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The Common in a Compound:

Morality, Ownership, and Legality in Cairo's Squatted Gated Community

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by

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The Common in a Compound:
Morality, Ownership, and Legality in Cairo's Squatted Gated Community

Nicholas Luca Simcik Arese, St Antony's College
D.Phil Thesis

Abstract | In Haram City, amidst Egypt's 2011–2013 revolutionary period, two visions of the city in the Global South come together within shared walls. In this private suburban development marketed as affordable housing, aspirational middle class homebuyers embellish properties for privilege and safety. They also come to share grounds with resettled urban poor who transform their surroundings to sustain basic livelihoods. With legality in disarray and under private administration, residents originally from Duweiqa — perhaps Cairo's poorest neighbourhood — claim the right to squat vacant homes, while homebuyers complain of a slum in the gated community.

What was only desert in 2005 has since become a forum for vivid public contestation over the relationship between morality, ownership, and order in space — struggles over what ought to be common in a compound. This ethnography explores residents' own legal geographies in relation to property amidst public-private partnership urbanism: how do competing normative discourses draw community lines in the sand, and how are they applied to assert ownership where the scales of 'official' legitimacy have been tipped? In other words: in a city built from scratch amidst a revolution, how is legality invented?

Like the compound itself, sections of the thesis are divided into an A-area and a B-area. Shifting from side to side, four papers examine the lives of squatters and then of homeowners and company management acting in their name. Zooming in and out within sides, they depict discourses over moral ownership and then interpret practices asserting a concomitant vision of order. First, in Chapter 4, squatters invoke notions of a moral economy and practical virtue to justify 'informal' ownership claims against perceptions of developer-state corruption. Next, Chapter 5 illustrates how squatters define 'rights' as debt, a notion put into practice by ethical outlaws: the *Sayi'* — commonly meaning 'down-and-out' or 'bum' — brokers 'rights' to coordinate group ownership claims. Shifting sides, Chapter 6 observes middle class homeowners' aspirations for "internal emigration" to suburbs as part of an incitement to propertied autonomy, and details widespread dialogue over suburban selfhood in relationship to property, self-interest, and conviviality. Lastly, Chapter 7 documents authoritarian private governance of the urban poor that centres on "behavioural training." Free from accountability and operating like a city-state, managers simulate urban law to inculcate subjective norms, evoking both Cairene histories and global policy circulations of poverty management.

Towards detailing how notions of ownership and property constitute visions and assertions of urban law, this project combines central themes in ethnographies of Cairo with legal geography on suburbs of the Global North. It therefore interrogates some key topics in urban studies of the Global South (gated communities, affordable housing, public-private partnerships, eviction-resettlement, informality, local governance, and squatting), as Cairo's 'new city' urban poor and middle classes do themselves, through comparative principles and amidst promotion of similar private low-income cities internationally. While presenting a micro-history of one project, it is also offers an alternative account of 2011–2013 revolutionary period, witnessed from the desert developments through which Egyptian leaders habitually promise social progress.

Dedicated to:

Tino

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

Throughout this thesis I broadly follow the transliteration system in *A Dictionary of Egyptian Arabic* by Martin Hinds and al-Said Badawi (1986), differentiating between ع (‘) and "hamza" (’) and غ as gh; ش as sh; خ as kh. However, in order to facilitate reading by both non-specialists and native speakers I avoid diacritical marks. Transliterations do not recognise long vowels (not doubling — e.g. "aa," "ee," "ii," etc. and without macron — e.g. ā, ī, ū). I also do not represent voluminous consonants (ص ض ط ظ), but distinguish ض and د as "d" from ذ as "dh" (so ضايع is *dayi‘*). Doubled consonants are always represented. I also have striven to follow Egyptian colloquial pronunciation for endings (e.g. - "-uh" instead of "-ho"), but leave ق as "q" rather than hamza (’) to improve legibility and let the reader pronounce as desired. Citations from Arabic press have been translated into English in references. For any Arabic terms that are regularly used in the media, such as appellations in English and names of people or places, I maintain the most commonly accepted and recognisable transliteration format, even if the transliterations may be technically incorrect (for instance, Rabaa al-Adawiya/*Rab‘ al-‘dawia*).

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

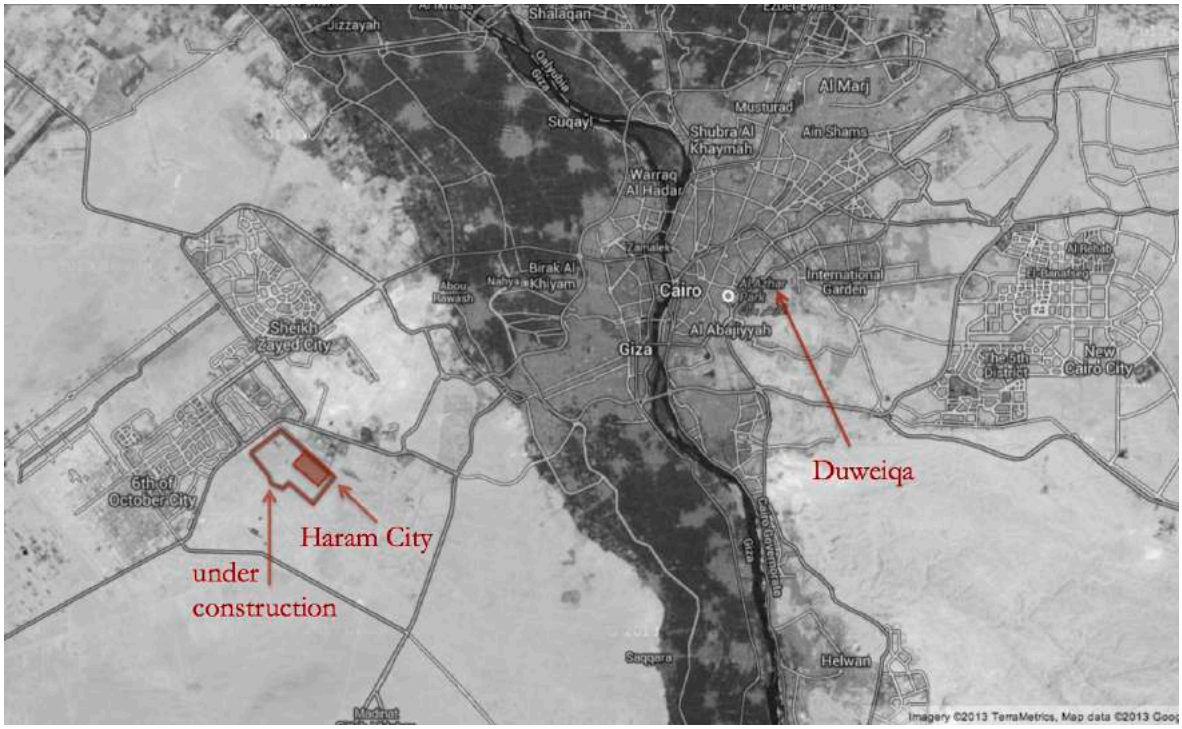
APE	Association for the Protection of the Environment
AUC	American University in Cairo
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
CESR	Centre for Economic and Social Rights
ECCLR	Egyptian Centre for Civil and Legislative Reform
ECHR	Egyptian Centre for Housing Rights
EEAA	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
EIPR	Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights
EMRC	Egyptian Mortgage Refinance Company
ESCR-Net	Egyptian Social and Cultural Rights Network
GC	Greater Cairo
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
GOPP	General Organization for Physical Planning
HDB	Housing Development Bank
HIC	Habitat International Coalition
HLRN	Housing and Land Rights Network
ID	Identification
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISDF	Informal Settlements Development Facility
JLL	Jones Lang LaSalle
LE	Livre Egyptienne (Egyptian Pound)
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MFC	Mortgage Finance Company
MHUC	Ministry of Housing, Utilities, and Urban Communities
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NHP	National Housing Program
NUCA	New Urban Communities Authority
OHC	Orascom Housing Communities
OD	Orascom Development
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
REIT	Real Estate Investment Trust
SFSD	Sawiris Foundations for Social Development
UN-ESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

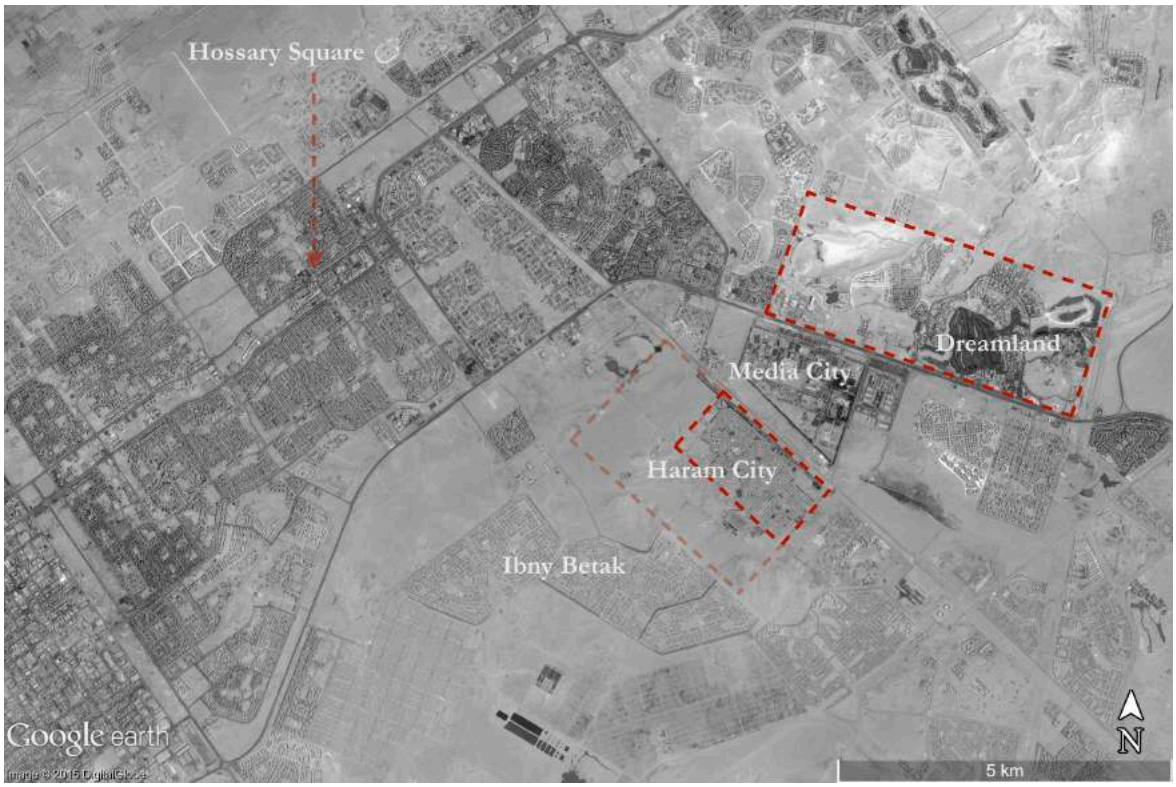
All exchange rates from Egyptian Pound (LE) to British Pound (£) at LE10.00 = £1.00*

*Corresponding to 8 March 2013 (mid-fieldwork), 10 January 2006 (approx. date of land sale to OHC), and approx. ten-year average. From Jan. 2011 to Dec. 2015 LE/£ ratio has fluctuated from LE9- LE12 = £1.

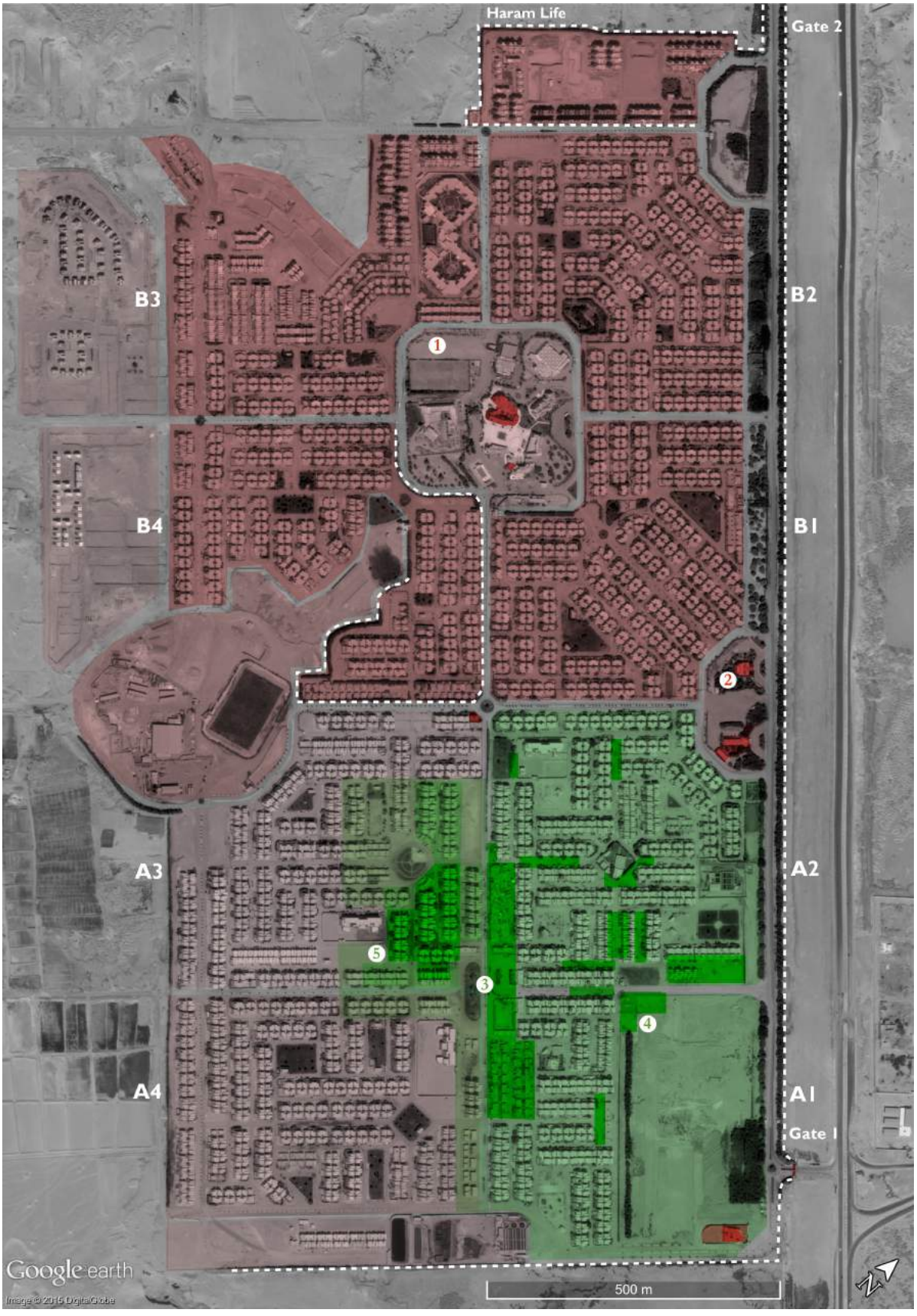
MAPS



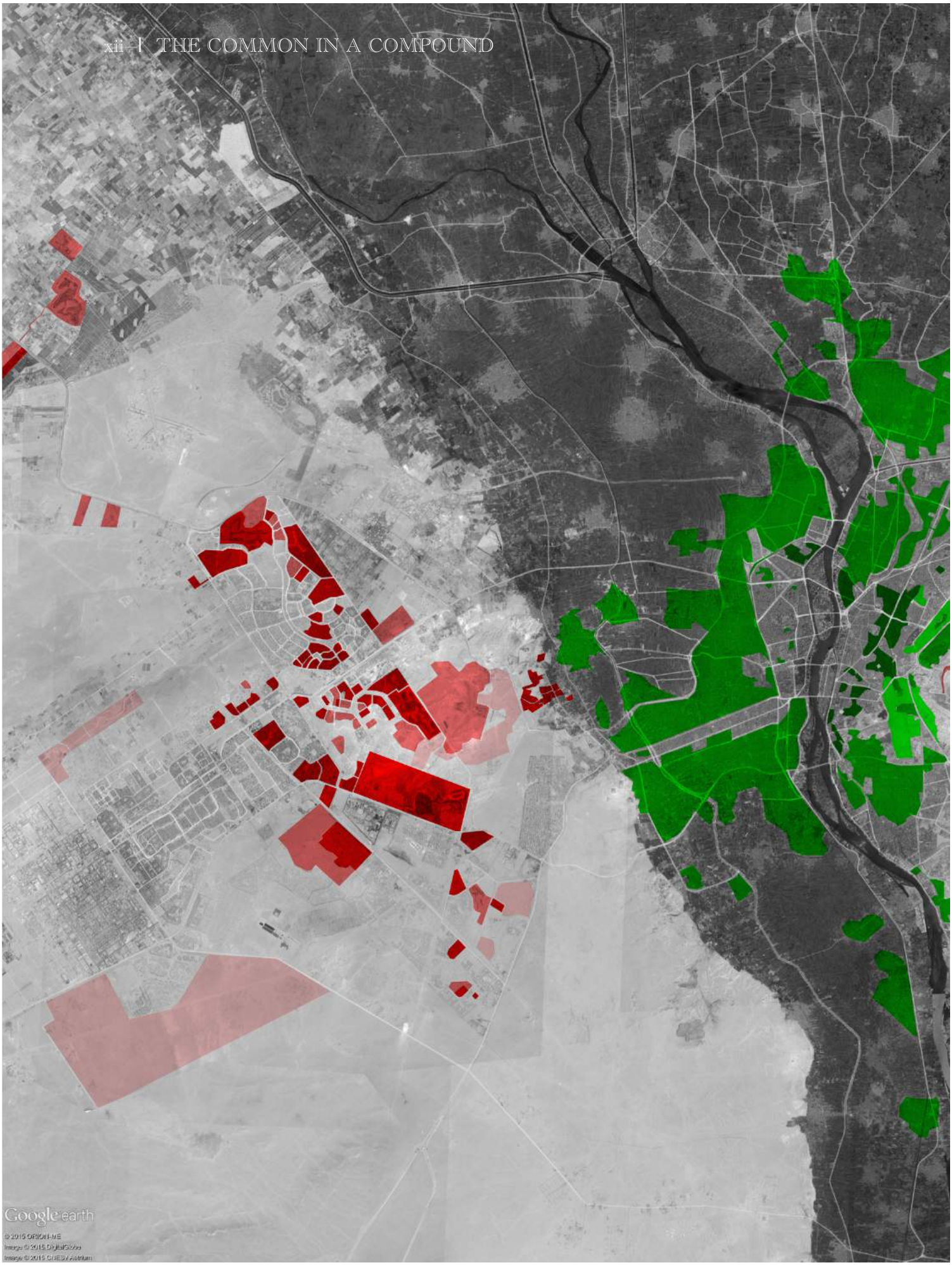
Map 1: Greater Cairo with 6th of October satellite city, indicating Duweiqa and Haram City.



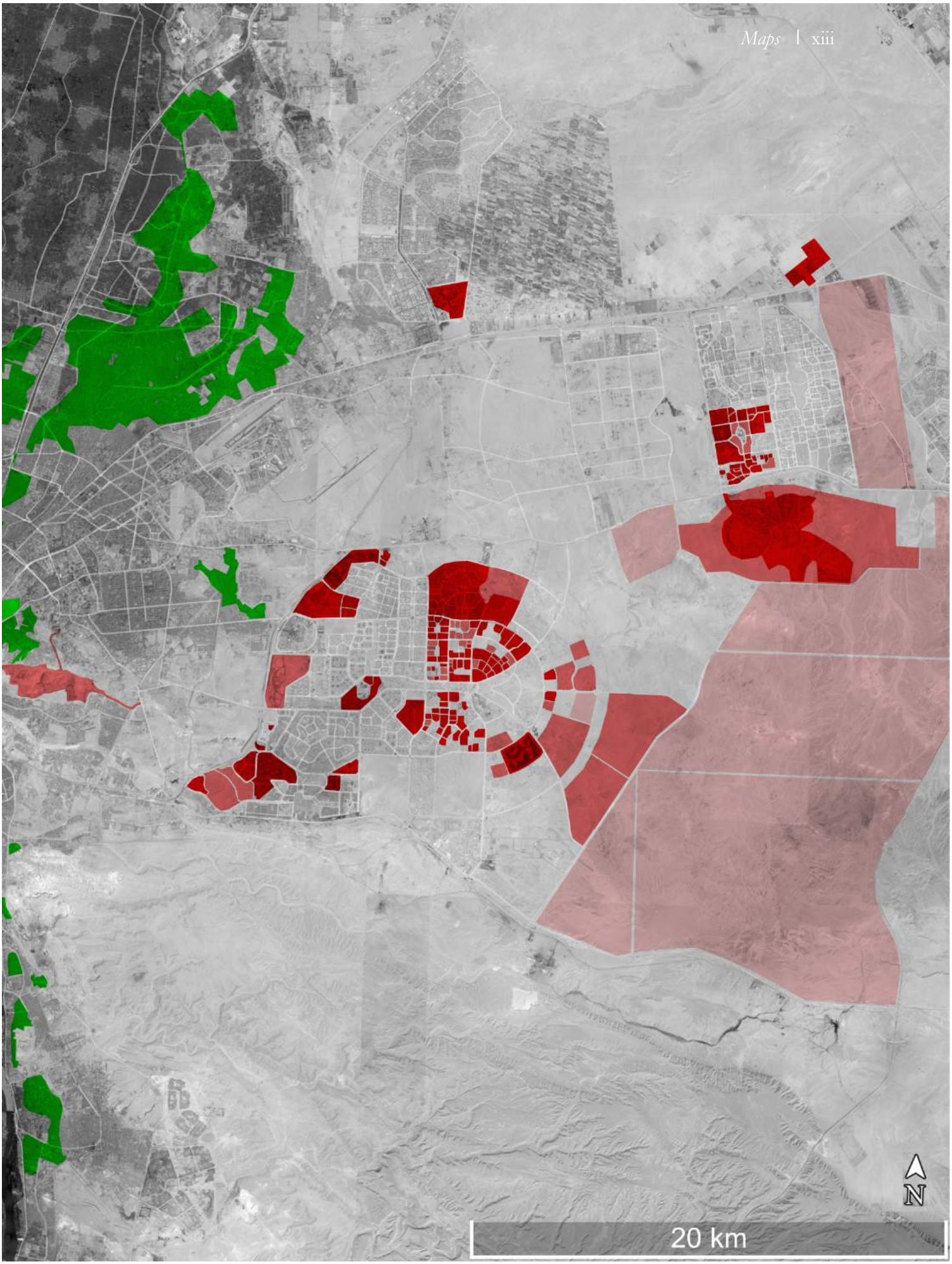
Map 2: 6th of October City, indicating Haram City, Dreamland (see T. Mitchell, 2002, Chapter 9 and Denis, 2006a), and Hosary Square (commercial and transportation hub).



Map 3: Haram City, indicating A-areas & B-areas, A1/A2 resettlement quarter (green – brighter for areas most in contravention of OHC norms), purchased home concentration (red), Tamar Hinna mall/OHC admin (1), OHC sales (2), "Souq Duweiqa" (3), microbus stand (4), and area squatted by Duweiqa community (5).



Map 4: Greater Cairo & satellite cities with 'informal areas' ('ashwa'iyat) *in green (light = partially inhabited cemetery, dark = deteriorated historic core) and gated communities* (compounds) *in red (light = under construction, v. light = planned).*


N
20 km

Preface | Binary vision of a city

On April 23rd 2015 a group of students from the American University in Cairo (AUC) organised an official campus festival called "El 7ara" (*al-Hara,* 'the alleyway'), offering elite private university students an opportunity to experience the everyday inner city life of over fourteen million other Cairenes: "a unique and unprecedented experience from the local Egyptian streets brought to you" (AUC Theater & Film Club, 2015; Bower, 2015). This seven-hour event included reproductions of *qahwat* (coffee shops) with dominos and backgammon, local *koshk* (kiosks) serving *foul* (refried beans), nuts, and sweet potatoes, and as the main attraction an "authentic Egyptian wedding" with actors performing as "*sha'bi* (popular) singers," wedding guests, bride and groom, and family members all wearing turbans and *galabiyyas* (a popular robe, often worn by Cairo's multigenerational rural-to-urban migrants). Rather anachronistically, many actors simulating informal street vendors wore a *tarbush,* the red cylindrical cap of aristocratic pashas and beys absent from public life since the rise of Gamal Abd al Nasser in the 1950s. The show promised to reproduce an intact reality but in safety, proposing to assert an external moral order on the centre to appease classed and gendered fears,

asking: "how many girls want to go sit in a local *qahwa* but can't?"

Located in the middle of an agglomeration of gated communities in the New Cairo satellite suburb and with tickets costing LE150 (£15), this phantasmagoria of central Cairo's everyday reality was perhaps closer to Timothy Mitchell's account of the Egypt exhibition at the 1867 Exposition Universelle in Paris (1988). As unsettled members of a visiting Egyptian delegation then remarked, in these façades of Cairo streets, "even the paint on the buildings was made dirty," where actors portrayed locals as no more than "stage parts . . . or the implementing of plans" (1988, p. 1, 28). To the local French industrialist, tourist, or Orientalist writer, Mitchell argues, the "carefully chaotic" design enframed an object as much as it defining its surroundings: "The representation was set apart from the real political reality it claimed to portray as the observing mind was set apart from what it observed . . . To 'determine the plan' is to build-in an effect of order and an effect of truth" (1988, pp. 1, 9, 33). Reluctant to or prohibited from driving to the city centre, mostly privately educated, housed, and serviced cosmopolitan English-speaking AUC youth shipped a sanitised and orientalised version of their own city into the suburbs, for a glimpse at "our lost identity" twisting and turning up to the edges of a sprawling garden plaza.

