhyad and the garden of Omar Makram mosque. Diverse kinds of treatment for tents' erection have emerged." (Int3, Act3) Pro7 explained how "At the beginning these zones were perceived as too far from the sit-in that was almost limited on the zone of the roundabout and KFC pavement." (Int37, Pro7) These new locations of campsite tents demonstrated the rooted spatial pattern of housing that existed in the roundabout as an inadequate pattern to new inhabitants. In addition, sit-in inhabitants, who once took over Omar Makram garden, were more isolated and marginalized. Many inhabitants and visitors described this campsite part as closed off zone, and that most people has arrived sit-in without passing through. There was limited social interaction among them that emerged due to high limits of control and spatial privacy required by its communities. Besides, every campsite part in the sit-in was separately developed without a collective strategy. Compared to other campsite in pervious occupations, Tahrir campsite afforded more diverse environments with many communities of different social sectors during the time. Different traditions and habits spatially influenced the living and life needs practices and their compositions. Moreover it embedded the concept of partial organization of campsite expansion that accepted other elements of formal organization to appear while new inhabitants arriving with more rigid and organized rituals.

Camping at the edges was a needed spatial pattern that served a basic mission so it appeared with more organized decision making and targeting specific location and enforcing area around tanks to be static, being alternative home-place. Accordingly, it was not spontaneous actions but a functional expansion. Camping in the roundabout or inside other green areas was different from camping at the edges. On February 5 early morning was the army second attempt to remove barricades around Tahrir Square set up by protesters near Abd El Moneim Rhyad Square. Pro10 added that, "Protesters slept on both sides of the tank at Abd el Moneim Rhyad in order to guarantee that it won't move to either side." (Int40, Pro10) Pro11 stated that, "Sleeping at tanks first night was without anything. Later on they brought their blankets with plastic sheet underneath, spread on the floor just at the edge and on the tank, while using its side to lay their bodies. Protesters sleeping at tanks started to cover the tank itself with plastic sheets since it was too cold to lay their bodies on while sleeping at night. (See Fig 11.4) Since Feb 6 when approaches achieved highest security, protesters were sleeping along the pavement covered with blankets and laying on buildings' facades, extended from KFC till Abd el Monim Rhyad Square. It was the reclaimed part after camel battle. Since their edges were already inhabited by protesters protecting it and preventing the army from advancing. (See Fig. 11.17)

Campsite spatial composition witnessed new innovative practices. Since February 6 new spatial pattern was intervening in public space, when saturated amount of plastic sheets were supplied in order to avoid the rain and cold. They were also used for constructing new tents. (Int14, Act15) Tureli makes an important point about how architecture 'is blurring the boundary between design activity and activism.'<sup>846</sup> She cites numerous examples of 'guerrilla' and 'do-it-yourself' as performative examples where the individuals take agency and create intervening tons in the public space. Similarly, Act15 observed that, "Plastic sheets were also used for constructing new tents or expansion of existing ones with some wooden columns or steel reinforce concrete columns that were extracted from the construction site, which we discovered while deploying many of its elements for defence tactics during camel battle day." (Int14, Act15) In the last days, campsite spatial development was through real structures with wooden beams and columns covered with plastic sheets and traditional textiles inside roundabout. (Int6, Act7) Pro11 confirmed that, "It was very dominant and higher than other tents or structures inside. The exit was directly from the edge of the roundabout with open air facade not as usual from internal pathways." (Int41, Pro11) These new spatial interventions through different elements and types of structures in reconstructed space were significant in the expansion inside roundabout that entailed spatial reconfiguration and reorder. It witnessed self-dependency and self-expression.

During this time, Sit-in witnessed significant expansions and over spilling due to missive crowds. When the government tried to bring the country back to "normal" on February 8, and the workers return to their factories, discuss the current situation and start to organize en masse, moving as an independent block.<sup>847</sup> Since then, with all this massive crowds arriving, existing campsites were not enough. Pro11 recalled that, "Tents started to appear outside the green fences of Omar Makram garden." Alternative home-place was the influencing practice by the time. It clearly occupied any space even outside the traditional borders of existing campsite terrain. Pro11 added that, "Green fences edging all pavements in Tahrir Square were effectively deployed through stretching plastic sheets and spreading blanket under." (Int41, pro11) (See Fig 11.18) Pro11 recalled that, "Since February 10, protesters were already squeezed in full-fledged campsites so many protesters just spread a long cloth and long flag on street around the roundabout –where the main foot-traffic was." (Int41, pro11) In this case campsite inhabitants adapted streets used for foot-traffic to temporarily provide a sufficient alternative to the lack of indoor spaces –tents- for hosting sleeping activity. These uses of outdoor space introduced another pattern of informality. (See Fig 11.19)

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<sup>846</sup> Turell, I. (2013).

<sup>847</sup> El-Hamalawy, H. (2011, February 14).

Even pathways between tents witnessed spatial evolution through the gradual composition of campsites. Their evolution was affected by searching for privacy from the beginning. Act3 explained that, "Erecting plastic walls along internal pathways affected protesters' perception while moving between tents. It became more enclosed and smaller spaces. Paths started to have covering to protect from wind and rain." (Int3, Act3) It limited the accessibility and it became more unwelcoming in last days. Instead, the pathways composition and experience in Omar Makram garden was different from the roundabout. First, the existing urban design facilitated the process of camping composition and existing pathways were clearly defining the pathways between tents. Pro2 explained that, "pathways between these new structures were different from organic ones between tents at the roundabout that were tinier, enclosed, and anfractuous and shaded." (Int32, pro2) Por2 added that, "These tents were much bigger in size than existing tents of roundabout. They also had shades projected outside towards these big pathways." (Int32, pro2) Yet they were not welcoming still while being closed off through green fence since they were famous for being inhabited by conservative families. Pathways being the divider between private and public domain part in campsite composition it acted as a spatial threat and opportunity during the campsite time. This evolution demonstrated how partial organization was influenced by social norms.

The campsite expansion at Tahrir Square in downtown Cairo was extremely beneficial location due to the abundance of residential buildings and lodging opportunities that many of activists or friends' activists' flats, clinics and offices are located. The existence of many houses around the sit-in itself allowed many residents to take part in the partial organization while sympathizing with protesters and opening for them there space to rest. Res1 emphasized that, "Many people who had friends living around there, decided to participate, being sure that they will find place to hide or rest in whenever they need." (Int45, Res1) Not only private spaces were available for protesters but also, some public one. According to Act7, "Omar Makram mosque was one of the big effective places that were purely used for sleeping area." (Int6, Act7) Moreover, Downtown is famous for its massive number of lodging spaces as; hotels, hostels and B&B that are scattered in around Tahrir Square zone. They were fully booked during the 18 days by many protesters; to sleep when they got tired from sleeping in the sit-in and to have shower. (Int28, Int1) Act8 added that, "Political parties, human rights centres nearby Tahrir Square and also Publishing Houses were spots opened 24 hours either for everyone as Merit publishing house or just for their staff and people they knew." (Int7, Act8)

#### *Private spaces and architecture in Tahrir Square as part of living and life needs spatial pattern*

Informality was not limited on spatial practices in occupied public spaces only, instead it took part private spaces around the sit-in terrain as well. Locals and residents of Tahrir Square and area around showed significant role supporting protesters through practical direct action to provide: supplies, restrooms for circles of friends and connections, offer shelter to sleep and rest, and cook food and distribute it downstairs. Some private spaces were creatively reused and spatially transformed to serve protesters. Tracing spatial practices and activities distribution of living and life needs in Tahrir Square during the 18 days, a large place must be reserved for some private spaces as Res1 apartment. It was one of the spaces that worth clarifying and tracing it separately, with its significant location and containment of multiple spatial initiatives that benefited from each zone in the house efficiently. According to Res1, "It all began with a wanting to offer a safe space for "the kids" so I opened my apartment overlooking Cairo's Tahrir Square." (Int45, Res1) Res1's apartment from Jan25 gradually filled up with people who were either friends or sons and daughters of friends. Due to the big circle of people, this place developed to serve directly the sit-in terrain. The big kitchen and foyer were used as buffet for all friends and people inside the house. (Int45, Res1) Pub1 added that, "Res1 house has become famous for the big pan of lentil soup that was brought from the ninth floor by young protesters and distributed it to all

protestors down." Its strategic location in the square was crucial in critical moments. Res1's flat was turned into a large shelter.<sup>848</sup>

Another case was since Jan 30 in private space flat "Commune 8" emerged to play influential role in providing supplies and living needs. It was in Houda Shaaraway Street, 500 meters away from Tahrir Square. (Int6, Act7) According to Int2, "The idea of this open space emerged from a mother cared about her sons and daughter who were protesting and camping since first day, having opportunity to stay near to them in friend's apartment that was empty." (Int28, Int2) The house continued to develop its activities and to serve bigger circle of network of people. Int2 described that, "It started with being a base for storing supplies near the sit-in. Supplies were received from connections and friends who were coming from outside downtown. Int2 added that, "In last days supplies were sent from unknown donors." (Int28, Int2) Since 3 Feb similar to spatial patterns of sit-in, Int2 explained that, "The space started to have specific spatial system for serving and fully functioning with all amenities as well." The dynamics of space and sustaining spatial practices of providing food and supplies via spatial routes and challenges entailed these places to have active and direct role during the 18 days.

The place started to have its new form, morphology, system, maintenance and even decoration. It was part of the scenery of the sit-in for its users directly and for protesters benefiting from its distributed supplies indirectly. It was a storage spot for receiving supplies from anyone and distributing supplies to everyone. A spatial reorder for the flat to suit this reuse of spaces was required. According to Int2, "The entrance hall served as dining room with plastic table and chairs on corner with console for serving; the next room was a hall with TV, two sofas and coaches on the floor so this room took five people sleeping, other times for meetings or interviews with media or uploading data on internet or watching news. Big dining room was used as storage filled till the ceiling with all kind of supplies even generators and when there was place they put blankets on the floor as space for more four people to sleep. The two bed rooms were divided to one for ladies and for men. The girls' room fitted five in the room. While the other one was bigger, that took six people. So it afforded around 20 people sleeping there and this case was very rare as most of the time they were sleeping down in the roundabout, while this happened in the days of protests after Mubarak resigned." (Int29, Int2)

6, Qasr el Nile Street is where the apartment of "Merit" – an independent publishing house- is famously located. Merit publishing house has been recalled by most of the interviewees as one of the spaces that efficiently affected the revolution and its performance. Merit's proximity to Tahrir Square is definitely one of the key factors. Moreover, it has been over the past few years, an important gathering place for many writers and artists and for normal people who were not celebrities but has cultural or political interest. On Jan 28 Merit publish house felt the responsibility to secure protesters. It was one of the spaces opened for people to hide in and specially women. Later on it developed to have active role in receiving and distributing stocks of supplies. Merit was also spontaneous destination for donations for revolutionaries in the sit-in. Act14 explained, "We received blankets, money, food and drinks every day from a wide variety of people and institutes." (Int13, Act14) It became a staging ground for distributing supplies and a key spot for people to gather and rest when they are tired, to eat or to drink something. It was 'the revolutionary leadership's kitchen.'<sup>849</sup> Act14 recalled that, "We were receiving trucks of supplies –Metro market truck. These huge amounts of supplies were our responsibility to store, prepare and distribute them around to any protestors in the sit-in." (Int13, Act14) He added that, they were frequently distributing supplies protesters who were at the gateway of Talaat Harb Street: Estoril pathway: Greione pathway: Qasr el Nile bridge: Shambelyon street: Abd el Moneim Rhyad square. Restroom was accessible and three halls were a shelter for anyone to hide from cold or clashes. Events on Feb 2 has spatially shaped Merit's location and nearness to Tahrir Square as an effective factor but risky as well. Act14 described

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<sup>848</sup> Abaza, M. (2011, March 22).

<sup>849</sup> On Writing and Revolution: An Interview with Mohamed Salah Al-Azab by Chris Stone retrieved by: [www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/1950/on-writing-and-revolution\\_an-interview-with-mohame](http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/1950/on-writing-and-revolution_an-interview-with-mohame)

that, "We were almost inside the battle field that allowed us to effectively supply and support protesters in moment the sit-in was completely besieged." (Int13, Act14)

### 11.2.2. Food and Subsistence Supplies Patterns Informality

As In general, campers built communal kitchen etc., their communication, governance, protest actions and practices of re-creating everyday life are shaped through their communal relationships.<sup>850</sup> Yet for Tahrir Square campsites weren't part of a planned or formal organization, like other practices they faced spatial development through informal practices through gradual and spontaneous process. Food and subsistence supplies provision was part of spatial practices for alternative home-place making that animated through different strategies since first day. As they weren't like other protest campsites, food supply and life needs weren't part of its formal organization. They were tasks that required spatial tactics from protesters and participants to accomplish. Jan 25 waves of protesters filled Cairo's central Tahrir Square, pattern of food supplies and living needs were similar to previous demonstration. Protesters were able to get their needs by themselves from near shops and services that were functioning normally. Some organized youth movements were prepared for the possibility of sitting-in like '6 April Youth Movement' and 'Youth for Justice and Freedom Movement', and youth liberal groups as well. They were distributing lots of food and supplies on anyone in the occupied terrain. Tactics by protesters have been modified to resist police brutality along their routes while reaching Tahrir Square. Act8 recalled that, "Protesters who took responsibility to bring food from outside sit in got separated from each other, and took different routes to reach Tahrir Square." Awareness of sideways and tiny pathways in Downtown was crucial. He added that, "We were aware of downtown dark alleys and pathways that weren't known for all policemen so we escaped through them and reached Tahrir Square." (Int7, Act8) Partial organization through decentralized network of donors and suppliers targeting single location without targeting particular groups in this community was achieved since early phase. The resistance to maintain this spatial configuration for supplies network would not have been the same without locals' significant collaboration since day one. Act9 recalled that, "The usual open spaces of cultural or political events or Merit publishing house were influential since they were spots for many people to rest, eat and store supplies." (Int8, Act9) (See Fig 11.9)

On 28 January after protesters succeeded to reclaim the square, Act2 mentioned that, "Hisham Mubarak Law Centre, other human rights centres, homes and all spots that worked on storing supplies in the days before, took the mission of providing them for the sit in." (Int2, Act2) Other individual initiatives for providing food supply were performed. Originally the idea of collecting and storing living needs and supplies in some human rights centres, homes and political parties for Jan 28 demonstration was invented spontaneously while some activists were requesting and gathering the living supplies for arrested protestors of 25 and 26 Jan in the camps. Building on previous experience in collecting supplies for arrested protesters in other demonstration, there was an extent of confidence and trust from donors that these supplies will reach the sit-in. (Int2, Act2) Human rights centres and political parties were crucial in the early process of establishing networks and guaranteeing number of providers in early phase. January 26 and 27 were preparatory phase for establishing network between suppliers that entailed effective decentralized spatial pattern for donating food supply around downtown terrain. This partial organization was crucial at the beginning of the evolution of complex pattern. Act2 stated that, "Locations for delivering supplies were familiar; most of them were human rights centres or political parties or activists houses that were located in downtown terrain." (Int2, Act2) According to Act2 who was looking after supplies collection from Hesham Mubarak centre, "There were around 6 or 7 storages for supplies full and big." (Int2, Act2) There were no a centralized committee or group established to collect and organize supplies for all the sitting-in. Instead, they were separate groups, spatially divided and targeting campsite as convergence

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<sup>850</sup> Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013). (p. 42).



spot. These organized groups did not have any agenda to move them instead; it was spontaneous without targeting specific group or gathering in site-in. (Int14, Act15) (See Fig 11.9)

When some shops decided to close, especially the area around Tahrir Square where clashes took place, different spatial dynamics emerged since January 29. Protesters had to take the risk and go far away from sit-in territory, in order to find opened shops. (Int8, Act9) Protesters resisted the threats and attacks appeared outside campsite terrain. By January 30 when police disappeared completely from the country, Int2 recalled that, "Most shops and restaurants near Tahrir Square were closed, protesters were able to move in downtown and went to bring food and supplies from either; Abdin; Souk el Tawfeqia Street; Ramses districts." (Int29, Int2) Due to the current spatial condition, Int2 emphasized that, "Many protesters started to think of buying good stock of packed food from there to keep it in the campsite of roundabout." (Int29, Int2) The initiative of storing food supplies was related to the erection of tents in the roundabout. This spatial reconfiguration evolved through dynamic and direct actions, witnessed changes in routes for delivering supplies, and suppliers in order to resist the scarcity of living supplies in campsite specially food, drinks and blankets. Moreover, Act12 explained that, "Young protestors under 18 years took the mission to reuse the kitchen of Hardees fast food shop for preparing sandwiches and tea." (Int11, Act12) Accordingly new layer was added to existing spatial pattern, some food supplies were requested to be received directly there. (Int2, Act2) This action yield to occurrence of big storage point for supplies inside campsite as well. Relying on the commercial pattern for food supply was since January 31, Dr2 recalled that, "Some shops started to open back in Tahrir Street. Yet, they were open only during the day. Instead by night protesters had to walk to farther places to bring food." (Int22, Dr2) (See Fig 11.11) On Feb 1 'Million-man March' day was good opportunity for providing sit-in with supplies. This day made sit-in terrain a familiar space to many suppliers. It provided flux patterns of supplying and abundance of living supplies through direct actions. An effective layer of living and life needs supply appeared, since many supplies were mainly sent first to mediator -human rights, activists' houses, political parties- inside downtown terrain who took the responsibility to organized and deliver these supplies to the sit-in in the first days. (See Fig 11.12)

It was clear that life needs and supply patterns were vital factor for sustaining the campsite even during clashes. The acts and tactics for hindering this development were imposed. Since February 1 night, people were blocked from their supplies storages –located outside sit-in zone, disconnected from receiving donated supplies, disabled from reaching markets, and besieged away from far shops. Act8 mentioned that, "Protestors inside sit-in were completely paralyzed. They weren't able to leave their space or receive supplies either from near or far zone." (Int7, Act8) Facing huge risks and violent clashes while trying to move supplies from storages, was the normal spatial trend for that time. Int2 added that, "Due to clashes raised since late night many opened restaurants and shops decided to close again." (Int29, Int2) The spatial confrontation to the tactics enforced against receiving supplies, was performed as part of sit-in spatial practices, preceding the camel battle attacks. The proximity of some stores was effective. Act8 recalled that, "Headquarter of Socialist Renewal Movement located in Mohamed Basiouny Street, was one of the near storage for supplies that protesters were able to bring supplies from. Yet, we took the back narrow pathway." (Int7, Act8) The abundance of sit-in terrain with supplies on first 'Million Man March' day was obviously influential as well. (See Fig 11.13)

