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The Haussmanization approach and the Egyptian revolution
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The Haussmanization approach
From a counter revolution urban fabric to a success factor for the Egyptian revolution in Cairo

Abstract: *In the 19th century, Napoleon III commissioned Baron Haussmann, to make a new planning for Paris to prevent any future protests or revolts, after the successful revolutions of 1830 and 1848. Barricading was heavily applied to sustain both revolts in the old urban fabric of the city. Haussmann applied strategic surgical interventions that cut through the urban fabric, to prevent any future protests. 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.*

In 2011 this urban fabric witnessed protests to topple the regime in Egypt. The urban fabric introduced in Paris in the 1800s to ensure the control of the state, was the same witnessing the Egyptian revolution. This paper attempts to identify the mechanism of the protests that took place during the revolution and how they unfolded within the Haussmanian urban fabric. The main focus is on January 28th 2011, a day that witnessed major demonstrations in Cairo and was called the "Friday of anger".

The aim of the research is to analyze the impact of 19th century French urban planning influence on the Egyptian revolution. It attempts to examine whether the urban fabric in downtown Cairo made it difficult to hold the protests as this was supposedly the logic in the original Haussmannian approach applied in Paris and transferred later to Cairo or otherwise. Finally the study looks at the post revolution period that witnessed several protests many of which took place in the downtown area in the vicinity of governmental building. It looks at how this period witnessed the construction of "walls" as physical barriers between the protestors and these buildings, opposing totally to the original logic of the Haussmannian urban fabric that introduced the concept of boulevards to oppose the construction of barricades.

Key Words: *Revolution, urban fabric, urban planning, Haussmanization.*

1. Introduction

After the French protests in Paris at the first half of the 1800s, and since most of these protests started from the backstreets and the narrow alleys of Paris, Napoleon III commissioned Baron Haussmann, to make a new planning for Paris, in order to facilitate the mechanism for crushing any future protests. Accordingly, Haussmann applied strategic surgical interventions that cut through the urban fabric of Paris, and introduced the new Haussmannian approach of wide boulevards and large nodes (squares).

The approach was transferred to Egypt by Ali Mubarak pasha who was commissioned to build the new Cairo "Ismaili Cairo" by Khedive Ismail in the run for the opening ceremonies of Suez Canal. A century and a half later in January 2011, the Egyptian revolution erupted and this urban fabric witnessed the angry masses protesting to topple the regime in Egypt, after seizing control over some Key squares notably Tahrir square. In that sense the urban fabric introduced in Paris in the 1800s to ensure the control of the state, was the same urban fabric that witnessed the toppling of the regime in Egypt.

As such, the aim of the research is to analyze the impact of 19th century French urban planning influence on the Arab spring Egyptian revolution tracing the original doctrine and ideologies for applying a specific approach of space management, and examining whether it hindered or helped in the course of revolution.

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1.1 Research sequence

The paper starts by looking at the causes for re-planning Paris in the 19th century and applying the Haussmannian approach in planning. The focus is made on the Paris revolutions of 1830 and 1848, which witnessed the use of barricades in the old urban fabric to sustain the revolts. The study then shifts to examine how the Haussmannian approach in planning was transferred to Cairo and how it was applied within the Cairo context in the second half of the 19th century.

Moving forward to the 21st century the study then looks at the Arab Spring Revolution in Egypt in January 2011 and briefly discusses its causes and how it all started. It then tries to identify the mechanism of the demonstrations and protests that took place in the first days of the revolution and how they unfolded. The main focus is on January 28th 2011, a day that witnessed major demonstrations in Cairo and was called the "Friday of anger".

The study then attempts to analyze and examine whether the urban fabric in downtown Cairo made it difficult to hold the protests as this was supposedly the logic in the original Haussmannian approach applied in Paris and transferred later to Cairo or otherwise.

Finally the study looks at the post revolution period that witnessed and still witnessing several protests many of which took place in the downtown area in the vicinity of governmental building e.g. Ministry of Interior and the Parliament. It looks at how this period witnessed the construction of "walls" as physical barriers between the protestors and these buildings, opposing totally to the original logic of the Haussmannian urban fabric that introduced the concept of boulevards to oppose the construction of barricades. The paper then gives some conclusions on the outcome of the discussion and research.