The sentiment that Cairo contains two worlds coming apart, a resolutely binary vision of a city, is echoed in numerous mass-mediated Ramadan television series, also portraying a great divide between future and past and mirrored in a genre of suburban development adverts that often mock the chaos of the Egyptian 'street' to promote spaces that exclude it (Armbrust, 2012).[1] It is also a binary vision that some revolutionary youth groups lambast on social media, with one Facebook group called 'Porto el-Shaab' — playing on the Amer Group's brand of gated communities (Porto) and revolutionary

[1] For an excellent example of suburban development advertisements explicitly ridiculing inner city life, while comparing suburbs to the United States, see: Mountain View Hyde Park – 'The Thug' (2013).

demands 'of/for the people' (*al-sha'b*) — regularly posting photoshopped mock billboard advertisements of housing developments with collaged images from Cairo's poorest areas against ones of elite gated communities (Porto El-Shaab, 2014).

In a rather hyperbolic variation on similar sentiments, the central plot device for Ahmed Khaled Towfik's horror science fiction novel Utopia is an Egypt in 2023 where society has irrevocably bifurcated into two geographical universes (2009). Restricted to a walled and US Marine-guarded secessionary gated outpost (for which the book is named), a young male protagonist, bored with freedom to consume drugs, gratuitous violence for amusement, and extravagant leisure funded by his oligarch parents, organises an illegal visit *extra mura* to the masses in the centre. To impress his friends and for a thrill, he surreptitiously rides a domestic worker bus in disguise to Cairo's now devastated *sha'bi* Shubra district. His mission: to retrieve a hand from one of "The Others," navigating their Hobbesian gangster rule and a poverty-induced collapse of the "barricades of morality." The novel interlaces chapters from the perspective of 'predator' and 'prey,' two sides of a flipping coin, as the protagonist hunts for a commoner to dismember and mount, a trophy of bravery to his friends. As the novel ends, a marine spots an infuriated mob of "Others" rapidly approaching city walls. In the prologue, the author warns: "The Utopia mentioned here is an imaginary place … even though the author knows for certain that this place *will* exist soon."

This promise is sensationalist, but it is also one where some Cairenes see truth. According to Towfik's publisher, he is "the Arab world's best-selling author of horror and fantasy genres" (Byrnes, 2011). One commentator directly compares AUC's "El 7ara" simulation to Utopia as a seemingly inevitable culmination of profound shifts in a "moral code" of conviviality stemming from the July 1952 coup and eventual 'opening' of Egypt's economy, as described in Galal Amin's classic book Whatever Happened to the Egyptians? (2000). He resigns: "It seems as if the entire purpose of one modern

narrative of Egypt's history is to maintain the gap between these 'two levels' of Egyptians, one which enables the rich to transcend their oriental culture and transform themselves into embodiments of the modern, western-like, superior model" (Shafick, 2015).

The gap in binary perceptions over the legitimacy between so-called 'formal' and 'informal' urban realms fragments along a clearly defined geography. With desert occupying over 90% of Egypt's total landmass, a great majority of state and international organisation policy projects since the 1970s have promised solutions to everything from a supposed housing crisis, faltering agricultural production, export-led industry, tourism, and migration through conquest of this frontier. This enduring "topological imperative" (T. Mitchell, 2002, 2015), largely premised on an perennial myth of unsustainable overpopulation within the Nile basin (Sims, 2015, pp. 250–251), has been a source of and destination for the great wealth accumulated by Egypt's handful of post-structural adjustment oligarchic business leaders. Since the second half of the twentieth century, Egypt has built fifteen new 'satellite cities' in the desert around its existing ones, including the mostly privately developed New Cairo where AUC is located and others like it. Gradually, one side of a binary vision of Cairo is said to be observing from the outside in.

At the 2015 Cityscape Egypt summit, the premier gathering for Egypt's real estate sector where most decisions over Cairo's 'new cities' are spun, Egyptian Minister of Housing Mostafa Madbouly spoke before 150 developers and Jones Lang LaSalle analysts of the importance of private investment in affordable developments, declaring: "The state and the investor should not be competing. We want to regain the confidence of investors as we are two faces of the same coin" (Madbouly, 2015). Somewhat like a flipping coin himself, Madbouly has been a World Bank consultant, Director for UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Arab States between 2012 and 2014, and Chairman of

Egypt's General Office for Physical Planning (GOPP) under Mubarak between 2008 and 2012 — the two bodies responsible for major investment-centred masterplans such as the faltered 'Cairo 2050.' Likely in attendance at Minister Madbouly's talk before giving her own yearly presentation was Sahar Nasr, former Lead Financial Economist in the World Bank's Finance and Private Sector Development Department of the Middle East and North Africa, creator of the World Bank's "Affordable Mortgage Finance Policy Loan" to Egypt associated with Madbouly's private affordable development drive, and as of late 2015 Minister of International Cooperation responsible for attracting foreign investment for social development. Also in attendance was Atter Hannoura, Director of Egypt's Ministry of Finance Public-Private Partnership Central Unit. The business breakfast was held in conjunction with Cityscape Global's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Mortgage and Affordable Housing Congress to address a regional "housing crisis," part of a push from within the regional real estate industry to expand the city's outside to include middle and low-income, privately serviced and managed communities.

The organisation likely to implement any schemes launched at Cityscape is Egypt's New Urban Communities Authority (NUCA). Acting as local government for new cities from its creation in 1979, NUCA presents itself as an active partner to investors and "the principal property developer of the state," a role sometimes also interpreted as that of "civilising" society towards an orderly life on the outskirts (Sims 2015: 171 footnote 81, Al Masry Al Youm, 29 May 2013, 3). Implying that binary visions of Cairo can be resolved by the outside subsuming the inside (rather than the other way around), Madbouly notes in a recent interview: "[In] the revolutions that have happened recently, one of the major players there were the people from these [urban poor] communities … So unless you give more focus and more attention to the development and improvement and the condition of those people, they might again have another round" (Fick & Georgy, 2014).

Echoing Madbouly's promise that orderly suburban housing by public-private partnership can stem a revolutionary tide by an unruly centre, a 2012 article in Cityscape's industry trade magazine titled "A Million Homes are Not Enough" states that the wave of activism in 2011 has "shown that Arab governments can no longer ignore the needs of millions of low-income citizens in their countries" (Cityscape, 2012). The article alarmingly reports that, according to a Jones Lang LaSalle, in 2011, "Egypt currently holds the record of the largest shortfall of affordable housing units (1,500,000) in the region" (Cityscape, 2012). Accordingly, on paper, the Egyptian government is running four separate "million home" desert housing schemes simultaneously, all largely privately invested and publicly subsidised (whether by land deals or directly), and some planned to be privately managed as "compounds," the local term for gated community.

While numbers can be hard to come by, to anyone crossing the vast street layouts of desert developments in a microbus one of the only ways to pass the time is to gaze over a sandy sea of endless rolling rows of identical homes that appear empty. Indeed, some estimate vacancy rates in satellite cities approaching 60% in existing stock (Sims, 2011, p. 154). With 'million home' schemes announced yearly to great political fanfare and press, then, it is likely difficult for that microbus passenger — perhaps at the end of an hour-and-a-half morning commute to a job as builder and with newspaper in hand — not to wonder if some misrepresentation is at play. Whether industry trade magazines or consultancies inflate housing demand or state agencies inflate projected supply, each in the name of benevolence against 'crisis' and against the supposed root of revolution, for the builder as for any other discerning observer: both cannot be true.

This thesis is about Haram City, a development that is a regularly cited as a model precedent in many Cityscape, ministry, and World Bank promotions for new, large-scale, and "fully integrated" private housing developments to combat a "housing crisis." Attending its opening a few years prior to her husband's toppling from power, Suzanne

Mubarak declared, "The project is a civilisational leap to provide housing units for young and low-income people at affordable prices" (Arabnet 5, 2008). Since that day, it is also a place that has found both 'sides' of a binary vision of the city stereoscopically collapsed into a single circumscribed territory and optic for governance. When Cairo's aspirational middle classes, finally able to afford private suburban lifestyles, face an unlikley 'invasion' by the urban poor, bringing a way of life and breaching the "barricades of morality" — "a unique and unprecedented experience from the local Egyptian streets" literally and irrecoverably "brought to you" — residents ask: what, who, and how is the common in a compound?



Figure 1: The Egyptian army attempting to evict squatters in Haram City between 25 January and 11 February 2011. Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnzaYYTjPM0 (Adel, 2011).

1 | Questioning local legality:

A slum in the gated community?

"He who divides the fight gets torn apart."
(*Mainubsh al-makhlas ila taqti' haduma*)

The idea that Cairo is bifurcating into a landscape reducible to slums in the centre and gated communities in peripheral new towns is emerging as a trope of Egyptian popular culture. If much media, local journalism, and real estate promotion are to be believed, residents of gated and 'cosmopolitan' suburbs and 'satellite cities' view inner city life as a lost tradition, suffocated by density and disorder, and made inaccessible by crime and sexual harassment — often framed as moral decay. As one Egyptian professor of urban planning decried in a 2014 editorial on squatting in the inner city, published in Egypt's most widely circulated and majority government owned newspaper Al-Ahram: "The urban fabric is deteriorating," part of a "national trait" attributable to "disintegration of social conduct," "erosion of human behaviour," "disrespect of the rule of law (which could be unethical or immoral)," and "denial of traditions" (Zahran, 2014). He asserts, "The primary definition of urbanity is its embodiment of order" and offers two solutions: first, authorities must ensure that "law enforcement is mandatory for all." Second, that they provide new housing beyond the green Nile Valley at a rate "not less than 10 units/1000 population annually." With Cairo wedged between vast desert

expanses, such reference to a uniformly chaotic inner city easily expands in the imagination to include a majority of what is colloquially referred to as Cairo and Giza and the seemingly indistinguishable masses within. It reflects a point of view looking in from beyond the 'V' where the Nile Basin bursts from Cairo into the Delta, where more new cities were constructed from scratch in the second half of the twentieth century than in any other country, and a distinct expression of what Mitchell has referred to as Egypt's rulers' enduring "topological imperative" (T. Mitchell, 2002, 2015, p. xx).

Formulations around order, tradition, and behaviour to describe *'ashwa'iyat* (an Egyptian term for 'slums,' literally 'haphazard' or 'chaotic') are a main discursive component in justifications for widespread state designation of urban "unsafe areas" listed for demolition (ECCLR, 2014; ISDF, 2010b), as well as international policy alarmism around Cairo's perennial "housing crisis" as motivation for building more houses (Fahmi & Sutton, 2008; Trew, 2014; USAID & World Bank, 2008), and during the 2011–2013 revolutionary period a main lens for attributing the sources of social unrest (de Soto, 2011; MHUC, GOPP, UN-Habitat, & UNDP, 2012; Nasr, Abdelkader, & World Bank, 2012). But contradictions in this popular assessment abound: vacancy rates in Greater Cairo and Giza are estimated at between 7–30% (with most estimates at the higher end of the spectrum) as well as around 60% in Cairo's desert satellite cities, indicating a severe mismatch in supply and demand rather than a shortage (Fahmi & Sutton, 2008, pp. 279–280; Singerman, 1995, p. 112). With the revolutionary-era indictment of twenty-seven businessmen (controlling 80% of land reclamation projects) and several Ministers for Mubarak-era illegal land deals in new 'orderly' desert suburbs, some residents of subsistence urban housing have come to question the relative illegality of their ownership claims (Egypt Independent, 2012; Shalaby, 2012; Sims, 2015, p. 276,

Footnote 52).[1] While irregular conversion of land-use from agricultural to residential-commercial is rampant, as are irregular building additions, unclear tenure on generationally inhabited land, and pervasive street vending, most of these cases are in some form or another paid for retroactively to state officials, for example as exploitatively variable ground rents on government claimed land to the Cairo Governorate (Dorman, 2007; Shawkat, 2014b). In Cairo, squatting itself is extremely rare: contemporary invasions of non-state or military land are few, and the direct seizure of homes is nearly unheard of. Lastly, demand for the provision of "10 units/1000 population annually" (900,000 units/year) — an improbably high number even for the most wealthy and socially committed state — is still lower than what is habitually promised by Egypt's presidents, generals, and ministers, with at least five desert schemes promising between a quarter million and one million units each announced between 2005 and 2015 (Kingsley, 2015; Shawkat, 2014a; Trew, 2014).[2]

While less than 20% of promised affordable units have been completed, at a very flexible definition of affordability and at great infrastructure costs to the state, the vast majority of housing bolstered by such policies since the mid 1980s has been in the form of *compounds* (the preferred term for 'private gated communities' in Egypt), mega

[1] Since the rise of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in July 2013, almost all cases have been dismissed or rescinded, testament to the return to Mubarak-style authoritarian bureaucratic patronage, substantially supported by support in return for land transactions with Gulf States and influential Egyptian oligarchies (Mada Masr, 2015).

[2] Projects over 250,000 units for Cairo and it's surroundings in the last decade include: The National Housing Program (NHP or '*Iskan Mubarak*': 500,000 units between 2005-2011), The Supreme Council of Armed Forces supported Social Housing Program (1,000,000 units between 2014–unspecified), *Dar Masr/Iskan Mutawaset* ('House Egypt': first 150,000 then 250,000 units promised from 2012/2014–unspecified), Arabtec (1,000,000 units promised between 2014-2019), The Capital Cairo ('New New Cairo': 1,100,000 units promised, including portions from existing schemes and private developments, between 2015–2020/2022) (Kingsley, 2015; Shawkat, 2014a, 2014b; Trew, 2014). Of all these promises, it is likely that not more than between 300,000 and 400,000 units have been built in the last decade, at a rate of production of 33,000 units per year between 2000–2011 and 27,000 between 2012-2015 (Shawkat, 2014a). In addition to this, several others schemes in the high tens-of-thousands have been promised in the same period for areas outside of Greater Cairo, such as *New Ismailiya,* and for proposed Cairo eviction areas, such as the *Tahya Masr/Iskan Asmarat* ('Long-Live Egypt') project in Manshiet Nasser. In December 2015, Housing Minister Mustafa Madbouly announced yet another million home scheme to be completed over five years, providing no details on feasibility. In is unclear if this is a rebranding of the Social Housing Program or its own million-home initiative.

developments within Cairo's desert periphery cities that cumulatively occupy roughly twice the land area of non-satellite city Greater Cairo but contain only 4% of its population (Sims, 2015, p. 147).[3] In these spaces infrastructure provision and services are privately allocated or denied, collective spaces are privately regulated, and most residences sit out of sight of each other behind a further layer of residential walls. Not only are the legal terms of such mass land acquisitions often questionable, the state of local legality within them is often undefined (who forms covenants, by who's mandate, and what constitutes a violation of norms over property, behaviour, or morality?). It is from this doubly ambiguous legality that derision of a "lawlessness" city centre is often lobbied, justifying new generations of desert construction. From its outset, this project grapples with the central problem of what many claim to be an increasingly transparent legal-geographical double standard, focusing on how citizens frame legitimacy of city expectations and practices accordingly.

This thesis presents an ethnography of contestations over ownership and order within Haram City, Egypt's first publicly subsidised, privately controlled "affordable"/"low-income" gated community.[4] It navigates relations between two groups of coinhabitants: aspirational middle-class homeowners (Haram City's target market for the first time able to buy into suburban dreams for civic order) and several thousand people resettled from Cairo's poorest neighbourhoods after prolonged disputes with the Cairo Governorate (some following a 2008 rockslide in Duweiqa and others evicted from subsequently labelled "unsafe areas" in Manshiet Nasser, Dar al-Salaam, Ezbet Khairallah, Establ Antar, and Bassatine). Divided only by two streets bisecting the Orange County California-style suburban plan, both groups share row-by-row of

[3] This figure is an approximation based on ongoing construction and does not include current plans new satellite cities, including a new capital just east of Cairo on land approximately the size of Singapore (Kingsley, 2015).

[4] While generally presented as "affordable housing" in English promotion and documentation, in a majority of Arabic material the preferred term is "low-income" as well as in most English documentation from before 2012.

identical 63m^2 or 48m^2 semi-detached homes — Hassan Fathy-inspired 'Nubian vernacular style' reproductions — with garden, grass parks, and a central commercial 'mall' area all behind staffed gates and surrounded by a deep trench and desert.[5] As the resettled are disconnected from livelihood networks, physically modify the residential landscape with workshops and stores to allow income generation, interpret the inner workings of opaque Mubarak era public-private partnerships, and as some began squatting vacant homes in during the January-February 2011 occupation of Tahrir Square, much debate with neighbours, company managers, and local authorities expressly asks: what is *really* illegal urbanism here and when is it morally justified? Conversely, homeowners buying into a middle-class propertied prestige and fearing their investments compromised by disorder lament that for the first time in Egypt's history an *'ashwa'iyat* is spreading within their compound.

Amidst a development where property entitlements, social services, and infrastructure are effectively administered as though outside Egyptian law, I document residents' and management's expectations and interventions in the city as normative projects. As some homes are embellished with ornate walls and others are turned into workshops or small kiosks, conjoined into multi-home investments or squatted, visions for what a new private city ought to be are publicly contested and inscribed. Navigating residents' demands, asserting standards or double standards, and the ways that they are put into practice, this thesis asks: *in the squatted "affordable" gated community, where local legality is undefined and openly contested, how is ownership given moral weight and used to assert order?* Put differently: *In a city built from scratch amidst a revolution, how is legality invented?*

To answer this question, I spent a total of eleven months in 2013 as a participant observer in the everyday making of Haram City, living between homeowners and the

[5] Hassan Fathy (1900-1989) was a noted Egyptian architect recognised for combining modernist planning sensibilities with Nubian-inspired building techniques (mud-brick construction, passive cooling, etc.).

resettled and regularly attending company interventions. Broader involvement with Haram City between 2012 and 2015, including repeated visits before and after main ethnographic fieldwork and regular communication with residents, spans half of the development's existence. In addition to over 80 interviews with middle-class homeowners and resettled slum dwellers and 15 with Haram City's onsite management team, most knowledge was produced through active dialogue, whether over tea and dominoes, in cafes or people's homes after work, training at a small gym improvised in a resettlement home, assistant coaching a local youth football team that brings children together across the divide, or mostly literally squatting (*'oud*) in gardens or on curbs in front of seized homes with their chronically underemployed occupants to cook and look out for security guards. Additionally, 21 interviews were conducted with NGOs or activist non-residents somehow involved with Haram City.

The title of this thesis is meant to evoke the ambivalence between shared (common) and exclusive (compound) spaces coexisting at once, two categorical tropes in scholarship on urbanism in the Global South existing within each other like two sides of a Mobius strip: a slum inside the gated community. It alludes to three interrelated pluralities, or disputes, over the 'common' in Haram City: 1) the 'common citizen' or commoner — a contestation over the legality of subjects with regards to "affordability," *al-sha'b* ('the people' or populace) versus the *sha'bi* ('the popular' or low-income masses); 2) 'common land' — a contestation over expectations of ownership in a private development built on formerly public land, marketed as a cooperative but operated as an enclave, and lacking clear definition of property rights; and 3) 'common sense' — a contestation of moralities, each invoking an imagined community to legitimate visions of how the city ought to work. Contestations over these three deeply interconnected commons are legible in discourses and practices of ownership (land) at the junction between morality (sense) and order (legality), framing this project's theoretical scope.

While study on suburban life in the South has thoroughly explored the splintering-off of elite spaces (AlSayyad & Roy, 2006; Beall, 2002; Caldeira, 2000; Graham & Marvin, 2002; Lemanski, 2006; Srivastava, 2014; Waldrop, 2004), as well as private governance (Datta, 2012; Hook & Vrdoljak, 2002; Shatkin, 2011), at times resulting in "authoritarian private governance" (Ekers, Hamel, & Keil, 2015) supported by homeowners' associations as in the Global North (M. Davis, 1990; Low, 2003), research on private cities as a socio-economic development strategy is without precedent, in the North or South. Yet, as a Middle East representative for Jones Lang LaSalle, the global real estate industry's main source for investment opportunity statistics, states: urban-scale affordable and low-income private developments represent "probably the single greatest opportunity for the real estate industry" (JLL MENA, 2011b).

In 2007 construction started in Haram City to great fanfare, winning real estate industry awards (OHC, 2012b) and accolades from the World Bank (2013), UNDP (2011), and UN-Habitat (2011), defining the project as a model case study for "growing inclusive markets" to meet the UN human right to adequate housing by way of affordable mortgages and public-private partnership. A majority ownership stake of Haram City is controlled by Orascom Development (OD), with Egyptian billionaire Samih Sawiris as CEO. The project is operated by Orascom Housing Communities (OHC), an OD subsidiary. The sense that this project is highly reproducible, possibly highly profitable, and has international organisation support for further "best-practice" low-income housing privatisation globally has also led to substantial international investment, with just under half of company shares owned by Mexico's largest homebuilder HOMEX and US real estate investment trusts (REITs) Blue Ridge Capital and Equity International, shifting assets out of the US since the 2008 property crash and into emerging markets (Gallun, 2011; Orascom Development, 2010b).

Suspended legality in Haram City, Egypt 2009–2015?

A significant difference between elite private spaces in the Global South and (real estate) developers doing (socio-economic) development regards issues that arise when introducing private services, infrastructure, and land use regulations to the people who most depend on them for livelihood and survival. Administered by company managers who do not derive their mandate from either citizenship or elite consumption, and with poorer residents holding uncertain property entitlements, private infrastructure can be extended or limited, excluded or included towards a range of market-motivated ends.

In the parlance of OHC, Haram City is a Egypt's first low-income "fully integrated community," a phrase currently being adopted for similar projects around the world (OHC, 2007). This entails the private construction and management of a complete infrastructure network, including electricity, water, sewage, garbage, and roads. Sewage and recycling are both processed by OHC subsidiaries on site. While water and electricity are currently sourced from the government, OHC is in planning phases for its own LE42 million (£4.2 million) 66-megawatt power plant to power 11,500 units (with a target of 50,000–70,000 units). Furthermore, while one option for public education exists as well as a small public health clinic operating at restricted hours, most social services are private and given disproportionate prominence, including several schools (such as a German language school and 'alternative learning' school), an around-the-clock private health clinic, ambulances, security, a central bakery selling subsidised bread, an OHC supported mosque, sporting facilities, and a cinema. An NGO-run orphanage and embroidery factory for street children are also within the site, but there is almost no interaction with residents. Presenting "full integration" to the state as cost savings in meeting affordable housing promises, a transaction described by international organisations as a public-private partnership, it is the main justification for state subsidies — 8.4 million m^2 of military and public land for LE10.70/m^2 (£1.70 in January 2006)

(compared to LE300 [£30] for most other nearby projects) and a LE10,000 (£1,000) non-refundable subsidy for home buyers.[6]

Haram City staff's explicitly stated goal is to eventually reach total "self-sufficiency" from the state, fully integrating all essential components of a small functioning metropolis within its boundaries. Similar to the latest round of elite suburban "building from scratch" in South Africa (C. W. Herbert & Murray, 2015, p. 11), OHC's six to eight member onsite management covers tasks normally tackled by a small municipal administration. This includes acting as a local legislator and adjudicator over land-use management, making comprehensive regulatory regimes, defining the spectrum of acceptable compound behaviour (nuisance, type of self-employment, loitering, 'public' or private decency etc.), and establishing building codes — all norms that many of Cairo's urban poor spend a significant portion of life negotiating or circumventing vis-à-vis the state (see Singerman, 1995). In addition, OHC controls most police-like means of coercion, protection, and incentives that otherwise contribute to the law's enforceability and weight. An openness of possibilities for rules — who owns what and what can they do with it — the process of defining them, the delineation of common mandates for legitimacy, and the ability to enforce them accordingly, then, are all competing normative projects amounting to a *de facto* production of legality, legitimised by resident moralities and company profit targets.

In effect Egyptian state law over property disputes and resource access, already inconsistently applied and regularly circumvented, is only put into practice in Haram City when either city administrators summon it or a resident does so under company supervision. Indeed, while satellite cities are advertised as panaceas of order in

[6] Since 2014 the government has sought to rescind land sales for Haram City's second phase of more expensive homes to supplement the cost of the already built 'low-income' component. OHC has mounted a prolonged legal dispute arguing that its low-income development would not turn a profit without 'upscale' expansion. Recently OHC and US investors have threatened to bring the case before an international court for arbitrations (Samir, 2015).

comparison with the inner city, much popular imagination is built around social possibilities far from observation, a kind of frontier mentality. As one homeowner reflected: "here you have 144 people per acre and in Giza its 700-something … they can control you or they can watch you or monitor your movements easily." Indeed, much hushed gossip circulates through Haram City on not only the experimentation that both distance from the city centre and distanced properties afford, but also on social or vice-related transgressions of the law within private homes — common to all of Egypt but, somehow, practiced more openly because of a sense that behind gates some rules don't apply (see Ghannam, 2014; Simone, 2007). Haram City's marketing as a public good, state mandated income caps, and state mortgage subsidy programs are theoretically within reach of a lower-middle class. Yet, many homeowners are able to demonstrate low independent income, while affording lump sum purchases using family assets. Many are men investing in the usual struggle to find a spouse — a potential groom without his own home may not be considered eligible — and in the meantime are free from the gaze of neighbours and relatives, often seen as insurers of morality and respect. Other properties amount to investments and double as weekend/summer homes, creating a flux of people seen to corrupt conviviality and neighbourly familiarity. Furthermore, many homes are bought, refurbished, and sold or rented despite a Ministry of Housing condition for land sale to OHC prohibiting sublets or sales before five years of ownership. Of 28,000 residents in 2014, 16,000 are considered homeowners by OHC, with the rest resettled. But between independent broker transactions of purchased homes, squatting, and the resettled transacting in resettlement documents, the actual number and provenance of people physically in the city at any given moment varies.