On February 2, patterns of living supplies were completely limited, and sit-in was isolated from supplies provision. New spatial dynamics were required since there was crucial need for delivering supplies internally from storages near to the sit-in, and then transferring them to sit-in edges where confrontation lines were full of protesters fighting for more than 15 hours. Pub1 is one of the young protestors less than 18 years old stated that, "We took responsibility of transferring supplies from storages and houses inside sit-in as Res1 apartment, Hardees and inside the roundabout, where they were collected." (Int44, Pub1) Women and young protesters played crucial role in transferring supplies. They were able to link and shorten the distance by bringing all supplies backward forward effectively. (Int44, Pub1) (See Fig 11.14) Delivering supplies remained problematic

even after the battle was determined. Since February 2 at night, protesters succeeded in spatially imposing control on some routes to let supplies reach the sit-in however they were interchangeable. It remained very random to guarantee which route to pass from with supplies securely. There was always a range of risk since many incidents for blocking supplies by the army and thugs occurred. Accordingly, flexible spatial tactics through interchangeable routes were required in order to encounter these spatial attacks. Protesters were keen on updating any suppliers with safe routes via social media. Feb 3 afternoon according to Act3, "Many house revolutionaries arrived with supplies and especially from Qasr el Nile Bridge as this was always the nearest point to arrive with car." (Int3, Act3) Dr5 described that, "The role of house revolutionaries was same important as the revolutionaries on the square. They were keen on sending food daily, blankets, and any needed supplies." (Int25, Dr5) Spatial reconfiguration in living and life needs spatial practices entailed contracted model that has emerged in the aftermath of the camel battle. While sit-in was significantly preserved and controlled by protesters, according to Act1, "Human rights and other political parties as Hesham Mubarak Law center and Nadim were raped by police who destroyed and took everything at on 3rd Feb." (Int1, Act1) Yet Supplies were still collected in many political parties near the sit-in as el-Ghad Party (Hizb el-Ghad), Tagamoa Party, Democratic Nasserite Party (al-Hizb al-Dimuqrati al-Nasiri), and Socialist Renewal Movement. During violent clashes high dependency on near spots for storages and others that were almost inside terrain as; houses as Res1's apartment; destroyed shops as Hardees; open space as Merit publishing house; under stage of the Mogamaa or inside tents; nearest human rights Centres as centre for political studies-in Tahrir Square: field clinics and field hospitals has emerged. It was interesting how newly born initiatives as field clinics and art corners were spatially preserving a zone for storing their supplies with someone responsible for its spatial system. These new spatial patterns revealed new layers of decentralization and independency within sit-in according to their locations. Clearly, it guaranteed for every part in the sit-in to receive supplies. (See Fig 11.15)

On Feb 4, 'Million-Man March', Act15 recalled that, "This day, sit-in featured a systematic supply for food and subsistence supplies. Visitors of the square came with all what they can carry from supplies and food. It was another phase—it became as the duty of any proud Egyptian to support the demonstrators." (Int14, Act15) It was kind of apologize action, feeling guilty for believing all rumours said by local media about revolutionaries. Since this moment a complex patterns of living supplies spatial practices emerged, sit-in did not face any difficulty for receiving supplies through near checkpoints and entrances however, the risk was always from far checkpoint and thugs who remained even after the 18 days. It maintained kind of partial organization, creating a role for house revolutionaries and providing spatial opportunity for them to directly act. The repetition of these festive events sustained the individual initiatives for providing sit-in with supplies that continued to repeat separately. (See Fig 11.16) The government decision to bring back people to work Since February 6, created new dynamic. Tech1 explained that, "We used to finish work and then directly arriving to the sit-in with all requested supplies from the day before. Moreover, going back to work, has mobilized even people who never get the courage to go Tahrir Square." (Int47, Tech1) Spatial systematic process on daily bases emerged then. Moreover, the establishment of "Coalition of the Youth of the Revolution"<sup>851</sup> on February 6, reflected on the spatial system and composition of the sit-in in general. Act3 explained that, "Kind of organization for some activities especially food distribution and rubbish collection groups started to appear." (Int2, Act3) (See Fig 11.17)

Another partially organized pattern that took part spontaneously was spatially located around the Mogamaa stage. It became one of the main reference points inside sit-in for receiving supplies from visitors and donors. Due to this flux amount of received supplies at this location, a committee was established for organizing and taking care of received supplies; ordering and distributing them. (Int11, Act12) Protesters used available

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<sup>851</sup> Was a coalition of organisations of young people involved in the Egyptian Revolution of 2011. Groups involved include the 6 April Youth movement, Justice and Freedom, Muslim Brotherhood youth, ElBaradei's campaign, The Popular Democratic Movement for Change (HASHD), The Democratic Front and Khaled Saeed Facebook group administrators. The coalition has 14 group representatives in total and a general assembly with a few hundred members

opportunities within terrain like Hardees that is located inside sit-in terrain, with its huge stoves installed, electricity and gas supplied, Act6 recalled that, "We changed it into field kitchen for cooking food in its ground floor." Food was prepared with huge quantities and distributed among protesters." (Int5, Act6).

Since February 6 commercial layer has significantly been part of the spatial pattern of living supplies. Pro8 recalled that, "Street vendors were not appreciated at all by sit-in inhabitants." (Int38, Pro8) Yet, the commercialization interfered through street vendors activities and, the opening of all shops and cafes around sit-in. The midan 'Tahrir Square' that initially resisted the commercial aspect gradually came to accommodate the increasing number of vendors, selling food and memorabilia, which constituted the informal political economy of Tahrir.<sup>852</sup> Moreover, Int2 explained that, "When near shops decided to open, there was a sense of guilt about the groceries and markets near to sit-in zone, we relied on existing commercial services of neighbourhood significantly with an intention to lessen the harm and not to affect them negatively from campsite appearance." (Int29, Int2) This concentration of commercial layers of supplies provisions yield to shrinkage of the complex patterns of supplies and be limited on near zone.

The attendance of Muslim brothers and their families in campsite has influenced the pattern of living supplies as well. In the aftermath of the camel battle a layer of formal organized provision of supplies emerged targeting specific group mainly located at Omar Makram garden. In short, informality was through complex pattern of living supplies including: formal layer targeting specific gatherings: commercial layer, residents' supports: partial organization by internal groups: and revolutionary visitors were maintained until last day. All these patterns resulted in significant saturation of food supplies inside the sit-in, entailing new initiative according to res1, "Protesters were distributing food and supplies at all entrances to be sure that no one inside might feel hungry or in need of anything." (Int45, Res1) It was a sign of full control and ownership of space and its resources by the inhabitants. It demonstrated the disappearance of worries of receiving supplies anymore.

### 11.2.3. Cleaning and Maintenance Informality

Participation in service as cleaning was one of the primary essential initiatives in sit-in. When Tahrir Square was finally reclaimed, Act3 explained that, "On Jan 29 an enormous clean-up effort has started with significant support from residents living around the square, offering cleaning tools to wash the floor and move water spilled the other day." (Int3, Act3) According to Dr4, "Cleaning action was the main theme for first days and the last day." (Int24, Dr4) It was spatial preparation for staying in space. People clean and maintain what they feel is theirs.<sup>853</sup> Cleaning emerged as one of the earliest spatial practices purely voluntary, since they wanted to make sure that they are living in a clean place. Elaborate spatial system of garbage collection without leadership was grounded on partial organization concepts. An unusual spatial pattern for cleaning emerged while people were treating public space in different way. Egyptians normally considered Tahrir Square like other public spaces not there's since it is a space outside their home. This mentality has changed significantly during 18 days. (See Fig 11. 5) Garbage collection became one of daily spatial rituals in the square. Partial organization through groups of young protesters moving around campsite without any hierarchal organization, holding big rubbish bags every morning to collect the rubbish from protesters in their campsite. Sustaining the activity of cleaning even during clashes reflect their feelings that this will remain to be theirs. In fact, this apparently banal act demonstrated a sense of reconstituted community and collective ownership.<sup>854</sup> (See Fig 11.11)

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<sup>852</sup> Mehrez, S., & Kreitim, S. (2012).

<sup>853</sup> Shehayeb, D. (2009).

<sup>854</sup> Petti, A., & Hilal, S. (n.d.).

Protesters deployed burned down Security vehicle and cars for garbage collection. Their locations served significantly the functional necessity as well. Garbage collection points were effective and spatially distributed around sit-in terrain where the police left their cars and retreated. However due to the expansion of sit-in terrain and reconfiguration of campsite in the aftermath of the camel battle, spatial transformation was obtained. Pro11 recalled that, "Garbage collection points were shifted away from the roundabout. One was relocated on the pavement in front the Arab league building where the entrance to the sit-in was defined. Other spot of garbage collection appeared behind Mogamaa beside Qasr el Dobara Church, other one beside the Army tank near Talaat Harb Street and Qasr el Ainy Street." (Int41, Pro11) This spatial relocation was kind of defining sit-in borders since all garbage points were located outside sit-in approaches. Moreover, it clarified the efficiency of spatial informality through public participation and self-dependency characteristics. (See Fig 11.12, 11.15)

Informal tactics for getting rid of garbage has lots of similarity to what informal settlements in Cairo witness. Pro2 explained that, "Garbage was collected from these spots either by negotiating with the Army to bring a car to move it or protestors calling rubbish car to come and pick it." (Int32, pro2) Concentration of garbage collection points on sit-in edges same like informal settlement where inhabitants get rid of their garbage just on the edges of their terrain that witnessed same authority disregard and have to deal with a variety of discrimination from authorities. Due to lack of sufficient garbage collection system and ability to access all its spaces, informal waste management systems are found to be very dynamic, flexible and great potential holders.<sup>855</sup> Similarly spatial practices with technical, organizational, socio-cultural and socio-political patterns emerged in sit-in terrain that can be distinguished in terms of their relationship with the authorities. Since informal settlement were unacknowledged by the authorities and sometimes even neglected, alternative solution was required. Pro2 recalled that, "Community development initiative or nongovernmental organizations intervene as mediator in order to force the government to act and send rubbish cars to collect garbage from this urban poor." (Int4, Act5) Similarly, the consequences of having garbage points on sit-in edges have been treated with same strategies.

Cleaning was part of spatial practices performed for preparing sit-in space for 'Million Man-March' day that shows clearly how 'the space was no longer perceived as public—the space of authority—but rather as the space of the people.'<sup>856</sup> It was sign for community participation that distinguish them from their guest in space. Spatial system and techniques imposed by campsite inhabitants were always different from how visitors dealt with space. Pro6 observed that, "The differences in degrees of care were due to the lack of awareness of knowledge by visitors of how the system spatially worked." (Int36, Pro6) Yet protesters did not surrender to this threat; they even continued to develop garbage collection process. According to Pro2, "Protesters set up recycling bins with cordon to define its space around the roundabout at the main entrance for many visitors. (See Fig 11.16) Teams were organized for collecting rubbish from sit-in terrain according to the recycling division." (Int32, pro2) Cleaning remained influential and symbolic initiative in Tahrir sit-in, its spatial practices revealed a lot about the change of nature of people while dealing with public space as part of their private space that required taking care. These kinds of development of spatial practices revealed the ultimate control of sit-in terrain and the ability to live.

#### 11.2.4. Utilities and Restrooms Informality

Interviews showed how during the 18 days, interchangeable options have been the only way in order to find restrooms. On January 25, interviewees recalled that, "People were able to find some shops and restaurants in Downtown opened to use their restrooms." (Int35, Pro5) Pro5 recalled that, "Hardees fast food shop on one of Tahrir Square corners has been destroyed during clashes so its upper floor was transformed into restroom for

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<sup>855</sup> Butter, I. (2006).

<sup>856</sup> Petti, A., & Hilal, S. (n.d.). (p.110).

women.”(Int35, pro5) Instead, KFC fast food restaurant is inside Tahrir Square and did not face any damages so it was closed, according to Act6, “The owner allowed protesters to use its restrooms only by women.”(Int5, Act6) Art2 stated that, “This practice was completely stopped on Feb 5, when ‘Art corner’ occupied KFC façade. (Int19, Art2) When protesters reclaimed Tahrir Square and campsite started to develop in its practices, and finding restrooms was one of the main problems. It is not that they were in public space so there were public toilets ready for public to use. However, there were public restrooms in Tahrir Square -next to the submerged sidewalk going to the underground metro, interviewees confirmed that it was like any public restrooms in Egypt, “Unreliable.” One of the private restrooms, which protesters relied on during uneasy moments of leaving the square, was the restroom of construction site inside Tahrir Square. It was formerly used by construction workers. It turned to be one of the main campsite toilets for men. Open spaces inside Tahrir Square were opportunity for protesters to use their restrooms, Act7 mentioned that, “Since early moments, Omar Makram mosque was a spontaneous destination for men and women to use its restrooms.”(Int6, Act7)

After February 2 sit-in terrain was clearly defined through its barricaded borders, it was easier to move around its approaches and depend on restrooms that were accessible in places around downtown. Merit publish house and many political parties were opening their doors 24 hours for protesters. The occurrence of the campsite inside downtown was significant opportunity for being surrounded by many friends or relatives’ houses, offices and clinics that protesters were counting on for using their restroom. Moreover in the last week after sustaining the campsite autonomy and spatial division from outside some areas were abandoned and dark especially near Ministry of Interior, Mohamed Mahmoud Street- that were transformed into restrooms by men.

Searching for places to use for restrooms remained spatial constrain till the last day. Tahrir campsite was not like traditional protest camps having its restrooms constructed, and ready for use from the beginning. Instead, finding restroom was a clear spatial challenge, either to reuse existing restrooms or invent adequate spatial pattern. However, the evolution was spontaneous; they were able to achieve spatial order to guarantee gender division. Restrooms were always controlled by spatial separation between men ones and women ones. It was a clear respect and stick to local and religious traditions and habits even in hard times. Moreover, Tahrir campsite composed of all social classes of the Egyptian society has influenced restrooms availability pattern. It required from each person to figure out where to go to the toilet. It appeared as personal decision without fixed spatial pattern: it witnessed flexibility and diverse locations depending also on people’s social relations and connections and awareness of the places. The occurrence of several homes, clinics and offices played significant role in the dynamics of finding adequate restrooms individually. They were erected next to existing restrooms according to Pro8, “New restrooms in wooden booths have been erected outside Omar Makram Mosque that has been supplied by existing infrastructure inside the mosque.”(Int38, pro8) Act6 emphasized that, “Public toilettes in the island near Abd el Moneim Rhyad Square, were in bad condition used as prison during Camel battle, were maintained by protesters and ready for using.”(Int36, Act6)

Providing restrooms was as other newly installed activities that witnessed informality through public participation in the construction, social attention and self-belonging by campsite inhabitants. They decorated it with revolutionary murals on where self-belonging, pride and ownership appeared. Restroom as part of a complex spatial system for living and life needs witnessed kind of significant shift from spatial adaptation on exiting patterns in space and using all available opportunities of restroom to installation of new infrastructure that imposed spatial empowerment of inhabitants. This was through spatial festivity, social memories, cultural habits, social tradition and rituals of its users. Informal patterns for providing and using restrooms clarified that dealing with campsite space was not anymore as public dealing with public space, instead they treated the space as their house that required maintenances, decoration and protection. (See Fig 11.22)



## 11.3. Analysis of Living and Life Needs as Spatial Practices

### 11.3.1. Social Control in the Campsites Terrain

#### *General policing and ensuring privacy*

In some camps social control was obtained through physical borders that define the spatial limits of campsite as part of formal organization. Instead in Tahrir Square campsite, social control imposed complex patterns composed of diverse spatial practices and tactics. Edges were clearly defined due to defensive actions and protection tactics against violence and attacks. Campsite was contended with local and sometimes hired vigilantes, in addition to state-sanctioned police violence. This was witnessed since first day when protesters reclaimed the square and was seen intensively in the 'day of the camel.' The level of violence at protest camps can be seen in the ways in which violent contact zones transform or reorient protesters' relationships to their objects and environments, and therefore to their protest tactics.<sup>857</sup> In Tahrir Square, all campsites in the sit-in witnessed a general control and policing strategies that defined sit-in approaches. This particular spatial monitoring was accompanied by a defensive system that combined checkpoints to control whoever were entering and to be sure he is not anti-revolutionaries or thugs or policemen or related to NDP. In this regards, campsite developed over the time, and sustainable notion of a collective alternative home-place, in which boundaries between outsiders and insiders was imposed. This collective policing spatial pattern was evoking the patterns emerged from the sense of security and a support system that was formed through lifelong relationships in informal and urban poor areas. Similar to physical and spatial pattern of these areas, the boundaries of this shared space were barricaded and controlled with gates and patterns of spatial practices for policing and control. Ishash al-Turguman in Bulaq like other informal area that, 'the police could not penetrate, which the government could not regulate, where the popular classes, with all their unruly passions and political resentments, held the upper hand.'<sup>858</sup> They are self-defended territory that is secured against external intrusion. Similarly Campsite was able to obtain its sense of security system fast through its inhabitants' practices and care for their alternative home-place. The concept of campsite in Tahrir Square sit-in became same as the concept of home which thus stems from the need for security and privacy. It illustrated a place where people feel safe and secure from outside risks. Campsite was even a place where people may feel safe during even the moments of attacks by thugs and disappearance of police from all the country.