1.2 Research Methodology

In conducting this research several methods were used, these included the following:

- Literature review was used throughout the research but mainly when retrieving the necessary data and history concerning the 19th century Paris revolutions and the introduction of the Haussmannian approach in Paris and later in Cairo. It was also used to review relevant studies on the Egyptian revolution and the course of its protests.
- The online Facebook pages of opposition groups that organized and participated in the revolution were used specifically to understand the timeline of the unfolded events in January 2011. Such pages provided good overview on the paths and routes of the different protests that took place at that time, and was later related to downtown Cairo.
- Internet based search was made to reach for the digital manual of protests that was circulated prior to the revolution and giving a "how to" approach on the course of demonstrations, their routes and how to deal with security forces.
- Interviews were held with some participants who joined the demonstrations in the first days of the revolution, giving eyewitness accounts on the course of demonstrations. The interviewed were either urban planners or architects who managed to reflect in a more professional way on the course of the demonstrations and protests in relation to the urban fabric. They were asked to give their accounts on how the demonstrations poured in Tahrir square, the main square in Cairo that witnessed the large sit in during the revolution and what was the impact of the urban fabric in later holding the square.
- Own experience in terms of being a resident in Cairo during and after the revolution, hence, living the daily events, as well as several visits to downtown Cairo during the post-revolution demonstrations and sit ins, thus having a clear idea on what happened and is happening.
- Finally, map analysis of the downtown area in relation to the constructed barricades and walls in the post-revolution period.

It is important to note that the scope of this research focuses mainly on downtown Cairo as it is the only district in Cairo to which the Haussmannian approach was introduced, hence

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sharing many similarities with the urban fabric of Paris. Although the Egyptian revolution took place in all of Cairo and many other cities in Egypt, yet the reference to that is only relevant to arguments related to the research.

2. Paris Revolutions: The Barricades

Following the 1789 French revolution, France witnessed other revolutions that followed in 1830 and 1848, due to political and social conflict and unrest. These revolutions were again popular uprisings against the ruling governments demanding social justice and political reform. In 1829 King Charles X caused resentment in the French middle class and its press when he formed a new ministry that was objected by the chamber of deputies. As a reaction of this objection Charles dissolved the chamber and new elections were held in 1830, which brought even more objection and opposition in the chamber, causing Charles to dismiss it again. Following this, Charles X issued the "July Ordinances" which imposed strict control on press and reduced the electorate. Within the next few days the French revolted and blockaded the streets. Charles X abdicated and later was succeeded by Louis Philippe (Kohn, 2007). Eighteen years later, the French revolted again. According to Duiker and Spielvogel (2010) a severe economic depression that started in 1846 brought a difficult time in France. When the government of King Louis Philippe failed to provide solutions and relief and rejected to make proper changes, this angered segments of the middle class as well as workers, eventually leading to revolt and the abdication of Louis Philippe and his government in February 1848.

The main tactic of sustaining these revolutions until they yielded their demands was mainly through barricading, especially in Paris. Owing to the fact that the urban fabric of Paris at that time was characterized by its narrow streets and alleys, this formed an appropriate context for revolting. The rebels would start constructing the barricades to block the advance of governmental troops within the streets and alleys. At the beginning they did that with whatever available materials, from barrels, wood, furniture and even paving blocks that were torn apart from the pavements, and then the process became more systematized. According to Douglas

Fig1: Barricades were used extensively during the French revaluations of the 19th century.
Source: http://urbantimes.co , 2013

(2007) 4000 barricades were built during the 1830 revolution and 6000 barricades during the 1848 revolution.

In a comparison done by Traugott (2010) on the locations of the Barricades in one of the Parisian districts (the Saint Merri district) within the two revolutions, it was found that in both events there had been a large percentage of identical locations , since the same tactic of barricading was used in both revolutions within the same urban fabric.In both cases, the revolution started from within the **Pari**sian urban fabric, and was sustained and succeeded by using the barricades to stop the advance of troops and to keep hold of the inner city territories.
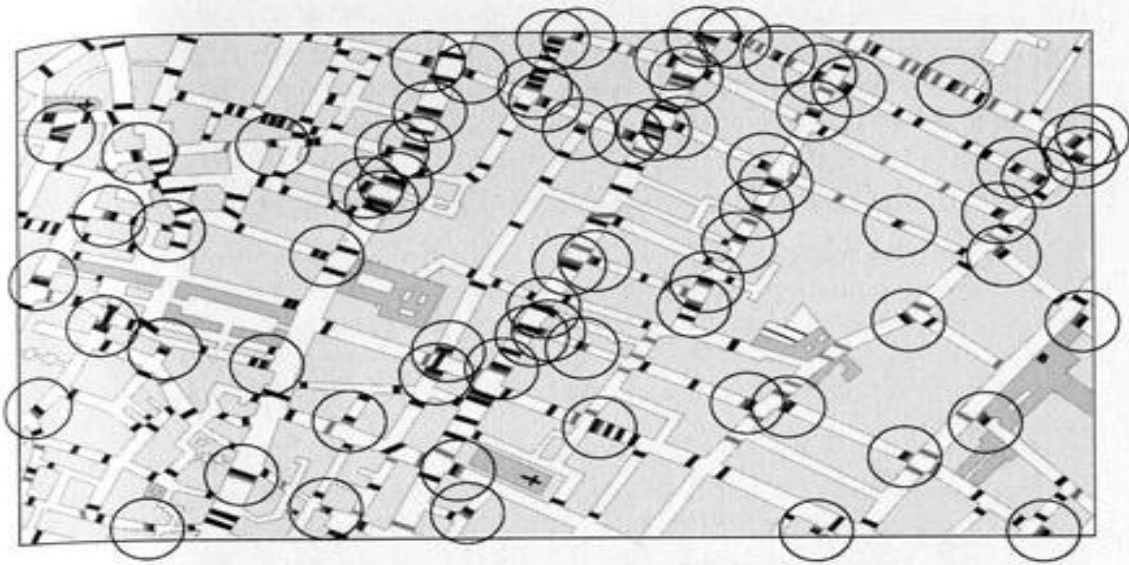
Fig2: Location of barricades in Saint Merri district in Paris. Circles indicate identical locations of Barricades in 1830 and 1848 revolutions. Source: Traugott , 2010