Other issues around the reliability of the law in Haram City during 2012–2014 have to do with broader institutional and political conditions. As Said M. Hanafi, lawyer/director of OHC and public-private partnership specialist, notes in an

introduction to his course on Law and Development at the American University in Cairo focusing on public-private partnerships and affordable mortgages in Egypt, there is a "challenging task to formulate policies on matters related to development in a society where the Rule of Law is not very well entrenched" (Hanafi, 2014). Indeed, in Haram City, at times, it feels as though efforts are made to reinvent the law. How, for example, would a decision be taken over nuisance in Haram City, overwhelmingly a behavioural evaluation predicated on slippery subjective intangibles like "reasonableness" or "offensiveness" (H. E. Smith, 2004, p. 967)? And to what effect would it be enforced as a norm when some people's notions of "offensiveness" are transgressed by what others define as acts of survival, such as building a livelihood in a rigidly residential-only space?

Broader questioning of Egyptian legality was exacerbated during the 2011–2013 revolutionary period, when issues of social justice and corruption were confronted publicly and spectacularly in the country's main cities and squares — as captured in the ubiquitous slogan "*aish, hurriya, 'adala igtimaiyya*" (bread, freedom, and social justice) — and the legitimacy of state authority was often dismissed, invoking the law and repression selectively. Amidst institutional disarray, numbers of street vendors in central Cairo skyrocketed ("infectious," according to the aforementioned planning professor), twenty-storey brick and cement towers ("malignant tumours") appeared out of nowhere, and politicians repeatedly blamed the urban poor for political unrest, exacerbating sentiments of a great chasm (Zahran, 2014). At the same time, high vacancy rates in new developments, built on public (or military) land in the name of public good, stood in particularly stark contrast with the inability of a large percentage of Cairo's residents to have their homes regularised. In this context, few have asked: how do long-time residents of the inner city feel about accusations lobbied against them, amidst revolution, and view the suburbs accordingly? In the three years following Mubarak's fall, Egypt's government, the institution entrusted with making and enforcing the rules of society, has

hopscotched between complete military rule under the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), the democratically elected but highly controversial Muslim Brotherhood and Mohammed Morsi, a military coup, and Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's current 'near unanimous' electoral rule, as well as a parliament dissolved twice and reassembled twice, and three different constitutions over five revisions.[7]

During the 18 days of Mubarak's overthrow, Egypt's television cameras often avoided shots of solidarity in Tahrir Square and focused on series of stories about chaos, including "thug" invasions of vacant desert homes (DreamTV, 2011; Kharsa, 2011). Haram City was a main topic in these stories, with its legality subsequently coming under particular fire on two fronts. First, a group of families from Duweiqa in Haram City — the rockslide victims upon which other evictions were justified — took action over their resettlement into homes significantly below sizes promised by the Cairo Governorate. Duweiqa victims had resisted offers of resettlement to desert new towns between 6 September 2008 and mid-2010, camping in front of the Cairo Governorate to protest well before the mass movements of Tahrir Square. In this time other resettled groups had been given bigger homes in Haram City to facilitate eviction. When exhausted Duweiqa victims finally relented and followed, people resettled in their name had taken all limited work opportunities. Under the cover of political chaos in February 2011 and cognisant that Haram City was being subsidised as a 'low-income' 'cooperative' on state land while catering primarily to middle class homeowners, 231 Duweiqa families seized and squatted a block of unsold homes. At the same time, numerous other invasions

[7] On 10 February 2011, Mubarak requested that Articles 76, 77, 88, 93, and 181 be amended and 179 removed (Adams, 2011). Following Mubarak's fall SCAF appointed the Egyptian constitutional review committee of 2011 to further alter these articles (Yasmine, 2011). On 30 March, a provisional constitution was adopted based on amendments and new articles for constitutional reform. A new constitution was approved in 2012 under elected president Mohammed Morsi (BBC, 2012). Mohammed Morsi was overthrown on 3 July 2013 by the Egyptian military and a new constitutional referendum took place from 14-15 January 2014 (Carlstrom, 2013; for changes see Rizk & El Shamoubi, 2013). Mubarak's Egyptian Parliament was dissolved by SCAF in 2011. Mohammed Morsi restored a new parliament in 2012. Interim president Adly Mansour dissolved this parliament in 2013. Under former general President Sisi, new parliamentary elections were held on 19 October 2015 and on 22-23 November (Waguih, 2015).

occurred either by non-Duweiqa resettled or by inner city relatives. The Egyptian Army promptly intervened and most squatters were evicted (Adel, 2011). The original Duweiqa 231 families, however, managed to defend their claim. Soon after Mubarak's fall, and sustaining squatters' claim to local legitimacy, Sawiris and OHC were included in — but survived — an array of lawsuits targeting land corruption cases for large-scale desert housing development projects.

Beginning with the first round of "unsafe area" evictions in 2009, and especially since January-February 2011, Haram City's resettled have coordinated a radical transformation within and between rows of identical suburban homes to replace jobs that are too far away and expensive to reach. Many homes have been reassembled to accommodate storefronts, mechanics, workshops, and recreational facilities in complete contravention to OHC's covenants, or internal 'legality.' While the vast majority of modifications enable market trade of staple goods and services, uprooted dislocation of interdependent communities has also been accompanied by clandestine activities such as drug dealing and, occasionally, burglaries. Clandestine activities were by no means limited to the resettlement areas, however. Many vice-based crimes occurred within the ornate ironwork walls of the more respectable homeowner areas. The Duweiqa community's hostile and open home seizures — amidst marketing based on order through ownership but framed by occupiers as indisputably moral — has exposed them to blame for the entire range of compound transgressions.

Morality, ownership, and order

Haram City exists at an intersection of a variety of legal ambiguities, from aspirations for total self-sufficiency, to concerns over crime related to space between homes at the desert frontier, to complex tensions of legitimacy between homeowners of

varied middle-income provenance and a range of state resettlements of the urban poor, to large institutional questions of faith in national law amidst revolution. Accordingly, when approaching disputes over ownership, this research is not so focused on individual theft or corporate land theft, as it is on relative moralities — just who has stolen from whom? — and the space it creates for reinterpreting and perhaps prefiguring social and legal structures. The morality explored is not necessarily religiously defined, nor one emphasising a teleology of saintliness or sin. While research was conducted largely during the Muslim Brotherhood's Mohammed Morsi presidency, Islamism or the role of religion more broadly, including sectarianism and secularism, was scarcely a component of locally focused debates. Many residents are religious, and local mosques certainly provide an important hub for congregation, as well as helping a researcher form networks in the city. To describe appeals to morality with regards to ownership and order I make use of property scholar legal scholar Carole Rose's description of the moral subject of property regimes as a practitioner of a "second-best morality" (2007, p. 1900). This "moral middle ground" can comprise a rather large and ambiguous space between what one's role as an owner or non-owner ought to entail, including often fraught questions such as: on what grounds ought a non-owner be able to modify an owner's property without consent? How much latitude ought an owner have to act within or modify their claim in such a way that aggravates other owners or non-owners? When ought an owner or non-owner's actions be considered 'malicious,' 'innocent,' or 'necessary' and according to whom? How ought one adjudicate over such a dispute, lending legitimacy to one side or another while setting precedents? What kind of life, economy, or safety ought a city or spatially-circumscribed community accommodate, and how ought this be contingent on property ownership itself? And what kind of claim over how long a period ought to constitute ownership anyway? Specifically, ought a financial transaction be inherently necessary to claim ownership over a home built in the name of

'low-income' residents on public land and sold for little by the state when claimants have been relocated by the government following a natural disaster?

Much dialogue in Haram City centres on questions of legitimacy — the right to live, own, build, and work on this piece of land. Within these debates, two central areas quickly emerged into focus. First, *discourse* on people's own theorization and constitution of what ought to be legitimate property and city belonging — moral articulations of ownership. As Rose shows, even in the most seemingly stable legal regimes and unquestioning circumstances over what defines ownership, property is never a static, preordained entity but one that always depends on some form of active 'doing' (N. Blomley, 2003; C. M. Rose, 1994). She sums up the enactment of property as "persuasion," a communicative claim to others towards forming agreements over who can be excluded, why, when, with what exceptions, and compelling enough to be codified, enforced, and respected. Dialogue on legitimacy and life in Haram City, a vast stretch of sand only four years prior, can be understood as forming communities along shared beliefs towards rendering them persuasive and, eventually, normative moral positions on ownership. Documenting aspects of this discourse encapsulates one of two main ambitions in the thesis.

Throughout Egypt's recent history mapping has been an immensely persuasive act, naturalising property relations and erasing both their contestability and complexity through cultural assumptions of rationality (T. Mitchell, 1988, p. 79). But the power of persuasion far exceeds the hand of large institutions or the state. Anecdotal evidence is in the sheer number of Cairenes delineating and labelling their property claims on WikiMapia.org, an open-source service for editing satellite images. There is an abundance of efforts to literally 'draw' property lines over Haram City in WikiMapia, despite the fact that property is sold by an international corporation as putatively 'clean,' including erased and reinscribed self-mappings of squatted homes, purchased homes, and self-built

markets.[8] Each such act represents a moral claim towards persuasion, contested or approved. Furthermore such contestations are not limited to group commitments and may include individual internally conflicting commitments. As Lambek states: "Morality cannot be simply an act of commission or an acceptance of obligation but includes the reasoning behind choosing to do so and the reasoning that determines how to balance one's multiple and possibly conflicting commitments" (Lambek, 2000, p. 315; see also Schielke, 2009b). At the same time moralities over ownership depend on reasoning towards some form of consensus, cooperative agreement over signals of obligation or respect for others' things, imbued with a sense of the 'common' as imperfect 'common sense' (C. M. Rose, 2007, p. 1899; Taylor, 1989, p. 15). This thesis is not an effort to present a comprehensive review of people's often conflicting, overlapping, or ambivalent moral commitments with respect to ownership. Rather, it is an effort to recount the expression of some commitments that float to the surface by the buoyancy of collective reliability, drawing 'legitimate' community lines in Haram City's sandy streets.

The second principal effort is to interpret *practices* asserting moral positions over ownership. This concerns the instrumentalisation, codification, or application of internally persuasive claims either onto those who may not agree or simply to bolster resistance. While the corpus of law and society research has definitively challenged beliefs in a positivist law able to rationally ground morality, particularly in its equal application (Fuller, 1964; Silbey, 2005), people do turn to legality to render morality-based persuasions culturally interpretable. As Ewick and Silbey note: "the law is not simply a tool used to adjudicate disputes … legality actually operates to constitute the interests (as well as the obligations and privileges) sought by citizens" (1998, pp. 133, 134). In the absence of fixed reference points for a shared legal consciousness in Haram City — whether formal law or codes of the street — asserting 'common sense' over 'common

[8] See: Haram City in WikiMapia (n.a., n.d.).

land' requires auxiliary practices of normativity and order. Normativity and order, in turn, assert visions of Haram City's "common subject" and approach forms of legality.

Towards interpreting these practices, I adapt legal geography as a theoretical current running through the project's entirety, an analytical lens mostly confined to settings in the Global North where people's presumptions over respect for and coherence of the law compels examination. Legal geography begins from the position that nearly every aspect of the law has some spatial reference, that the law's "where" is inextricable from its "how" (Braverman, Blomley, Delaney, & Kedar, 2013). Nicholas Blomley, for example, describes a central aspect of his research as efforts to "surface" property. Seeing a fluid map of interactions across people and property as an evolving relationship with the law, he reveals how when interactions are imagined as static they normatively influence alternative moral claims over the city (2004, p. 38). In Haram City residents "surface" the implications embedded in property themselves, hotly debating how to fix the fluidity of their map, literally as a project still under construction, and figuratively in the sense that that property's cultural force confronts opaque land deals, opaque resettlement schemes, and opaque means for legitimate home acquisitions. People's own "surfacing" works towards defining and asserting references and codes, projects resembling law as "a deep, broad-based normative consensus" (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, p. 36), in a non-democratic compound tenuously held in common. To go further, this is an ethnography of residents' *own* legal geographic thinking and doing, not looking at the capital 'L' Law's tacit spatial frames amidst crisis of legitimacy, but at people's self-conscious efforts to generate their own guidelines or rules. Like in rule-design for a game, the reflexive invention of legality establishes "deliberate degrees of freedom around which outcomes are produced but not predetermined" (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, p. 136). As Haram City's chief on-site manager sometimes notes, he loves his job because his favourite games are SimCity and CityVille (see Chapter Seven). Also like a game,

amidst sensations of a bracketed political-legal reality, many residents and management see Haram City as a "world-building activity" (Goffman, 1961, p. 27), with competing contentions over how much rules should resemble those outside (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, pp. 136–137).

By reading such expressions through the legal geography corpus, dialogue between residents and researcher directly interrogates some of the more popular tropes for urban legitimacy in scholarship and policy (formality/informality, propertied autonomy, theft/purchase, obedience and urban governance etc.), dominant topics in urban studies of the South that may rest on assumptions about the law's fixity and style. Global North legal geography on urbanism in the Global South, then, becomes a vehicle to compare established Northern-biased policy frames with less expected literatures. This includes work resonating more strongly with participants' lived experience (such as Marxist history on the market and moral economy, rhetoric studies on the outlaw, Aristotelian virtue ethics) as well as prominent social science based in Cairo that is nonetheless rarely framed in terms of the urban (such as Asadian critiques of secular-liberalism and autonomy, and histories of late Ottoman and colonial Cairene poverty management).

Structure of the thesis

This thesis presents its core empirical research as a "submission by papers," as per an option offered by the School of Geography and Environment at the University of Oxford. According to regulations, the four papers here within must be submitted to journals but not necessarily published. In addition, submission by 'paper route' requires an introduction, literature review, and conclusion. Because this is an ethnography, I have also included a methodology chapter discussing the traditions of research upon which I build, the design of research techniques suitable to their context, and key ethical considerations. Furthermore, I begin the literature review with a brief analysis of recent

history in Cairo's urbanisation, essential for untangling historical and geographical trajectories behind property claims in the satellite city. One of the disadvantages of the "submission by papers" approach when working on one location is that, inevitably, there is some degree of repetition of the contextual details necessary for each paper to be publishable on its own. Accordingly, repetition of background information is approached from the perspective of topics and literature in the paper that it supports, with new paper-specific details emerging over the course of the thesis to keep the long-form reader engaged and grounded in that which residents dispute. Beyond offering multiple parallel narratives on a single place towards evidencing its richness and complexity, it is my intention that when the papers are read together they will provide the effect of glancing through the sides of a prism. As Michael Keith notes following Walter Benjamin, analysis of the contemporary metropolis demands reconciling empirical awareness of novelties with a self-consciousness about historical traces and theoretical burdens in vocabularies rationalising the city, a "process of continual perspectival movement" (2005, p. 12) Portraying currents of argumentation and then practice, seen with closeness and then interpreted with some distance, both of very different geographical and historical provenances as they refract and intersect across the same new desert development may, in the end, allow a clearer sense of the "empirically fluid quicksand of the configuration of the city" (Keith, 2005, p. 188).

While each paper stands clearly on its own exploring a wide range of experiences through an equally wide range of literatures, I have put great care into a collective logic and purposeful coherence across sections so that the whole emerges as greater than the sum of the parts. As stated, this work looks at two principal groups disputing a common ground and forms of moral discourse and practice asserting order within each. I therefore divide the work into two primary sections: Part A (Chapters 4 and 5) focuses on resettled residents, with specific attention to the Duweiqa squatters' movement, and

	DISCOURSE: Constitution, framing, & argumentation of moral ownership (*Emic*)	PRACTICE: Assertion of ownership as moral practice and normative order (*Etic*)
PART A: A Sub-zone *Resettled/Squatter*	**Chapter 4** "Thinking by Profession" *Theme: Moral Economy*	**Chapter 5** "*Sayi'*" *Theme: Outlaw Rights*
PART B: B Sub-zone *Homeowner*	**Chapter 6** "Dreams and Illusions of the Suburban Self" *Theme: Incitement to Autonomy*	**Chapter 7** "Seeing like a City-State" *Theme: Simulating Behavioural Law*

Table 1: Ownership moralities as competing normative projects in the *ex nihilo* city, with interwoven geographical and methodological scales of analysis.

Part B (Chapters 6 and 7) focuses on homeowners and company management representing its clients. This 'A' and 'B' labelling corresponds to OHC's nomenclature for Haram City "sub-zones," with almost all resettlement and squatting occurring in "A-area" (used interchangeably with "sub-zone," primarily A1 and A2 but also A3) and a vast majority of homeownership existing in "B-area" (B1, B2, and B3). These two primary 'A' and 'B' parts then mirror each other's internal structure, two cross-sectional secondary parts, divided into a first chapter (four and six) on the discourse and the moral constitution of ownership claims — with methodological weight placed on emic exploration — and a second chapter (five and seven) on the practice and application of these normative registers — privileging an etic interpretation (Table 1).

First, Chapter 4 explores how varied conceptions of property ownership are used to relativise institutional accusations of urban informality by its very subjects. As squatters elaborate their discourse and build alliances, their description of people and places "thinking by profession" evokes an understanding of moral property ownership

based on practical wisdom (*phronesis* in Aristotelian virtue ethics), productive use, and the visible legibility of these qualities in urban form, conveying the value of what has been lost while framing avenues for its recuperation. In order to frame squatters' discourse on legitimate informality, I introduce two literatures rarely used in the context of cities in the Global South: E.P. Thompson's discussion on notion of a "moral economy" underpinning direct action (Thompson, 1991), and literature in legal geography critiquing the "single owner model" of property rights as a normative property morality that excludes legal alternatives (Singer, 2000b). By approaching their own property as a moral economy, squatters raise questions over the broader housing market and government land deals and frame critiques to delegitimise OHC accordingly.

Looking at squatters taking action towards asserting an order of the "moral economy" by outlaw practices, Chapter 5 explores the use of rights language by some of Cairo's poorest residents who do not actively identify as revolutionary. It notes the emergence of outlaw positionalities, in the context of revolutionary rights language but rejecting identification as revolutionary, invoked through positive use of the term *sayi'* — commonly understood as an opportunistic bum or idle vagabond. In privileging the term, squatters reject associations between homelessness and immoral behaviour to assert a code of the street. In defining the concept of outlaw discourse, I rely on rhetoric studies (Ono & Sloop, 1997) to suggest a connection with "broker" positionalities in geography and anthropology (Auyero, 2007; Bayat, 2012; Jeffrey & Young, 2012; Simone, 2004b). Rejecting politicians and revolutionary activists alike, by conceptualising rights as a bundle of essential property, rather than property as a bundle of rights, sayi' squatters negotiate rights as a series of debts that can be accumulated and allocated rather than as an abstract condition of citizenship. I conclude by comparing outlaw rights-trafficking to the well established role of brokers mitigating "law as process" in the city.

Shifting back to portray homeowners' discourse on ownership in Haram City,

Chapter 6 explores the motivations for, realisations through, and frustrations with migration towards propertied suburban life by Egypt's lower-middle classes. Within the context of Egypt's history of "frontier" suburban development as a "comprehensive civilisational strategy" (Wahdan, 2013 p. 36; Sims, 2015; see also Mitchell, 1999), advertising of Egyptian gated suburbs as part of growing mass "liberal incitement to autonomy" seen to result in the "subjectivization of morality"(Asad, 2015), and research on North American suburban homeowners constituting norms of liberal autonomy (Low, 2001; Perin, 1977), I detail Cairo aspirational middle-class homeowners' own evolving framings and vocabularies on the relationship between morality, self-hood, and property in gated suburban life. For many, personal and class aspirations at the desert frontier are discussed in parallel with international migration (as "internal emigration"), generalised critiques of Egyptian identity, and hopes for self-realisation requiring a new spatial template of social norms. From this diasporic point of view, homeowners discuss multiple nuanced forms of communal self-hood, in both city and suburb, beyond a uniform liberal notion of autonomy: immoral "self-interest" is distinguished from moral "self-respect" and "self-management," and each is discussed in relation to property. As owners settle into new lives, build new walls, and speculate on new neighbours, "dreams" of affordable but separative property — detached homes with enclosed gardens — cementing new norms for middle-class self-realisation are increasingly perceived as "illusions," protecting and formalising the social deception and moral disarray that many had sought to escape.

Finally, Chapter 7 interprets OHC management's channelling of migrant homeowner market dreams for moral self-hood through practices defining adequate behaviour for being part of "affordability" and analysis of its governance strategies. With no civic laws regarding private services and infrastructure provision, land-use, or property disputes, the company management team works to invent governance practices

codifying behaviour and morality. While Haram City is the product of Euclidian, expert-driven "seeing like a state" governance (Scott, 1998), the day-to-day resolution of community disputes over 'offensiveness' and 'reasonableness' in mundane city life, and corresponding access or restriction to infrastructure and services, requires forms of inter-personal and subjective adjudication otherwise addressed through deliberative and revisable local planning law — what Valverde terms "seeing like a city" (2011). The chapter speaks specifically to industry growth in affordable housing in the Global South (JLL MENA, 2011b) and the results of collaboration between development institutions and real estate developers pushing for public-private partnership masterplans to meet this demand (Cityscape Global, 2013; UNDP, 2011; World Bank, 2010). In this "case study" project (UNDP, 2011), the confluence of "seeing like a state" and "seeing like a city" expresses itself in decidedly authoritarian ways (Ekers, Hamel, & Keil, 2015). Outlining the constitution of a mandate for, law-like practice of, and nonprofit collaboration with local private governance, the paternalistic "upgrading" of the urban poor's behaviour invokes a variety of political rationalities, including technical, traditional, and biological logics. Central to this case of privatised welfare provision, logics rationalising governmentality reproduce in equal measure both transgeographical attitudes — neoliberal 'work-fare' practices distinguishing 'deserving' from 'undeserving' poor — and transhistorical ones — Cairene politics of poverty benevolence/management from 1800–1952 indexing behaviour to confer access to urban space.

In Chapters 4 and 6, I document how residents stake their claims, justify define the moral coherence of communities and belonging, or, loosely, forms of private citizenship. Following Gramsci, these chapters emphasise the "organic intellectual," a belief that "all [people] are intellectuals … but not all [people] in society have the function of intellectuals" (Gramsci, 1971). Irrespective of education or literacy "organic intellectuals" can offer counter-hegemonic ideas acting "as constructor and organiser, 'permanent

		LEGALITY	OWNERSHIP	MORALITY
A	*Ch. 4*	Formal/Informal	Moral Economy	Phronesis (practical virtue)
	Ch. 5	Broker & Middleman	Outlaw	Rights as Debt
B	*Ch. 6*	Propertied Autonomy	Migration	Self-Respect/Control
	Ch. 7	Seeing like a State	Seeing like a City	Behavioural Upgrading
		Common subjects	*Common land*	*Common sense*

Table 2: Thematic literatures compared within each paper, including theoretical approaches to order presuming a more 'fixed' legal setting, theoretical approach to order from the point of view of Haram City ownership claimants, and the moral norms asserted to orient notions of order.

retributive action, and seek to assert situated cultural imaginations through efforts to persuader"' for their own "technique" of labour, particularly when circumstance become so confounding that self-conscious reflection delineating a justifiable courses of action becomes an exigency (Gramsci, 1971). Centrally concerned with discourse, observation for these chapters was conducted with background interest in morally imbued metaphorical framings (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Lakoff, 2002). In Chapters 5 and 7 I engage more critically to explain people's methods of action (practices) and the instrumentalisation of normative stances, even if they may not be fully recognised as such by the participants themselves. While mobilising a variety of literatures, to interpret practices I pair specific Egyptian vernacular and historical subjectivities with related but better researched ones from a Global North context. Background interest and loose inspiration motivating these chapters is from Elinor Ostrom's collaborations with both anthropologists and property theorists on the formation and maintenance of rules and norms in the management over common land (Acheson, 2011; Donahoe, 2009; Fennell, 2011a; Guha-Khasnobis, Kanbur, & Ostrom, 2006b; Ostrom, 1990). Shifting methodologies from Chapters 4 and 6 to 5 and 7, respectively, also evoke the pragmatics of ethnographic engagement and cohabitation with two sides of a dispute: understanding assertions of legitimacy to build trust on both sides allowed me to not compromise

subsequent engagements with active contestation over "rights" to the city. A reading that follows the chronology of ethnographic analysis would therefore be 4, 6, 5, and 7.