Besides the distinctive uses of physical environments for housing and living needs, it also became privy to spatial interactions and exchanges that usually happen in the privacy of the home. Creating and sustaining campsite community came with determining and figuring out how to obtain required privacy and its variable levels. Boundaries between individual house units –tents- were variable and sometimes seen as less significant than the collective sit-in terrain ones. Some social control started to be imposed on the campsite in the roundabout, originated from the need for privacy. Since Jan 30 and 31 expansion of campsite witnessed the existence of some inhabitants and arrival of new neighbours that entailed a sense of intrusion to the older ones. Act3 stated that, "It yielded a crucial need for considering privacy at certain point." (Int3, Act3) Roundabout being an attractive destination for all sectors of society coming to sit-in by that time, Act3 explained that, "Some protesters were intruders and ladies started to complain feeling discomfort while staying in their tents. We had to reorder our tents, instead of being in front each other and having a small path in between into cluster with an internal space "housh" that can allow us to stay together and can be used by our daily visitors." (Int3, Act3) Yet, these clusters endured reconfiguration and evolution during the time depending on the relationship with the neighbours. Enclosing the space between groups of tents was an act to achieve privacy. Clearly, there were

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<sup>857</sup> Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013). (p. 117).

<sup>858</sup> Scott, J. (1998). p. 63.

always initiatives for making campsite space more domestic and intimate according to everyone's criteria of privacy. The relationship between neighbours witnessed unusual standards that were away from any differences in religious, social or economic classes. As Art1 added, "We were socializing with everyone around us without considering any social, religious, or economic differences." (Int18, Art1) Instead, maintaining privacy through spatial tactics reflected some of protesters' social classes and their keenness to maintain privacy inside their private space -tent.

In response to the increase of inhabitants' number, a spatial re-configuration was spontaneously emerged while gradual composition of campsite achieved with other social control tactics on the level of semi-public space between the tents. A primitive urban fabric appeared as Act3 explained that, "We used rocks to create pathways between tents. Then the increase of number of tents erected entailed a high flow of people passing through these pathways between tents and caused blockage of some of them." (Int3, Act3) The roundabout witnessed an unplanned urban fabric, which Pro6 explained that, "There were some difficulties while passing between tents they became like a maze and sometimes dead-end. Each one had to learn some routes in order to reach other places in the roundabout." (Int36, Pro6) Spatial order and reconfiguration for tents yielded to continuous changes in pathways, their walls started to be defined by erected tents. Therefore pathways continued to be exploratory due to their spatial evolution and spontaneous composition until the roundabout was fully occupied. Accordingly, private space has been morphing while semi-public spaces were getting defined in accordance.

Roundabout campsite was accessible through its internal pathways between tents that were left accessible until certain point. When Sit-in witnessed significant expansions and over spilling due to massive crowds and flux of visitors, by February 8 a high flow of foot-traffic inside roundabout required higher extent of control through imposing new spatial limitation tactics. Pro2 explained that, "During this new condition, moving around sit-in was so difficult and sitting inside tents as well. Inhabitants were used to sleep during the morning in their tents, since then it was impossible." (Int32, pro2) Suffering of discomfort, noise and crowd required new spatial rearrangement in campsite. Act3 observed that, "People who were visiting sit-in terrain didn't deal with the campsites as a space where people sleep and live inside." (Int3, Act3) Ensuring privacy through spatial limitation of people to pass through narrow paths between the tents in roundabout was imposed. Received flux amount of plastic roles to protect their home-place from rain, were used to surround the roundabout campsite and leaving some openings leading to main pathways. Erecting plastic walls along internal pathways affected protesters' perception while moving between the tents. They became more enclosed and smaller spaces. They were not anymore defined just by rocks on the floor or tents but plastic walls edging both sides along the pathways. (Int3, Act3) Act3 described that, "The influencing sensation was that you are moving in alleys that are all edged with plastic walls, while before tents, were more open for communication during moving or passing by the clusters." (Int3, Act3) This spatial pattern limited the accessibility and they became more unwelcoming in last days. Apparently this new spatial intervention resulted from a need to control social relation between neighbours and necessity to exclude non-inhabitants. Accordingly this spatial pattern imposed on semi-public space mainly entailed another level of privacy to appear in space.

Moreover, Pro2 explained that, "In last days, a supplementary spatial feature by forming a human chain around the roundabout appeared." (Int32, Pro2) It was an act of resistance against the massive crowds congregating and breaking through private and semi-public spaces of the campsite and specially the roundabout. Inhabitants succeeded to control the access of the campsite inside the roundabout. Pro2 described that, "Special entrance and control point for the roundabout has been formed. It was erected facing Qasr el Nile Bridge." (Int32, Pro2) It was highest spatial limitation for access, allowing only inhabitants of the roundabout or someone coming for inhabitants or specific reason to enter. Partial organization without a unified laws or regulation for building within the campsite like the roundabout one was highly effective in the last days when

conflicts over the privacy of the space were experienced. Privacy patterns were never pre-planned or design during campsite erection, instead they were spatially dynamic due to instant need and reactive to changing in conditions.

Yet, different social control patterns emerged inside other campsites in Tahrir Square, where they were gravitated toward spaces in separate ends of the sit-in and away from the roundabout social mix. A spatial autonomy emerged then, with inhabitants' tents clustered at Omar Makram garden and other closed off zones. Different from the roundabout inhabitants, some families either conservative or from other governorates-arrived with their own life style, traditions and habits. They preferred to be spatially isolated from existing community. They chose to have their campsites socially and physically isolated and to uphold privacy since the beginning of home-place erection. Pro7 explained that, "It was weird how to go inside and outside, and difficult to access since there was too many green fences however as distance it looked near." It was exiled by physical barriers -green fences- leading to difficulty to reach inside. And social barriers as habits and traditions of living were imposed by its conservative community. Act9 observed that, "Every family was living together in a big tent that included many facilities like the cooked food." (Int8, Act9) Act9 was astonished that, "There were tents in size of a room." (Int8, Act9) The way protesters lived in these recent campsites began to form autonomous community laden with self-expression. Christopher Alexander has recognized two key issues that mark a successful home: its ability to express the uniqueness of each family and family member, and its ability to connect its inhabitants with other people and the society at large.<sup>859</sup> Exactly, that what happened in Tahrir campsite at Omar Makram, when people succeeded to obtain a house unit suitable for their habits and traditions and the extent to relate with others. Spatial composition of campsite at Omar Makram succeeded to be unwelcoming to other inhabitants in other parts of campsite since it was limited to campsite activity. The real distance between the roundabout and the area around Omar Makram mosque isn't that far however, people who were sitting-in the roundabout as Pro7 said that, "We didn't know anything about what was happening at Mogamma or Omar Makram campsite as if it was out of the sit-in terrain and since there were no need for us to go there." (Int37, Pro7)

Clearly, zoning of campsites witnessed different levels of privacy through different spatial patterns of control that demonstrates the sociological differences in the sit-in. In Tahrir Square, it was while observing the diverse classes of society, their variable demands for privacy and the increasing spatial segregation that gradually emerged as an attempt to ensure certain privacy. Campsites were relatively heterogeneous, where subsequent differences emerged while inhabitants spatially adapted the space for their own lifestyle. Gradual composition of campsite through diverse communities with different criteria of privacy led to formation of organically constructed zones and corridors. Partial organization and horizontality in decision making allowed people in campsite to decide and design their own spaces and decide the extent of privacy they needed among a single campsite. In addition to that some were attractive to non-inhabitants to access due to the occurrence of other activities performing. Like the roundabout that witnessed internal initiatives while maintaining privacy on some housing unit scale. Some tents were opened directly on corridors and pathways, others managed to obtain semi-public space through cluster of tents. In this case, tents became their private spaces where people limited access to, while corridors and inner spaces between clusters had another level of privacy depending on spatial intervention by others that kept changing during the time. Instead, complete different experiences with less dynamicity occurred in other zones like Omar Makram while maintaining their different level of privacy with unwelcoming image of campsite zone since its erection. It was limited on its families' tents without trying to host other activities, discouraging non inhabitants to access. High privacy and limitation were main factors to be maintained through single spatial pattern of social control since first day. There was no significant evolution of activities in this zone that required dynamic reconfiguration in spatial control patterns or tactics for preserving

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<sup>859</sup>Alexander, C. (1985).

privacy. Informality in space through partial organization and horizontality in decision making allowed sit-in to include inhabitants with variable levels of privacy.

Patterns of social control was not only responsible for protection and maintaining privacy in campsite, Yet it included very particular pattern that may distinguish its community in social sphere. Act7 recalled that, "One of the evidences that Muslim Brothers families and other conservative families took part in the campsite in the aftermath of the camel battle, was the spatial pattern that appeared in a form of circles of men surrounding their women while moving in the sit-in." This condition was significant in the way women of conservative communities appeared inside campsite, how un-freedom and humanly chained by their men while moving inside sit-in enforcing their private zone. This particular dynamic was clearly based on unique social reference. On the other hand, these practices and regularities maintained an unbreakable link with the past of its community. However in campsite this social control in maintaining women's private domain was practiced strictly through highly controlled tactics. In short, women were viewed as privatizing the public that was spatially practiced in campsite by some communities. These communities were keen on performing all activities inside the tent to maintain women's privacy and in order to avoid any social disorder except while going to the restroom or entering and leaving the campsite in the sit-in. Therefore, by maintaining the rigid dichotomy and fixity in the separation between "the world of men" the public one and "the world of women" the private one, tracing campsite composition was able to account the struggle to define the boundaries between the private and the public and how this practice was central to the production of space through the reproduction of power relationships and the reinforcement of gender inequalities at some of the campsite communities.

#### *Risk Profiles in the Campsites*

In the wake of many protest camps, governments have enacted legislation that explicitly prohibits or severely limits protest camping.<sup>860</sup> Camping and occupation of public space continued to be risky for the state faced by regulation directly targeting the camp, prohibiting camping, giving police the power to evict campers immediately and considering protesters as risk profile. Yet, the condition of exchanging the power holder can change the spatiality of space and its risk profile as well. In Tahrir campsites, all out comers were subjected to particular monitoring and control at sit-in approaches being checked by ad-hoc security groups. Non revolutionaries or NDP employers or policemen or thugs who fit 'risk profile' criteria weren't allowed to access. Exclusion of non-revolutionaries was due to being seen as disorderly. The social control of campsite through spatial order also informed us that the campsite spatially suited revolutionaries from different social sectors while the presence of anti-revolutionaries was considered out of place and may lead to unconventional behaviour. What was happening on the ground in Egypt was not an openly accessible public space, prior to entry people were being checked to see if they adhered to the common ground of protesters' claims.<sup>861</sup> This led to creation of an environment of spatial segregation, discipline and order, as well as a solidarity form of cultural consumption; thus changing the nature of free public space with diverse demands into single one. This separation was part of what made the physical square in Tahrir capable of being a space for democracy building and collective resistance. It was clear how through social control tactics campsite was limited for profiles who obtained same demand, with spatial exclusion of non-revolutionaries.

The same army power that took part in policing campsite was controlled and limited by the people from advancing at sit-in approaches as well. Interviewees recalled the great fear by campsite inhabitants was when the Army tried to move their tanks to shrink campsite space. Dr7 added that, "Feb 3 late night, the Army nearby Egyptian museum tried to move the tanks from their location that caused anger and distrust from protesters." (Int27, Dr7) Protesters slept in front of the Army borderline near Egyptian museum side. The Army

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<sup>860</sup> Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013). p. 19.

<sup>861</sup> Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013).

authorities pictured campsite as illegitimate act, in order to advance and open the street back to traffic. Precautions by inhabitants in banning tanks across sit-in approaches weren't spatially consistent. Camping reached the tanks at Abd el Moneim Rhyad Square as a guarantee that they won't move. One way to explain this spatial action is that protesters considered the camel battle happenings as a betrayal from the Army who disappeared from this side and leaving thugs to infiltrate into the sit-in. Protesters camping under the tanks to ensure that they can't spatially advance have demonstrated the Army being a risk profile. Hence, part of the campsite social control patterns was to confront strategies which the army authorities sought to control the function of the space and its distribution. However, protesters found out spatial tactics to neutralize this power.

While Tahrir Square was subjected to 'the state of exception' and concentration of campsites, it was purely empowered by its inhabitants. Spatial expansion of campsite was partially controlled by the Army power that was part of policing campsite system. In this case, protesters themselves fitted the risk profile in particular areas inside campsite as they were prevented to expand their campsite near Mogamaa Tahrir complex. All green areas were transformed into campsite with tents used for the sit-in except the garden of the Mogamaa and the garden between Mogamaa Tahrir and Qasr El Ainy Street. (See Fig. 11.19) The Army was guarding public buildings by keeping this area empty so they were limiting the tents expansion from the side of Mogamaa complex. (Int28, Int1) Although people took full control of the terrain, the army appearance in sit-in entailed spatial conflict, demonstrating the occurrence of other power through control patterns and fields of negotiation. The appearance of both Army and protesters as risk profiles in same space and their social control imposed through spatial practices against one another was able to account the struggle between the two powers spatially.

### **11.3.2. Production of Lived Space: Informality as a Spatial Phenomenon in the Campsite Terrain**

#### *Partial Organization and Decentralized Horizontality Notions in the Campsites*

Campsite witnessed informal political, economic, and social significance, these nodes of human environment acted as "infrastructure for social life."<sup>862</sup> Their spontaneous unregulated design acted as a facilitator that invited an organic process of spatial and social configurations to evolve. This section analyses how the living and life needs spatial practices activated urban public space. It highlights 'decentralized horizontality' and 'partial organization' concepts as spatial strategies that informally shaped its dynamics and contributed to its development among participants' experience. This didn't imply that protest's use of space was fully planned to deliver certain strategic results; rather, due to the spontaneous and horizontal nature of the protest, these spatial strategies were put to practice in an experimental mode and grew with success to unexpected outcomes. A series of spatial engagements, in which human actors and non-human materials has entered into particular relationships with each other. While, other protest camps were autonomously organized according to pre-plan, Tahrir campsite was lived space where informality was the only way to organize. Spatially it demonstrated the significance of informal principles of new urbanism, promoting the revival of liveable sustainable communities while enhancing physical and social participation. Tahrir campsite spatiality marked "the relationship between an individual/group of people and particular physical settings that is characterized by a feeling of possessiveness, and attempts to control the appearance and the use of space."<sup>863</sup>

Campsite has demonstrated a process of the creation of a lively enclosure symbolizing social equity, and economic vitality. Downtown has been experiencing spatial, social, and symbolic shift leading to the transformation of Cairo's downtown from a central area symbolizing its social segregation and public exclusion

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<sup>862</sup> Madanipour, A. (2003).

<sup>863</sup> Bower, S.N. (1980).



into symbol of informality. According to Turner, the experience of 'Communitas'<sup>864</sup> enables the questioning of the existing social order; it is like a break from the normal that allows a reconsideration of organization. There was high tendency to produce decentralized and organic horizontality. Int1 explained that, "There was never a centralized committee or group established to collect and organize supplies for all the sitting-in. Instead, they were separate groups spatially divided and targeted campsite as convergence spot." (Int29, Int1) As spatially and temporarily confined collectives, affective ties may grow between participants, lessening the need to connect people through abstract organization.<sup>865</sup> Partial organization was spatially significant through composition of campsite, maintaining supply provision and finding restrooms, sustaining cleaning and garbage collection patterns.

The evolution of living and life need patterns witnessed a significant shift from a wide spatial range including; self-reliable, non-linear and indirect actions, and decentralized network around downtown into more narrow, centralized direct action and partial organization supported by campsite inhabitants, residents and visitors. The convergence of all spatial patterns of support in campsite terrain wasn't achieved before the clashes of the camel battle vanished and after maintaining the autonomy of the space. Through partial organization, sit-in was capable to include all kinds of action either linear action or nonlinear one –which some active political parties, human rights centres, residents played an intermediate role for providing supplies. It also included the formal organization and informal ones. As some groups as Muslim-brother through their closed culture and being organized groups were spatially centralized and their supplies were formally delivered targeting them in specific and through fixed modes and routes as well. Even commercialization became a part as formal pattern, through street vendors' activities and the opening of all shops and cafes around the sit-in.

Tahrir Square campsite employed modes of horizontal and consensus decision-making that stood in radical contrast to forms of representative democracy or autocratic rule that define a nation's formal political system. There was a form of 'organic horizontalism' that emerged as campers decided directly what to do and how to do for housing and life needs. "You didn't see some people giving orders and some people taking orders. It was a spontaneous, collaborative effort."<sup>866</sup> This was what made Tahrir camps' governance structured differently than in other protest camps, involved both procedural and spatial re-organization of who makes decisions, what, when and where. They were responsible for creating and operating alternative and autonomous forms of governance together. These practices of direct democracy and horizontality generate a different feel or atmosphere than other kinds of spaces for politics. Horizontality and partial organization can be distinguished through the unplanned routes and unfixed group as targeted destination for supplies provision. Second there were fixed pattern with no fixed members of locals and visitors who didn't stay at the camp, but visited regularly and provided food and other supplies to sustain the camp. This dual spatial structure effectively meant that the sustainability of the camp was based on informal agreement between locals and occupiers or any previous organized formal network responsible for supplying this influx of people. Perhaps it was, the non-affinity shared by those in the different campsites -Closed off at Omar Makram- that meant there was less of a need to have formal decision-making procedures involving the whole terrain. The establishment of a number of campsites served to create physical and discursive space for the management of differences between inhabitants, which strengthened the camp. Yet at the same time, it endorsed the principle of decentralization that was centrally to anarchist political theory, because it enables horizontal decision-making in large groups.

By investigating living and life needs activities as set of informal spatial practices and the extent to which space was organized in order to accommodate them, it is possible to capture how public space was used, lived and constructed by campsite community, through traditional informality that is found in Cairo. Studying the

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<sup>864</sup> Turner, V. (1969).

<sup>865</sup> Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013). p. 179.

<sup>866</sup> Petkova, M. (2011, March 1). p.18.

informality as a territorial formation of campsite shows the complexity of this concept and how campsite composition and development responded to patterns of everyday life and routine of individuals. The self-making of alternative home-place was subjected to range of flexibility that reflected the pattern of people's lives in local traditional contexts, as 'lived space.' Examining informality in campsite as way of living, demonstrates how a group of collective practices took place and that generated spaces of belonging, space of cultural sharing and a setting for reinforce the sense of community. This practice of making homes, as a consequence, supported the preservation of cultural history and the intrinsic nature of traditional communities and the association between private and public spheres. It can be signified by its simple and extraordinary complex process. It was simple in its everyday appearance and in its expressions. People experienced informality in their daily life when they created their own home-place, providing food and supplies, creating alternative system for cleaning and collecting garbage, and finding restroom to rely on, that were all new practices to traditional spatial practices of Tahrir Square. It was complex in its relation to formality imposed by the State strategies either through existing built environment that intruded public or continuous tactics against the campsite sustainability.