2.1 Boulevards versus Barricades

Through the course of the 19th century that witnessed the revolutionary years, France alternated between revolutionary governments and centralized imperial rule, among which was the second empire of Louis Napoleon (1852-1871). Having been aware of the recent revolutions before his reign and how were they sustained, Napoleon III commissioned Baron George-Eugene Haussmann to make an urban restructuring plan for Paris. Haussmann, who was the prefect of the Seine for almost a decade and a half, did apply strategic surgical interventions to the city. He did so by ruthlessly imposing a network of boulevards, formal parks and squares that cut through the urban fabric of the city and demolished whatever stood on its way. The clearing up of space around important monumental and historical buildings such as the Notre Dame and the Louvre was also done. Parallel to that; municipal utilities had been introduced on a grand scale including the famous sewers of Paris (Abulughod, 1971).

This plan was in fact an explicit response to any future threat of revolutions. On one hand the plan aimed to improve sanitation, built environment, improving infrastructures and alleviating social pressures. ***On the other hand with his surgical intervention, he aimed to make the construction and defense of barricades impossible***. Setting the barricades and holding ground took place on an effective place in 1871.They appeared twice afterwards in 1945 during the Nazi occupation of Paris and 1968 during the students' revolution throughout Europe, yet on a less effective scale. This is because the Haussmann interventions and the advance in artillery and military techniques made affected the use of the barricades (Douglas, 2007).
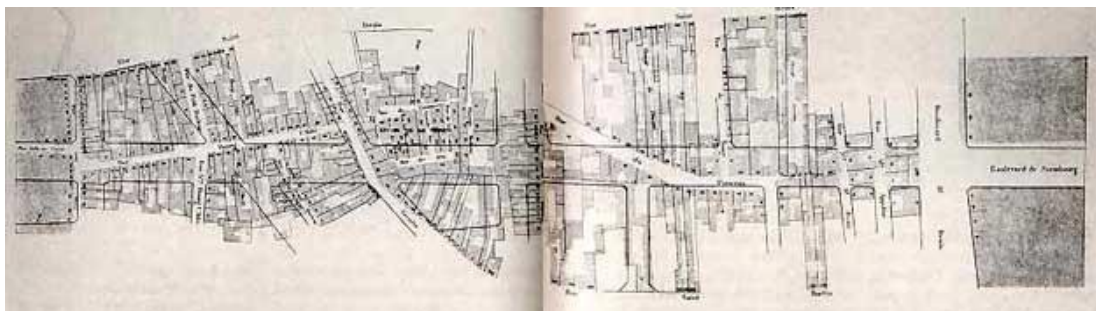

Fig3a: Haussmann boulevards ruthlessly cut through the urban fabric erasing anything that stood in its path. Source: http://380mcparis.wordpress.com , April 2013.