While this thesis deals directly with many foundational topics in urban studies — informality, exclusion, real estate, eviction-resettlement, suburbs, governance — I interpret this world-building project by cross-referencing with literatures not common to analysis of cities of the South or not common to explicit study of the city, untangling internal contradictions in dominant disciplinary terminology and binaries. Presenting four takes on one specific circumstance, therefore, the work strives to speak outwards and be relevant to a wide range of debates, stemming from the following eleven principal original contributions to the discipline of urban geography:

a. Lamentations over poor people's home modifications leveraging 'formal/informal' discourse presumes full coherence with 'legal/illegal,' and therefore urban legality in general is a treated as a perceptual category (i.e. form = law). For the so-called 'informal,' efforts to associate with legality are secondary to more salient, cohesive, and motivating framings of moral/immoral economies.
b. As emphasised in some important ethnographic studies of Cairo's urban and rural poor (Julia Elyachar, 2005; Schielke, 2009b), moral reasoning over the market and life is laden with notions of wisdom and virtue derived from practicality, work, *bricolage*, and craft, resembling the concept of *phronesis* in Aristotelian virtue ethics. This has far ranging implications for people's belief in what constitutes legitimate property rights and legitimate city making, which architects and planners must account for to ensure a project's success.
c. When the institutional legitimacy of property title is compromised, conceptions of ownership premised on practical wisdom and craftsmanship strongly conflict with the Blackstonian "single owner model" of property (Singer, 2000a). This

dominant liberal conception of ownership — where the entire range of possible rights bundled in property are assumed to inherently privilege a title-holder — is implicitly and normatively embedded in development policy, academic discourse on the 'formal/informal,' and covenants of real estate ventures marketing affordability in the Global South.

d. The Egyptian street vernacular appellation *sayi'* (meaning 'down and out' or 'bum') is widely appropriated as an honorific laden with notions of social justice and morally justifying actions by outlaws from Cairo's non-revolutionary urban poor. It is also used pejoratively by elites or to mean 'cool bad boy' by middle-class youth and activists, fuelling strong class-based misunderstanding over what constitutes justice. When 'justice' (*'adala*) is summoned in revolutionary chants and state-building, there is a false presumption of mutual understanding.

e. Similarly leading to unknown misunderstanding, in justifying squatting but not identifying with revolutionary social movements, the urban poor discuss 'rights' as a bundle of properties, using the term 'right' (*haqq*) interchangeably with 'debt' (*din*), and transacting 'rights' accordingly.

f. Reading the 'broker/middlemen' working in complicated legal environments as a subgenre of the 'outlaw' facilitates an understanding of people's shifting legal consciousness and the ability of brokers to influence and shift the law itself.

g. Many aspiring suburbanites explicitly frame relocation to Cairo's gated communities at the desert frontier as akin to international migration.

h. Discourse by Cairo's suburban aspirational middle classes responding to incitement to propertied autonomy distinguishes between a plurality of moral self-hoods combating self-interest vis-à-vis property, evaluating property's value according to the relationship between social commitments, spatial proximity, and immorality.

i. Projects promising 'objective' masterplanning of places and management of people ("Seeing like a State") and projects of intersubjective local law over notions of 'reasonableness' ("Seeing like a City") are inseparable in Cairo's private 'affordable' gated suburbs, doubly entrenching both historically embedded and globally circulating logics of authoritarian paternalism.

j. The broad and undefined promotional labelling of gated communities as affordable or low-income by real estate developers is widely recognised as duplicitous by the excluded, and lamented in ways that can be persuasive to the included, undermining the credibility of the law and social housing initiatives, particularly in public-private partnership cities with high vacancy rates.

k. Private communities of the South defining 'affordable' or 'low-income' vaguely also intrinsically open possibilities for strong moral claims justifying sustainable redistributive action by the excluded.

More generally, as the first comprehensive and extended ethnography within a gated community in the Middle East North Africa region, this thesis aims to make original contributions to the following literatures in geography: urban studies of Cairo and MENA, legal geography in Global South, gated communities, global real estate flows, affordable housing, public private partnerships, private post-eviction resettlement, private urban governance, middle-class urbanism of the Global South, suburbs and satellite cities, squatting, land-use planning, rule-making and the commons, and social movements/non-movements. It also aims to make an original historical contribution as an alternative perspective on the 2011–2013 Egyptian Revolution period. It offers non-activist standpoints that are grossly under-represented in scholarship: self-described politically agnostic urban poor, the aspirational middle classes (stereotyped by activists as politically apathetic *hizb al-kanaba*, literally 'Couch Party'), as well as non-downtown and

suburban 'frontier' narratives portraying themselves as pursuing a perpendicular route to historical-material progress while looking at revolution "from the outside-in."

Before the four papers, I will briefly provide a theoretical framework for my work, delving deeper into the key literatures and explaining how some could benefit from being used in tandem. This section will first summarise relevant literature on Cairo, covering satellite cities, suburban studies, and the urban poor. It moves on to present three dominant binaries in urban studies — social movements/quiet encroachments, broker/hustler, and formal/informal — to show how they are imprecise for research on people self-consciously negotiating these binaries themselves. Lastly, I present two external literatures that I introduce to tackle the issue of participants negotiating these binaries, one highly situated but not explicitly applied to urban studies (morality and market in Egypt) and the other highly topical but rarely applied to the Global South (legal geography and property theory).

Next, I present a chapter on methodology, emphasising how a multi-sided, single-sited approach works and is well suited to the four paper model, research design, field methods, ethics, the rationale for shifting back and forth between the emic and the etic frameworks, and the complexities of working in a setting struggling with internal disputes amidst Egypt's 2011–2013 revolutionary period and coup.

Following four empirical chapters, I conclude the thesis with a brief reflection on how contentious and often opposing conceptions of ownership and practices of order continue to coexist in a relatively stable fashion after six years, where neither side is able to fully entrench expectations into place. I also detail some limitations of this research while suggesting how they might be addressed in further projects on a growing market for "affordable" private cities in MENA and the Global South.



Figure 2: Boy drives friends on a scooter across Haram City



Figure 3: Vacant homes in A-area



Figure 4: Two homes in B-area, remodelled and conjoined

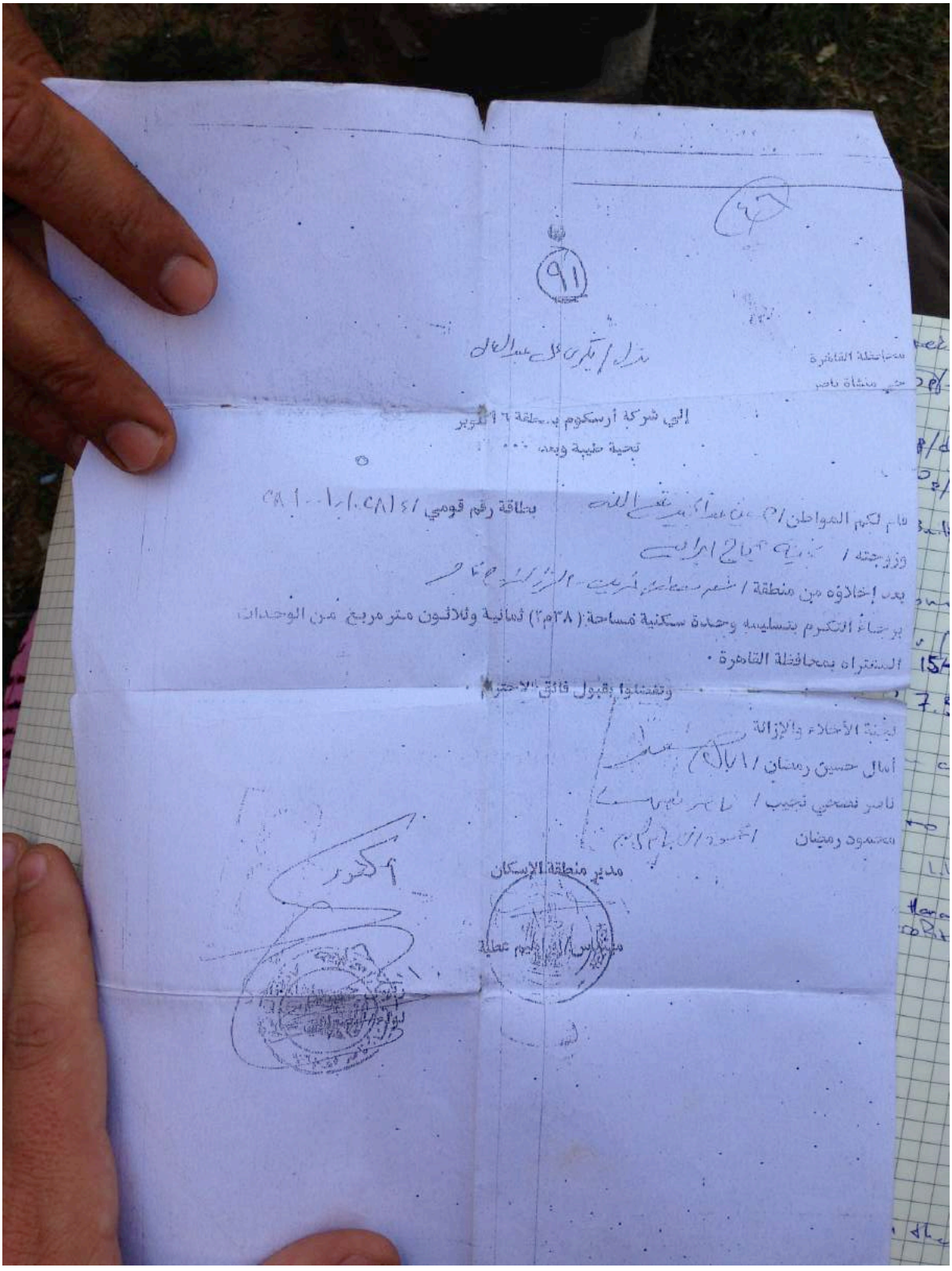


Figure 5: Duweiqa resettlement document from Cairo Governorate to Orascom Housing Communities

2 | Making cities, properties, and moralities:

The terms of Cairo's everyday urbanism, from centre to satellite suburb

"Egypt is a pie, and the people are sausages sprinkled onto it."
(*Masr fatira, wi-l-sha'b al-suguq illi bitrash 'liyah*)

Yahia Shawkat on Egypt's satellite cities

Like Cairo, Egyptians visiting Haram City tend to describe it as highly divided, a vision reducible to two socio-economic groups and ownership types: the haves and the have-nots. As an experiment in the complete privatisation of affordable housing in the form of a gated community at Cairo's desert frontier, and amidst tumultuous political change, it is also a place where social expectations and political norms vis-à-vis Cairo are directly interrogated, challenged, and asserted by homeowners, the resettled and company management alike. In grappling with a contested territory, upon which people's imaginations of Cairo are projected, this thesis benefits from a four-paper format to reflect on a struggle of ideas over what the compound is and should be. Papers are structured according to a multi-sided approach, explicating peoples' discursive moral relationships to the new city and then interpreting what they do to bring that ideal closer to the present in the face of contestation. As four very different stories on one place, all papers rely on the expansive corpus of research on urbanism in Cairo and the Global South while also each introducing separate literatures less frequently framed focused on the 'urban' to interrogate the former in terms of participants' own perceptions and

actions. This chapter outlines these traditions of scholarship and gives an indication of how they might be productively applied together.

In order to provide the broader theoretical context, I first describe the state of contemporary research and theory on suburban Cairo. In significant ways, this body of work both resembles and differs from a more prominent literature on global suburbs in the North and South. A central subject in public discourse over the production of Cairo's suburbs is that they offer a solution to overcrowding and rural-to-urban migration. Because, in part, Haram City was promoted to address perceptions of the chaotic inner city, and grew to directly confront these perceptions, core literature on Cairo's popular poor quarters, or '*ashwa'iyat*, — with particular attention to one, Duweiqa — will be outlined. Woven within literature on Cairo's highly divided landscape, I detail some global narratives on both gated space and urban poverty, pointing out similarities and differences. Above all, the aim is to show how a general bifurcation of research between two central themes within urban studies (particularly on the Global South), the slum and the gated community, speaks to similar perceptions and scholarship on Cairo. Unpacking the binary of global 'divided cities' is essential to understanding a space that both reproduces and confounds such categorisation.

Moving forward, I describe three other central themes in global urban studies literature that also directly relate to Haram City, and in other locations often stem from the experience of high spatial inequality. Sections are divided into key themes in urban citizenship, urban brokering/livelihood practices, and urban informality, with primary disciplinary focus on geographical and anthropological ethnography. These are global literatures on the city describing topics pertinent to residents' interpretations of varied ownership claims in Haram City, and which I explicitly interrogate through empirical material in subsequent chapters. Citizenship, brokering/livelihood building, and informality are presented as normative categorisations in themselves, a kind of 'baseline'

from which this research departs, and a subset of all possible morally inflected structures of justice, practices of survival, and discourses on legality by city residents.

Next, I discuss an extensive body of well-established anthropological and sociological research on Egypt that is rarely used to approach issues of land and urbanisation: debates on subject formation and morality in relation to rights, theft, autonomy, governance, and behaviour. Often based on Cairo, though not exclusively, much of this scholarship stresses the importance of analysis focusing on aspiration and self-realisation as well as notions of disorder and decay. It therefore speaks indirectly to the main stances in popular conversation, editorial punditry, and political rallying on the state of Egypt's city's and the genealogical impetus for diverting state funds to endless, half-vacant, desert cities, as well as to Haram City itself. Surveying the breadth of ethnography on morality and aspiration/frustration in Egypt, topics that are politically channelled into 'grand desert visions,' provides a conceptual apparatus to anchor variations on a baseline of global notions of urban citizenship, livelihood practice, and law/form within the issues that non-urban studies scholars of contemporary Egypt find most pressing.

Lastly, I survey literature in legal geography and critical legal theory on the moral and behavioural tenants that inform people's conceptions of property ownership and urban law. This second literature provides the core theoretical and methodological lens and common language through which popular themes in urban studies can be matched with highly context-specific social science amidst a process of rapid spatial transformation. Work on property and urban law theorises across discourse and practice, showing how codified norms and transgressive actions are mutually constitutive, and deconstructs the terms research participants spend the most time debating ('property,' 'owner,' 'order,' 'law,' 'home,' 'rights,' 'freedom'). The overall conceptual framing, therefore, is to intervene with literature on the complex and embedded ways people

relate to ownership and order as moral projects, a reoccurring theme of contemporary ethnographic research on Cairo. These combined perspectives are then contrasted with dominant terminology and binaries in global urban studies that are used in the institutional justifications for creating Haram City.

1. Cairo

1.1 Desert dreams

Over 90% of Egyptian land is arid desert. The remaining land, home to the vast majority of Egypt's 83 million citizens in the Nile Valley, Delta and coastlines, is often only a stone's throw away from this vast expanse. Consistently from the late 1950s to the present, state rhetoric promoting grand populist visions, technical expertise, and national triumph has first and foremost leveraged a single assumption: Egypt's population-to-land ratio is unsustainable. The only solution, leaders, policymakers, and development experts have repeatedly argued, is to conquer the desert frontier. Indeed, most development reports on Egypt open with a satellite image of a bright green line that is the Nile meandering through a vast yellow. Subsequently, woven throughout generations of policy recommendations is what Timothy Mitchell has referred to as a "topological imperative which governments and planners employ to make desert-based solutions look natural and without need of justification" (T. Mitchell, 2015, p. xix).

The naturalisation of possibility and urgency for frontierist technical solutions is compounded by two other regularly assumed facts: there is an unsustainable deluge of rural-to-urban migration in Egypt and that the desert is clean slate for bringing dreams of a developed Egypt's into the present (Wahdan, 2013, p. 36). Indeed, beginning immediately after the 1973 Egyptian-Israeli war, Anwar Sadat presented the 1974 October Working Paper in which he established his plan for state "progress and

construction" towards full economic liberalisation. One of the central points within was to facilitate investment in desert and coastal land as a "comprehensive civilisational strategy" (1977; in Wahdan, 2013, p. 36). In the years since, Egypt has led the world in the number of new cities, often termed "satellite cities," constructed during the second half of the twentieth century (T. Mitchell, 2015, p. xx). With their creation, images of inner city disorder (focusing primarily on traffic, self-built areas, crime, and poverty) and images of desert dream futures (idealised renderings of development projects that litter Egypt on billboards, newspapers, and reports) have become pervasive and intimately sustain each other. Such contrasting depictions linking technical planning solutions to social progress can at least be traced back to Sadat's decree for urban planning to above all else provide the "scientific method of directing and guiding the national economy" towards a liberalised, global, and first-world future (Sadat, 1974, p. 84). Principally, mass schemes surround Greater Cairo's desert fringes, including the 6th of October City to the west, New Cairo, El Shorouk City, El Obour City, and 10th of Ramadan City to the east, and 15th of May City to the south. Since the beginning of Hosni Mubarak's presidency (1981–2011), both the rate of private construction and percentage of the national housing budget allocated to satellite developments have drastically increased.[1] In this period a majority of vacant expanses diagrammed within satellite city masterplans, often larger than Cairo itself, have been filled with hundreds of private gated developments generally targeting the most high-income market and modelled after suburban spatial typologies similar to those of many North American cities such as Orange County California (Denis, 2006a; Sorkin, 1992).

[1] Considering only direct public investment in housing units, from the 1982-2005 period, 22% of the national housing production, or 251,000 dwelling units, had been built in new towns at a value of LE4.7 billion (construction only, in current pounds - £470 million) (Sims, 2015, p. 145). Between 2005-2011, this increased to 51%, with 255,000 public units in new towns. At present, only one of three current new town government schemes (2012-2017), aiming for an improbably high one-million units, will likely result in 70% of total national construction (Shawkat, 2014a). Such projects are often contracted to large-scale developers but still require immense government investment in infrastructure up to the development itself.

And yet, statistics show that much of the rationale behind this generationally accelerating state-sponsored (but mostly privately executed) effort for demographic redistribution is false. First as Cairo-based economist and planning consultant David Sims shows, while large segments of Cairo do indeed suffer from inadequate resource provisions (Denis, 2012), tenure insecurity (Séjourné, 2012), and challenging public health concerns (Sholkamy & Ghannam, 2004), Egypt currently has one of the lowest rural-to-urban migration rates in the world (Sims, 2015). Measured as ratio of internal migrant population to total working-age population, from the 1970s and 1980s city in-flow has declined to 8%. Considering that Morocco has a rate of 35% and India of over 60%, Egypt is well under the global average — a fact that has been attributed to rural Egyptian livelihood reliance on village social networks, viable population density, and the relative success of small-scale farming (T. Mitchell, 2015, p. xx; Sims, 2015, p. 154).

Second, despite exponential increases in suburban desert developments and scant statistics on occupancy rates, by any statistical evaluation Egyptian state goals justifying subsidies, mass land sales, and expansive infrastructure construction (mostly for pumping water from the Nile to elaborate gardens, golf courses and fountains) have almost never been met. For example, the state's own 2006 census found that 61% of units in the 6th of October City were 'closed/unoccupied' (*mughlaqa/khaliya*), with other satellite suburbs at between 71–79% (CAPMAS, 2007, p. table 17). In total, according to the same census (the most recent data available), only 5.1% of the Egypt's population lives in new desert cities despite promises that they would inevitably release pressure on the inner city. Indeed, an over 50% vacancy rate despite accelerated construction indicates an entirely supply-side approach to the desert development housing economics. There are only two ways to explain such persistence: first, through the lens of government corruption in land deals; and second, through the role most new housing is likely to serve as the main vehicle for savings and long-term investment of a great proportion of Egypt's upper and

middle classes. In the former case, as Sims notes, "because there can be expected to be windfall increase in the value of any but the most remote desert land parcels, delivering land to someone is practically as good as handing out cash" (Sims, 2015, p. 298). Land allocations — distributed primarily through the New Urban Communities Authority (NUCA), Egypt's designated institution for city periphery desert land administration — from military ownership to private hands are much more difficult to trace than cash transactions, and are a perfect mechanism for rewarding military loyalty and incurring political favours.[2] Numerous developments in 6th October City, the context for this project, are highly contentious sites amidst slow attempts to untangle vast webs of corruption. On May 15th 2011, former Housing Minister Mohamed Ibrahim Suleiman and businessman Magdi Rasekh, of Sixth of October Development and Investment Company, and Hosni Mubarak's son Alaa's father-in-law were brought to criminal trial over the questionable fire sale of 6th of October land (Shalaby, 2012). At his defence, the former Housing Minister declared that his projects were in the greater good by virtue of facilitating the removal of Cairo's "shantytowns" (Al-Masry Al-Youm, 2012). At the same time, satellite city initiatives are also justified with reference to downtown evictions freeing up prime central real estate to investment from Gulf monarchies with strategic regional implications (Sims, 2011; Singerman, 2009). Where patronage politics might be fuelled in other countries of the region by oil or tax disbursement, lacking this, in Egypt there is no shortage of disused city periphery public or military land.

In the case of savings, for many members of Egypt's middle and upper classes, secondary housing investment can provide significantly greater returns than traditional

[2] In the immediate aftermath of the 2011 Tahrir uprising and fall of Hosni Mubarak, amidst a brief period of transparency, the front page of Egypt's semi-official newspaper *Al-Ahram* implicated twenty-seven businessmen in improper land deals, including Hosni Mubarak's son Gamal Mubarak (Al-Ahram, 2011). Nearly all charges have since been dropped. In November 2011 a story in *Al-Masry Al-Youm* exposed that businessmen at the helm of only twenty private companies controlled 80% of national desert reclamation projects (2011, 4).

savings, with interest rates that rarely exceed the rate of inflation in a banking sector fraught with risk over currency dependability. With developers aware that much motivation for desert homeownership is purely to preserve capital assets, the actual outcome and quality of developments is secondary. The result is a self-fulfilling imperative to maintain growth while implicating "a sizeable slice of Egypt's middle class, its government cadres and its business elite, whose financial interests are now entwined with the continued maintenance of desert expansion" (Sims, 2015, p. 299). This consequently propels construction of even newer schemes that remain over half empty, woefully under-serviced, and planned with little consideration for the real exigencies behind sustaining local economic life (for example through a uniform avoidance of commercial or work space beyond shopping malls). This scenario closely fits the definition of a property bubble, explaining the simultaneous promotion of immense demand by real estate consultancies but the dearth of impartial up-to-date statistics over true occupancy, productivity, and home value fluctuations, lest peoples' savings be severely devalued.

A majority of desert developments can therefore be considered a truer example of "dead capital," appropriating and reframing Hernando de Soto's term for value lost by the lack of clear property title in the world's irregular urban settlements (de Soto, 2001; Sims, 2015, p. footnote 46, ch 4). As numerous critiques of de Soto show, land that states may define as 'irregular' is in fact regularly exchanged, irrespective of legal recognition (Denis, 2012; Gilbert, 2002; T. Mitchell, 2008). On the other hand, a majority of Cairo's desert housing, while ostensibly recognised under the law (regardless of questionable transactions in original land deals), can be left vacant and capital withdrawn from circulation for decades within non-existent local economies but propped by lack of housing market transparency. It is in this sense that Denis also shows how public-private partnerships behind some of Cairo's suburban real estate projects — public in so far as

the land is virtually given away by the state, and private in so far as the developments come to be completely secessionary and privately secured spaces — mobilise a "frontier" narrative to propagate an imperative of unrelenting expansion and speculation (Denis, 2006b).

The logic of desert frontier expansionism seems to be further sustained by the nexus of populist politics under prolonged authoritarianism, particularly considering the importance of housing in Egypt's cultural imagination as an evocative symbol of development. In the last year alone, despite a high national budget deficits, tumultuous politics, and several uncompleted mass housing promises, to shore support following 2013's military coup President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi introduced a new round of million home schemes — at least two separate initiatives, one called *Iskan Mutawaset/Dar Masr* built by the government and another privately built on government subsidised land by a conglomerate named Arabtec dubbed "For Egypt's Youth" — all predicted to woefully miss their ambitious targets (Al-Abwaz, 2015; Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, 2014; Trew, 2014). In addition, as recently as March 2015, to great fanfare at a global summit in Sharm el-Sheikh announcing that Egypt is once again "open for business," Sisi pledged to construct a new capital on the desert road between Cairo and Ain Sokhna at a proposed cost of LE500 billion (£42 billion in 2015) primarily funded by Gulf investors (K. Fahmy, 2015). According to hyperbolic government promises, the project will occupy 700km^2 (nearly the size of Singapore) and host five million residents, making it the largest purpose-built capital in human history — as large as Islamabad (population estimated at 1.8 million), Brasilia (2.8 million), and Canberra (380,000) combined (Kingsley, 2015).[3] Such announcements are regularly made preceding national elections, for example with one million home scheme announced in 2005 just prior to Mubarak's

[3] These projects largely ignore the fact that Egypt currently has cash reserves under £11 billion and that in 2014 GDP was expected to grow by 2%.

first presidential campaign in twenty-four years and leading to Haram City. As leaked recordings between General Abbas Kamel and Sisi in the run-up to his own 2014 presidential elections show, he is continuing this tried-and-tested populist tradition. In the conversation, the two discuss how to make Gulf foreign investment go directly through the Armed Forces, which would then announce its own 2013 million home scheme during the former general's presidential campaign, with Sisi ordering: "[make it] so it appears as if the contract was signed with the armed forces, who in turn would look like they were solving the housing crisis" (Al-Abwaz, 2015).