Campsites terrain was purely self-managed and accordingly the right to the city wasn't limited on the right to housing or reclaiming the public space yet it included the right to decide housing location, spatial order, design and the structure by each inhabitant without any formal organization or harmony in composition. Spatial intervention on housing unit and life needs patterns evoked part of the informality performed by informal settlements inhabitants. As 'active users,' protesters have differentiated their personalized homes inside Tahrir campsites from other standardized homogeneous ones in other protest campsites. The housing unit was thus important for the representation of the self and for showing individual's distinction as well. Protesters were treating their tents as if it's their housing unit. Spatial development and refurbishment of inner and outer spaces in campsite and even utilities as restroom were obtained. These physical changes introduced to individual unit like; adding shades, changing tent structure, enclosing the space outside some tent to maintain privacy, etc. They were similar to spatial intervention by inhabitants in informal settlements like 'el Zawia el hamra', when physical changes introduces to the individual unit include adding balconies, removing and adding walls to expand the living room, renewing sewage connections and replacing the old toilet with a porcelain one or with a flush toilet, and repainting the apartment using oil paint.<sup>867</sup> Therefore, the daily use of space followed the inhabitants' perception. To use is 'not simply to apply, to put into practice, but to evade the prescriptions embedded in 'official' textuality.'<sup>868</sup> Similarly, spatial interventions to attain convenient housing unit of campsite and pathways ensured empowerment and ownership of the space. It was a sign of stability and safety as well. It was a space of contestation where creating home-place was considered as an act of resistance and sustaining its making and development was a sign of full power and control over the space.

Exploring the transformative power, looking at the newly erected campsites and living needs patterns and practices, confirmed Farha's argument that "The city is not merely a ready-made container for the practices of its residents but a flexible entity that is made and remade through these practices."<sup>869</sup> The transformative power of these practices, went beyond individual units and the campsite, it extended to reshape the image of Cairo that the state tried to control. Living and life needs spatial practices enabled its inhabitants to disrupt the State's attempts to homogenize social spheres and Cairo's image. Their aim was not to change laws of use of space but rather to create realities that deactivated current laws and control. As Bayat emphasized that these acts become 'political'<sup>870</sup> only when they are threatened by the State.

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<sup>867</sup> Ghannam, F. (2002).

<sup>868</sup> Frow, J. (1995). *Cultural Studies and Cultural Value* (p. 48). Oxford, England: Clarendon Press.

<sup>869</sup> Ghannam, F. (2002).

<sup>870</sup> What is considered by government officials and some writers as "lack of privacy" (Rugh 1979: 20) is seen by the people as closeness that facilitates cooperation and creates solidarity. See chapter 4 for more on the theme of privacy.

The reproduction of space and paying good attention on the “spatial practices of the ordinary practitioners of the city”<sup>871</sup> showed that the dominant image of the space was contested and struggled over through direct action. This decentralized horizontality and partial organization generated direct actions that were spatially converging towards sit-in. Dr5 explained that, “Sit-in was never a circle in Tahrir Square it was always a ramified star form that has been morphing into several forms and directions due to peoples’ motion and needs.”(Int25, Dr5) This clarifies the complexity resulted from direct actions in the form of nonstop dynamics towards a fixed destination deploying plenty of routes, spatial patterns and tactics. Protest camps are a place in which people become ‘active’ or ‘activate’ their politics.<sup>872</sup> Tahrir Square being centre for direct actions helped making a community of resistance that nurtures, as well as justified and normalized taking part in direct action. This community was not limited on campsite inhabitants instead it included all revolutionary supporters from house revolutionaries, street vendors, opened shops and markets near campsite terrain. As John Jordan writes, engaging in direct action is a potentially transformative experience on a number of levels, both materializing and communicating resistance: “*Direct action takes the alienated, lonely body of technocratic culture and transforms it into a connected, communicative body embedded in society. Direct action is the central strategy of creative resistance, a strategy that, unlike the rationality and objectivity of most politics, revokes the emphasis on words and reason and demands the acknowledgement of intuition and imagination.*”<sup>873</sup> Living and life needs spatial practices were protest actions in themselves that sustained direct actions through complex networks system.

The first ‘Million-Man March’ day was a clear opportunity for direct actions through informal spatial pattern to be experienced by out comers. A sense of ownership of the place has been entrenched significantly by campsite inhabitants while inviting outsiders to visit the campsite and experience its hospitality. Spatial patterns of the ‘Million Man March’ day in the aftermath of the camel battle played a part in consolidating alternative home-place and reinforced the legitimacy of its inhabitants. It confirmed the spatial centrality of direct actions and politics through the physical support to the campsite. Since Feb 4 campsite turned to be their real home where Pro6 explained that, “An act of welcoming and hosting tourists and visitors of Tahrir as their own guests to Tahrir Square was remarkable, offering them food, guiding them in the space, informing them with what activities has been developing and involving them in series of discussions and debates.”(Int36, Pro6) Spontaneous rituals and spatial practices derived from the relationship between protesters and visitors inside sit-in consolidated housing and life needs campsite to the spatial patterns of space. (See Fig 11.21)

#### *Inclusionary Expansion by Mixed Communities*

As the 18 day of the Egyptian uprising materialized in public space through campsite, which grew in size and converged geographically in Tahrir Square. It also became more inclusive in mass gatherings. This inclusionary expansion can be analysed in relation to the informality. The inclusionary expansion and diversification of protesters in occupied space took its most concreted shape in the way it was quickly picked up by campsites in Tahrir Square. Different from the exclusive idea of resurrection City, bringing together ‘America’s poor to the doorstep of the US government, creating a community of Native Americans, Blacks, Hispanics and poor whites, taking action together against economic injustice. Instead, since January 28 the campsite in Tahrir Square gradually developed a community life, attracting in its first days mostly young people. It was a new scene for Cairenes to see the merge of social classes all unified for a cause. Max Rodenbeck in his interview with AUC stated that, “The nature of the people also changed over time, at the beginning the protest combined hard-core revolutionaries and politically organized youth such as the Facebook youth, leftist

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<sup>871</sup> De Certeau, M. (1988).

<sup>872</sup> Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013).

<sup>873</sup> McKay, G (1998) *DIY Culture: Party and Protest in Nineties Britain*. London: Verso. pp.134-135.

party, the Kefaya movement and various groups who had been pushing for change long before the Revolution. Towards the end of the occupation of Tahrir, there was more involvement by the Islamists groups, and there was a lot of involvement by ordinary people.”<sup>874</sup> The appearance of all social communities and living together in one place was exceptional condition entailed unusual complex of living and life needs patterns and tactics. According to Pro2, “The roundabout that included; major number of liberal protestors and celebrities in one zone that was named later “Gucci Corner” were side-by-side to ‘Salafi’ families, or rural conservative protestors.”(Int32, Pro2) The roundabout campsite revealed how stereotypes were broken, as people from all sectors learned to accept each other and lived together. Campsite spaces in turn became social spaces with their communities, their alternative home-places and different levels of privacy in which their self-representation, social actions and social relations took place. These spaces were shaped exclusively by social orders and solidarity among the inhabitants of different social sectors of Egyptian society. The way protestors were living in Tahrir Square began to form a community laden with self-expression. Campsite in Tahrir Square took the challenge up to obtain a space between people from all backgrounds in a society that lived in segregation for ages. Roundabout was a clear transformation in social relationships and opportunity of spatially mix Egypt society that has been for years divided into autonomous spheres. (See Fig 11.21)

## 11.4. Conclusion

In this chapter we have discussed how living and life needs practices in Tahir Square, during the 18 days engaged strategies of exceptionality to the campsite while claiming autonomy. The research argues that this time practices found informality as a spatial opportunity to perform. It allowed the production of space where communities reconfigured and reshaped according to imagination, spatial organization and operation. What this chapter suggests is that such political space included a complex of living and life needs spatial practices, was performed by different communities from Egyptian society. The campsite, here, emerged as a means to sustain protestors’ appearance in public sphere; and materialized it as an architectural object rising in the open space. It could be perceived as social production of space that was attached to the existing urban texture and transformed its social order. This social production of space and articulation of an alternative right to the city is thus recast as a process of ‘common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization.’<sup>875</sup>

Detail empirical focused on the making of alternative home-place and life needs in campsite, this chapter emphasized the relationship between informality and the making of alternative forms of shared living. Decoding the living and life needs complex patterns, spatial practices were classified to fours strands: food and subsistence supplies: housing and campsite: utilities and restroom: and cleaning and maintenance. These living and life needs practices witnessed kind of significant shift from spatial adaptation on exiting patterns in space and using all available opportunities into more dynamic converging patterns that were spatially imposed. They introduced some of many deployed tactics towards an understanding of the ideals and desires of autonomy. The task of creating alternative worlds demanded a co-operative approach to both partial organization and decentralized horizontality.

The notion of partial organization and decentralized horizontality through informal practices appeared as the only exit in order to generate the living and life needs spatial practices in campsite with society that was done through mix of communities that was never found in one homogeneous space before. It exposed the entrails of democracy as a concept for campsite spatial practices and flexibility in actions. Living and life needs

<sup>874</sup> Interview held with Max Rodenbeck, University of the square project. American University in Cairo.

<sup>875</sup> Harvey, D. (2008). p.23

spatial practices and making alternative home-place were crucial for exceptionality and commons because they allowed participants to spatially experience a dilemma that can't be solved except through practice. The dilemma of Democratic organization, or empowerment was addressed through partial organization, and decentralized horizontality whereby certain elements of organisation were employed informally. It made the individuals' habits, social traditions and lifestyle radically visible. The ways inhabitants used public space revealed something about their social production of space that contains protesters' unique demands for empowerment, social relations; a space, in other words, that embodies their perceptions and lived experiences.

We discussed the ways in which protest camps built on the experience of informality, which derived from acts of resistance and collective political dissent. In putting into practice and developing procedures such as horizontal decision making, campsite has attempted to preserve the organic horizontality experienced in expressions of antagonism. It developed a range of spatial practices aimed at enabling autonomy in the organisation of collective live. Although urban fabric of Cairo seeks to segregate the society into different spheres according to differences in social classes, campsite autonomy existence generated a sense of community. The power of informality of local system of objective reality affected the heterogeneity of campsites layouts inside Tahrir sit-in. Even in the face of a high degree of risk from thugs and authorities protesters continued to appropriate square for self-representation and cultural expression, and claim their right to the city.

The way campsites were constructed and re-conceptualized Tahrir Square as liveable space through group of informal practices was clearly evoking the traditional informal patterns that belongs to different context of the city in both informal and formal urban space they normally challenged and struggled to belong, that are a typical character of Cairo as a city. Looking instead at the process associated with them, allows for an analysis that takes seriously the campsite itself, and looking at how people, ideas, objects and partially organizing structures were all entangled in 'building together.'<sup>876</sup> This helped to further illuminate the complex ways in which people and objects interact, and how specific cultures, habits and backgrounds influenced the informal making process chronologically under different circumstances and events. Likewise, being attuned to the ways that spatial investments and ideas circulated with and through the objects, structures and environments that made up acts of resistance, have helped create new spaces for reflection on campsite communities and their habits and traditions. It uncovers chronological informal tactical developments and spatial challenges by showing how campsite reconfigured its practices, and reshaped experiences of participant, collaboration, collectively and mutuality. Campsite witnessed informality in providing facilities and supplies including informal economic activities that represented a 'socially constructed system' of human actions, habitual practices, spatial order, and rituals so they are informal practices to all extents. These spatial activities were essential for the survival of the campsite community not only in terms of supply and services but also in terms of political and social support, social interaction and cultural representation. All these common factors between informality in Cairo and informality in Campsites limited and even vanished the dependency on local authorities in such environments through participation of public. However, while some aspects of the traditional city are on the brink of oblivion, informality offered to others the chance to consolidate. In Tahrir Square, the pace of the evolution of characters of informality in Cairo –mentioned in the beginning of the chapter- was faster than any planned areas due to their prominence role in production of space.

In summary, this informal spatial complex system has encompassed overlapped experiences of the urban fabric and confronted the rigid socio-spatial segregation. Yet, this sector investigated complex process by which campsite inhabitants, visitors and residents worked together to produce and sustain an alternative home-place and space for an on-going protest in public space through patterns of living and life needs during 18 days. There were a number of peculiarities that separated the campsite in Tahrir Square protest from others. First of all, in contrast to the pervious homogenous activists groups action pursued via the organizational body of political

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<sup>876</sup> Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013). p. 67.



movements, the Tahrir occupation was a rather the heterogeneous character through partial organization and decentralized horizontality of the current wave of protests in terms of participant profiles and their socio-spatial practices for living. Yet, all were resisting for one demand. Secondly, despite its significance as a political event, the spatial resistance proved to be an indicator of the fading power of social conflicts and the end of segregation of society in Egypt since all social classes related, shared and reclaimed their right to the city through informal practices.



Figure 11.1: Tahrir Square on January 28. (Source: <http://bbc.com>)



Figure 11.2: Tahrir Square on February 11. (Source: <http://totallycoolpix.com/>)





Figure 11.3: Anti-government protesters arrange transparent plastic sheets to shelter themselves from the cold Tahrir Square. (Source [www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2011/feb/11/egypt-protest](http://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2011/feb/11/egypt-protest))



Figure 11.4: An anti-government protester spending the night alongside an Army tank in Tahrir Square on Feb 9. (Source: [www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/02/09/the\\_republic\\_of\\_tahrir](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/02/09/the_republic_of_tahrir))



Figure 11.5: Protesters cleaning Tahrir Square ground for camping. (Source: [www.elsoar.com/soar/photo718/](http://www.elsoar.com/soar/photo718/))



Figure 11.6: Rubbish bins Egypt has no formal system of recycling so the demonstrators have set up their own, as part of efforts to keep the square clean. (Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-12434787>)





Figure 11.7: A burned down Security vehicle at the edge of Tahrir Square., turned into a garbage collection point. The cleaning and garbage collection system at the square was remarkable. 3 Feb 2011. (Source: [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com), by Hareedy)



Figure 11.8: A volunteer serves tea to anti-government protesters Feb. 8, 2011. (Source: [www.ap.org](http://www.ap.org) AP Photo/Tara Todras-Whitehill)



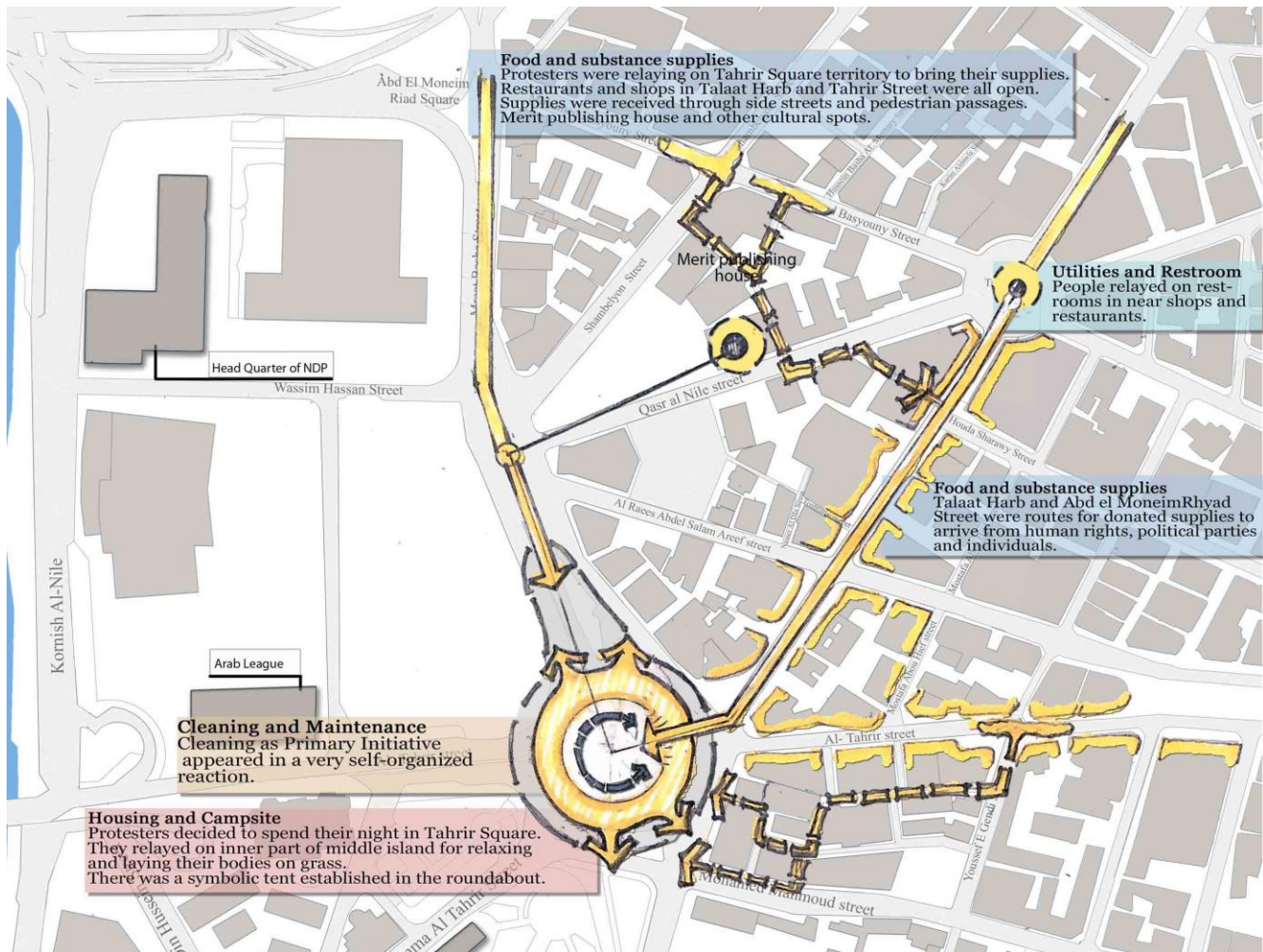


Figure 11.9: Living and life Needs as spatial practices on Jan 25. (Source: By the Researcher)