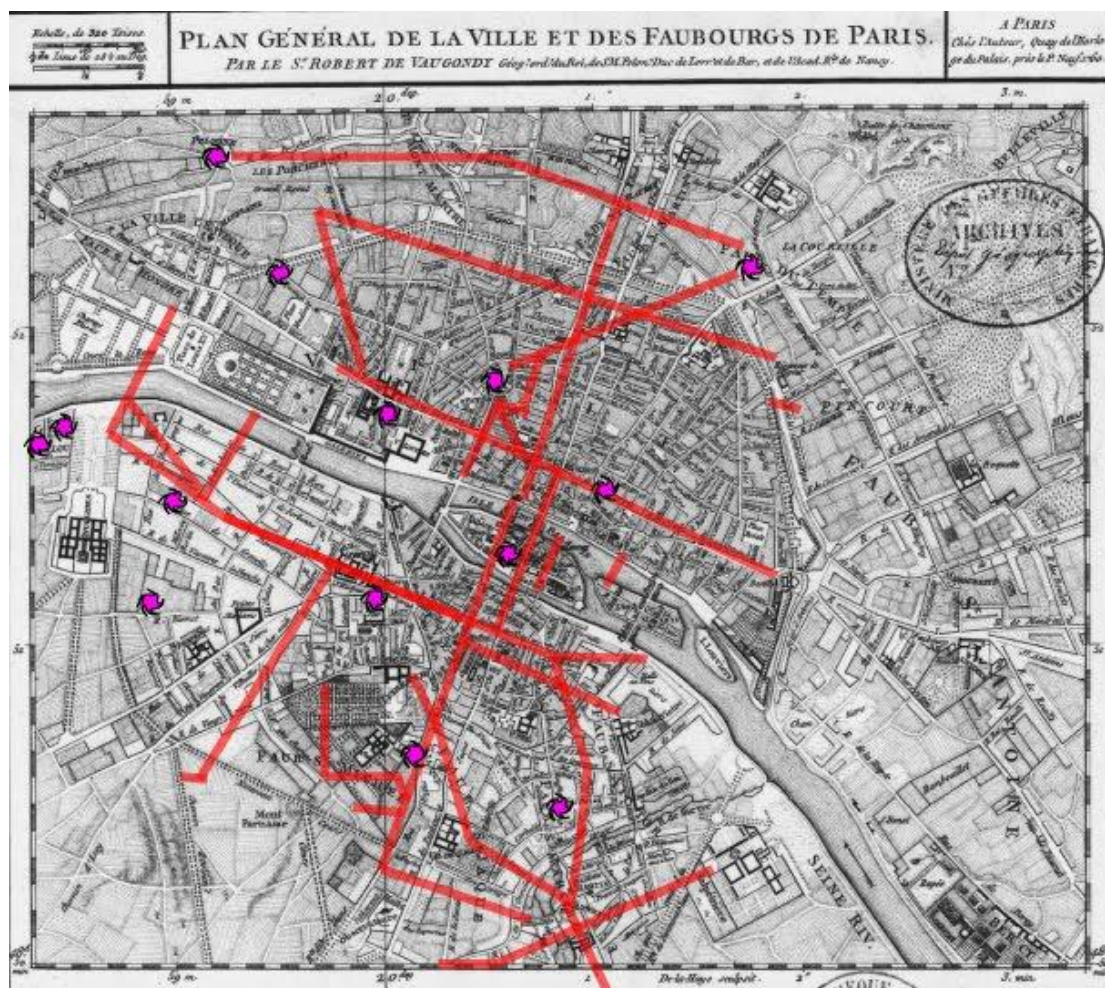© SB13-Cairo 2013

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Fig3a: Haussmann applied a network of Boulevards, parks and squares over the existing
urban fabric of Paris. Source: http://dystopolitik.blogspot.com , 2013

3. Haussmanization of Cairo

The construction of the Suez Canal was a mega project that took place in between 1859 and 1869; it was mainly based on a French design but totally constructed by Egyptian labor. As the completion of the Suez canal approached, Khediv Ismail , who was highly influenced by the European and French culture and learning, had his own vision of transforming Cairo to a European like capital to represent a modern country along the banks of the Nile from Alexandria to Khartoum. He aimed that by the time of completion of the Suez Canal, his new capital would be ready to hold a legendary and unforgettable ceremony hosting the monarchies of the world (Ali, 1997). Initially, Egypt at the turn of the 1860s was in a good economic position, despite the fact that a mega project was being constructed at that period. The American civil war was at its peak at the other side of the globe, which affected the exports of the American cotton to Europe. An evident alternative at that point was the Egyptian cotton, which flooded the European market, hence increasing Egypt's income from such exports (Abu-Lughod, 1971). Accordingly, there were appealing settings to embark on a large scale development for the new capital.

The French educated governor of Egypt was impressed by the construction of Paris, which he was following earlier in contemporary French journals, even before his visit to Paris in 1867. The Haussmannized Paris was introduced to the world in the "*Exposition Universelle"
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Among the visitors was Ismail Pasha who received a personal invitation from Napoleon III himself. In June 1867 he was received by Haussmann who was his personal guide (Abu-Lughod, 1971). However, Ismail could not intervene in the old city because of its complicated urban fabric, as Hasussmann intervened in Paris with a time span of two years till the opening ceremony of Suez Canal. In addition he conceived the idea of keeping the city's positive attributes for its inhabitants and keeping the historical city out of his interventions.

2.1. A New Development

The decision was made by the Khedive to construct a new quarter of Cairo "the Ismaili Cairo" West of the existing Fatimid Medieval Cairo at a vast vacant land suitable for city expansion. This was to be the modern façade that the Khedive will receive and show his royal guests during the opening celebrations of Suez Canal. As such a second Modern and healthy Cairo was constructed next to the historical un-sanitized one (Ali, 1997). Accordingly, 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 (Abu-Lughod, 1971).