Lastly, satellite settlements such as 10th of Ramadan City, New Cairo, and 6th of October City are both sought after and disparaged for their distance from the city centre. Distance may explain their attraction for Egypt's large refugee population. An overwhelming majority of predominantly Iraqi, Sudanese, and Syrian refugee populations congregate in smaller scale private lease-hold housing arrangements in 6th of October City's centre, portraying distance as an important asset for establishing new networks and evading heavy-handed work permit regulations (Fargues, El-Masry, Sadek, & Shaban, 2008). Based on conversations, refugee communities with some savings report that opening businesses in satellite cities avoids dense inner-city competition and possible anti-immigrant sabotage. Refugees without savings, on the other hand, have a better chance finding employment in new-town shopping centres or in large export-oriented industrial zones (GTZ, 2009; Sims, 2011).

1.2 Localising suburban studies

Historically, Cairo's suburban new towns and gated developments must be understood not only in the context of "high modernist" projective visions (Ferguson, 1999) and as exercises in social engineering through an enduring "techno-politics" (T. Mitchell, 2002), but specifically as the product of economic liberalisation and structural

adjustment. In Mitchell's important genealogy of Egyptian techno-rationalist governance, the narrative arc begins with the spread of malaria resulting from dam construction under early 20th century British colonialism and culminates with the economic rationalism imposed under Muhammed Anwar Sadat's *infitah* (opening) of the Egyptian economy. This point is captured in his concluding chapter on Dreamland, a gated community in Cairo's 6th of October City. For Mitchell, the project embodies both the nexus of corruption between state, military, and liberalisation new elite and the rise of consumerism shifting class-identification in parallel with city formation. Dreamland's developers, the Bhagat group, are a case study in the emergence of about two dozen prominent families who accumulated immense wealth beginning in the mid-1970s, rapidly accumulating and concentrating privatised state assets and monopolising state deregulation. Many within this small group of post-liberalisation elites — including the Mansour, Seoudi, Mohamed Mahmoud, Metwalli, and Sawiris families — share a business trajectory beginning with import-export and moving to distribution, infrastructure and telecommunications, services, and finally to suburban development (T. Mitchell, 2002, pp. 282–285).

Dreamland is located only a couple of desert plots away from the subject of this thesis, Haram City, along the main Wahat Road thoroughfare running south from central 6th of October to the Giza-Fayoum Highway towards the pyramids of Giza. Orascom Housing Communities, Haram City's developer, is run by one of three brother-controlled branches in the multi-billion dollar Sawiris family holdings (Orascom Development), Egypt's richest family since 1970s liberalisation. The Orascom conglomerate began by receiving exclusive contracts with the Egyptian Military for the distribution of US information technology (primarily Hewlett-Packard) and telecommunications (AT&T), turning over profits of between 30–50% (T. Mitchell, 2002, p. 284). These profits were funnelled into what are currently some of Egypt's

largest telecommunications, construction, and tourism companies, since expanding to global markets. As with other families, many of Orascom's early contracts involved projects supported by USAID or the World Bank (including tourist development) (2002, p. 284). As a contemporary rendition of the triangulation between state, international development organisations, and post-liberalisation oligarchs, Orascom Housing Communities' Haram City was launched in 2007 through a public-private partnership for fulfilling state commitments to low-income affordable housing by sale of military land at rock-bottom prices with promotional support from UNDP as a "growing inclusive markets" case study (2011) and timed to collaborate with USAID and World Bank affordable mortgage subsidy initiatives (Nasr & World Bank, 2006; USAID & World Bank, 2008). In contrast to the 1970s, the link with international development is softer, helping to drum up political and investor support, providing a source of indirect subsidies (via subsidised mortgages ear-marked for specific housing typologies), and providing "best practice" images and "case study" pop-outs for World Bank publications advocating the securitisation of subsistence housing.

As of writing, there are no published extended ethnographies documenting life inside Cairo's vast desert suburbs or its numerous gated communities, let alone a private city addressing affordability. Situated accounts that exist are mostly in blog, journalistic, Master's Thesis, or individual chapter form and describe the aesthetics of spaces of security for elite exile (Marafi, 2011), the adoption of architecture styles prioritising the singly family detached unit (Kesseiba, 2015; Said, 2013), the entrenchment of neoliberal planning (Naguib, 2010), and the fostering of enclaves of global consumerist and cosmopolitan aspiration (Abaza, 2006; de Koning, 2009). Writing on Cairo's gated suburbs also addresses how they are often portrayed in highly gendered ways as protecting desires and bodily self-expression (Ghannam, 2014), as well as emerging as a common backdrop for Egyptian films and media contrasting the choice between a life of

consumerism and religious transformation (Armbrust, 2012).

In these works, central themes of fear, security, consumerism, neoliberalisation, and utopian promise are in many ways consistent with literature on exclusionary suburbanisation in the Global North and throughout the Global South. As foundational scholarship on suburbs from the "Los Angeles School" of urban studies highlights, fear of crime motivates increasingly securitised landscapes (M. Davis, 1990; Low, 2001), limiting land use to residential function at the urban periphery (Dear & Flusty, 1998), and marketing utopian city imaginations and idylls through postmodern spectacle cladding homogenous structures (Soja, 1989; Sorkin, 1992). As with other "splintered" (Graham & Marvin, 2002) urban spaces, gated suburban developments in Cairo are largely made possible through large-scale privatisation of not only land, but of urban governance — where nodes of infrastructure and communication networks are also privatised and access privileges the few who pay for community membership (Keil, 2013). In scholarship anticipating the rise of a "Fortress America" (Blakely & Snyder, 1997) beginning in the 1970s, suburban life in the US is seen to revolve around dual questions of security and freedom captured within a search for autonomy (Perin, 1977), new kinds of moral orders (Baumgartner, 1988), and agency (Low, 2001) afforded by exclusionary property and family values.

While Global North elite suburban construction, specifically in the form of gated communities and shopping malls, has rapidly declined in the last decade ceding to a rise in suburban poverty (Nijman & Clery, 2015), many other cities across the rest of the world — from Africa (Bloch, 2015; C. W. Herbert & Murray, 2015), to South Asia (Datta, 2012; Gururani & Kose, 2015), to China (Wu & Shen, 2015) — are experiencing rapid gated suburban growth. The rise of security focused suburban developments across the Global South has, generally, followed patterns in the Global North but exacerbated by postcolonial relations amidst high inequality (Roy, 2015), often following land

evictions (Watson, 2009), government sponsored land privatisation (Davy, 2009), and producing further adjacent informal urbanism (Ward, 2004) — whether in Calcutta, Cape Town, Dhaka, or Mexico City, respectively. Similarly in detailed situated research on gated spaces from São Paolo (Caldeira, 2000) to Johannesburg (Beall, 2002; Hook & Vrdoljak, 2002) the question of insecurity is paramount, in the latter case even reproducing apartheid era securitisation, with critical emphasis on the creation and implementation of orderly private governance within.

There are also important divergences between gated spaces of the Global North and South in this literature, particularly regarding forms of governance and community dispute management. While, for example, Davis and Low demonstrate the centrality and ubiquity of "homeowner associations" and "common interest developments" codifying covenants (and moral norms) from within (M. Davis, 1990; Low, 2003, p. 390), examples from contexts of much higher inequality show more disputed forms of internal rule creation and enforcement. As Caldeira notes, while residents across gated São Paolo enclaves "reject the city," the formation and consolidation of clear rules between homeowners is consistently fraught where many "residents seem to treat the entire complex like a private home in which they can do whatever they like" and "interpret freedom to mean an absence of rules and responsibilities toward their neighbour" (2000, pp. 274–275). Such an account contrasts sharply with experiences of "moral minimalism" (Baumgartner, 1988) emphasising, above all, non-interference in others' affairs and property (N. Blomley, 2007) seen across North American gated suburbs (Low, 2001, 2003).

The conflicts over rule creation and enforcement emerge particularly in studies on newer gated spaces catering to broader markets, such as an emerging middle class, and where class consciousness informs governance and neighbourly judgement. In gated suburban New Delhi, for example, Residents Welfare Associations (RWAs) negotiating

tension over the rules that constitute a community are fraught with people's competing attempts at "classifying spaces, specifying classes" (Srivastava, 2012, 2014, pp. 182, 191). Also in the context of Indian RWAs, research has documented class interrogations in nuisance disputes and governance negotiating an extended "bourgeois inside," beyond the private home and into greater public sphere (Ghertner, 2011, 2012, p. 1171). Such disputes over morality and the invention of uniform regulations may reflect findings in scholarship questioning whether neoliberalism should be the primary lens for interpreting urbanisation in the Global South. As Robinson and Parnell note, the gating of spaces conceived of as 'cities' (rather than simply 'communities'), including completely parallel private concentration of services (requiring private community management), may in fact "reflect the new urban form of an absent and utterly incapacitated state that arises out of different circumstances, ideologies, and process than those that gave rise to neoliberalism" (Parnell & Robinson, 2012, p. 601). If one then frames on-going industry efforts to 'democratise' access to gated communities,[4] meaning the current growing market for "affordable" private cities, in the context hollowed out by private capital (Ferguson, 2006) by politics of patronage or in other ways that neoliberalism may not be able to explain, than the breadth of possibilities for forms of private community governance managing an enormous spectrum of citizen needs becomes apparent.

The most detailed study of life in suburban Cairo's new towns to date was also conducted in Mitchell's Dreamland, across the street from Haram City, and arrives at similar conclusions as Parnell and Robinson (2012). In this 2006 paper, Eric Denis identifies a place where "private democracy materializes" in parallel to a complete collapse of faith in Egyptian local government and democracy, a process he describes as "political de-liberalization" (Denis, 2006a). While he gives an account of another gated

[4] Real estate industry promotion of affordable private communities as fulfilling state obligations over the 'rights to housing' has been on the rise in the last five years. See (Global Real Estate Institute, 2012, 2014, 2015; JLL MENA, 2011b).

community — Mena Garden City, a project publicly traded on the Cairo stock exchange — where residents self-manage some city services, the notion that other desert developments in Egypt might be collectively run by homeowners associations is somewhat misleading. While condominium-type building management organisations have legal backing, the Egyptian State has yet to pass a law (stalled in draft stages during the 2011 Revolution) permitting the constitution of homeowners' associations in 'city-like' multi-building developments. As such, in the case of most developments (including ultra-elite ones) a complete suite of parallel infrastructure, covenants, and forums for resident association are administered directly by development management companies, consulting with property owners but retaining a distinctly hierarchical and non-democratic decision making process.

Denis's observation that the production of these spaces, and life within, gravitates around negotiation of risk is therefore crucial (2006a, p. 51). In Dreamland risk management is not only manifested through standard global strategies of walling and gating. Rather, he understands risk as an internal reproduction of entrenched cultural and political norms, risk as an "ambivalent object that produces exclusionary norms all while ancestral myths and beliefs are reappropriated and remade in order to master and stabilize current forms of political monopoly" (2006a, p. 56). Denis limits his description to ecological discourse naturalising urban order (something related to observations in chapter seven), but this detailed observation on how deeply embedded norms over life within Cairo's communities are remapped and reframed behind private gates — whether cultural, political, or economic — is something this thesis significantly expands on in all subsequent chapters. In particular, I develop this brief (but also the most detailed in existence) work ethnographically, documenting the gradual and prolonged evolution of how different norms and normative disputes across communities manifest themselves under private governance.

In Denis's research, Cairo's suburban developments are almost exclusively the domain of Egypt's upper-middle class and elites, as a majority of developments remain today. In this sense, the projection of norms into private governance flows from a relatively uniform group of very wealthy people fleeing the inner city, likely harbouring relatively minor disputes of what their city should and should not be. By focusing on the re-mapping and evolution of norms and political formations in the first of a new wave of gated communities aiming to replace (or at least compete with) public affordable housing provision, a wider demographic and array of projective views on the city come at odds with each other behind walls. Through participant observation within contrasting but coexisting normative stances, one can interrogate the very process of re-mapping order in the suburban everyday in directly comparative ways, as debated between recently arrived residents themselves.

1.3 The urban poor

In 2010 the Cairo Governorate compelled Haram City's management to host several thousand individuals evicted from central Cairo. It has since become subject to both critiques of and by the urban poor. It is therefore imperative to briefly review literature on Cairo's dense inner city.

Eleven out of Greater Cairo's seventeen million inhabitants in 2000 were estimated to live in areas developed 'informally,' illegally, or semi-legally since 1960, constituting 53% of metropolitan residential areas (Sims, 2000, 2011).[5] Residents of these mostly *sha'bi* areas, meaning "popular" or "commoner," as referred to by their own residents, are regularly polemicised as the cause of urban crisis. Since the 1990s the colloquial term '*ashwa'iyat* (haphazard or chaotic, from the root word for 'chance' or 'random') has

[5] Greater Cairo's current population is twenty-two million, but the proportion of extra-legal inhabitants has remained approximately consistent (approx. 14.2 million people).

become the predominant term for urban poverty used by residents of other areas, the media, and the state. First emerging in the late 1960s and accelerating through the 1970s, the rapid growth of self-built settlements has in part been attributed to rural-to-urban migration resulting from structural adjustment policies that began to impact Upper Egypt (*sa'id*) and Delta farming communities after 1973 (Saad, 2012). Many anxieties over these areas stem from fears of cultural difference that are often linked to any migration. Stereotypes of a backwards countryside, particularly regarding Upper Egyptians (*sa'idi*) imagined as aggressive and hot-blooded, are evoked in some Cairene sayings such as "Upper Egypt begins in Giza" (*al-sa'id yebtada' fi al-Giza*) or the more contemporary youth saying "Giza metro [station] is very dodgy" (*Giza metro shimal* [lit. 'left'] *ketruh*), considering Giza's relatively recent expansion and high prevalence of urban poor from beyond Cairo's more historic popular quarters (such as Sayeda Zeinab or Ataba, for example). Some Egyptian anthropologists explain this stigma, particularly in relation to questions over the performance of honour and group hierarchy, as the ascribed marginality of an "Upper Egyptian low-status tribe" (Saad, 2012).

While exacerbated by a spike in migrant inflows in the mid-to-late twentieth century, such deeply rooted anxieties over the countryside have a much older genealogy. As early as the late-Ottoman era (ending in 1867) and throughout Khedival and colonial Egypt, policies targeting beggars as the source of panic over urban blight and disorder — a judgement couched in accusations of indolence — specifically targeted rural-urban migrants through the *tadhkira,* or identification document, system listing place of birth and regulating access to city housing and guild-based work (Chalcraft, 2012; Ener, 2003). While migration flows have significantly decreased in the last decade, the sense that internal migration by *fellahin* (peasants) is an existential threat, making a "city of peasants" (*medinat al-fellahin),* persists (Bayat, 2010, p. 174). Conversely, Upper Egyptian, or *sa'idi*, roots remain a point of pride and strong identification for many within the '*ashwa'iyat*,

with interfamilial, linguistic, marriage, musical, and market practices cherished across generations (Deboulet, 2009).

It is from this intergenerational prejudice that the term *baltagi* ('thug') perhaps comes to be frequently targeted at youth from the '*ashwa'iyat*, evoking fears of violent criminals and drug dealers coordinated under local strongmen, known as *el-Kabir*, 'strongman,' or a local *ma'alim*, 'boss.' While the term *baltagi* (lit. hatchet man, from 'axe' and the Ottoman Turkish suffix for 'man of') is a derogatory generalisation (seemingly applied by officials to over half the city during the 2011–2013 revolutionary period), the reality of life in dense inner city Cairo, where only one police station exists per 300,000 residents in some areas (Dorman, 2007, p. 73), is that many must grapple with non-state networks of power, coercion, and illicit trade (Ghannam, 2013).[6]

Literature focusing on popular Cairo, however, has consistently shown that much tension and violence is provoked by predatory police and public authorities, tasked with maintaining order while practicing extortion, forcing labour (often as police-hired 'false flag' criminals), and generally exploiting the vulnerable (Bush & Habib, 2012; N. S. Fahmy, 2004; Ghannam, 2013; Ismail, 2006). As of 2000, approximately 82% of what is referred to as '*ashwa'iyat* is on land converted illegally from agricultural to residential and commercial use, in ever expanding rings around central Cairo and Giza up to the sharp border where desert begins (Sims, 2000). The remaining 18% live on government or military owned land occupied at least a generation ago. As a general principle, the latter case represents the most legally precarious, the most likely to be evicted and/or co-opted by state authorities (for example in the form of predatory, strategically highly variable 'ground rents' that never contribute to tenure recognition), and the site for more recent internal migrants (first or second generation).

[6] Since the rise of Sisi and persecution of the Muslim Brotherhood, much mediatic legitmisation of state coercion in the city by invocation of monolithic invisible evil personas has been replaced by the word 'terrorist' (*irhab*). In many ways, Egyptian state rhetoric from August 2013 onwards directly reproduces the early days of George W. Bush's 'war on terror.'

The distinction between more established and more precarious '*ashwa'iyat* is a crucial one. It is also vividly reflected in the internal dynamics of Haram City between a community from Duweiqa (one of the must precarious and recent land claims in Cairo) and other resettled groups (many from more established poor areas in Old Cairo). In places like Duweiqa, where land has been progressively captured by *wad' al-yad* (seizures, lit. 'putting a hand on it'), intense local administrative corruption is fuelled by uncertainty over land and access to schools. This severely compromises social mobility, financial circulation, and often corrupts organised solidarity (in the form of local "popular committees," *ligan sha'bia*) which are common in older working-class districts such as Dar al-Salaam, historic and poor central Cairo, or on illegal agricultural-to-residential land-use conversions in Giza (Deboulet, 2009; Singerman, 1995). For example, in Establ Antar, another highly precarious area, local activists were finally able to organise and brought a suit to local courts asking for tenure legalisation considering extended payment of ground rents. After winning the verdict, governorate officials complied but raised land rent to the prohibitively expensive sum of between LE400–500 (£40–50) per month and forcing eviction of many activists and organisers. This practice amounts to a lifetime of daily extortion, a politics of selective authoritarianism swinging purposefully between intentional neglect and direct intrusion. Dorman terms this relationship between the Egyptian state and its poor urban citizenry as the "logic of neglectful rule" — a distinct mix of disengagement, clientelism, and fear resulting in legal-irregularity/illegal-regularity (Dorman, 2007). The central dynamic in this logic directly aims to fracture community alliances while keeping them barely intact (like breaking a bone but never allowing it to heal), with residents simultaneously dependent on protection from and tormented by brokers and strongmen that the state quickly co-opts, purposefully ignores, or disperses according to plan (Ben Néfissa, 2009; Wahdan, 2012).[7]

[7] The role of local strongmen in precarious areas and their interaction with the state has been a central

Around the late 1980s, many politicians and scholars associated the *'ashwa'iyat* with Islamic revival (*al-Sahwah al-Islamiya*), seen as havens for the construction and reproduction of insurgent networks and social movements as politics of piety from below (Bayat, 2000b; Ismail, 2000; Kuppinger, 2001). However, as Dorman notes, generally, the "conditions of possibility" for discourse on *'ashwa'iyat* has had much more to do with security fears than the areas themselves (2007, p. 272). Much Mubarak-era discourse conflated these neighbourhoods and Islamists as related and dangerous problems requiring an orderly desert expansion of affordable housing. While inner city evictions do occur, they remain relatively uncommon given cemented clientelist networks with local officials (Dorman, 2009). At the same time, efforts to upgrade areas, particularly in cases with international organisation support, have been fraught at best. For example, in Manshiet Nasser, adjacent to and more established than the Duweiqa hillside settlement, USAID and World bank projects of the late 1970s and 1980s succeeded in providing potable water, sewerage, and electricity connections (World Bank, 1985, 1986). However, the Egyptian government directly undermined donor insistence on land titling and legal standards for self-built construction — policies emphasising behavioural-hygienic attributes through, for example, standardised home floor plans separating people and livestock (Furniss, 2012) — by insisting that residents acquire their land at prices comparable to Belle Époque and boulevard areas of downtown Cairo (El-Messiri, 1990).

State reluctance to title, even after World Bank insistence, may be further understood in terms of its reliance on clientelist networks to demobilise political insurgency (Islamist or otherwise) by the most disaffected citizens (Dorman, 2009, pp. 282–284). Whether for better or worse, a corollary to this troubled stability between self-

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theme in global research on tenure, poverty and the city (Assies, 2007; Eckert, 2006; Roy, 2003a). Rumours of the Egyptian state having subsidised heroin consumption (some claim that under Mubarak it could be found for cheaper than hashish) in poor urban communities speaks directly to a generally toxic state cultivation of dependence/punishment.

construction and strongmen mediating with the state is that a vast majority of Cairo's poorest areas are built as permanent multi-storey brick and concrete constructions (rather than the repurposed tin and timber seen in other countries, but often causing global policy confusion under shared terminology of 'slum' and 'informality'). A positive consequence, for example, is that over 90% of homes in Greater Cairo have access to potable water (Sims, 2011). Since being rebuffed by Egypt's "politics of neglect," the World Bank and USAID have not attempted any more urban upgrading and land titling programs, shifting resources to large-scale infrastructure and, most recently, affordable mortgage subsidies tailored to private desert developments priced accordingly (such as Haram City).

To this day in Egypt, nearly every newspaper article or television reportage on Greater Cairo's poor areas mentions a rockslide in Duweiqa on 6 September 2008 that killed upwards of one hundred people. Subsequent government demolition of much of Duweiqa was followed by extended resident protests and street occupations in front of the Cairo Governorate between 2009–2012 demanding resettlement near Duweiqa to protect livelihood networks. Gradually over three years, as homeless families grew exhausted, sequential groups of several hundred accepted resettlement by the governorate. A small fortunate group was resettled at the Suzanne Mubarak Housing Project, not far from Duweiqa. The rest were first resettled in a distant desert settlement east of Cairo called 'el-Nahda,' then others to a housing project in the far south western corner of 6th of October known as 'Osman Project,' and finally the most resistant group acquiesced to an offer for housing in Haram City.

When evictions do happen, it is often to small, radically disconnected public buildings at far flung desert frontiers.[8] However, the destruction and relocation of large

[8] Many from the Duweiqa community suspect that resettlement schemes purposefully disperse tight-knit communities at opposite extremes of desert new towns to prevent future mobilisation.

portions of Duweiqa are hardly representative of the lives of millions of other urban poor, while invariably shaping a public discourse where the 'solution' for slums boils down to a choice between eviction and death. The Duweiqa tragedy has therefore become instrumental in the wider policy framing of *'ashwa'iyat* through a new term: "unsafe areas." In October 2008, immediately following the Duweiqa rockslide, a presidential decree established the Informal Settlements Development Facility (ISDF, disbanded in 2014) to coordinate upgrading or eviction of areas like Duweiqa and rank informal areas by degrees of safety for inhabitation (ISDF, 2010a, 2010b). The ISDF subsequently identified 404 areas — home to 850,000 people over 116 areas mostly in central Cairo — to be henceforth termed "unsafe areas" according to four levels of danger (Amnesty International, 2011, p. 2). The term remains a staple of Egyptian urban policy rhetoric (despite ISDF's disbanding under Sisi), with documents smoothly conflating between questions of construction/sanitation security (regularly accompanied by images of a crumbled Duweiqa) and questions over personal safety with regards to stereotypes of criminality and immorality (often followed by news of recent neighbourhood prosecutions of *baltagiya*) (Khalifa, 2011).

Demarcated with red lines on ISDF maps as an official category of jurisdiction distinct from other informal areas, most sites were specified as irreparably "unsafe" and requiring eviction in residents' best interest. As observant urban researchers and activists quickly demonstrated, however, redlining corresponded not only with land to which the state retained some claims (irrespective of duration of settlement) but precisely outlined the sites for Cairo 2050, a 2010 Egyptian government and UN-Habitat grand urban masterplan proposing massive neo-Haussmannian boulevards and Dubai-like skyscraper clusters, (Deknatel, 2012; ECCLR, 2014; GOPP, MHUC, & UN-Habitat, 2010). Some of the earliest post-Duweiqa rockslide "unsafe area" evictions in Ezbet Khairallah and Establ Antar led to direct resettlement in Haram City and may have been associated with

Cairo 2050 plans. With the January 2011 uprising and Hosni Mubarak's fall, uproar by urban activists and area residents eventually led to Cairo 2050 being scrapped.[9] However, media during 2011–2013 further adopted the term "unsafe area" to blame political violence on criminals from the *'ashwa'iyat*, entrenching its evocation of anxieties and association with redevelopment in the city talk. It remains a core feature of the current post revolutionary-era gradual increases in evictions and resettlements (Khalil, 2014).

Haram City's Duweiqa community, then, directly embodies a critical turning point in Egyptian discourse on slums. They remain the primary justification for further evictions (some of which were placed in Haram City before even themselves), directly led to the criteria for redlining districts slated for massive urban redevelopment, and images of their homes are regularly used by the state to motivate massive desert investment. Seeing all of this as the government's co-optation of their suffering, many Duweiqa residents quickly point out that they represent another turning point: the only Egyptians to have sustained a long-term anti-government public space occupation in the years prior to January 2011 (at al-Falaki Square and Abdeen Palace, a two and five minute walk from Tahrir Square).

With the abandonment of large-scale international organisation funded urban upgrading initiatives in the 1990s, amidst a renewed clientelism of the "politics of neglect" under Sisi but in the post-Duweiqa rockslide era, only evictions in areas of particular high value have increased, frequently continuing the pattern of resettlement to sparse state-built housing in desert new towns. Very few studies exist on the effects of resettlement to Cairo's periphery. Those that do exist focus on the severe disruption of formerly embedded social networks and livelihood collapse (Florin, 2009; Ghannam,

[9] Though often forgotten amidst the recent political fluctuations and an eventual return to authoritarianism, housing activists' vociferous public and legal questioning of the possible eviction of 850,000 people and demolition of enormous parts of the city centre under Cairo 2050 effectively led to its cancellation. Saving the characteristic face of Cairo from becoming something much closer to Dubai, at least for the time being, is one of the great, understated, accomplishments of the 2011 uprising, regardless of political outcomes.