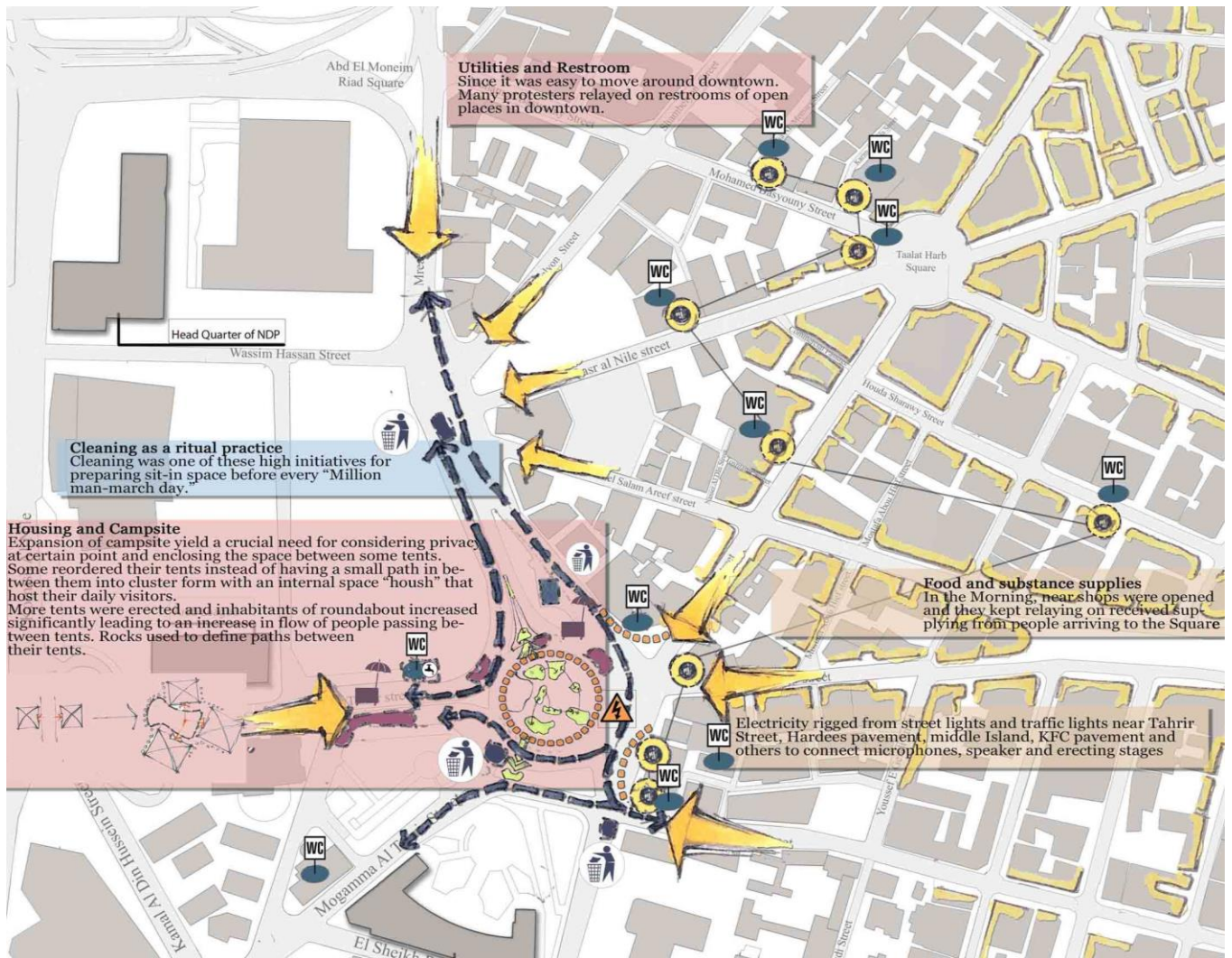


Figure 11.12: Living and life Needs as spatial practices on Feb 1. (Source: By the Researcher)



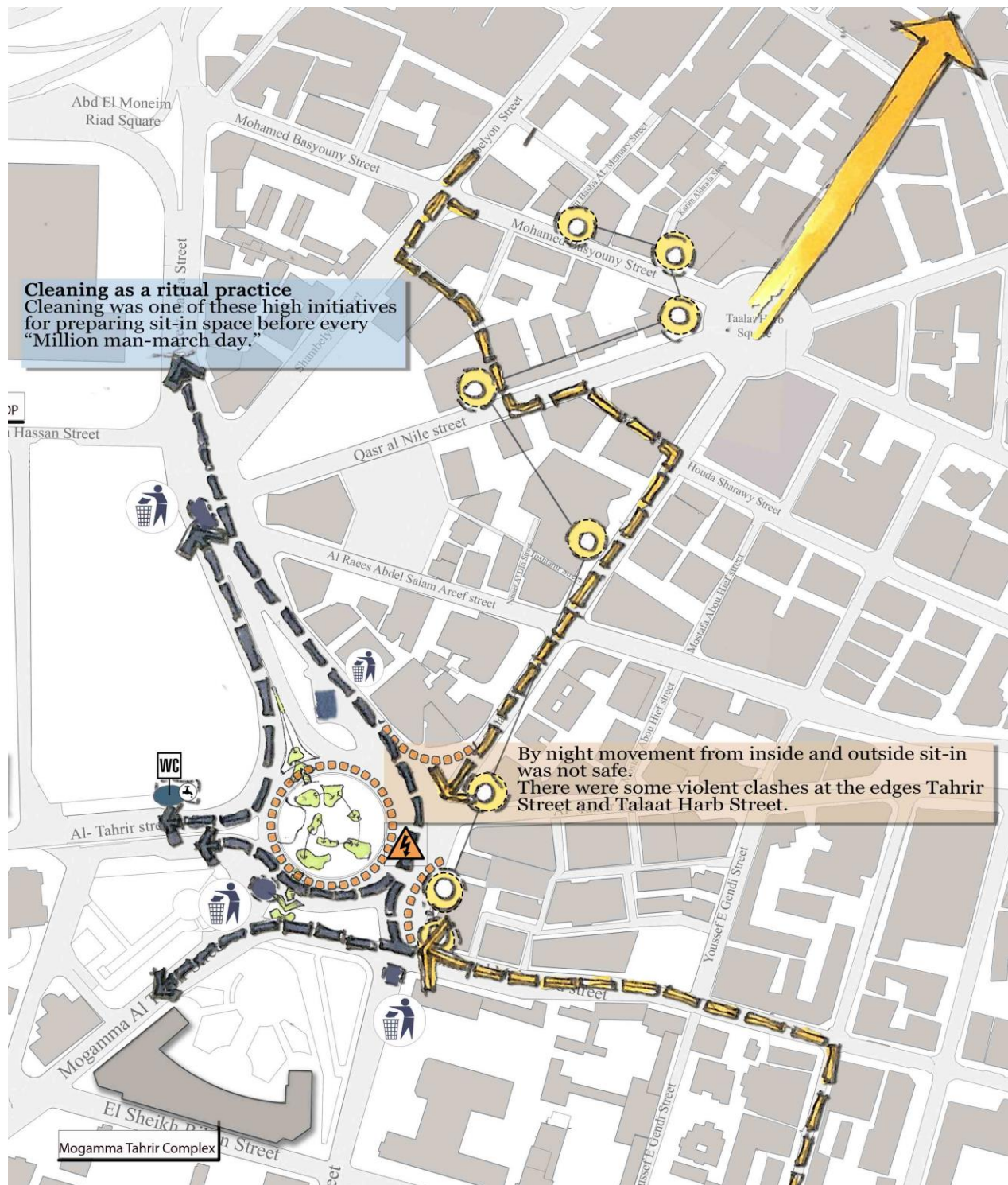


Figure 11.13: Living and life Needs as spatial practices on Feb 1 night. (Source: By the Researcher)



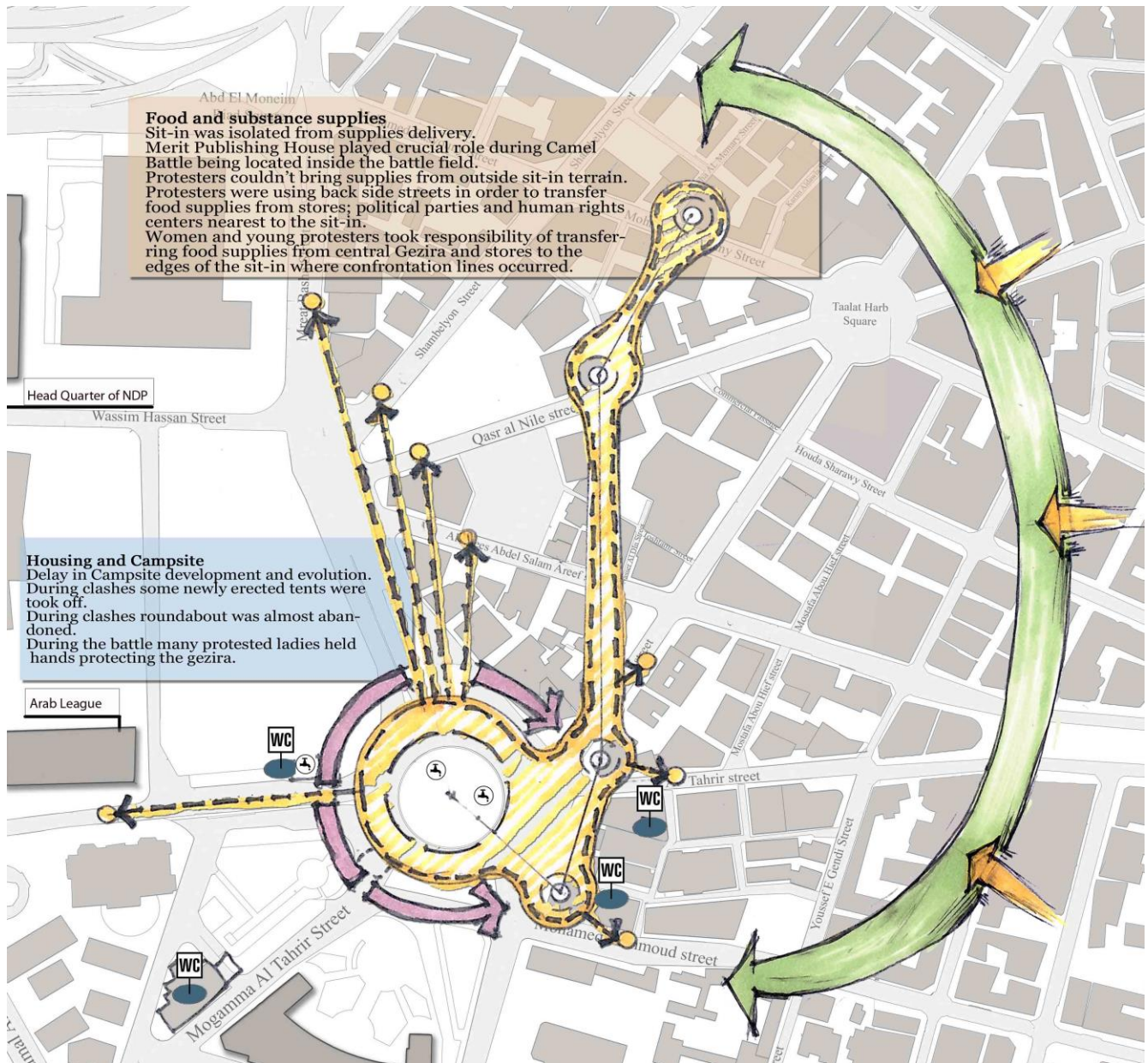


Figure 11.14: Living and life Needs as spatial practices on Feb 2. (Source: By the Researcher)



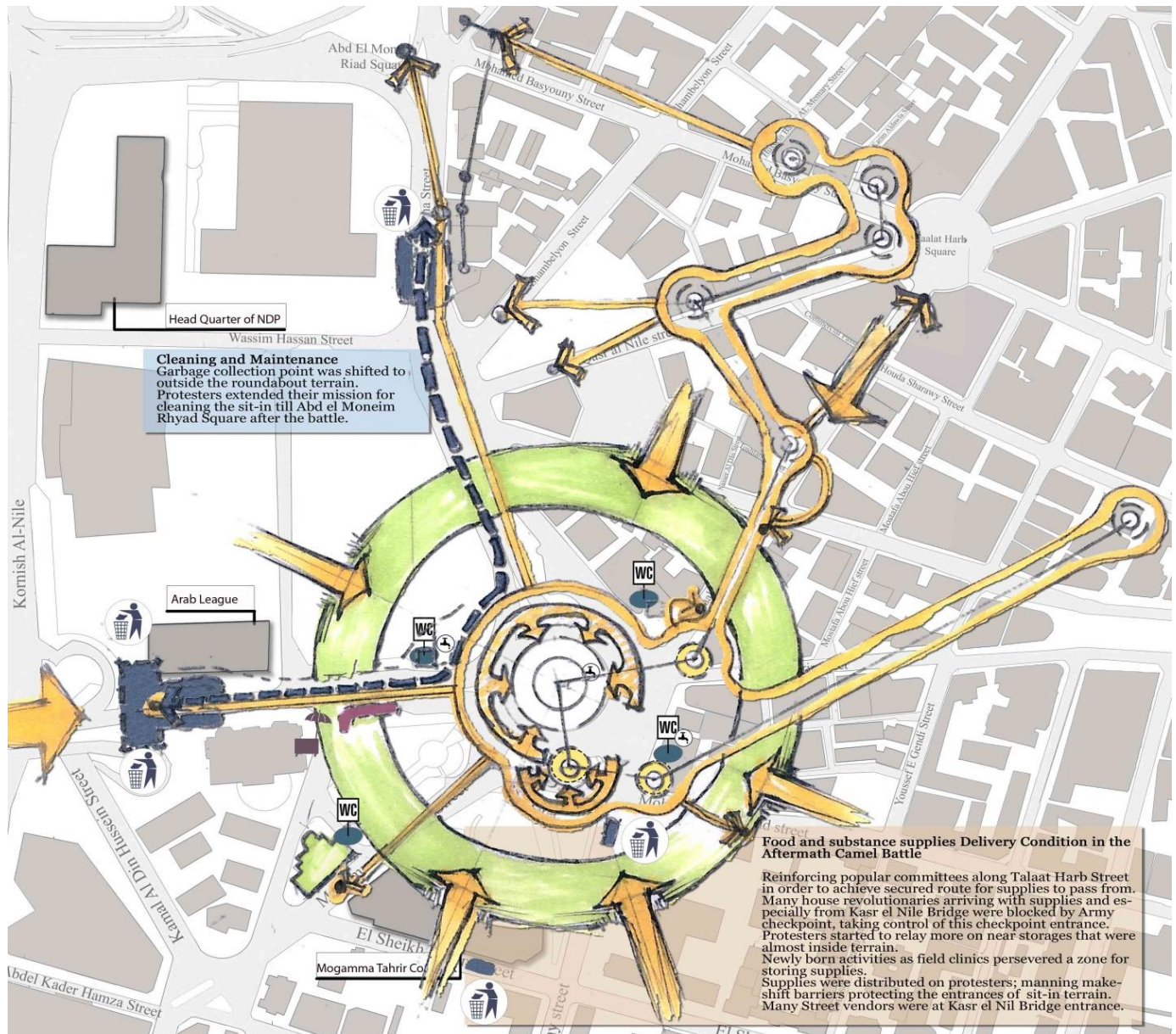


Figure 11.15: Living and life Needs as spatial practices on Feb 3. (Source: By the Researcher)



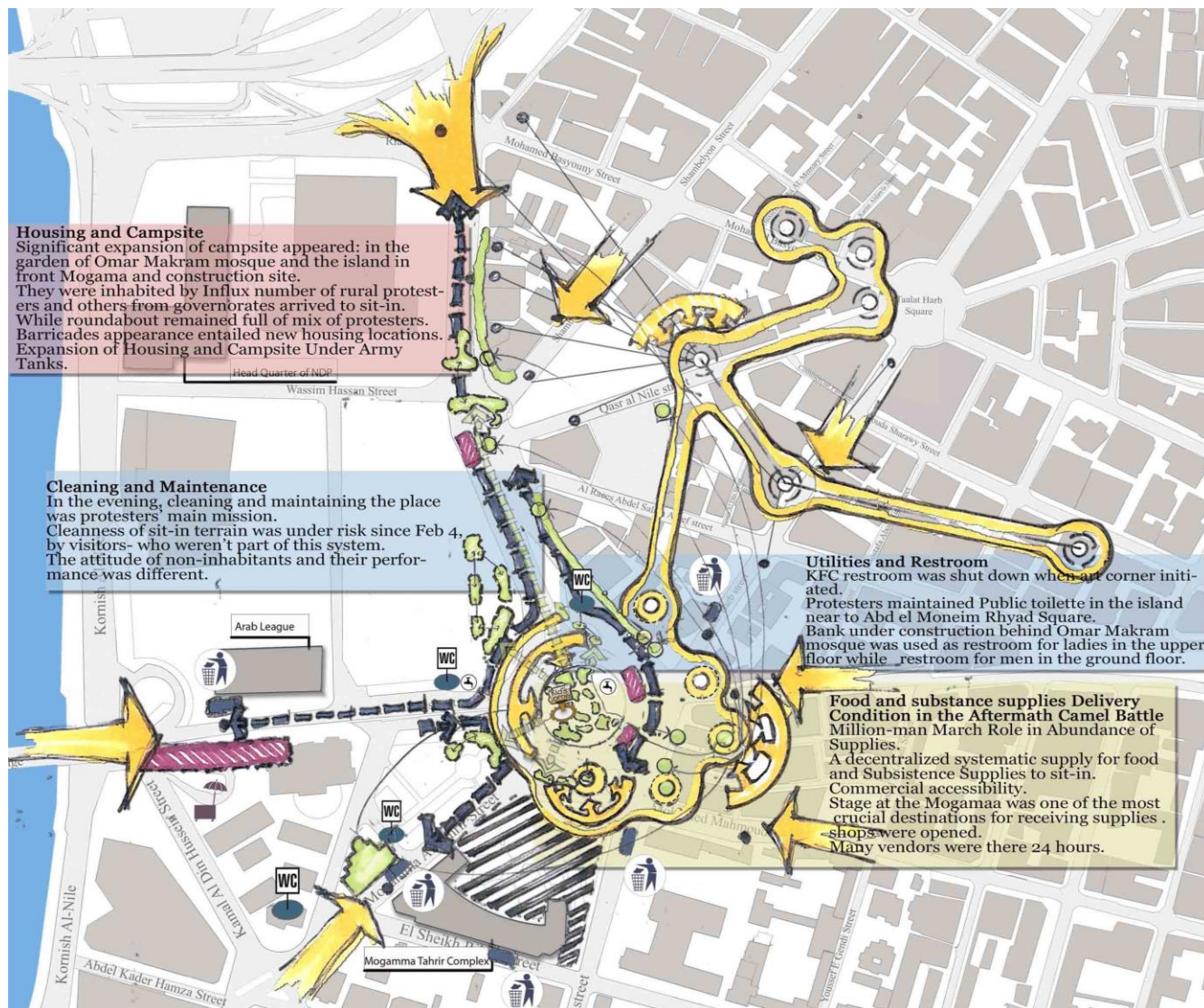


Figure 11.16: Living and life Needs as spatial practices on Feb 4. (Source: By the Researcher)