The plan stressed on the following:
- Introducing new street networks, with wide, straight, and long streets (compared to old Cairo), connected to each other with squares modeled upon those of Paris.
- Realizing a sanitized city, by constructing proper water supply networks and proper sewage systems.
- Introducing a new green network of public parks and avenues in the new city.
- Creating a beautiful city, as delightful as European cities especially in their architecture with Paris as the reference city of inspiration.
- Making a whole series of public works and administrative reforms along the city, and linking the two banks of the Nile together via bridges , initiating the future development towards the west bank of the Nile.
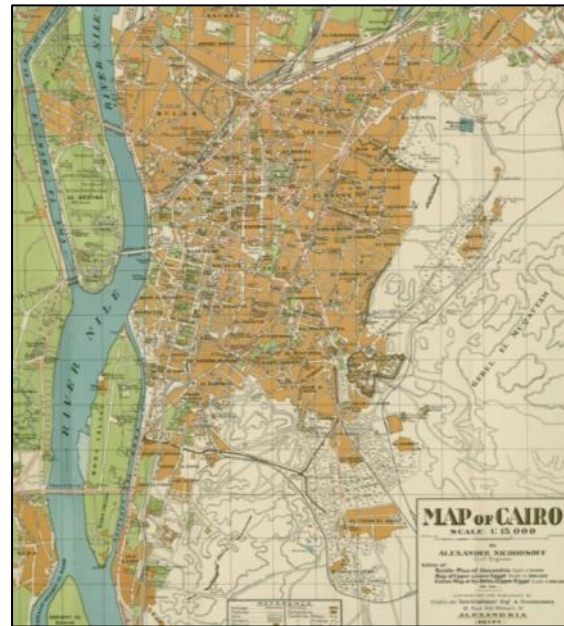

Fig 5: The New Ismaili Cairo along the Nile with its new urban fabric adjacent to the Medieval Cairo. A map by Alexander Nicohosoff, 1933.

Fig4: Strong similarities can be found in the urban fabric of Cairo and that of Paris, as shown in the above picture with Tahrir square on the left and Charles de Gaulle etoile in Paris. Source: (ZaaZaa, 2009)

The city went through successive phases of development in the 19th and 20th century. Ismaili Cairo that was considered a new development in the 19th century became the core for Greater Cairo in contemporary times playing the role of the modern downtown. Accordingly, the new urban fabric of Paris was the source of inspiration for Cairo, with strong tangible similarities and characteristics between the two.
The implementation of this new urban fabric in Cairo did not have the intention of stopping any future protests or revolutions as was the case in Paris; its main aim was to have a modern European new downtown. Nevertheless, it is argued that the

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Haussmann characteristics of the urban fabric including those of preventing protests were all unintentionally inherited in the Ismaili downtown Cairo.

4. Arab Spring Revolution in Egypt

The anger revolution in Egypt (January 2011) , the second in the Arab Spring revolutions after Tunisia, aimed to eradicate corruption and to reduce disparities within the different strata of the Egyptian society as well as creating a better and prosperous lifestyle. The revolution aimed at its early stages in January 2011 to overthrow the government. This was up scaled later to overthrow the president and the whole regime. The revolution started by a series of protests on the 25th of January 2011 and escalating to reach a peak on the 28th of January gaining the status of a revolution. The protests were organized by different activist groups using the different means of social networking. To encounter such protests, clashes erupted with the security bodies of the government, ending by a total retreat of the police forces from most of the cities and villages in Egypt, followed by a military intervention to protect the people and public properties from criminal acts, while the revolution continued for 18 days before achieving its main political goal (at that point).

4.1 Prelude to the protests

In the decade preceding the revolution, growing discontent from President Mubarak's rule and the successive Egyptian governments became tangibly evident in the society. Meier (2011) notes that opposition groups and campaigns emerged during that decade starting with Kefaya (2004), 6th of April movement (2008) and Khalid Said campaign (2010). These groups and movements were mostly influenced by the writings of Gene Sharp who advocates that change can be done through nonviolent protests and persuasion; this approach could be enlarged in the 2000s with the use of modern information telecommunication technologies (ITC) (Meier, 2008).

In the aftermath of the Tunisian revolution and with its initial apparent success that flooded the media, several calls appeared among the social networking sites calling for a similar revolution in Egypt that was scheduled to take place at a national public holiday that is the police day on the 25th of January 2011. As a contemporary eyewitness and resident in Cairo at this period, the author like millions of others received the calls for a peaceful protest via

Facebook, the so called "scheduled event" asking to join a "Day of Anger" on the 25th of January. Synchronized with these calls, the circulation of different information on the peaceful techniques of protesting and resistance took place as well through the social networking websites such as facebook and twitter.

Among the information circulated at that time was a short manual " How to protest intelligently: important information and tactics", this manual gave instructions on how to conduct the protests in a peaceful way based on the ideas of Gene Sharp (El Menawey, 2012). The instructions provided in this manual were carefully illustrated in a professional way. Meier (2011) refers that this

Fig 6: How to protest intelligently is a manual of 26 pages and was circulated prior to the protests in January 2011.

is due to the influence and the exchange of information and training between some Egyptian groups and the Otpor opposition group in Serbia, as new tactics as well as adapted tactics were introduced. Some of the instructions within that manual will be referred to in the discussion.

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4.2. The protests

On January 25th 2011, thousands of Egyptians went for protests in different locations in Egypt. The initial success on that day encouraged for a further call to organize a "Friday of Anger" on January 28th, since Friday is a weekend in Egypt. The calls for that day were again circulated via the digital media, which proved to be highly effective in reaching a wider internet public. The discussion in the coming sections focuses mainly on the protests that took place on that day, with some later references to events that took place since the ousting of President Mubarak.