2002). This broadly matches conclusions reached by research on peripheral evictions across the world, emphasising in particular the severely detrimental effects of social fragmentation and the importance of maintaining generational continuity in access to land (Patel, D'Cruz, & Burra, 2002; Potts, 2006; Rao, 2010). Such disruptions are severely exacerbated in Cairo, though, by the immense distances between and within 1980s new town masterplanning — untenable for livestock or agriculture as deserts or for small-scale markets, workshops, and commercial initiatives as entirely car-oriented, and lacking affordable public transportation (Wahdan, 2012).[10] Anecdotal accounts by resettled people and nonprofit lawyers representing them claim there is a state policy to punish resistant communities by dispersing them across buildings in furthest corners of Eastern, Western, and Southern new towns.

A central issue for this thesis involves not only understanding the effects of resettlement from Cairo, an understudied topic, but also resettled people's perspectives when finding themselves directly confronting both suburban luxury, security, and exclusivity, as well an endless landscape of identical newly built homes with over 60% vacancy rates. While there are endless portrayals of the inner city in the media by the same communities fleeing it, a central gap in the literature on both the urban poor and new towns is on the ways the urban poor see desert development — local market and workshop-based economies confronted with birds-eye-view planning and rows of identical homes behind gates. Furthermore, all studies on resettlement to Cairo's new towns approach communities largely in terms of their view 'inwards' towards their new

[10] Entrepreneurial private microbus and tuk-tuk drivers have thoroughly branched through poorer and resettlement areas of new towns, but at a cost. While a standard long-distance microbus fare (Cairo, Ramsis to 6th of October, Hosary) is LE3 (£.3) in 2013, the several connecting microbuses and tuk-tuks necessary to reach one's final destination in various hard-to-reach areas of Cairo/Giza from a far corner of a new town can total up to LE7–10 (£.7–1) each way. A work commute costing LE15–20/day (£1.5–2) for a low-income person is approximately equivalent to the cost of rent for an 80–100m² apartment in a central *'ashwa'iyat*. The economic value of social networks is so valuable that people resettled as a community would rather manage the rent-like cost of commuting than moving back to the centre and risk losing livelihood alliances.

homes and immediate community, or 'backwards,' towards efforts to sustain connections with their original home. None explore how the resettled negotiate the relationship between their livelihoods and an expanse of organised but often empty homes, nor relations between resettled people and aspirational suburban homeowners. Amidst a landscape where laws and norms over the city acquire some flexibility — for example where policing is often for the first time as absent from daily life of the urban poor in places such as 'Osman Project' as it is in gated communities such as 'Dreamland' — expectations over ownership and order in spaces populated for the first time are in the process of being defined.

In the next section, I introduce some common binaries in urban studies and urban policy and discuss how they may be imprecise frames for research on life in Haram City, particularly as interpreted by the urban poor.

2. Between Binaries in Urban Studies

2.1 Citizenship: social movements or quiet encroachments?

Since being resettled in Haram City, under the cover of the 2011 occupations of Tahrir Square, the Duweiqa community squatted 231 homes. As will be elaborated in subsequent chapters, squatters demanded access to fair resettlement after a natural disaster or, in lieu of that, access to proportionately sized homes, employment, and a sense of belonging in a desert community subsidised by the state to be affordable housing. Existing urban studies literature provides three dominant frameworks for interpreting this action as either part of mass social insurgency, as parallel resistance towards citizenship rights, or simply as an escalated form of informal encroachment. Invariably, understanding the significance of Cairo's contemporary housing struggles involves simultaneously focusing on everyday claims to the city and any connection to mass social movements, while staking a position within foundational literature that

complicates a clear distinction between the two.

While the scholarship on urban social movements is immense, dominant debates on the relationship between the city and social mobilisation derive from conversations around collective consumption, the grassroots, and class identities from the 1970s and early 1980s (Castells, 1983; Harvey, 1973; Lefebvre, 1970). Since the late 1980s, Harvey's influential focus on the potential for social movements to threaten the unity of more immanent class struggle has been criticised as reductive and tautological in light of a plurality of demands — voices that must be held as representative of multiple interacting fields of power (Pile, 1997). Castells expands the analysis of urban mobilisation to include demands around three sets of structural issues: collective consumption such as housing, schools, and welfare; the expression of cultural identities; and the workings of the state (1983). In this matrix, when one of the three forms of demand is territorialised or definitively "placed," potential is galvanised but also becomes subject to state control. While recognising the importance of multiple triggers for urban social movements, Pile criticises Castells' description as still defined by a uniform reactionary goal, even if shifting between motives (1997). As Cairene revolutionary youth identities united and divided over issues like geographic provenance, cultural identity, political objectives, and struggles for collective consumption, however, Castells' categorisation remains important for acknowledging fluidity and simultaneity across social groups over place and time.

Working around structural understandings of class and social movements in the city, other literature from the same period describes more tacit, subtle, and everyday forms of resistance. De Certeau, for example, describes trickery, deception, and adaptation as "tactics" mobilised by a wide range of society, either subconsciously or in purposefully emergent ways, and directly opposed to more calculated state "strategies" of control (1984). This vocabulary for the multiple forces and power structures to which the everyday must adapt provides an important theoretical foundation for subsequent

scholarship on resistance. At the same time, it relies on structural binaries between the legal and illegal mirrored in development language asserting a clear separation between 'formal' and 'informal' economic and spatial sectors. Following in the tradition of separating the everyday from structural strategy, Asef Bayat offers numerous accounts of urban "non-movements" by the urban poor across the Middle East but particularly in Mubarak-era Egypt (2010). The tactical theft of utilities in unplanned areas and the practices by which street vendors proliferate and protect themselves from security forces slowly evolve as a "quiet encroachment of the ordinary," negotiating the city's rules not as a hegemonic imagination of the "Arab Street" but as countless nearly imperceptible and spontaneous acts of resistance (Bayat, 2010).

In language that expands on how individual embodied actions come to spread as collective enterprises, Bourdieu and Wacquant distinguish between a "field" of social codes and distinctions and a "habitus" of acquired ways of being or doing things, together building social capital as a "feel for the game" of stratified social life (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Bourdieu, 1984). As Jeffrey explains, the fluid and layered relationship between one's habitus and social fields must sometimes be understood as a calculated process that develops over time, as a "chess player plotting eight moves ahead" where "predictability and management of time is central" (2010). When one considers people's inevitably complex interactions with multiple fields simultaneously, Bourdieu's work accommodates coalescence and reproduction in everyday resistance commensurable with an individual's plural social identifications and spatial frames of belonging. Towards understanding experiences of the urban poor squatting gated housing during a revolution, one is obligated to consider multiple interacting fields and the social, cultural and institutional capital transacting between them. For example, squatters may identify with an enormous range of social categories to justify coordinated actions before peers, classists, the state, and a corporation — including 'youth,' 'slum

dweller,' the 'popular,' 'Cairene,' 'Egyptian,' 'Arab,' 'Upper Egyptian,' 'suburban,' 'revolutionary,' 'non-revolutionary,' 'pious,' 'worker,' 'craftsmen,' 'former military conscript,' 'outlaw,' 'thug,' 'boss,' 'homeowner,' 'squatter,' etc. Many of these fields and commitments may conflict with each other, but they must be negotiated across times of common resistance and times of everyday gamesmanship for material struggle. In sum, in contrast to De Certeau a Bourdieusian approach to resistance avoids "implacable opposition between an urbanising panoptic strategy of power" and "ubiquitous contradictory movements, ruses and tactics," blurring the line between the everyday and social movement (Osborne & Rose, 1999). In doing so, it enables ethnography on the relationship between individual morality and community with regasrds to contested ownership claims that complicates "the separation of inside and outside in sovereign political subjects" (Keith, 1997, p. 286).

While appreciating the dexterity of a Bourdieusian analytic frame for discussing resistance in the everyday, it must be read against literature on agency and the South challenging hegemonic framings from the North. Also in the late 1980s, the Subaltern Studies Group built on Gramsci to identify everyday individual acts of resistance against the postcolonial condition and dominant short-sighted Euro-North American knowledge production (Gramsci, 1971; Spivak, 1988). Works by Chatterjee (2004) and Roy (2003b) portray a breadth of cases by which individuals both perform and resist social categorisation in the shadow of global power imbalances, mirroring scholarship on agency and labour (Willis, 1977) or gender (Butler, 1997), manoeuvring within hierarchies of the Global North. As Jeffrey notes, particularly in Southern contexts, Bourdieu's framing of power as reproducing itself through fields and habitus may not fully account for everyday alliances and actions that escape class logic (2010). As homeowners, occupiers, and the resettled untangle dislocated and recombinant social relations, some mapping aspirations for 'freedom' or 'justice' from the inner city onto suburban detached

properties, an interpretive balance must be struck between emphasis on agency and habitus.

Both agency and habitus must be incorporated into a sophisticated understanding of citizenship, the subject of much struggle by Egyptian revolutionaries demanding, as in the popular chant, "bread, freedom, and social justice." Writing on Brazil, Holston productively avoids dichotomies between the citizen and the state, instead describing citizenship as an entanglement between the two that motivates social movements to emerge and subside (2008). It is in this sense that Holston finds that the modernist utopianism of Brasilia is inevitably shattered by its "Brazilianization" by builders — shipped in from all over the country but unaccounted for in Niemeyer and Costa's plans drawn from the sky, they "auto-constructed" the very same favelas that a technical and statist planning for the new capital sought to deny (1989). Similarly, through ethnography on social tensions around auto-constructed settlements at São Paolo's periphery, Holston articulates a circular relationship in insurgent social movements — when seeking democratic citizenship many end up perpetuating the same hierarchies within citizenship that they oppose (2008). Everyday resistance at the urban periphery towards social inclusion is revealed as contingent on inherently exclusive social divisions, property models, and forms of violence. Many claims to a stake in democracy and the city, therefore, result in a "corrosive entanglement" that unsettles both state and society, in the process undermining antinomies such as legal/illegal and public/private through the shock that comes with their very reproduction (Holston, 2008, p. 13).

Life adapting to statist-modernist masterplanning in Brasilia, where high social contrast exhumes the profound limitations of citizenship, resonates strongly with the urban poor adapting to Egypt's "techno-modernist" desert masterplanning as a "civilisational imperative," as does the friction of distance at the urban periphery found in Holston's writing on São Paolo. Cairo's rapidly shifting social and political terrain

during 2011–2014 requires a framework that relates everyday appropriations to consolidated urban social movements, and forms of agency to the reproduction of social categorisation. By focusing on hierarchically planned landscapes as a canvas for plural and undefined forms of resistance to react to and to mark, teetering institutional norms come into focus by the broad spectrum of social struggles drawn to them, some problems of rigid categorisations over collective resistance fade to the background, and investigation of agency or habitus can remain prominent on a case-by-case basis. While I avoid direct reference to the term 'citizenship' in this thesis — a particularly fraught and dangerous notion when conducting research during a coup and military persecution of the democratically elected Muslim Brotherhood — tension over 'official' belonging to various institutional entities lurks throughout the work, in particular with regards to people's interrogation of their own legality vis-à-vis a landscape marred with corruption.

2.2 Middlemen: broker or hustler?

Cairo's complex and variegated housing market has long been most efficiently navigated by a *simsar,* Egyptian for broker. These agents (or teams of agents) charge finders' fees to connect tenants to like-minded landlords, making economic sense to clients because of their grasp of livelihood networks and neighbourhoods. Similarly, nearly all middle and upper class apartment building residents in Cairo maintain strong relationships to their surroundings through a *bowwab*, or doorman. This ubiquitous figure is often a former farmer or the son of a *bowwab*, often with Upper Egypt or Delta origins, providing basic services to tenants for a fee while mobilising an unparalleled knowledge of neighbourhood residents' daily lives to both surveil and connect a community. In the process, the *bowwab* becomes a central resource of evidence for the arbitrage of land disputes, sometimes settled in non-state or religious courts, and a gatekeeper separating those who belong in an area from those who do not. Cairo is rife with examples of

middlemen, with appellations ranging from *mutawasit* (middleman), *maslahgi* (facilitator, implying high self-interest), *mihtal* (hustler), to *khirti* (hustler focusing on foreigners and forgery) or *nassab* (broker without scruples or principles, lit. 'swindler'). What is the role of these individuals, intimately connected to livelihoods of the urban poor, in negotiating cross-class access to Cairo's peripheral housing estates?

In considering the entanglement of fields in which lower-middle class and poorer youth compete for social assets, it is important to counterpose literature on negotiations of identity around resources and survival, particularly as it emerges from the South. Pratha Chatterjee, for example, makes a distinction between "civil society" and "political society" which separates an enfranchised domain of citizen politics in conversation with the state from unilaterally governed subaltern social and material coordination (Chatterjee, 1998). Whereas civil society relies on western legal norms to counterbalance the state within a regime of citizenship derived from property ownership, political society defines unstable arrangements of resource distribution by those without recourse to normative protocols of the state. At first glance, possible subterfuge and alterity by a detached political society resonates with the domain of middlemen brokering resources outside formal channels afforded to "full" citizens. Yet, this categorisation excludes many of the resource shifts, insertions, and hedges in often unstable and corrupt environments, for example by a licensed *simsar* adapting to constraints and opportunities across a legalistic civil society and an associational political society.

Alternatively, the figure of the *simsar* may represent its own social habitus between the everyday and the normative-legal, acting in the name of deep contingencies between categories of governance and blurred agency. Some have seen Chatterjee's distinction as a false binary, over representing the role of the masses to the detriment of micro politics between class and cultural fields. This critique is borne out of research identifying forms of arbitrage that occur in less explicitly material ways amidst relations cultivated by

overlapping time and place. In the "politics of waiting," for example, Jeffrey documents how young Indian men's state of limbo leads to forms of cross-class action similar to the alliances forged by people self-identifying as middlemen, if not for limbo's seemingly coincidental nature (Jeffrey, 2010). Excluded from a nepotistic job market, these students accumulate advanced degrees with help from civil society organisations. In doing so, however, they are also excluded from the full promise of civil society. Amidst an extended youth afforded by uninterrupted student life while waiting for employment, strategies to co-opt one's circumstances emerge haphazardly across dominant class affiliations (Jeffrey, 2010). While these forms of casual mediation undermine the distinction between the civil and the political, other individuals self-defining as brokers may strategically depend on reproducing a strong distinction between the two. The relationship between mediation that ignores official norms and mediation that propagates official norms is also something that can vary with socio-spatial context. For example the urban poor and the lower-middle classes can be brought together by a fluid threshold in the occupation of central Cairo's streets but are pulled apart in the occupation of a gated community where the appearance of order is paramount.

If, as J.M. Jacobs notes, "the politics of identity is undeniably also the politics of place" (Jacobs, 1996), then figures of arbitrage may mitigate *between* "regimes of place for accumulation" (Roy, 2004) through selective mobilisations of class or gender. Indeed, individuals may broker certain privileges of citizenship at the expense of or in order to fulfil gendered roles, ascribing agency to disenfranchisement. For example, Ananya Roy describes male slum dwellers in Calcutta participating as community leaders in political party clubs, gaining prestige but perpetuating their own eviction in rhythm with election cycles. In this case a male 'head of the family' arbitrates between the family's once subordinate role as landless peasants and the possibility of being an urban voter, trading urban citizenship for a "sense of manhood," and "ascribing resistance and choice to their

own oppression" (Roy, 2004). This exchange of material capital for the accumulation of social capital shows how complex the question of agency is when looking at middleman strategy. Looking at arbitrage between labour-capital and social-capital, Willis similarly notes that "there is a moment…in working class culture when the manual giving of labor power represents both a freedom…and a precise insertion into a system of exploitation" (Willis, 1977).

Another way of understanding the relationship between middlemen and institutional legitimacy is through the explicit brokerage of forms of eligibility for citizenship — mediating people's legitimacy in the eyes of the state. Individuals translating livelihood practices and territorial claims by the urban poor in terms of their contribution to a city's continued functioning have been important for negotiating access to rights and services (Holston, 2008; T. Mitchell, 2002). Amidst global neoliberalisation, eligibility to citizenship rights for the urban poor is often framed in terms of individual morality or communities perpetuating their own poverty, and hinges on demonstrating that one is doing the institutionally designated "right thing" (a process similar to means-tested welfare in the Global North) (Huchzermeyer, 2008). Often these injunctions are variations on the idea of insufficient 'sweat equity' by an 'undeserving poor' and derive from institutional denial of structural socio-economic exclusion systematically undermining economic self-determination.[11] Research is lacking on the ways poor people acknowledge the criteria upon which they are measured by the state and international development, thus 'going through the motions' to secure assistance. Brokering or hustling through aestheticised and ritualised performances of eligibility creates a forum for the management of expectations and resources and traffics directly in institutional legitimacy.

[11] One example is in the Habitat for Humanity's approach to private home building and poverty alleviation as requiring participants to demonstrate effort and merit (Baggett, 2000).

In examples from Sub-Saharan Africa to South-East Asia, Simone identifies a growing indifference by the urban poor as to whether or not "they have the authority, skill or motivation to speak or act" in the eyes of the state (Simone, 2011). The staking of an "indifference to eligibility" is intimately connected to everyday struggles to "introduce more uncertainty into the city" and rearticulate territory on terms that the so-called informal are well adapted to negotiate (Simone, 2008). Presenting one of the few important case studies of eligibility mediation, Simone describes complex forms of brokerage that regulate commerce and production inside an occupied modernist building in Phnom Penh (2008). Painstakingly aware of the potential efficacy of a "messy site" in a city that is increasingly "formalising," everyday negotiators from the occupation meet city officials to collectively protect their ad hoc community by framing it well within developmentalist urban planning jargon as a 'culture and leisure centre.' Here arbitrage between an individual's own affiliations takes a back seat to collective forward-looking brokerage able to reframe the site as 'spontaneous' and 'fun,' using language of 'formal' real estate development. This thesis seeks to contribute to literature on informed, complex, and strategic groupings of middlemen able to arbitrate with the state and work against dominant institutional antinomies by using them in name.

2.3 Forms of property: formal or informal?

The relationship between mapping and the management of political subjects in Egypt is well-established, whether as part of British colonial governmentality over agriculture or as a cornerstone of mass infrastructural schemes by a "techno-rational" post-independence state (T. Mitchell, 2002). A historical trajectory from colonial mappings of arable land, to Nasserite mappings of malarial zones and Nubian displacement following construction of the Aswan Damn, to current World Bank advocacy for linking name and title to every plot of land in the country might all be

considered extensions of the logic by which cities are run. As Osborne and Rose note, from a comparative and transhistorical perspective, "the vicious immanence of the city is a never-ending incitement to projects of government" (1999, p. 738). Others have challenged the teleology of a modernist relationship between mapping and governance by highlighting current forms of bio-political control that are consistent with traditions in the medieval city (such as the relationship between guild membership and urban enclaves) in Cairo (AlSayyad, Bierman, & Rabbat, 2005) and in Europe's mercantile cities (AlSayyad & Roy, 2006). Alternatively the 19th century may mark a distinct turn in the degree to which projects of government become inseparable from "the continuous activity of generating truths about the city," either due to new technologies of rule, spreading industrial capitalism, or colonial and postcolonial resource extraction (Osborne & Rose, 1999, p. 739). Colonial techniques of mapping, in India but also in Egypt, have been understood as unprecedented attempts to "recuperate the unruly body of the colonial subject through the language of numbers," the legacies of which shape the postcolonial era (Appadurai, 1996). As the current authoritarian Egyptian state forms policy on housing and slums in close collaboration with international development regimes, efforts to upgrade and secure territory must be situated within deep legacies of power.

Over the last four decades several important debates have emerged over the link between poverty, informality, and land. Historically, neighbourhoods associated with the urban poor have been accused of perpetuating cultures of poverty. However, foundational research on Latin American cities emerging in the 1970s (confirmed longitudinally over decades) crucially demonstrates that urban 'informal' settlements are produced through a combination of social exclusion and demand for cheap labour, while most period analysis propagated the "myth of an marginality" (Peattie, 1970; Perlman, 1979, 2003; J. F. C. Turner, 1976). Nonetheless, the notion that self-built urban areas are

breeding grounds for poverty and extremism persist in institutional and popular imaginations. In Cairo, Bayat debunks relentless Mubarak-era rhetoric on the urban poor's susceptibility to radicalisation by the Muslim Brotherhood, revealing how the main Muslim Brotherhood constituencies are in middle-class suburbs, and how the rhetoric of a radicalised, criminal, and messy city justifies evictions from high-value real estate (Bayat, 2000a). In the context of similar rhetoric, scholars observe that state sanctioned luxury housing or commercial construction across the South are also often built by illegal land invasions, directly challenging a naturalised policy association where the terms 'informality' and 'illegality' operate synonymously (Roy, 2005). Instead, informal land occupations might be better understood as an intrinsic "logic of planning" variously mobilised by both the rich and the poor, the state and the everyday, with examples emerging across the North and the South (Roy, 2005). The selective criminalisation of poor people's informality can therefore be understood as symptomatic of a strategic state imperative to map the city as clearly private or public (illegal occupations by rich or poor parsed between the two), but nowhere between.

Irrespectively, within most development practice informality is generally treated as symptomatic of poverty. Diagnostic approaches to self-built areas hope to either consolidate existing livelihoods by permitting land tenure and gradually upgrading infrastructure (Durand-Lasserve & Royston, 2002) or to fully insert livelihoods into capital markets by providing ownership. For the latter case, economist Hernando de Soto asserts that trillions of dollars in assets already exist at the hands of the world's urban poor, if only it could be "unlocked" by the insertion into the formal economy (1990, 2003). For de Soto, land ownership should act as collateral for mortgages, lead to taxable entrepreneurialism, and a full economic integration poor people's productivity. This proposition has come under sustained criticism by both the academic community and large portions of the development community. The notion that the world's urban poor

already hold trillions of assets is roundly disputed as an incalculable figure and built on a romanticised portrayal of the slum dweller as heroic victim (Roy, 2005). Furthermore it avoids the fact that the urban poor are by definition already within the market in as far as their circumstance is produced by it — providing low-wage and irregular service and manufacturing labour, but relegated to create their own housing nearby (Gilbert, 2002). The development community, on the other hand, has pointed to implementations of de Soto land titling initiatives where residents' relatives find out in advance, flood the area with new claims, and immediately sell deeds for short-term (but essential) gain, only to form new communities elsewhere (Edésio Fernandes & Varley, 1998). De Soto's Institute for Land and Democracy holds an office in Cairo promoting numerous titling, and it is increasingly vocal in asserting a connection between a lack of land titling and revolution (de Soto, 2011; Soliman, 2004a).

In opposition to de Soto-Washington Conesus approaches, others straddling academic and development communities have sought to create pragmatic legal definitions for the 'Right to the City' towards livelihood protection and the promotion of safety in self-construction (Durand-Lasserve, 1998; G. Jones & Ward, 1994; Ward, 2004). These efforts emphasise land tenure arrangements that avoid untangling contentious and overlapping claims, instead promoting participatory community trusts, cooperative associations, or "right to use" deeds that enable self-initiated upgrading in demonstrably more effective ways than pure titled-by-name private ownership (Assies, 2007; Edésio Fernandes & Varley, 1998; Fitzpatrick, 2005; Unruh, 2004; Varley, 2002). In certain cases, legalistic 'Right to the City' strategies may be consolidating local ambiguity around land claims in administrative packages able to operate against informal-equals-illegal associations. As McAuslan notes, despite the global proliferation of British common law on property as part of colonial mappings and unification that have proven highly resistant, many legal regimes are beginning to break down or mutate (1998). UN-Habitat

advocacy for customary tenure as one of many "land tools" for land security, particularly in cases where local Islamic law practices and common law practices often work in parallel, demonstrates growing institutional recognition of pluralistic conceptions of ownership as well as revisable interpretations of state law (Fitzpatrick, 2005; Sait & Lim, 2006).

Others have complicated formal-informal policy binaries by suggesting a need to avoid treating land tenure as a "technical panacea" for otherwise highly improvisational, sometimes itinerant livelihoods (Simone, 2008). Research on flexible ownership suggests strong potential for accommodating neighbourhood improvements through regimes of "jurisdictional softness" and open infrastructure access, as in studies of migrant worker *colonias* on both sides of the US-Mexico border (Ward, 2004). Similarly, Assies argues that if nations can unite to create tax free enterprise zones, then they should be able to also designate special social interest/housing zones that strategically adapt normative health and safety regulations (Assies, 1994). The Brazilian government has attempted this by implementing "Special Zones of Social Interest" (ZEIS) in poorer neighbourhoods of many cities, strategically limiting planning regulations to facilitate self-upgrading, with mixed results (Hirata & Rodrigues Samora, 2012).