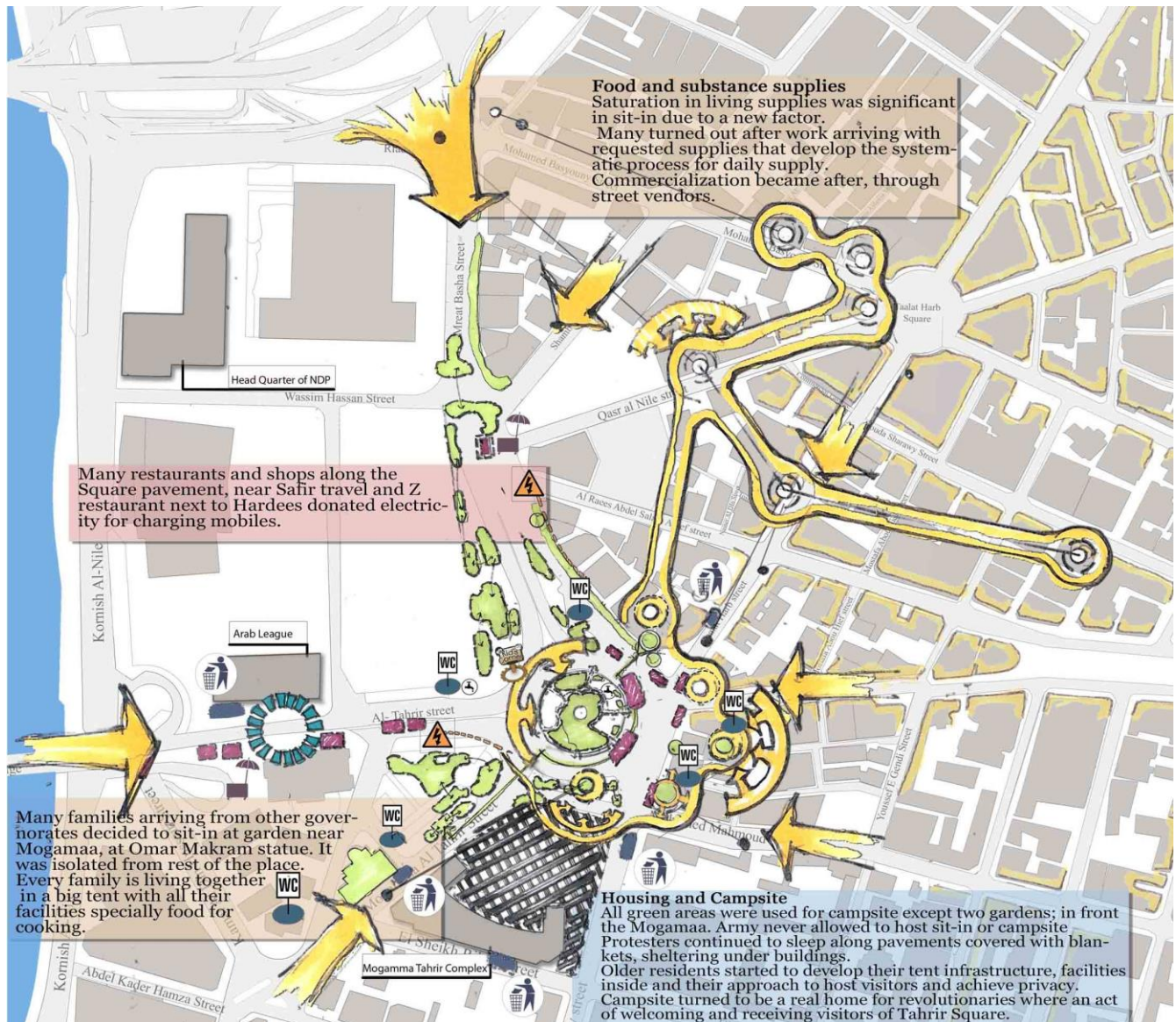


Figure 11.17: Living and life Needs as spatial practices on Feb 6. (Source: By the Researcher)



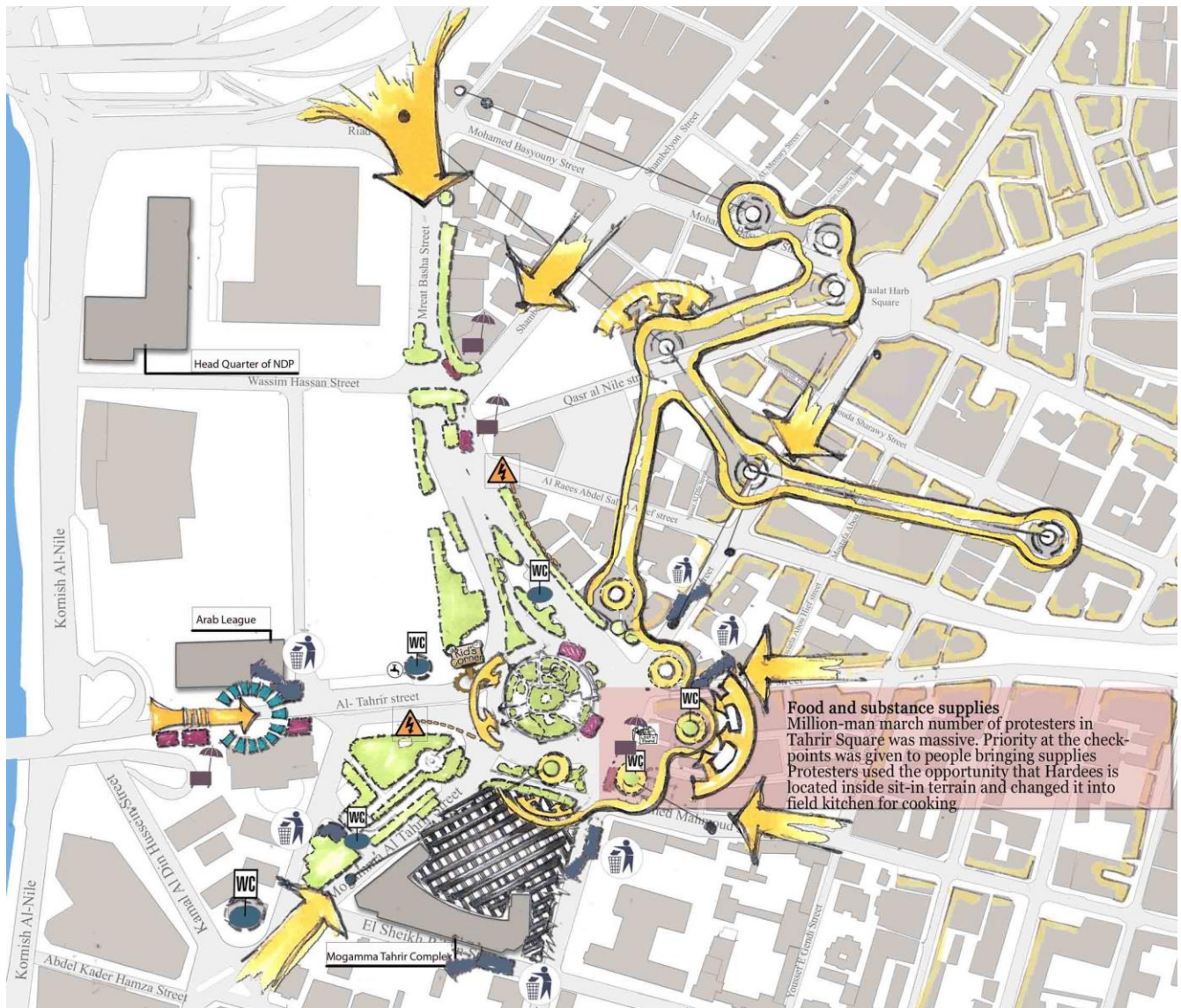


Figure 11.18: Living and life Needs as spatial practices on Feb 8. (Source: By the Researcher)

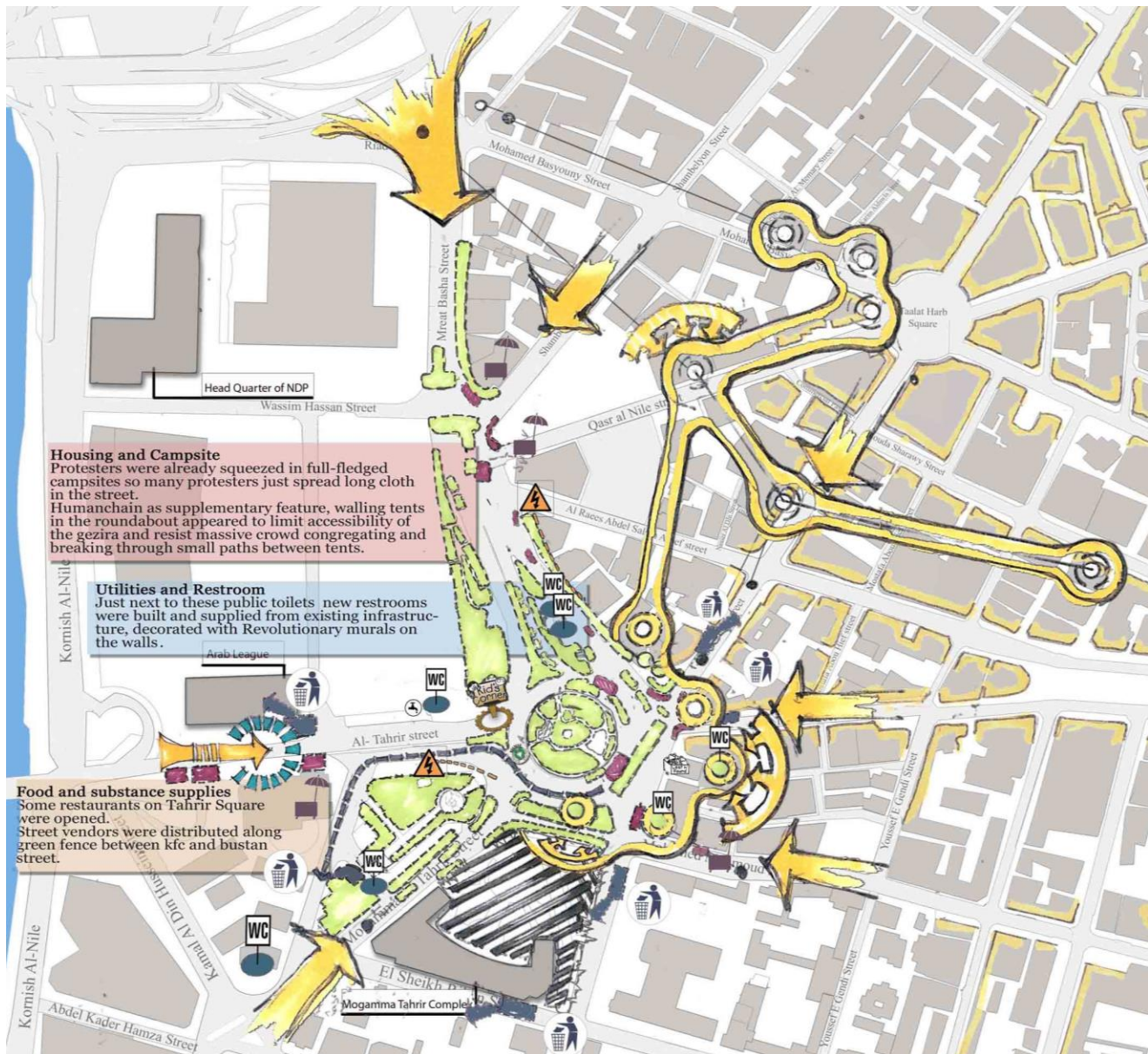
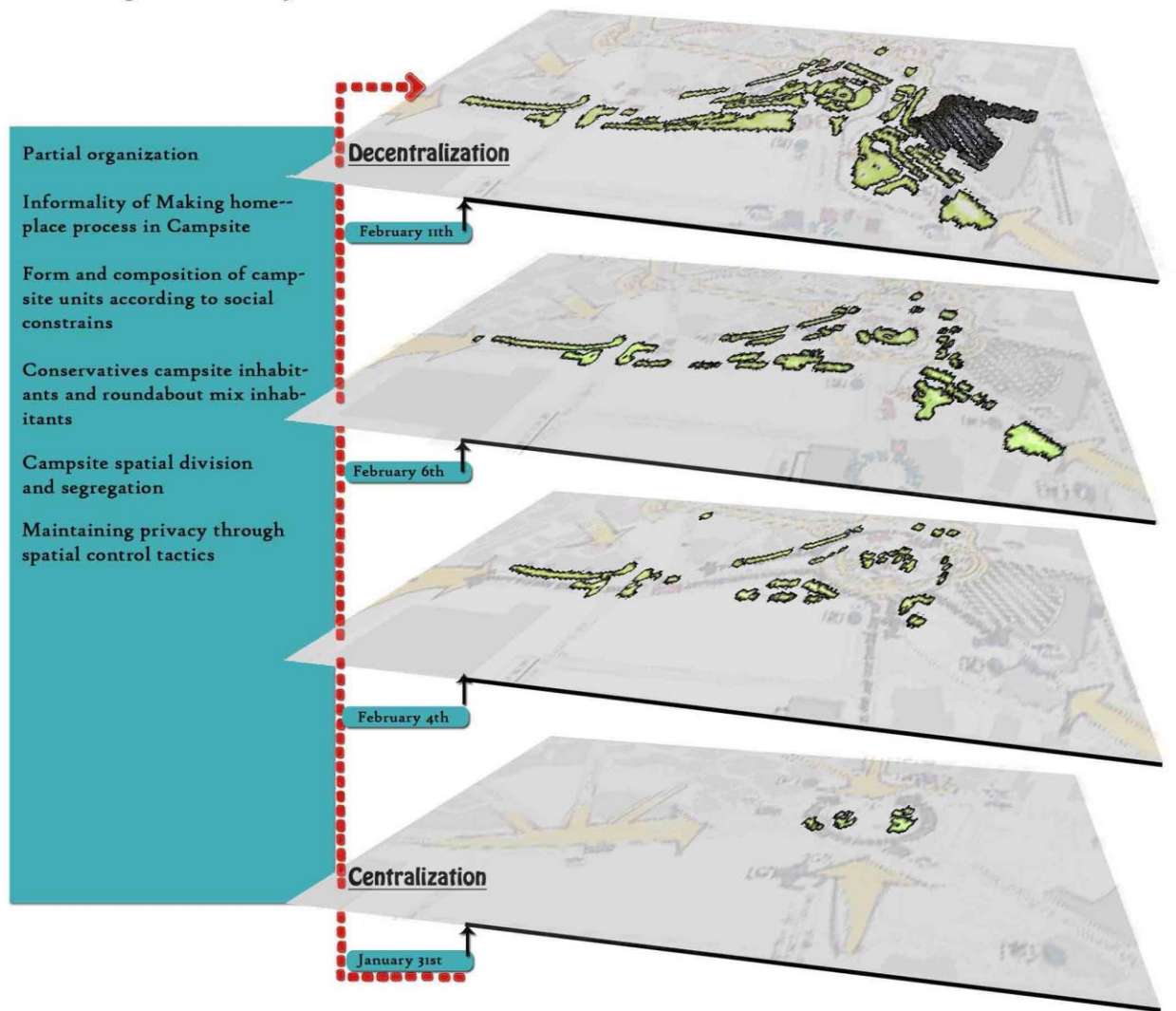


Figure 11.19: Living and life Needs as spatial practices on Feb 10. (Source: By the Researcher)





From Centralized to Decentralized housing spatial structure and location division of residential communities

Figure 11.20: Housing and campsite pattern. (Source: By the Researcher)