4.3. The urban Fabric and the protest mechanism

Some interviews had been conducted with some of those who participated in the protests and marches of January 28th 2011 and the days that followed, as well as the author's own contemporary experience of the events. The interviewed agreed on some common aspects / events that took place on that day. Hence, the protests' mechanism can be described as follows:

1. They received the calls for protests on facebook and twitter in the days following up January 25th. These calls stressed on starting the protests and marches after the Friday prayer while coming out from the mosques. Some key mosques and churches (35 in number) were identified in a note that was circulated over the facebook. The end destination of these protests would be Tahrir square (in Cairo) and certain governmental buildings and the ruling party head quarters in other cities.

2. People after the prayer gathered in front of mosques to see what might happen in reference to the internet call. In most cases, there would be someone or (many) who would start shouting slogans and start marching; such acts encouraged people would follow and join up in a demonstration. In other cases, some people interrupted the preacher in the Friday prayer accusing him that his pro-government and that he is a liar, most of the preachers were instructed by the government to preach against violence and protests, and marched out of the mosque and others followed.

3. Depending on the location and residence of the interviewed, after gathering in front of the mosques, especially those mentioned in the internet call, people went marching towards Tahrir as the destination, while the protest leaders guided them with directions. In most cases protests masses started small in number but would pour in a larger protest moving in a wider street or boulevard. In most cases the protests started at distant origins from Tahrir square reaching in average 12 kilometers.

4. On the way to Tahrir square, many of the protests had encounters with police and security forces. In some cases granting them the right to path before circling them few moments later and attempting to distract them by force. However, owing to the growing number of people, many managed to continue on their way.

5. Some of the interviewed who reached Tahrir square at an early time in comparison to other marches, explained that they had been almost arrested by

Fig 7: One of the major protests heading towards Tahrir square with confrontations with security forces.

security forces in the square and were only released when people coming from other protests smashed in the security forces, hence, outnumbering them.

6. Being outnumbered and almost running out of teargas canisters, security forces retreated from Tahrir square and simultaneously from other squares in most of Egypt.

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7- Following that day, a "sit in" in Tahrir square took place until the ousting of President Mubarak 18 days later. Throughout this period the square witnessed some `in" period a considerable mass of protestors was always present in the square to make sure that it would not fall back to the pro-regime groups.

The sequence mentioned above by the interviewed can be explained from the following perspective:

1- The fact that most protests started small in size in secondary streets and squares and poured in into a larger street; this was actually explained by Meier (2011) in light of the protests manual discussed earlier. The explanation for this was given as follows "*Starting in the alleys was not a random decision. Starting small and away from the main protests is a safe way to pool protesters together. It's also about creating an iterative approach to a "strength in numbers" dynamic. As more people crowd the smaller the streets, this*
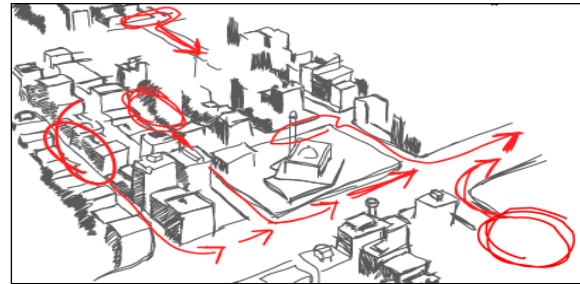

Fig.8: A diagram from the protests manual showing the building up of significant number of protestors through converging from small streets to larger ones.

gives a sense of momentum and confidence. Starting in alley ways localizes the initiative. People are likely neighbors and join because they see their friend out in the street". This pooling of protestors also helped in building a critical mass that was later culminated in the "sit in" in Tahrir square.

2- The urban fabric of the downtown leading to Tahrir square, a copy of Paris's urban fabric, could not generate enough masses of protestors. The reason for that is the gentrification and change of building uses in most of the downtown area. Most of the downtown buildings changed their uses from residential to business and office space (Serag, 2002). Hence, it is argued that since the protests were taking place on a Friday (weekend), the numbers of protestors that could had been generated only from the downtown fabric, could had been easily distracted by police and security forces. Thus, a critical mass of protesters was needed to ensure the continuity of such protests.