Other than planners and geographers working in the South, an abundance of scholarship on the commons (broadly shared ownership regimes) in economic sociology, legal anthropology and political science also challenges a hard legal binary between formal-informal, as promoted by many states and elites. These debates reflect post economic crisis renewed interest in the transition from liberalism — separating the state from the market (and society from economy) — to neoliberalism — a refashioning of the state and society to principles of market competition (Davies, 2010; Foucault, 2008). Forms of governmentality managing society through the presumed rationalism of economic modelling also depend on shaping law as a tool to construct the language and

criteria for market competition (Çalışkan & Callon, 2009). From this perspective all that cannot be assumed to be rational and thus not quantifiable, such as the cultural and social, is bracketed by economist-policymakers under the catch-all notion of "externalities" (Coase, 1960; Davies, 2010). It is directly in this sense that Chicago School economist Garret Hardin's description of the "tragedy of the commons" — destruction of jointly held assets such as land by people free riding — demands not only a clear distinction between public and private, but a full partitioning of the commons as assets linked to individual responsibility (Hardin, 1968). Where shared ownership relations in the 'logic of informality' are imagined as neither public nor private, neither clearly owned individually nor collectively, and with little acknowledgement of legal structures able to accommodate such claims, informality is often cited as an example of the "tragedy of the commons."

And yet many scholars have renewed efforts questioning (or at least complicating) Hardin's normative treatment of the commons. Also stemming from within the Chicago School economic-legal tradition, Heller has proposed the concept of a "tragedy of the anticommons," where enormous economic inefficiencies derive from overly fragmented property, particularly in the case of land or patents (Heller, 2010).[12] In political science, Elinor Ostrom has prominently shown that, with proper rules and design, 'common pool resources' (CPRs) such as public urban land can be effectively managed and rendered democratically productive (Guha-Khasnobis, Kanbur, & Ostrom, 2006a; Ostrom, 1990). Others have observed a productive ambiguity associated with commons-like formats, a situation where moderately unclear ownership boundaries means that one is unsure if an action will harm or benefit himself or others, compelling cooperative behaviour. For

[12] Heller cites examples of rows of empty storefronts immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union, where completely compartmentalised ownership left no incentive to either compete or form commercial alliances — remaining empty for years. He also cites the deadly problem of pharmaceutical patents, so compartmentalised into an archipelago of private ownership that many proven life-saving drugs cannot be manufactured and sold.

example citing research by Arrighi (2007) on the global competitive advantage of hybrid ownership in Chinese Townships and Village Enterprises, Davies (2010) makes just this case. Not subject to absolute transparency and regimented accounting over who owns what, the benefits and problems associated with externalities in Townships are collectively managed, not falling apart at the hands of defectors while also alleviating problems for the state.

Offering alternatives to conceptions of "absolute property" (and the formal/informal binary it reinforces), Davies cites legal philosopher Tony Honoré's description of ownership with eleven distinct characteristics ascribing degrees of possession (Honoré, 1987). Indeed, legal enforceability of a gradient of property possession has much older precedents in the Middle East. Deliberative approaches to land in Islamic law (*Shari'a*) frame ownership in terms that go beyond the functioning of abstract markets, emphasising practical use of resources and how benefits are accrued. Traditionally, *Shari'a* privileges use-based rights to land ownership, circumscribing ownership in the event of wasteful or temporary utilisation and insisting on a property's return to communal ownership (Hajrah, 1982). Going beyond North American approaches to property as constituted by a "bundle of rights" (Ellickson, 2011), Islamic law designates five types of partial ownership on a continuum between private and public: Right of Benefit (*Haqq al Intima*), ownership of the right of benefit (*Mulk al-Intifa*), ownership of usufruct (*Mulk al-Manafa'ah*), ownership of land object only (*Mulk al-Ain*), and borrowed ownership (*Mulk al-Dain*). This framework has complicated implications for formal/informal categorisations. Al-Said and Garba, for example, have interpreted that this plurality makes an important distinction between "encroachment" as illegal and "appropriation" as legal — a nuance not present in most state approaches to informality

(J. Abu-Lughod, 1971; Al-Said, Garba, & Garba, n.d.).[13] Theoretically privileging the "public or common interest" (*Maslaha*), *Shari'a* permits encroachments until they are explicitly perceived to interfere with the rights of others, a land use regime placing positive rights ("freedom to") before negative rights ("freedom from").

Throughout the expansive literature on urban informality (whether questioning the term or not), there are very few detailed accounts of how 'informals' themselves publicly or privately question this categorisation — something Haram City's squatters must do on a daily basis to justify occupation. Not exploring people's understanding of this subjectivisation risks implicitly affirming that the urban poor lack agency; that they are unable to manage their surroundings beyond reaction to power structures and survival. Two prominent case studies on agency working within but against formal/informal binaries, however, are invaluable to this thesis. In both, poor city inhabitants directly question who is in fact informal or illegal in the city (and why 'informal' and 'illegal' often come to mean the same thing). The first is the aforementioned research by AbdouMaliq Simone in Phnom Penh, where residents of a housing project called "Building" frame their strategic occupation through the language of entrepreneurialism and 'formal' planning goals (Simone, 2008). Mobilising terms such as "sustainability" and "participatory" to describe bars, brothels, workshops, and cafes, informality is appropriated by its very subjects and turned inside out through development codes.

The second important case is from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In an ethnography in the city's second largest favela, Jacarezinho, João Costa Vargas documents how residents reject the stigma of criminality and attacks by militarised state violence by publicly questioning why nearby 'formal' luxury gated condominiums receive such high levels of protection (2006). Residents perceive a double standard over both security and freedom

[13] Some distinction between encroachment and appropriation exists in the principle of Adverse Possession in common law, but only where encroachment *becomes* appropriation over significant amounts of time and through 'open and notorious' use (see Corr, 1999).

from intrusion by the state and attribute it to racism. In 2001 with the help of a small group of former Black Panther volunteers from Los Angeles (accustomed to a landscape of gated communities), residents installed private security cameras, gates, and manned security guard shifts at all the communities borders and at strategic entry points, creating a "favela-condominium." The study concludes by depicting how, despite "playing by the rules" of elite urban security, residents' public interrogation of 'formal' as a category of full citizenship rights generated uproar in the media.

Research in Haram City presents a similar reflexive account of double standards automatically ascribing illegality exclusively to construction that is perceived as informal. Here too — between aspirational middle class home purchases and a resettlement community adapting the private city to their survival — strong stereotypes over dialect, skin colour, class, and region of origin are at play. In this case, however, Haram City's squatters invert the "favela condominium," bringing the markings and lifestyle of the favela into the condominium rather than the other way around. Where life within the gated community is questioned by residents through the lens of corruption, improper public land sales, improper evictions, and misrepresented social policies, accusations that the 'informal' is illegal become much easier to contest.

In the following section, I introduce two sets of literatures to address the relevance of the aforementioned analytical constructs: one from anthropology describing social life in Cairo in very high detail but not necessarily framed in terms of the 'urban' and another from legal geography describing discourses and practices on the relationship between law and ownership at a foundational and generalisable level. One offers a highly situated approach and the other a highly topical approach to imprecise binaries — categorisations that research participants grapple with and navigate themselves.

3. Situated and Topical Alternatives

3.1 Morality and market

There is a wealth of deeply situated ethnography on everyday life in Cairo and Egypt that has yet to be incorporated into the study of urban processes and transformations. Most of this research is by anthropologists and focuses on people's experiences regarding the relationship between morality and the market.

In Haram City, discourse justifying or criticising property seizure, whether by individuals, a company, or the state, often appeals to moral positions regarding the purpose and form of the economy. While resettled residents defend the transformation of a corner of the gated community into a viable market space as necessary for survival and therefore as moral by definition, homeowners understand covenants banning the conversion of residential space as moral because it underwrites their investment in a more abstract notion of the market, financial and housing markets. Similarly, Orascom Housing Communities' discourse over their right to set the norms, rules, and assert authority through private means is also upheld through their own market share in formerly public desert land, in contracts with the state, and in international real estate investment. In more ways than one, understanding normative assertions over the form of the city and the limits of property rights is also a matter of understanding personal and institutional moral attitudes to economic life.

In an ethnography on the relocation of craftsmen from central Cairo to Madinet el-Hirafiyeen — a purpose-built 'Craftsmen's City' in the desert periphery — as part of a government urban renewal scheme and World Bank microenterprise initiatives, Julia Elyachar provides a rich account of conflicting embedded and institutional expectations over the market (2005). She shows how, amidst structural adjustment and technical expertise advocating the virtues of free market economics, craftsmen who managed to retain social networks despite relocation faired much better than their microentrepreneur

counterparts. From the perspective of craftsmen, neighbouring microenterprise initiatives often failed because of their over-reliance on self-interest and competition divorced from rooted protocols of transaction. Craftsmen articulated the entrepreneurs' difficulties through the idiom of the "evil eye": short-term self-interest and pure profit maximisation is seen to inevitably boomerang back into its proponents and materialise in the long-term through accident, misfortune, and alienation. Above all, Elyachar notes the contradictions within a free market "comic book hero" reading of Smith's "invisible hand" by policy advocates, largely divorced from Smith's observations on moral sentiments: a mythology that, when imposed on Cairo's local socio-economic networks, fundamentally resulted in dispossession (2005, p. 20). As structural adjustment through the 80s and 90s "freed" a vast pool of Egyptians from state employment into undefined sectors, programs seeking to convert market practices into "entrepreneurship" had the paradoxical effect of undermining the very networks that allowed them to thrive.

Focus on moral attitudes amidst divergent conceptions of the market — between the physical space of economic transaction enabling livelihoods and the imposition of a higher-order universal ideal of competition — has been a minor but important theme in the literature on structural adjustment in Egypt. Many studies cite examples of displaced, uprooted, fixed, or restored physical markets in the name of free market ideals. Early research by Mitchell in rural Delta farming communities, for example, shows 1980s USAID privatisation efforts essentialising local agricultural inequalities by imagining that historic physical markets were thrown into "disequilibrium" by Nasser's socialist state interventions (1995). USAID encouraged decentralisation of production to introduce market competition, only further entrenching local market power inequalities and prompting rural-to-urban migration.

Alternatively, Jörg Gertel evidences government use of other neoclassical market metaphors to justify the 1994 eviction of Cairo's Rod al-Farag street vendor market to a

desert wholesale market in the remote al-Obour satellite city (2009). Rationale for eviction followed the logic that inserting small-scale street level market transactions into a larger wholesale networks, more closely resembling "ideal" competitive relations, would have a transformational effect. Faced with eviction, however, traders organised to hire a consultancy firm to conduct an evaluation of the relocation, emphasising that disruption of supply chains from a community of local hawkers, increased transportation costs, and possible competition with wholesalers would exponentially increases transaction costs and result in massive unemployment. Importantly, small scale vendors brought a legal case that contested relocation on specifically moral grounds: what policy strategists referred to as a "purer" wholesaler's market was reframed as a bastion of strongmen and gangsters, while detailed pricing calculations reframed ad hoc hawkers as forms of social welfare.

Throughout Elyachar, Mitchell, and Gertle's work farmer, street vendor, craftsman, and microentrepreneur moral positions over the market — whether positive or negative always stemming from direct experience — are contrasted with those of institutions intervening from above. In Haram City there is similar contestation over notions of the market, also manifesting through the shock of desert displacement: livelihoods most reliant on highly codified direct market practices are forced to contend with a space premised on the notion that rigid property rights on the open market will moralise social relations. Importantly, while the resettled must grapple with homeowner moral expectations, in this case it is completely divorced from efforts to 'improve' the poor's market relations. The resettled are simply expected to socially conform, tolerate prohibitive transportation costs, or face destitution. As the insubordinate transform the gated community, therefore, they are compelled to defend their economy from a moral position in the face of immense hostility. On the other side, homeowner acquisitions also speak to normative position on the market: inalienable property rights as means to return

on investment, safety, and order. Directly coming at odds with each other, these moral positions frame argumentative strategies on legitimacy and belonging.

Towards navigating competing moral claims — whether justifying self-interest or association, property rights or livelihood — I make use of the rich literature on complex and indeterminate articulations of moral self-hood in Egypt. While the most prominent debates on moral disposition in Cairo revolve around practices of piety emphasising practical judgement, embodiment, and agency (Henkel, 2005; Hirschkind, 2013; Mahmood, 2012), other important work on youth aspiration and migration is particularly relevant for its emphasis on resistance and material fulfilment. In the latter cases, moral argumentation often asserts claims over the future or laments the inability to do so, often in pursuit of economic change. In a study on youth in the village of Nazlat al-Rayyis, Samuli Schielke details complex moralities framing aspirations as a constellation of "normative registers" within the same individual that need not be completely consistent and may even contradict themselves (2009a). This approach builds on a tradition of research that emphasises a dialogical notion of identity and subjectivity, accommodating an array of competing voices, experiences, roles, and identities in unsystematic ways (Gregg, 2007; Meijl, 2006). "Normative registers" comprise modalities of moral speech and action towards addressing not only the question 'Who am I?' but also the more propositional question 'How can I be a good human being?' (2009a, p. 165). Schielke's research offers the following categorical range: *religion*, understood as both an objective set of rules and an overarching metaphysical source of significance; *respect* (*ihtiram*), referring to social standing in community, good behaviour, and material responsibilities; *good character* (*tiba, gada'na*), as readiness to be of assistance to peers and friends; *family*, describing recognition of family hierarchies and intimate relations; *social justice* and *rights*, involving critique of economy and power in things like nepotism, corruption, or lack of opportunities; *love*, celebrating all-sacrificing passion and commitment; and *success/self-*

realisation (*takwin an-nafs*), referring to the aim of creating wealth, a meaningful place in the world, and expanding experiences (2009a, p. 167).

Such a list might be criticised for still being overly rigid, a taxonomy that undermines its own central premise: accounting for fluidity within opaque layerings of intent, hindsight, reason, and sentiment. For this reason, it is perhaps best to not approach normative registers as necessarily constitutive of 'clean' internal moral positions, but primarily as salient, popularly recognisable, and culturally consistent rhetorical strategies — tried and tested framings for effective argumentation, defence, legitimisation, or castigation of action. When approached this way, these registers are remarkably consistent with the forums of legitimacy that Haram City's residents refer to when deliberating amongst themselves and with outsiders. Rather than only framing the question 'How can I be a good human being?' against obstacles, normative registers are useful to frame the question 'How can I shape the just city?' in galvanising ways to those who agree and in intelligible ways to those with competing views.

Debates over the form of inhabitation in Haram City are not limited to questions of building modification. Discussions over the role of markets in the city extend to questions over appropriate behaviour in and use of 'public' (or, 'communal,' in the case of fully privatised community) space. In this sense, the question 'how can I shape the just city' might be applied retroactively to better understand Schielke's own earlier work exploring the relationship between morality and public space (Schielke, 2008a, 2008b). In observing the norms and forms of policing behaviour at popular Egyptian Muslim saints-day (*mulid*) festivals, he argues that the conceptual and physical configuration of this ritualised public space is deeply enmeshed with both bodily and moral disposition of its users (2008b). He notes that *mulid* festivals across Egypt are organised in strikingly similar ways (as well as condemned by officials in similar ways) — for example limits over the use of public space, spectacular state security presence at the festival centre, and the clear

separation of particular festival elements — despite no official policy, codes, or laws. This is portrayed as a remarkably consistent "diffuse common sense" over the relationship between order and celebration, the sacred and profane, policing and public behaviour (2008b, p. 540). Normatively self-fulfilling, this "common sense" relationship between behaviour and spatial form fundamentally boils down to perspectives on morality, inflecting and reflecting collective expectations over piety, eccentricity, safety, freedom, and conviviality.

Approaches to expectations over space, order, and bodily practice as mutually constitutive reflect contemporary debates by scholars of Egypt on the habitus — learned and internalised dispositions and judgments carrying ethical or social significance (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 170; Mauss, 1950, pp. 365–372). In ethnography on women's piety movements in Egypt, Saba Mahmood gives prominence to the problems of choosing ones disposition. Rather than passive internalisation, she emphasises an active and self-propelled approach to one's habitus as "*habituation*" — externally adopting habits as means to internally transformational ends (Mahmood, 2012). For Mahmood active approaches to the habitus distance themselves from "identity politics" — collective signifying practices aimed at distinguishing group political, religious, or ethnic affiliation — as a much more introverted and personal affair. In response, Schielke builds on Starrett to present active self-formation as existing dialectically between individual and collective, a contestation (perhaps even an argumentation) both embodying and transforming ideology as the "politics of habitus" (Schielke, 2008b, p. 542; Starrett, 1995). Amidst all the hegemonic ideological projects that have swept over Egypt and its cities — from colonialism, to techno-modernity, to structural adjustment, to Islamic reform — the habituation of ideology is not confined to the body in a narrow sense but "immediately related to the visible structures of public spaces, which, in turn, are understood to be productive and expressive of moral boundaries" (Schielke, 2009a, p.

542). If one then considers administrative mappings and policy framing of the *'ashwa'iyat* along social movement/encroachment, broker/hustler, formal/informal binaries *irrespective* of legality, one must confront how the mere visibility of built, personal, or organisational form can code for morality. This, in turn, is incorporated into the resident-critic's legal consciousness to gradually mould statutory reality through thinking along the lines of "well, if that's not illegal, then it *ought* to be illegal."

In very different contexts, others have also noted a similar imbrication between the formation of space and bodily hexis amidst sweeping ideological projects, either through the regulation or assertion of belonging. Sudipa Kaviraj, working on colonial and postcolonial Calcutta, argues that the construction of a clear public/private distinction in space emerged through practices of colonial administration, asserting a normative hierarchy of "civilized" appearances and behaviours through the drawing of lines (1997). In this work, behavioural norms in space acquire moral weight through discourse on sanitation and hygiene. Similar moral discourse on hygiene persists to justify housing evictions (Ghertner, 2011, 2012) and in gated suburban class formation premised on privacy (Waldrop, 2004), both in Delhi, mobilising colonial legal legacies of property rights and nuisance. In both cases, emphasis on suitable, legal, or orderly behaviour in space speaks directly to a 'politics of the habitus' that fundamentally revolves around problems of morality.

The interrelation between behaviour, morality, and space is an undercurrent that also runs through prominent ethnography in Egypt critiquing epistemologies that are deeply biased by secular liberal tradition for interpreting bodily practice and self-formation. For example, work on the embodiment of piety practices amidst Islamic Revival explores gendered practices (Mahmood, 2003, 2012, pp. 1–39) or the repetition of listening practices (Hirschkind, 2011, 2013) that constitute a sense of freedom through collective self-improvement, but that are not fit the definition of personal autonomy as

emancipatory self-ownership. Alternatively, in recent commentary on Cairo's new urban middle classes amidst a return to authoritarian politics, Talal Asad (Mahmood and Hirschkind's mentor) sees secular liberalism as an over arching force behind pervasive Cairene middle-class complaints. Asad recounts people's observations of fading conviviality and social commitment while self-interested behaviour is on the rise in Cairo's public spaces, something his interlocutors attribute to ethical reference points shifting in line with the proliferation of free market and consumerist ideology (Asad, 2015). One example is of fading conviviality habituating street market commercial interactions outside of the clear parameters of fairness. Asad retains that these widespread lamentations, particularly over the public sphere and the city, suggest that Cairo's new consumerist middle classes are subject to "liberal incitement to individual autonomy" which accelerates the "subjectivization of morality." He contextualises this transformation in the Egypt's 2013 military ousting of Islamist President Mohamed Morsi, and widespread support for authoritarian persecution of the Muslim Brotherhood. Support for the current regime's aggressive tactics, he suggests, comes from the new urban lower-middle and middle classes who have benefitted to a degree under economic restructuring and cronyism. An alternative name for this same demographic created by revolutionary activists is *hizb al-kanaba* (lit. the 'couch party'). The term targets the group's perceived political complacency in favour of stability above anything else. It is meant to evoke a spineless and immobile moralist judgement of the newly propertied, shouting from a sofa at a television depicting images of actual principled struggle and sacrifice for social justice. The *hizb al-kanaba* is one of the most prominent caricatures used to describe Haram City's homeowners by downtown activists familiar with the development. Asad's readings depict a shared template for the moral expectations and anxieties many first-time suburban owners might have over behaviour and order in space, and possible tension with the "normative registers" of morality appealed to by the

urban poor to justify 'disorder.'

Mahmood and Hirschkind's observations of emancipatory collective self-fashioning and Asad's of an "subjectivization of morality" by compromised conviviality, oscillate between two poles of ideological habituation: the Islamic Revival and authoritarian liberalisation. Reflecting on this tension, Elyachar sees that reducing arguments over ideological habituation, politics, and city life in Cairo to a struggle between Islamists and secular authoritarians flattens a much more varied landscape and denies other crucial ethical frames. She advocates for a third prominent repertoire of embodied practice and habituation in Cairo, one that has no distinguishing marks of identification: the historically constituted identity of *sha'bi* ('of the people') or *ibn al-balad* (son of the country) people in Cairo (Elyachar, 2011). A *sha'bi* Cairene has historically been indigenous to 'popular' quarters of the city and identifiable according to cultural practice over economic status, although some use the term to gloss for the urban poor (as non consumerist cosmopolitans) (El-Messiri, 1978). For example, a study on the atomised, popular, and livelihood based "quiet encroachment of the ordinary" in Egyptian cities largely refers to *sha'bi* practices (Bayat, 2000a). As Elyachar remarks, from as early as late nineteenth century independence struggles, elite efforts to publish texts inciting rebellion in local Egyptian dialects specifically targeted *sha'bi* populations, whose bodily practices were imagined to provide a foundation for political mobilisation (2011, p. 88). Like Schielke, she underlines collective practices of self-formation (unlike individualised Mahmoodian and Asadian ones) constituted by mutual recognition of locomotory, gestural, and micro communicative practices. One example involves astounding feats of improvisational micro cooperation occurring between anonymous people in high-speed microbuses, such as the ability of two drivers to exchange a large bill for change across vehicles while driving at full speed whenever needed. This "semiotic commons" mediates spontaneous time-space connections between two or

more people who have no visible way of recognising that there would be mutual understanding. It is a collective habituation amounting to the "infrastructure" of social life for people who are deeply reliant on mutual assistance (2011, pp. 94–96). With survival and mutual benefit depending on these communicative practices, they amount to a public political economy. As in other competing conceptions of the market, where livelihoods are made so are moralities.

While Asad's new middle class suffers from a crises of conviviality, when searching for avenues to restore social commitment he also affirms the important relationship between communicative channels and morality. Sensations of a subjectivisation of morality "mak[e] it much more difficult to develop a coherent moral language with which citizens can collectively criticise the state" (Asad, 2015). In other words, the shared moral frames for collective transformational projects (Schielke's "normative registers," perhaps) are seen to fragment. On the other hand, this statement implies that those who do share a "coherent moral language" (Elyachar's *sha'bi* "semiotic commons," for example) may be well equipped for argumentative collective struggle, even if it is often expressed in "quiet" ways (as in Asef Bayat's 'encroachment'). In this thesis, where clearly defined and secured private property is at times either understood by the *hizb al-kanaba* to offer the promise of autonomous self-ownership or by *sha'bi* settlers as an obstacle to tried-and-tested "communicative infrastructure" for encroachment, issues of moral discontinuity and habituation matter a great deal. And when these groups come to *dispute* the compound in common, effective argumentation defending the legitimacy of one's lifestyle and the coordination of a right to pursue it both depend on reproducing collective moral stances.

All research cited thus far on the habitus, habituation, or the "politics of habitus" in Egypt was conducted in well-established, historically defined, and culturally marked spaces. However, in a city built from scratch, amidst a formative process of and claim-

making during a revolution, the most pressing questions for all residents' are about what *their* city *ought* to become and how. This shared interrogation of place opens an analytic window for studying the process of habituation as a contestation in constant need of reflexive justification. How is one to consider the "politics of habitus" vis-à-vis its constitution in space when in Haram City there are no precedents for social life other than computer-generated advertising images of suburban idyll? Rather than relying on the symbolism of identity politics, an openly contested "politics of habitus" must draw from distant *sha'bi* or middle-class references and associated moral frames. Accordingly, Schielke's "normative registers" are important schemata for people to construct crosscutting communicative channels asserting 'common sense' approaches to a new city and a new market.

From the perspective of a person for whom work, family, and community must overlap as crucial factors for economic survival, as is the case for Haram City's resettled and squatters, prior to state intervention the distinction between many binaries in urban studies often appears trivial: form of organisation, mediation, or building is secondary to the need for a moral city — fundamentally, the city *ought* to provide security and opportunity to provide for family. And yet the open and notorious invasion of vacant homes, no matter how vital for the appropriator, will inevitably elicit questions over what constitutes coordinated action, ownership, and property, including amongst squatters themselves. To address these questions it is imperative to build on research interrogating the role of morality and markets in everyday Egyptian life, whether in challenging the housing market or building a literal market between houses. Applying the aforementioned wealth of ethnographic literature builds understanding of what constitutes legitimacy (and for whom) in a Cairo's satellite suburbs. And legitimacy is of the utmost importance when one considers that a main feature of Haram City between 2011 and 2014 is widespread legal uncertainty.

3.2 Local legality: property and the city

Many of the most vigorous points of contention in Haram City boil down to disputes over property rights. With covenants and rules over the limits to property rights set by a private corporation facing legal challenges and with only a handful of years in precedents to give already vague codes enforceable weight, property modification, use designation, theft, or elaborate walling are both ubiquitous and ubiquitously disputed. Towards a better understanding the codification of ownership and order — a fundamental object of contention in Haram City — I rely on a tradition of literature in legal geography and property theory that is of great topical significance but rarely applied directly or ethnographically to contexts of legal uncertainty in the Global South.