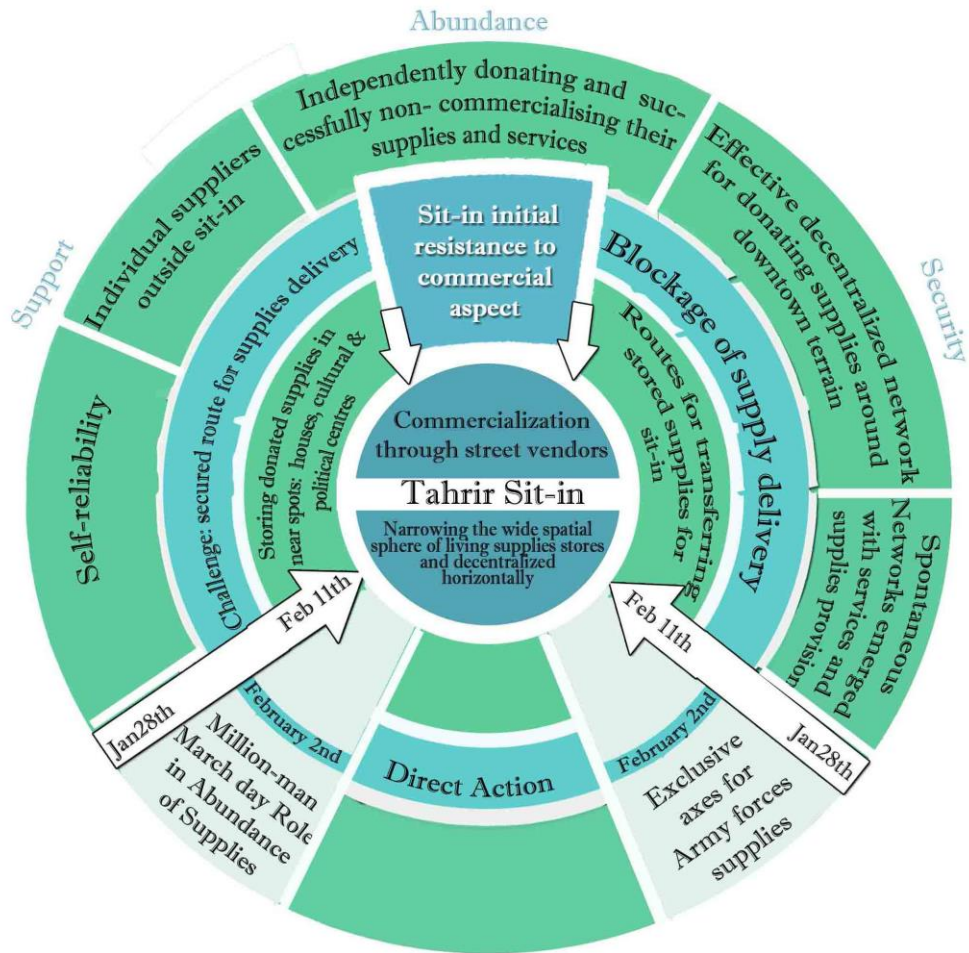


Figure 11.21: Food and subsistence supplies. (Source: By the Researcher)

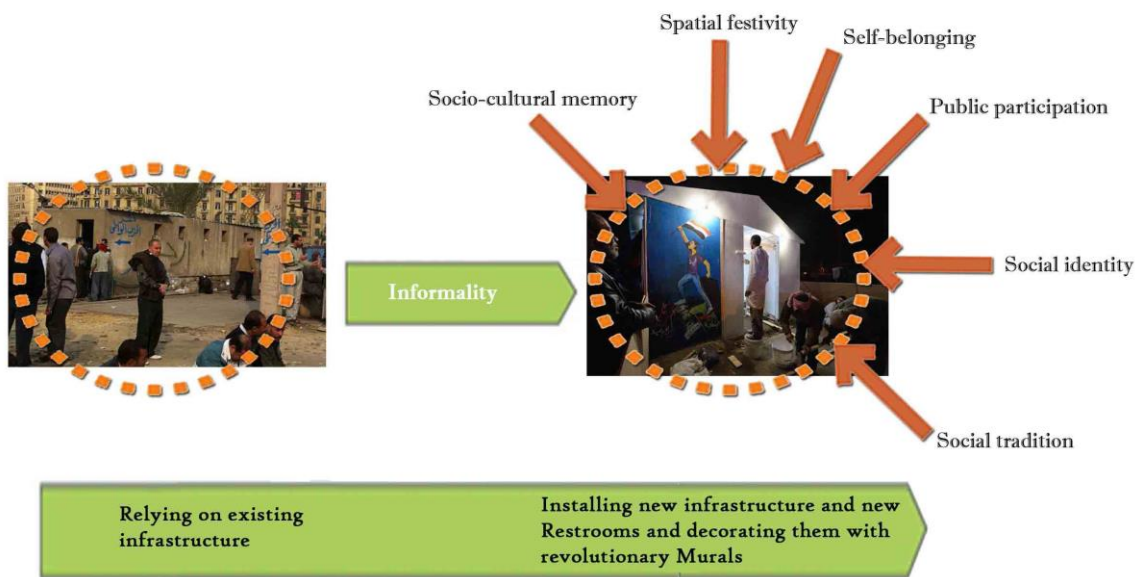


Figure11. 22: Utilities and restroom. (Source: By the Researcher)

## 12. Conclusion

### 12.1. The Re-conceptualized Tahrir Square: An Alternative World

This research aimed to develop a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics and socio-spatial practices in Tahrir Square during the eighteen days of the Egyptian Revolution from an interdisciplinary perspective. In doing so, this thesis has developed evidence-based recommendations for a space for urban politics to act as a model that can shape the success of uprisings for any public space in the world. The research has intended to build this interdisciplinary perspective into an analysis of socio-spatial practices, urban and cultural dynamics, as well as political influences, which together reshaped Tahrir Square during the eighteen days. The study of politics and recent social movements has for too long overlooked the space for urban politics as spaces where democratic actions and practices appear. Therefore, this research has built up a broad perspective on the analysis of recent uprisings in public spaces, considering the best spatial practices and acts of resistance. The dissertation aimed to study, investigate and analyze the changing socio-spatial practices and dynamics of Tahrir Square as people sought to use its space as a stage to voice their anger and to challenge the authority of traditional political institutions. This research has found that Tahrir Square during the eighteen days was a case, rich with many practices and acts, is a largely uncharted area of empirical study, and an important subject for spatial, sociological and activist reflection. Seen from this perspective, the thesis is a focus on how Tahrir Square during the eighteen days of the Egyptian Revolution gave us an example of the global phenomena of occupation protests, but also, a best practice case study from which to learn. Fundamentally, the revolution was produced through these spatial practices which the research has traced and decoded through the mapping of the spatial narratives of the Egyptian Revolution. This thesis has explained how self-dependent, autonomous, and self-managed this space was – with medical treatments, policing, housing, sanitation, – a formidable challenge to the extant regime and its systems. These conflicts have introduced to the public space new orders, functions, and limitations, which have impacted on its form and usage and the design of the public space in general.

*In this section, an overview of the findings and new knowledge is presented in-line with the research questions presented in Chapter One:-*

- A key attribute contributing to the success of the Revolution was the use of public space – the tactics and strategies used in order to re-conceptualize the use of urban space as a space for urban politics.
- The successful use of public space for urban politics attracts people from all social sectors and mobilizes them to practice their own rights and manage their own life through the empowerment of large-scale public protesting.
- The space for urban politics is characterized as a physical space which has to be a space for contest with the center of power.
- The protection of the space by law or police does not have the power to intimidate people or to prevent them to re-conceptualize the public space in their own terms.

- Public space is taken as the focus of resistance where acts of resistance have to be part of its spatial practices.
- Public space's capacity for resistance and contestation has certain requirements for visibility, accessibility, attracting attention, strategic location, symbolism and local support which all add to its success and performance.
- Spatial practices and dynamics are interactive and interchangeable in a very short span of time and in response to changing situations and political action.
- Reconceptualization of public space as a space for urban politics can become a means unto itself for contesting the existing hegemonic power and order, and sustaining new social relations.
- Partial organization and decentralized horizontality is key for a leaderless popular protest movement or any formal organization. All protesters are in active control of the practices of the square.
- The society of the alternative world in the square must be heterogeneous communities from all social sectors which contribute to its success.
- The inherent experiences in everyday lives through the power of informality in Cairo contributed to the effective reconceptualization of space. These kinds of practices and tactics are used by people in Cairo daily use to manage their lives, and could influence the understanding of the way this kind of uprising developed and was able to truly challenge a deeply rooted regime.
- The protection of the space by law or police or the medical treatment by formal hospitals or attracting attention to the events by formal mass-media etc. are all shown as they do not have the capacity for people to re-conceptualize the space in their own terms. Yet, the public space has much richer potentials, values and capacities that can be used through reconceptualization of the space.

Due to the timing of the research, it became possible to show and analyse how protesters reproduce the space according to their needs, attempting to relate them to five bigger themes.

*The space was reproduced as a space for art practices and the freedom of expression*, where particular forms of mass practices showed how protesters succeeded in transforming Tahrir Square into a performative space and commemorating its spatial events. Art practice had become essentially political in contesting existing power systems that had changed the social and physical realities of a place. Through acts of iconoclasm and defacement, anti-government protestors, signal a new order and the entry of a new actor in Tahrir Square and in the political sphere as well. Such lived-in experiences of space constitute the clear defiance of the dominant representations of space. Moreover, the power of artistic interventions recalled socio-cultural memory that was influenced by present incidents and recent memory. In order to sustain the acts for resistance and the momentum of revolt, the general disposition of complex patterns bore many traces of the Mulid celebration, enacted by protesters, but politicized and revolutionized.

*The space was reproduced as a space of religion*, through praying and commemoration practices of diverse religious communities of Egyptian society. The space offered protesters a dramatic stage for all religions to appear and collectively perform in peace and safety. Praying and commemoration practices were distinct experiences where Tahrir Square became a space of spiritual transformation. Religious practices showed their effectiveness away from traditional\ religious commitments and had the opportunity to regain their civil roles.

This display of prayer and ritual practice demonstrated a model of society with social reconfiguration. Sit-in space was reorganized for prayers, forums for democratic articulation, displaying solidarity, equality and unity, and the communication of universal messages of rejection of authoritarianism and gender-based or religion segregation. The very deliberate performance of Muslim-Christian solidarity as they guarded one another against attacks and the equally deliberate performance of men and women, joined in prayer lines, reveal how Tahrir Square was a space of contestation without religious or gender segregation. The associated strategies and acts of protection by Christians for Muslims were effective as it generated an atmosphere of peace, non-Islamism, and anti-fanaticism. Praying together in the largest public square in the country without the state-control, witnessing unity and peace was a dramatic event. Praying practices as revolutionary acts did not only represent the single traditional relationship between individual and his God as in a normal sacred space. Instead, it spatially demonstrated complex socio-spatial relation between people sharing the same space responsible for the production of this sacred complex space while challenging the regime. Tahrir Square became a space of contestation where a reciprocal relationship between religious practices as means to liberation and religion as a means to provoke revolt has manifested itself.

*The space was reproduced as a space for alternative hospitalization and medical treatment* through medical colony, challenging all traditional systems imposed in formal hospitals. The medical colony completion escaped from the formal hospital “multi-formality”<sup>877</sup> through an instant change of the use of space, different social relations, and unusual spatial system and networks. Its growth as a space of multiple orderings<sup>878</sup> showed how the fluidity and adaptability of alternative medical treatment patterns has effectively performed even under clashes. The process of completion of a medical colony reveals how the reproduction of space confronted traditional state-medical institute relations based on loyalty, confronted the patriarchal organizational system with an alternative restructure of medical personnel relation system, and introduced new relations between doctor and public. It confronted the traditional boundary and places of hospital care through non-linear networks for alternative ambulances and diverse modes for medical supplies that included many medical institutes and individuals. The ways the centres expanded into other space were confirmation of the efficiency of multiple orderings system imposed while being able to include instantly diverse spaces and networks. In summary, through the dynamics emerged from multiple orderings, protesters persisted in their use of public space for the growth of the medical colony regardless of all political challenges, violence, and clashes.

*The space was reproduced as space of complex forms of media display and coverage*, as citizen media and mainstream media took new spatial modes to act through collective spatial patterns – which coincided with the shutdown of the internet in Egypt. The consequence of this turned the space into a spectacular ‘internationalized space’. Tahrir Square became more complex, being a stage for the revolutionary spectacle for the world, and moreover, a space for displaying the revolutionary fervour of the people. Tahrir Square powerfully operated with dual functions: a stage and screening space where all spatial tactics for performing spectacle and amplifying revolutionary space occurred. Tahrir Square marked one of the first times protesters were able to use collectively: physical space; media coverage; technologies of coordination such as social media for recording; and the screens in Tahrir Square to display a utopian political spectacle. Broadcasting the sit-in live can, indeed, be seen as the loss of power that broke the symbolic ordering of the space that was lived-in, i.e., an occupation at the heart of the regime power. It was through both: protesters performance and the media workers with their spectacular imagery and representation of space that both collaborated in a series of political performances that were also spectacular performances. It witnessed a significant ability of spatial coverage with high capacity of footages that captured a large amount of global viewers’ attentions.

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<sup>877</sup> Street, A. and Coleman, S. (2012).

<sup>878</sup> Hetherington, K. (1997).



*The space was reproduced as space for living*, where campsites in Tahrir Square appeared as temporary built environments that presented a utopian form of collective political and social action. It represented the space within its heterogeneous communities that sought to confront the deeply segregated society into different spheres, according to differences in social classes in Egypt. To occupy this space, the protesters had to camp there in order to create a spatial anchoring of opposition by constructing an enduring infrastructure for survival and political opposition. Their attempts to create sustainable structures for on-going protest and daily living requirements were since first day. Tahrir campsite inhabitants' were developing their own living style realized through spontaneously formed communities that met their needs, through informal patterns and living style. The task of creating alternative living space demanded a co-operative approach to both partial organization and decentralized horizontal command. By putting into practice and developing procedures such as horizontal decision making, the campsite preserved the organic horizontality necessary to sustain the occupation. It developed a range of spatial practices aimed at enabling autonomy in the organisation of collective living.

The way that the campsite was constructed and re-conceptualized Tahrir Square as a liveable space through group of informal practices was clearly evoking the traditional informal patterns in that belongs to different context of the city in both informal and formal urban spaces that challenge the typical character of Cairo as a city. The campsite witnessed similar informality in providing facilities and supplies, including informal economic activities that represented a 'socially constructed system' of human actions, habitual practices, spatial orders, and rituals. These spatial activities were essential for the survival of the campsite community not only in terms of supply and services, but in terms of political and social support, social interaction, and cultural representation. All these common factors limited and even vanished the dependency on local authorities in such environments through participation in a continued public sphere in an extraordinary event. This informal city was self-regulated and self-organized, and appears as a 'lefebvrian contre-espace'.<sup>879</sup>

## **12.2. How to Re-conceptualize the Use of Urban Space as a Space for Urban Politics?**

Tahrir Square manifested itself as a space for an alternative world with multiple active dynamics within heterogeneous communities. It was a site of creativity and innovation, further characterized as a product of a materialization of 'social being'.<sup>880</sup> Protesters at the occupation of Tahrir Square engaged in a 'politics of space', by which control of public space was taken as the focus of resistance. The eighteen days of the Egyptian Revolution has reintroduced the notion of re-conceptualization of the public at the forefront of discussions on contemporary urbanism. The research showed how the significance of the public square, yet it appears on multi-layered grounds that include historical, political, symbolic, cultural, and spatial qualities. The dynamics and socio-spatial patterns of practices within the square could signify much deeper characteristics and values of a pluralist or segregated society. Investigating the ways Tahrir Square was reproduced and deployed on a daily basis during the eighteen days revolts reveals much richer values and capacities that were used. This public square with its realized values and qualities was capable to spatially and politically confront the formal State and emerge an alternative world with its own state. It was capable of defining its process of development and sustaining its operation system, in a way that the research was able to capture new knowledge that can help to fill current gaps in theories of Democracy and politics of space.

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<sup>879</sup> Bertagnini, E., Morbidoni, M. (2013).

<sup>880</sup> Lefebvre, H. (1991). p:225

### 12.2.1. Potential Impact of the Alternative World

Current theories behind the performance of democracy and the right of the people to control their own city can now be reinterpreted in light of the research findings. Concepts of democracy in theory and practice that were discussed in chapter two explain how the consequences of a democracy deficit leads to political activism and democratization demands which require physical arenas in order to be performed. The study of contemporary democratic practices in Tahrir Square represent a conflict and dissatisfaction that can be described as consequences of a democracy deficit, in which people sought to use urban square as a space to practice democracy and to attract global attention. The gaps between ideology and recent practice are now so obvious that it requires some reemphasis on the main features and characteristics of democracy as compiled from recent democratic practices in Tahrir Square. Re-conceptualization of public space as an urban space for politics is key for democracy to work in practice. The study has shown that urban space, when defined by people, i.e, when urban space empowers people to make decisions and to transform politically isolated individuals into public citizens. For John Parkinson, democracy is not merely the interplay of arguments and reasons in some abstract public sphere, but is something that is performed by the people with aims – thus, politicized urban space becomes on stage.<sup>881</sup> The study of Tahrir Square shows that better democratic practices can be achieved by some roles from the public to perform on three different stages: virtual, physical, and spatial. Democracy was achieved through a proactive participation by heterogeneous communities from all social strata in the political process on diverse grounds. This study of the Egyptian Revolution in Tahrir Square can help to delineate the collective decision-making mechanisms for democracy theory.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2011, the Egyptian people took to the streets with clear demands for, "bread, freedom, social justice, and human dignity." These demands were not aiming for political change only but social reform. This study has revealed the protestors' effectiveness in attracting and mobilizing people from all social sectors to come and practice their own civil rights. Moreover, public actions emerged with the vision for a broader type of democracy, concerned with developing the full potential of citizens, not only in political process, but in daily social life. This highlights that the 'democracy deficit model' should take into consideration that its consequences do not resonate effectively unless it is contesting established deficient social relations as well. Moreover, the study of Tahrir Square highlights that it is not about the action of the authoritarian structure in Egypt that mattered, rather it is their inaction. The type of action invoked here specifically refers to civic resistance. Protesters made use of a range of civic acts and sustained democratic performances in the face of regime brutality and violence. The action of sustaining the occupation of public space through techniques, described as peaceful or nonviolent activities, all of which, however, are democratic practices.

Democratic models discussed in chapter two enable the public to achieve some levels of democracy through their own actions and democratic practices that can act as the link between people and their government. In turn, they contribute to the more effective realization of human development and social security. In studying the eighteen days of the Egyptian Revolution which contested these models through the unique combination of factors thoroughly outlined and discussed, through which the public created an alternative world that accommodated different socio-spatial practices in a shared space of mutual security, collective support, alternative media display and coverage, medical treatment, and food supply. In sum, the protest stood against the corrupted state by forming a functioning alternative autonomous state, with its own systems outside police control and beyond the reach of the regime's oppressive control. These conflicts exposed the public space to a democratic model that was shared only between the people, while also showing that the government was losing its power.

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<sup>881</sup> Parkinson, J. R. (2012).

In chapter two, Parkinson noted that the imperative of reaching audiences determines the choice of stage: it must be highly visible, or made so by attracting media attention. In this large scale performance of democracy in Tahrir Square, audiences were physically and virtually present. The study of Tahrir Square demonstrated that democracy performances responsibility can transform space into a spectacular 'internationalized space.' Tahrir Square became more complex, being a stage for the revolutionary spectacle for the world and a space for displaying it. Tahrir Square showed the power being operated with dual functions: a stage and screening space where all spatial tactics for performing the spectacle and amplifying revolutionary space occurred. The study highlights that it is through both – protesting performances and the media workers' resistance with their spectacular imagery and representation of space – that collaborate in a series of joint political performances that are also spectacular performances. Accordingly, the research can add that it is also about spatialities capable of sustaining all performances in the square.