3- In 2011 an interesting poster research project was made using the GIS tools to map the most strategic routes for protests that would have led to Tahrir square. The mapping criteria was based on identifying points of gathering (mosques), the mosques being far from police stations and their distance from Tahrir square. Therefore the protests' routes would pass on streets with high population density to feed up the protest march, as well as being wide enough to contain the protesting masses, and points of convergence to pour in the square. The findings showed indeed, that most of the proposed routes would start outside the downtown area to gain enough protesters (TUFTS, 2011). Despite that the research was based on fixed assumptions and did not take into consideration changes on the ground, the findings of such routes were more or less conforming to a large percentage with actual events.
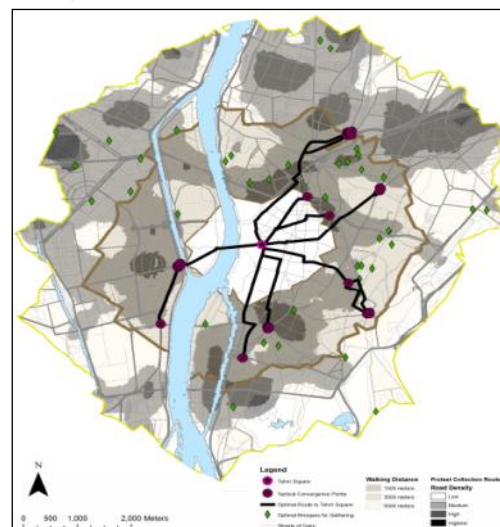

Fig.9: The use of GIS to analyze the possible routes for the protests showed that the origins of such protests would take place outside the Tahrir square and not from within. Source: https://wikis.uit.tufts.edu, November, 2012

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4- According to the protest manual Tahrir square was selected as a final destination of the protests that started in Cairo. It is argued that this was done for several reasons: the parliament, the seat of the government and several ministries are either overlooking the square or in one of its secondary streets, hence the symbolic meaning of the square. The square provided the necessary space needed for containing the protesters and ensuring that together with its surrounding connected spaces would allow for the formation of a critical mass of protesters to be reached. Despite the media claims at that time that the number of protestors in Tahrir square reached at a certain period

Fig.10: An aerial view of Tahrir square and its feeders including the nearby spaces.
Source: Google Earth, November, 2012

during the protests 2 million people, Shachtman (2011) argued that in view of Dr. Clark McPhail calculations, one of the godfathers of crowd-sizing science, the square and its surrounding spaces and streets can hold a maximum of 250000 persons, which is still considered a massive number of people in one place at the same time.

5- Tahrir square and its surroundings spaces are considered as a plug-in to the downtown fabric, in terms of scale and size the square could be considered of a larger scale than the squares of the downtown. One of the interviewed argued that the surrounding streets to Tahrir square provided a buffer zone to the protesters who in many cases would occupy them to drive any possible attack from the security forces away.

5. POST REVOLUTION BARRICADES

After the revolution, Egypt passed and is passing (at the time of writing) through a turbulent transitional period. The country was ruled by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) from February 2011 until July 2012. During this period there had been growing opposition among civil political groups against the military rule and the call for a civil president and government. Owing to this and other factors as well, demonstrations occurred in multiple incidents escalating sometimes to reach the state of a sit in. With the experience gained from the early revolution days, Tahrir square became a symbol of protest, and the physical container of a large critical mass. Bruer (2011) recalls that during a July 2011 major demonstration and "sit in" in Tahrir square; a huge canopy was constructed and donated by a wealthy civil engineer to provide shade and shelter for the protesters from the hot summer sun. In such a case opposition leaders knew that a sit in will take place in a considerable mass. Such incidents and several following others , showed the change in perception towards Tahrir square and also introduced the culture of protesting in large squares not afraid of being dispersed by security, police or other political forces provided that a considerable critical mass is present.

5.1. Not Barricades but Walls
Unfortunately, some of the demonstrations that took place in the post-revolution period turned into confrontations between the demonstrators and police forces.
In November 2011, a sit in of 200 protestors in support of those who were killed or injured during the first days of the revolution and asking for state's support, had been dispersed by the police. This action sparked another wave of demonstrations and activists poured into Tahrir square and started making their way towards the Ministry of Interior that controlled the police.

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Al-Jaberi (2012) describes how these demonstrations turned into clashes with the police and lasting for five days. These clashes ended after the army constructed a concrete wall across "Mohamed Mahmoud Street" where the Ministry is located. Not only this wall was constructed but few other walls were constructed to block the path towards the Ministry of interior in front of the protestors. The initial logic for the urban fabric applied in Cairo was initially formulated and applied in Paris, and that logic aimed to alleviate and minimize the possible use of barricades by the people to stop any possible revolution. It is argued that what happened in the streets of downtown

Fig.11: The clashes in November 2011 and targeting the Ministry of Interior by angry protesters, led to the construction of walls and barricades by the army in the streets surrounding the Ministry (Trew et al, 2012).
Source: ahram online.

Cairo was a reverse attitude by the police and military forces to protect their key establishments against the protestors. Of course what were built here were walls which were assembled by cranes from concrete blocks and not random barricades built of whatever material found. In this case the barricading (or walling) was done by the governing authorities to stop the protesters, especially that there were thousands of protestors in Tahrir square who were backing those clashing with the police forces in Mohamed Mahmoud street. *In that sense, the fabric whose initial logic of planning stood for preventing barricades, ended up in Cairo with building concrete barricades i.e. walls.*

Building walls by the authorities became a standard solution to separate the protestors away from the government buildings. Starting from November 2012 and until the time of writing this article, several protests and demonstrations took place, although they might differ in intensity many of which took place in downtown Cairo. Malsin (2013) recalls that protests first started in September 2012 against the YouTube anti Mohamed clip taking place near the US embassy in Cairo. Then in November against a set of presidential decrees
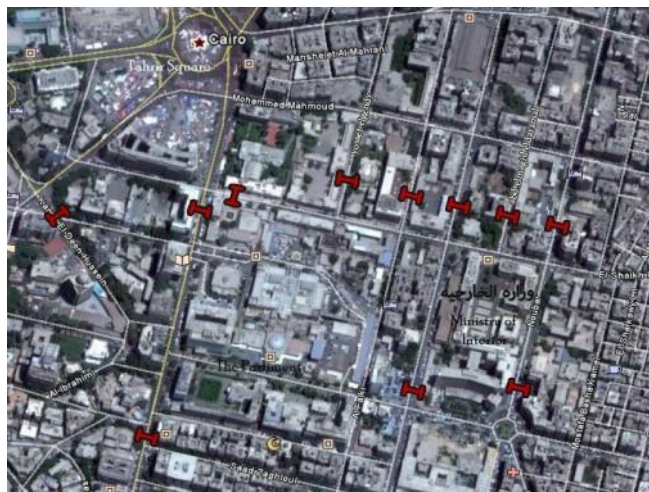

Fig.12: In April 2013, concrete barricades (walls) still exist in downtown Cairo especially near the Ministry of Interior. These walls were mostly erected in the period between November 2012 and February 2013, with only few remaining from 2011.
Source: Mapped by A. Osama in April 2013, an urban planner.

giving the president sweeping powers, causing a wide range of anger that was followed shortly with angry protests against the then intended constitution. Amid ongoing fighting between riot police and demonstrators, the protestors took Tahrir square and started a sit in turning the square into a protest camp. Consequently the security forces built several walls to make a physical separation between the square and the nearby government buildings especially on the streets leading to the Ministry of Interior, and other institutions. (*ibid*).

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Constructing these walls to block the streets had been very disadvantageous to many residents who got affected in their daily commuting routes and shop owners who got directly affected in their daily income. According to a downtown resident's account, more than six walls had been built since September 2012 bisecting the urban fabric of downtown Cairo in the surrounding area of Tahrir square. With their main sources of income affected, many shop and company owners in the walled area started to protest themselves against the presence of such walls.

6. Conclusion

The interventions in Paris's urban fabric through the process of its re-planning by Baron Haussmann in the 19th century aimed mainly to prevent future protests and revolts that could be sustained through barricading to hold ground in front of the state's forces and troops. Accordingly, wide boulevards were introduced in Paris cutting through the existing urban fabric and allowing for the swift intervention of state's forces to enter most of the city districts in a proper time, hence controlling and preventing the spread of protests. When the Ismaili Cairo was constructed shortly after Paris, its urban fabric was strongly inspired by the Parisian one; however, it was constructed next to the medieval Fatimid Cairo without intervening in the existing fabric. Despite that the urban fabric was copied without the intention of preventing possible revolts or protests, rather to give Cairo a more modern shape, the fabric still possessed the main characteristics of Haussmann's original fabric in Paris. Despite this, the Egyptian revolution of 2011 took place as well as its consequent demonstrations, protests and sit-ins and could not be stopped.

Based on the discussion within the research, the following conclusions could be made:

- Protests of the Egyptian revolution did not start from downtown Cairo, they rather started from distant locations outside the downtown in predefined routes initiating from relatively small squares and streets to pour into larger protests passing through wide streets, hence building up a considerable mass.
- The urban fabric of downtown Cairo was not considered a main origin of protests, only Tahrir Square was set as the strategic destination for protestors. This is due to its large area that could hold up to 250000 persons combined with the surrounding and spaces.
- According to the initial Haussmann intervention in Paris, wide streets were to allow for troops to swiftly march in and disperse the protestors, this was not the case in downtown Cairo. As the incoming protestors were pouring in from different directions towards a single origin that is Tahrir Square, the numbers of troops present were soon overwhelmed by the protestors , thus reversing the scenario that should had taken place and driving the troops out of the square.
- Although the original reasoning for the Haussmann urban fabric in Paris was to prevent barricading, the actual events during and after the Egyptian revolution led to the construction of barricades and more over concrete barricades (walls) bisecting through the urban fabric in many streets.

One can conclude that despite the original logic behind the urban fabric in downtown Cairo and its relation with the urban fabric in Paris, it could not stop the protestors, it could not stop barricading and it could not stop the revolution. Planning and intervening in the urban fabric could not and will not stop protests or revolutions. People got used to the urban fabric of their city and districts and adapted to it. Perhaps the protests got delayed for a considerable period of time; however, when people decided to make a change, they planned for it and overcame the difficulties within the urban fabric.

A final word, instead of using planning as a tool for control, planning should be used for the people to meet their needs. This should be the way to prevent protesting and revolting through planning.

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