In chapter two the research introduced the concept of public space that matters because of the functional necessity of the physical arena for democratic action.<sup>882</sup> Yet, the study of Tahrir Square during the eighteen days was able to reveal richer capacities and values that allowed a public square to tackle wider issues and take more responsibility beyond pro-democratic actions as part of the stage for performance criteria. The study shows that public space matters, not only for its physicality, but also for its effectiveness in sustaining new social relations, while contesting existing social relations. Contesting spatial and social relations was clearly a necessary aspect of radical social change. This kind of revolution is not essentially political – to replace the government or alter the form of government – and as such, the underlying capitalist social relations remained intact. Instead, a social revolution was required to change the social, political, and economic foundation of society. The research shows that by contesting hegemony and social relations. Here the study of Tahrir Square showed that by reclaiming the right to the city, the reproduction of space shall include contesting hegemony as part of the experience physically and spatially.

According to Hannah Arendt, there could be no exercise of freedom without the creation of a 'space of appearance', even 'a right to appear' and act. Arendt views public spaces as momentarily gaining new values and uses which imbed actions of democratic practice and stand as the space of appearance, i.e., where I appear to others and others appear to me.<sup>883</sup> The study of Tahrir Square through its recent uprising demonstrated that the concept of a 'space of appearance' should also consider the physical claiming of the public square. As, Tahrir Square became a single battlefield towards what was considered a spatial strategic victory against the regime. The research shows that physical confrontation between two powers and who claim the right to the space is crucial for the future of the 'space of appearance.' This space of appearance "comes into being wherever men are together in the manner of speech and action."<sup>884</sup> Studying Tahrir Square revealed that acts of resistance should mark all the tactics and practices of the space of appearance in present and future. Studying the eighteen days through changing conditions revealed that the 'space of appearance' should be protected and controlled through territorial control. Precisely, the study of Tahrir Square added that in order to sustain this 'space of appearance', it has to accommodate acts for resistance and performances of new spatiality through which people seize upon an already established space controlled by existing power, seeking to dissolve the relation between the public space, and the existing regime. Moreover, the study highlights that these acts of resistance shouldn't only be limited to defend and control the space, yet, it has to transform the atmosphere of the space from being a battlefield into space for festivity and creativity. Accordingly the research can add some qualities and roles to the 'space of appearance' and its action. Moreover, the study of Tahrir Square showed that reclaiming the right to occupation of space according to Tahrir Square experience was not only by occupying it but also by transforming it to the most secured space in the country at the moment there were no police to control. To

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<sup>882</sup> Parkinson, J. R. (2006)

<sup>883</sup> Arendt, H. (1958). P.199

<sup>884</sup> Arendt, H. (1998).

occupy urban space, the study of Tahrir Square showed that protesters had to create a spatial anchoring of opposition and resistance by constructing an enduring infrastructure for survival and political opposition. Protesters shall continue to devise new strategies on a daily basis to help them fight off the oppressive and immoral authorities, and ability to live. Accordingly, tactics and dynamic spatial practices are responsible to create from an occupied urban space a city by itself were all social, ritual, cultural, social and political performances appeared to sustain the resistance.

In chapter two in accordance to Arendt, “action transforms individuals into collective force that is amplified by their similarity and unity. Not only is power a factor, but also the deep bonds within the group creates a major threat to ruling power and a primary catalyst for successful action.”<sup>885</sup> Yet, the study of Tahrir Square showed different model and collective force that contributed to the successful action. The way unusual sociability\ social relation was established within the square, a division of labor that broke down gender differences and social classes differences. It involved spontaneously who would clean, who would defend, who would speak etc. In short horizontal relations among protests formed easily and methodically, and quickly are crucial for democracy practices and successful action. The research shows that relations of equality, which included division of labor between different genders or different social classes, became part of the very resistance to the regime and its entrenched hierarchies. The social form of the resistance began to incorporate principles of equality that governed not only how and when people acted against regime, but how people refurbished and cared for their reclaimed space and their makeshift medical stations, their campsites, their restrooms, and the check points and barricades where people were exposed to violence from the outside. These actions were all political in the simple sense that they were breaking down a conventional distinction in order to establish relations of equality; in this sense, they were incorporating into the very social form of resistance the principles for which they were performing democracy. The study proposes that actions in order to transform individuals into collective force should occur through horizontal relations among participants of different genders and social classes that can be amplified by their heterogeneity.

The other two fields the research has advanced our knowledge in can be ‘politics of space’ and ‘the right to the city’. Chapter three introduced the right to the city and the two principal rights involved: the right to participation, and the right to appropriation. The occupation of Tahrir Square provided a huge urban uprising with political and spatial system that operated to challenge the regime and liberate the space from the State oppression. The study shows that it was reclamation of people’s right to the city and to the public realm. The study highlights that the right to the city is not only limited to appropriation or participation yet, it is about using the occupation of public space to claim their rights to participate in the process of re-conceptualization of space in order to obtain space for politics. As mentioned in chapter three, the right to the city stresses the need to restructure the power relations that underlie the production of urban space, fundamentally shifting control away from capital and the state and toward urban inhabitants.<sup>886</sup> The study of Tahrir Square highlights that the best practices for production of space can be obtained from restructure the power relations towards heterogeneous communities. The merge of social classes all unified for a cause can create a vibrant society involving significant implication of social and the everyday way of living practices that affects the revolution performance. The research proposed that the best restructure for the power relations should move towards the inclusion of all social classes in one community, and they are able to practice their own rights and manage their own private life with such massive public uprising.

According to Lefebvre’s theory, not only is appropriation the right to occupy already-produced urban space, it is also the right to produce urban space so that it meets the needs of inhabitants. The study of the eighteen days confirmed that the re-production process of urban space shall include spatial practices revealed with high

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<sup>885</sup> Arendt, H. (1970). P.67.

<sup>886</sup> Purcell, M. (2002) Pp. 99-108.

extent of dynamicity and interchangeability as a result to changing situations and political actions on a very short span of time. Tahrir Square through these spatial practices witnessed highest flexibility of social production of space and reshaping to alternative world entailing determining power over the process of urbanization. If we remember Arendt's,<sup>887</sup> insistence that "the public space (of appearance) does not always exist" but is reconstructed each time with the social agents' participation in it. The research shows that convergence of multi communities from different parts of Cairo in an attempt to reclaim their rights to the city and manage their life entailed spatial complexity that was under efficient partial organization. Despite Tahrir Square sit-in significance as a political event, the study showed that the spatial resistance proved to be an indicator of the fading power of social conflicts and the end of segregation of society in Egypt since all social classes related, shared and reclaimed their right to the city through informal practices. It occurred in contrast to any existing social order. Protesters sought to disrupt the longstanding segregation between communities through new one of the spatial arrangement nature that seeks to engage all social classes in one space. The process of reproduction of space tackled bigger responsibility in this case in order to meet the needs of such heterogenous communities. The study showed that contestation of social relation is required in order to transform all rallies arriving from different social classes into active participant in the process of reproduction of space. The power of informality is highlighted by the research in chapter twelve in order to lead this process. The research highlights high dynamics of informal practices and different kind of communities acting in decentralization horizontal system as two factors considering the right to occupy and produce urban space.

The study of Tahrir Square discovered that for uprisings concerned with a radical transformation of spatial and society, this politics of space and its process of production must be decisively employed as a tool for the broader contestation of the existing order. Therefore, it must be regarded as part of a repertoire of action available to the movements. Tahrir Square study highlights the crucial need to accommodate forms of social organization and public discourse that rarely existed before the revolution. They should transform the space into a creative and generative one that manages to produce a new culture of social responsibility and engagement among diverse communities. The reproduction of Tahrir Square as public space took an evolutionary approach to spatial typology, where new functions of space were adopted based on human interaction with the space. In contrast to the pervious homogenous activists groups action pursued via the organizational body of political movements, the Tahrir occupation was a rather the heterogeneous character through partial organization in terms of participant profiles and their socio-spatial practices for living and decentralized horizontality. It witnessed no leadership or vertical hierarchy allowing sustainability and development that competed with the organized and formal systems. The politics of space through decentralized horizontality that Tahrir Square witnessed can be described as a process of worker autonomy and self-management. What Egyptians have experienced and lived during the eighteen days in Tahrir Square superseded their imagined utopia through social reconfiguration that can add to the qualities of 'lived space' concept.

Chapter twelve introduced "Spatial practices of the ordinary practitioners of the city"<sup>888</sup> to show that the dominant image of the space was contested and struggled over. Yet the study of Tahrir Square showed that spatial practices of complex network of participants are much effective for contesting the image of the space and their pace of transformation are much faster. It was remarkable how the sustainability of the sit-in was based on informal agreement between locals, occupiers, donors, visitors or any previous organized formal network responsible for supplying this influx of people. In addition to that the study highlighted that this interactive spatial network should seek to include formal institutes and systems as actors as well that can show a real contestation of hegemony. The practitioners were not limited on campsite inhabitants instead it included all revolutionary supporters from residents, visitors, house revolutionaries, street vendors, opened shops markets

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<sup>887</sup> Arendt, H. (1998). p.199.

<sup>888</sup> De Certeau, M. (1988). p.93.



near campsite terrain, some pharmacies, some hospitals, etc. The sit-in at Tahrir demonstrated a model for urban social change with significant inclusiveness and integration.

In conclusion, Tahrir Square was a political space of high intensity, where democracy was practiced and experimented within a living form. Tahrir Square sit-in enabled all its participants to experience political processes as they re-created life by developing alternative way of socializing, housing, eating, sleeping, medically treated, covering events, displaying media and living together with innovations in political action as intervention and democratic process. This is why Tahrir Square sit-in was more than just temporary living space or instrumental strategies of particular social movements. It was reproduced through particular spatial practices and high dynamics, attempting to influence its environment through a strategy aimed at extending autonomy. It was land for learning and experiencing of radical and tangible democracy that can help to imagine, plan and produce alternative world and a new space for urban politics. Tahrir Square sit-in came into being because it bordered itself against the outside, but it remained entangled in and related to this world. The occupation of the square during the eighteen days was remarkable for its interruption of the everyday life while taking place in significant location, its power stems from the spatial unusual practices it created. Sit-in was clear example of how the politics of occupation can appear through tactics and acts of resistance for claiming the right to the city and politics of space. The politics of space through acts of resistance, then, facilitates radical social and spatial change. Not only contesting the space but also hegemony and social relation. This politics of space clearly enabled Tahrir Square sit-in the emergence of new socio-spatial practices that shall have long-term effect on the design of the public space and policing tactics by the regime. Due to these spatial practices the square emerged as unexplored world and fields of politics between people and the State, between the sought democracy standards and values of equality and social justice and the standards of political institutions.

### **12.3. Post-revolutionary Policing and Spatial Tactics by the Regime**

The massive policing apparatus set up by Mubarak was temporarily paralyzed by the 18 days of the Egyptian revolution, but it did not disappear completely. What has changed is the government's attitude and tactics towards the public and public space. The 'Supreme Council of the Armed Forces' kept the power and initiated counter-revolution with new tactics. Reclamation of public space has turned into an urban war, Tahrir Square in particular. Walls have been erected in downtown around Tahrir Square, on Mohammed Mahmoud Street or Qasr al-Aini Street controlling and reshaping the urban space, where a walled zone occurred with very violent actions away from the other part of the city, where people can lead a very ordinary life. While these walls were complicating the lives of the locals, there was an attempt to block off dissent and restrict mobility. (See Fig. 12.1) Moreover, the walls that were built since the "Battle of Mohamed Mahmoud" in November 2011 in order to block Cairo's downtown streets leading to the famous Tahrir Square were replaced with gates. (See Fig. 12.3) The decision to replace the walls with gates on, February 3, 2014 was one of the latest manifestations of failure on the part of the regime and they stood to represent a physical mechanism of social control. Marking the domains of different authorities, gates in cities stood as boundaries to define the nature of spaces and outline the parameters of the right to the city. Gates on the way towards Tahrir Square intentionally violated these rights and amplified the state's absolute right to control public space, its spatiality and citizens' mobility. Playing on nationalist sentiment, the gates were painted with the colors of the Egyptian flag. This conveyed that these gates are erected to protect Egypt while demonstrating the regime dominating what factors and tactics protect Egypt's security. (See Fig. 12.3)

There was one main lesson the regime has learnt from the 18 days of the revolution: no compromise in the fight over public space. Since the July 3 2013 coup, the regime has continued to use several strategies to restore

and guarantee its dominance over public space. These strategies started with the imposition of a curfew; then by issuing the anti -protest law. In addition to that, Tahrir Square became a symbol of new trend in Egyptian urban policies. For security reasons, Tahrir Square witnessed unusual policing strategies in Fridays, As the SCAF had to close the square completely from pedestrian and traffic in order to keep control and prevent any gatherings and in anticipation of protests. Tanks were back closing all its approaches. (See Fig. 12.5) Targeting their main goal of who is granted or denied access to Tahrir Square, checkpoints were established in order to check IDs of who is entering the Square when it is possible. In fact, since June 30, 2013 the square can only be occupied by the regime's supporters. Any dissident voices that have tried to approach it have been violently repressed. (See Fig. 12.6)

Moreover, in November 2013 the SCAF decide to give Tahrir Square new meaning through other spatial tactics while constructing the memorial for the martyrs by themselves. (See Fig. 12.7) Yet, in 2012 SCAF removed a memorial installed by activists that had the names of the martyrs of the January 25 revolution written on it. It was clear that regime is not only controlling public space physically but it also aspiring to manipulate its symbolic aspect. The erection of a monument in the center of the square that was quickly inaugurated a few days before the anniversary of the Mohamed Mahmoud clashes. It was an act by the regime to bring the revolution to an end and discourage further dissidence acts against new authority. Tahrir Square marked the inauguration of the monument and its defacement with graffiti and damage by demonstrators on the same day. (See Fig. 12.8) Not only is this an attempt by the regime to hijack the legacy of the revolution which was equally a revolt against the security apparatus as much as it was against an authoritarian ruler, but also Tahrir martyrs' memorial showed how the regime monopolized the commemoration of martyrs, their definition, their space and spatiality ,and then rewrote the history. Dec 4, 2013 Egypt's government began to rebuild the memorial commemorating protesters again.<sup>889</sup> Since February 11, 2011, dominating public space physically and symbolically by the regime has effectively been tackled through diverse policing and control tactics. They deployed new strategies in order to control who grant access to Tahrir and is protected by the state, and who is deprived of the basic right of approaching the edges of the square, possibly then chased and arrested.

## 12.4. Avenues for Further Research

The novelty of customized methods applied in this thesis to explore spatial practices, and the researcher's effort to analyze and decode information through mapping spatial narratives, can be recognized as a significant novel contribution to the area of study. As such, this study paves the way for further research. The framework was structured through the chosen themes, yet it can include more themes, such as offense and defence, or physical and visual access, that can be tackled in further research. The thesis suggests a suitable research methodology that is customized to trace and decode spatial narratives in order to map spatial practices and patterns of other similar cases, continuing the ongoing debates and explorations brought together here. Re-conceptualization of public space offers a rich field of empirical study as they exist with different spatiality and complexities.

This thesis displays the re-conceptualization of an alternative world that was in Tahrir Square and calls for more critical and reflective attention to the phenomenon. Furthermore, it recommends for future researchers an investigation of what is, and how, to maintain the socio-spatial configurations that developed during the eighteen days, which can positively influence the daily experience of space. Public space has much richer values and capacities than some approaches currently use when recognizing that a space for urban politics needs still to be discovered. Moreover, the research recommends further investigation to identify what kind of intervention

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<sup>889</sup> Aswat Masriya (December, 2013).

can support the social change that was manifested in Tahrir Square during the eighteen days, and how its new role impacts on the use of Tahrir Square today

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## **12.5. Fields and Areas of Research and Potential Impact**

Politics of space  
Democracy in theory and practice  
Social behaviours in urban space  
The making of public space  
Urban Design and planning  
Socio-spatial practice in urban space  
Theories of urban politics, space and power



Figure 12.1: This wall on Qasr al Aini Street leading from Tahrir Square to the cabinet, the Egypt's upper house of parliament. 25 November 2012 (Source: [www.bbc.com/news/in-pictures-20581565](http://www.bbc.com/news/in-pictures-20581565))



Figure 12.2 Another brick wall near Tahrir Square (Source: [http://transitions.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/03/19/art\\_conquers\\_walls\\_in\\_cairo](http://transitions.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/03/19/art_conquers_walls_in_cairo))



Figure 12.3: Feb 8 Closed gates at Tahrir Square entrance (Source: <https://twitter.com/hashtag/Tahrir?src=hash>)



Figure 12.4: Opened gates at Tahrir Square entrance. (Source: <https://twitter.com/hashtag/Tahrir?src=hash>)





Figure 12.5: Apr 6 Tahrir closed to traffic once more (Source: <https://pic.twitter.com/O3yAxHOP8>)



Figure 12.6: Jul 3 Egypt Army blocks Tahrir Square completely a precaution for protests in support of the ousted president Morsi (Source: <https://twitter.com/hashtag/Tahrir?src=hash>)



Figure 12.7: Tahrir Monument heavily armed with Body guards (Source: <https://twitter.com/kikhote/status/402333928712699904>)



Figure 12.8: People wave banners depicting people who died in previous Egyptian revolutions around a monument, erected in honour of the victims, draped with an Egyptian flag after security forces fired teargas at protesters in Tahrir square in downtown Cairo November 19, 2013. (Source: [www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/19/us-egypt-protests-id](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/19/us-egypt-protests-id))



Figure 12.9: An aerial view shows security forces firing teargas to disperse a crowd in Cairo's Tahrir Square Tuesday. (Source: REUTERS/Mohamed Abd El Ghany [hamodia.com/2013/11/19/egypt-revolutionaries-return-tahrir-square](http://hamodia.com/2013/11/19/egypt-revolutionaries-return-tahrir-square))



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