There is an important difference between property and property rights. The latter are largely dependent on recognition by other individuals and has a higher source of authority as an "enforceable claim to use or benefit from something, whether it is a right to share in some common resource or an individual right to some particular things" (Macpherson, 1978, p. 3). The former, on the other hand might best be understood as a "social relation that defines the property holder[s] with respect to something of value . . . against all others" (Bromley, 1991, p. 2). While property rights exist only through an institution endowing them with legitimacy and therefore coercive power (to expel a trespasser, for example), property itself is fundamentally a relational agreement with others over things (N. K. Blomley, 2004, p. 11). Contrary to popular notions prevailing in liberal states, even in these settings the owner of property is almost never legally understood to have absolute authority over all activities regarding the thing. Even in legal contexts that place the greatest emphasis on powers of the owner, property rights are rarely a monolithic whole. Ownership of property can entail any number of combination of rights, including right to use, to sell, to exclude entry, to enter, to give away, followed by rights that extend beyond seemingly clear property lines (such as easements to right of

way, "light and air," views, structural encroachments, noise and pollution controls, and more). Furthermore, any number of these rights can be held by an array of possessors: individual, shared, the state, or open to the commons. A classic if obvious example often given in property law to demonstrate this is, for example, that even in contexts where an owner may believe that all rights collapse into one deed, one never owns the right to take legal action over planes or satellites flying overhead as trespassers. In other words, there are always reasonable limits to property rights in the name of some greater good, and 'reasonableness' is highly disputable and varies by context. Similarly, properties acquired through mortgage may appear to be a single family's or individual's near absolute domain, but are in fact highly complex forms of shared ownership, distributed across banking networks to shareholders (exponentially so if one considers the splicing and repackaging of derivative markets). This rather messy picture of ownership entitlements that are frequently disaggregated in any property context is simplified by legal scholars through a practical metaphor: varied property rights in ownership as a 'bundle of sticks' (Ellickson, 2011).[14] Like the bundle of sticks, rights in property can be aggregated or disaggregated. Yet, as Joseph Singer notes, demonstrating that property can be legally deconstructed does not undermine its immense "cultural force as an organizing category" (1996, p. 1459). In fact, often the prevailing instrumental effect between parties in propertied relations is that "ownership becomes aggregated into a bundle of sticks, with which on can beat one's neighbour" (N. K. Blomley, 2004, p. 37). Ignoring the complex and vast gap between property's role as a "cultural force" and its enforceable

[14] Some have criticised the bundle of sticks metaphor for not acknowledging the link between law and economics and for *encouraging* a disaggregation of rights, where partial ownership of rights significantly and disproportionally limits the value of property (Merrill & Smith, 2001). This position often advocates for a "Single Ownership Model" or "Blackstonian model" of property, a legal position treating the array of rights not as an aggregation but as *de facto* a single whole under threat of disaggregation (Schorr, 2009; Singer, 2000a). Others, on the other hand, see the 'bundle of sticks' as fruitful but suggest other metaphors that don't ignore hierarchies within rights, such as the "tree model" (Robilant, 2013), or that treat rights as an undifferentiated whole containing within recombinant possibilities but limited to clear boundaries, such as the "bucket of water" model (Fennell, 2009b). The 'bundle of sticks' remains the most commonly used description simply because it is effective at conveying the notion that there are many *kinds* of rights in property, irrespective relationships between them.

rights framework has been described by some property scholars as a "mutual conspiracy" between individuals and institutions (Gray, 2010). When rendered visible, however, this gap opens room for a great deal of contention as well as opportunities.

In Haram City the spectrum of property ownership claims run from a building deed (but with land and garden indefinitely bestowed by the corporation as usufruct — 'right to use'), deed pending payment of instalments, ownership through affordable mortgage (with strong company rights for foreclosure — for example OHC can unilaterally move someone in arrears first into a smaller house and if still failing to make payments into one of 10–12 rooms referred to as 'sanctuaries'),[15] company rental, private rental, long-term private subletting, government ownership with resident holding a 'guarantee of residence,' sale/purchase of 'guarantee of residence' (not recognised by company or government), rental of 'guarantee of residence,' possession despite foreclosure or refusal to pay mortgage, direct property seizure legitimised by resettlement 'home dimension guarantee' documentation from the Cairo Governorate, and direct property seizure without any documentation at all.

Beyond this complex array of tenure claims, as well as the multiple institutions to which they appeal to for authority, an equally vast array of property *use* rights are claimed: government approved and facilitated "affordable youth housing" ownership as primary residence, personal ownership for holiday or retirement, personal investment held vacant, personal investment rental, rental or purchase for commercial practice of illicit trades, multiple homes joined together for single family residential use, conversion of home into only commercial space, conversion of home into joint residential and commercial space, conversion of home into workshop or storage space, and built conversion of only garden as workshop/commercial/storage space.

Officially (for OHC) homes are for purely single-family use via purchase, with

[15] See this interview with OHC CEO Samih Sawiris: (Daily News Egypt, 2008)

strict wall height and colour retrictions, and resale or rental only permitted after five years of single-family ownership. Often contrasting with this, officially (for the state) as part of conditions for public land sale, all home purchases must demonstrate need to the Ministry of Housing according to upper income and age limits as well as be Egyptian citizens. With these two 'official' criteria for rights and regulation of property ownership often in contradiction with eachother (on paper they roughly match, in practice they do not[16]), criticism by OHC of resident norm violations often holds little weight. As theorists Ewick and Silbey define "legal consciousness," "Consciously positioning oneself in relation to the law provides a culturally interpretable way of expressing something about oneself or one's relationship to others" (1998, p. 133). But where does one consciously position oneself when two sets of 'official' rules clash or even cancel each other out? The management, practices, and discourses (allowing or prohibiting, modifying or keeping vacant, lamenting or supporting, respectively) asserting property rights in Haram City therefore often requires auxiliary support by individual appeal to morality.

As James Proctor notes, places are "inescapably normative . . . Normativity is not something to be added onto place as to be teased out of it" (1998, p. 13). This research explores a case of active "teasing" and, in particular, "adding," and the problems that arise in between. At the same time, claims and obligations over property only make sense in a social context and are inherently "jural relations," however defined, a situation where Carol Rose notes, "If any given subject is to have control over any given object, others must understand the signals of ownership and acquiesce in them" (1994, p. 269, 2007, p. 1899). In lieu of a clearly normative law, these agreements then collectively form, unravel, or are simply maintained according to implicit norms (or violations of norms),

[16] Beyond abundant anecdotal and evidence from residents, I personally went to OHC offices and attempted to purchase a home and - alternating between English and Arabic to emphasise that I am foreign - clearly stated that I am *not* an Egyptian citizen and that I do *not* want to disclose my source of income. I was told that it might be possible to work something out (for example through an intermediary).

often presented as 'common sense.' Because questions over property norms are also often also issues of prosperity, livelihood, self-fulfilment, or even survival for self, family, and community, this normativity over place (whether manifested in forms of gift/debt, eviction, return on investment, or access to childhood education) is bound to moral weight. Understood in this way, a property's value and collective human values are deeply intertwined. As Blomely observes across a broad spectrum of property disputes, when people say "'it's ours' they do more than complicate what property *is* . . . [T]hey raise moral questions of what property *ought* to be" (2004, p. 74). When a claim is then enshrined as a right, it invokes authority's disciplinary powers of coercion that must be deemed fair by some degree of majority (lest instigating revolt) and further legitimating propertied moral boundaries.

As studies of suburbs have especially shown, one's general relationship to property — disregarding the details of rights entailed — has long been a metric for evaluating moral worth, ascribing notions of autonomy, freedom, and ability to provide for one's family (Greenhouse, Yngvesson, & Engel, 1994; Perin, 1977). This means to a degree that a trope of liberal discourse on autonomy is the importance of private property in orienting morality, freedom as property in the self (self-ownership) and ensuing political projects. And yet, like property, autonomy is inextricable from social commitments, where "the collective is not simply a potential threat to individuals, but is constitutive of them, and thus is a source of their autonomy as well as a danger to it" (Nedelsky, 1989, p. 21).[17] The collective and often forward-looking moral dimension of property is a subject that emerges vividly in many case studies of urban change, or any intervention towards place transformation broadly. Neil Smith, for example, notes the ways in which

[17] In chapter seven I discuss how incitement to autonomy (through gated-development advertising) can lead to a paradox, what some Haram City homeowners refer to as 'internal emigration': the search for autonomy through escape to a propertied suburban chronotope exacerbates the very same 'self-interest' that instigated departure, blamed for blocking freedom in less clearly propertied, non-suburban life. For elaborate critique of 'autonomy as individualism' that retains the language of autonomy while emphasising its inherent relationality as constitutive of enlightenment and North Atlantic law, see Nedelsky, 2013.

developers promoting gentrification in New York discursively constitute the city as site of chaos and anarchy (or immorality), a frontier in need of civilizing (imposing morality), both culturally and economically (N. Smith, 1996). Looking at gentrification in downtown Vancouver, Blomley observes that moral terms within legal action facilitating the purchase and removal of long term tenants are coded through notions of "highest and best use" for property (N. K. Blomley, 2004, pp. 84–85). A phrase widely adopted by city administrations in support of massive developer acquisitions, it is also a framing that leaves the word "best" to be interpreted as broadly as possible by citizens while legally defining "best" explicitly in terms of land value maximisation.

In campaigns resisting gentrification, on the other hand, a very different register of moral claims to property is conjured. Arguments are frequently built on conceptions of property rights that are equally laden with moral stances over what property and the city ought to be: emphasising local collective neighbourhood entitlement ('belonging' often from a historical-geographical lens), condemning that the needs of an individual can trump those of a collective, and attacking profit-based displacement as dispossession (N. K. Blomley, 2004, pp. 92–103).[18] Alternatively, squatters in North American or European cities, whether seeking to eventually convert ownership through legal means such as adverse possession or not, often mobilise a work-sustained "sweat equity" moral frame, evincing a "labour theory of property" (Corr, 1999; Roy, 2003b). Crucially in these cases, normative moral positions over property claims are not purely directed towards establishing and congealing internal solidarity and commitment, but aim outwards towards wider recognition as acts of moral persuasion. The labour theory of property, for example, mobilises strongly held moralities around work, the so-called 'protestant ethic' for example, and is often taught by rights groups to would-be squatters because it has

[18] One definition of 'city,' in this case, might be: a dense aggregation of property claimed or used by an equally dense aggregation or people.

been demonstrated to be more culturally effective than moral claims around survival, which are framed as indolence (Corr, 1999; cf. Mead, 1997). In this sense, throughout these disputes, framing the moral underpinnings of property is not only a retroactive form of protection but also buttresses political language for "naming, blaming, and claiming" rights (Bourdieu, 1987; Felstiner, Abel, & Sarat, 1981).[19]

In a suburban gated setting were property rights sanctioning and enforcement are entirely up to the discretion of a private corporation, moral themes are central to understanding the emergence of a suburban *nomos*, classical Greek for order as a social construct with ethical dimensions that is valid and binding on all who fall under its jurisdiction, or a proto-legal custom of naming, blaming, and claiming. With understanding of the degree to which official Egyptian state law matters in this setting varying widely, this research is concerned with more rudimentary institutional applications of urban order. Legal geographer David Delaney coins the term "nomosphere" to describe a wide spectrum of normative cultural-material namings and orderings of space, going from the purely legal to the legalistic, to the simply moral signification of the social-spatial norms, while acknowledging the practical, embodied, and performative engagements through which orderings are constituted (2004, 2010). Methodologically, exploring nomospheres helps see beyond some "ruling antimonies or dichotomies of modernist thought" while also pushing legal geography scholarship towards a less oppositional exploration of "the richness of mutual constitutivity of the legal and the spatial," as both are invented in Haram City (2010, p. 13).

If property is inherently a persuasive act (a recognisable 'naming' within a "nomosphere"), than it follows that, as Carol Rose notes, "visibility runs through

[19] As pioneering work by neurolinguist George Lakoff demonstrates, this is true also at a cognitive level. Metaphors can carry deeply rooted moral messages within them shaping not only politics but interpersonal relations. This is particularly the case in politicians' discourse, where for example notions of 'sweat equity' are associated with metaphors couched in references to a 'strict father' family model (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999; Lakoff, 2002). Learning to work with or adapt dominant moral framings can be of great use to political action, as is the case in Corr's investigations on and advice for squatters (Corr, 1999)

property law as perhaps no other legal area" (1994, p. 269). With boundaries demarcated through fences, walls, signs, and all kinds of other objects, property in housing and land cannot be separated from the physical manifestation of legal positions in space. As such, material spatial arrangements and representations can also directly reflect moral judgement and inform moral deliberation. Just as a fence may delineate presumably agreed norms over trespass (even if devoid of political rights, it is a moral position on property asserting that one's individual right to exclude supersedes another's right to use) than the absence of fences and, indeed, the tacit sanctioning of entangled construction also makes a moral claim: that crossing or constructing across property lines can have mutually agreed reasonable or even vital functions. Indeed, even in settings emphasising the most highly exclusionary aspects of property, oftentimes the literal structural interdependence between adjacent properties is ignored. It is in this sense that Blomely describes landscapes of property as "particular ways of seeing" (2004, p. 54). While perhaps not sanctioned by legal right, collective agreements asserting that certain property uses are permissible beyond the single-owner herself are manifested in the very fact that such a thing is so common across so-called 'informal' areas throughout the world. If one were to speculate about legalising 'informal settlements' as they currently exist, there are few reasons (beyond effort and time) why existing legal language could not also codify around complex disaggregations of the bundle of rights. Because the nuances of disaggregated claims are in fact persuasive and often mutually agreed (shared uses well within the spectrum of vocabulary for property rights), designation of 'informality' speaks more to nonconformity with a visual schema of a clean-lined fenced-in single-owner property than it does to legal possibilities.[20]

Discrepancies between the physical form resulting from particular claims on the

[20] If this is the case with fairly rigid common law (emerging from liberal enlightenment projects), then it is even more the case with aforementioned conventions in Islamic law.

city and the correspondent likelihood of rights recognition, in any case, manifest a highly normative and moral "ways of seeing" property. To the observer, these "ways of seeing" may map inherent illegality where it is not the case, signal persuasive legitimacy where something is illegal, or even reflect the morality of individual or collective behaviour by claimants, for better or worse. Where such judgement occurs in highly disputed and public ways is also where the act of persuasion, a cornerstone of both property and property rights, becomes most critical. If the terms of persuasion amount to the viability of a "semiotic commons," than it is also conceivable that salient frames, or normative registers, for moral argumentation are of great utility.[21]

Conclusion

After surveying contextual literature on Cairo's poor and suburbs and related binaries in urban studies of the Global South, I propose that scholarship in critical property theory and legal geography, generally applied in the Global North, presents a widely relatable vocabulary for untangling the relationship between moral norms and the city. This deeply situated relationship mirrors that between morality and markets, for which ethnographers of Cairo have already laid strong foundations. Mixing highly situated and topical approaches, therefore, offers an alternative to reified vocabularies in urbanism as they are regularly questioned by residents themselves, while corresponding with the insertion of varied Egyptian's backgrounds into a pre-packaged, globally circulated, gated masterplan — the common in a compound. Both literatures privilege morality and bring principles of ownership and order to the fore, enabling a researcher and participant to jointly trace how these topics circulate through urban form, coordination, survival, and self-realisation.

[21] In Chapter 7 I show how city planning vocabulary - *licensing*, *nuisance*, *covenants*, *entitlements*, *coercion*, and *zoning* – can operate as "normative registers" ascribing moral validity before institutions, as private compound managers create policies that mimic deliberative local governance in a non-deliberative context.



Figure 6: A street vendor rests on the street between A-area and B-area



Figure 7: A family modifies a home in A-area



Figure 8: "Centre al-Nasr Gym" built on an A-area home's garden

3 | "He who doesn't know says it's lentils":

A strategically single-sited, multi-sided ethnography

(*illi mayi'rafsh yi'ul 'ads*)

Traditional Egyptian proverb

As stated in the introduction, the central research question this thesis seeks to answer is: In the squatted "affordable" gated community, where local legality is undefined and openly contested, how is ownership given moral weight and used to assert order? Four empirical papers are broken into mirroring halves reflecting degrees of property ownership, as recognised by OHC, and the corresponding line on a map demarcating 'A-areas' and 'B-areas.' Chapters 4 and 5 are about perspectives from 'A-area,' home to the resettled and resettled-turned-squatter. Chapters 6 and 7 focus on deed-holding homeowners in 'B-area.' Each half is then, in turn, divided into cross-cutting halves addressing two sides of the thesis' central question: *what* are attitudes to ownership (Chapters 4 and 6) and *how* are they enacted (Chapters 5 and 7). This prismatic structure, focusing on positions and then actions across a propertied divide, emerges from fieldwork and delimits a corresponding methodology and ethical framework for ethnographic research.

This chapter addresses several facets of doing ethnography in Haram City, including choice of research site, research design, field methods, research ethics,

management of political uncertainty, issues of positionality in highly contested settings, and questions concerning temporality in defining the ethnographic 'field.' Specifically, I emphasise the significance of a multi-*sided*, prismatic approach to a defined geographical area, the related importance of shifting back and forth between emic and etic frameworks in relation to property, the complexities of working with relatively hostile relations between residents (amidst the 2011-2013 revolutionary period and the coup), and techniques for a setting that is rapidly evolving over a short period of time.

Above all, this work presents four stories of one place. It is, in a sense, a microhistory where the victor is yet to be decided, presenting attitudes evolving over half of Haram City's existence through eyes and hands working to assert legitimacy. By recounting how people argue for and act on the city, much is implied about both an ever-shifting city and ever-shifting people themselves. Accordingly, a great deal of effort is placed on recounting peoples' interpretations of 'best practice' terminology in global development — terms such as 'affordability,' 'low-income,' 'homeownership,' theft,' 'freedom,' 'rights,' 'freedom,' and 'city' become sites of vivid confrontation according to both forward-looking aspirations and backward-looking experiences. Even at the highest policy levels, these terms are fraught with contention, often shifting with specific political-economic projects. Because they play a significant role in Haram City's creation and access to its resources — through promotion to international investors, support by international organisations, and towards land deals with the state — residents also come to legitimise appropriations of a new city through them.

A reoccurring question that residents posed themselves, for example, was: "who deserves affordable homeownership?" Laden within this seemingly simple question, profoundly complex and moral issues such as 'deserving,' 'affordability,' and 'ownership' all frame normative battle grounds, the strategic definition of which lends credibility to squatter, resettled, or homeowner practices and visions. My methodological approach,

then, is not so much to tell *about* the city or *about* the people within — subjects evolving quickly — but to allow an inevitably approximate and indeterminate understanding of the city to come into focus from how residents frame and manipulate it themselves.

Research Design: Site

The high trees, gates, large irrigation trenches, and vast desert that surround Haram City do not only give it an air of exclusivity. They also provide some control over who is allowed in and who is not. Set between May 2011 and May 2015, the bulk of fieldwork was conducted between December 2012 and December 2013 (totalling eleven months, with nine months of continuous research) while living within these geographically circumscribed parameters. And yet, most social lives within the compound are in no way restricted to its borders. In fact, most prominent fissures and alliances within its gates speak directly to a constellation of places beyond and throughout Greater Cairo. Like spokes on a wheel, these vectors can refer to literal motion (as in the case of eviction and resettlement), stereotypical imaginations (depicting people and places through the lens of 'slum,' 'middle-class area,' or 'compound lifestyle' as imagined from the centre), or aspirational dreams (hopes that the compound resembles migration to Europe or development in Egypt as a whole).

Beyond a majority of former Cairo residents, whether wealthy or poor, these gates contain numerous other geographical trajectories. Most company labourers are imported from Beni Suef, in Upper Egypt. About two hundred Syrian refugees live within the walls, benefitting from the combination of relative affordability and private security amidst widespread xenophobia. And a sizeable Bedouin community, original inhabitants of this space, have negotiated deals to drop claims over desert land in exchange for providing paid security services to the company. Furthermore, many keep a place in

Haram City as a second home, and much gossip is shared about people pretending to be someone that they are not in their hometown. Anxiety over anonymity in particular — perceptions that an "illegal place" inevitably caters to the needs of "illegal people" from outside — is common, and the line between rumour and fact often blurs. Others go further, stressing that *because* of dislocated social networks and a wide income spectrum one can finally be anonymous and have prolonged direct interactions with people that may have never mixed in the past. And home invasions during the 2011 eighteen-day occupation of Tahrir Square are a reminder to all that any physical boundary is porous, as well. According to one young homeowner, Mahmoud (featured prominently in Chapter 6), "Haram City is like an experiment, a microscope for Egypt." Despite the appearance of geographical contiguity, then, an imperative to define a field site was paramount.

Developments in ethnographic scholarship over the last two decades have led many researchers to emphasise the limitations of a single-sited approach to fieldwork. Criticising anthropology's traditional emphasis on Malinowskian bounded locality, George Marcus advocates "multi-sited" ethnography allowing one to follow webs of power connecting seemingly isolated communities with transnational institutions (1998, p. 95). In this way, Julia Elyachar expands horizontally outwards from her case study of Madinet el-Hirafiyeen, a Cairo craftsman resettlement project, to the homes and original markets of entrepreneurs and craftsmen alike (2005). She also expands her site vertically, "studying up" (Nader, 1972) through networks of power into World Bank project manger offices, and then "studying [back] down" to see how hierarchical attitudes are received (2005, p. 16). Methods in some ethnographic legal geography similarly contrasts vertical and horizontal channels of analysis, often dealing with large bureaucracies and emphasising that "studying up" administrative ladders must be paired with "studying sideways" across parallel channels of deliberation that may not seem to intersect (Braverman, 2014, p. 125). Such multi-sited approaches can imply that single-sited

research inherently reduces a subject to an artificial bounded locality and naturalises broader power dynamics.

Something perhaps missed in this regard, is that George Marcus himself — one of the strongest original proponents for multi-sited research — makes a point to distinguish between reductive single-sited ethnographies and "strategically situated (single-sited) ethnographies." In the latter case, it is vital that "the sense of the system beyond the particular site of research remains contingent and not assumed" so that a site "is only local circumstantially" (Marcus, 1998, p. 95). One classic example of a strategically situated single-site (cited by Marcus) is Paul Willis's classic study of English working class boys at school (1977). Willis's feet rarely leave the school, and yet his movements are deeply informed by his knowledge of pupils' lives on the factory floor. The strategic aim is to reveal systemic relations and contingencies that go on beyond a specific field site, weaving them through a detailed exploration of site itself. Haram City's growing community was formed, progressively, by decisions between the national state, local government, and a multinational company, both as a public-private partnership and as institutions taking actions independently of each other. Residents' lives are intertwined as a consequence of these decisions. They figure prominently in conversations on ownership and order, and therefore research methods directly and continuously engaged with their invocation. Amidst industry ambitions to construct more "affordable" private developments and continued housing evictions in the city centre, Haram City has, at various times, been presented as a solution to both demands. Because moral claims of ownership and order necessitate reference to established frameworks, I read people's discourses and practices *directly through* contingencies and familiarity with Cairo's poorest areas and middle-class quarters, in the way that Willis reads the school through the factory. Furthermore, this scheme is very likely to be reproduced as a template for further external and hierarchical decisions, a forward looking contingency which this

research has always kept in mind.

This ethnography aims for a productive tension between a single-site (inextricable from all its contingent geographies) and the multiple 'sides' people take within it. As a space principally divided along propertied lines (with all the associations of class, behaviour, and 'origin' that follow), *multi-sided* research accounts for internal site divisions (such as "A-area") as inhabitants define them argumentatively. 'Sides' (geographically) within and (discursively) about the compound often represent a microcosm for preconceptions of Cairo's own districts, mapped onto Haram City by residents to help dismiss or assemble persuasive normative positions. I researched this by living on the central street that divides the resettled from homeowners, and alternated participation in daily activities on a daily basis or on a day/night basis. While always maintaining a home of my own, at times I would spend several days continuously with residents on the either side. As will be described, I engaged in prolonged leisure and work activities with residents on both sides to slowly develop trust and garner acceptance, towards becoming one of the few people known and accepted for having close friendships across stereotypes and antagonisms.

Beyond extensive participant observation with residents, this research also involved a very localised form of "studying-up." Still within gates, I traced circulations of authority and power between company management and residents. Creating a routine of weekly or twice-weekly visits to management offices, I was eventually invited to participate in city inspection tours and resident-management meetings. Experiencing many resident disputes first-hand, I was permitted to trace how incidents circulated up this hierarchy, how they were interpreted, and how they were managed 'back-down' by OHC's on-site team — something most evident in Chapters 4 and 7. Furthermore, informing the scope of chapters significantly but not prominently featured, I conducted numerous interviews following relational and managerial paths outside of the compound

perimeter and upward. These paths were approached through more formal and semi-formal interview formats in some cases, and as extended loose conversations in others, and included: legal NGO's working directly with the resettled, NGO's studying legal cases against OHC by homeowners, urban planning consultants, World Bank and UN-Habitat officials, former residents, as well as visiting many families of residents in middle-class or working-class parts of Cairo.

A few NGOs, such as the Egyptian Centre for Civil and Legislative Reform (ECCLR), Egyptian Social and Cultural Rights Network (ESCR-Net), Centre for Economic and Social Rights (CESR), and the Egyptian Centre for Housing Rights (ECHR), provide occasional legal and very occasional material support (for example lending a generator) to those originating from Duweiqa because of relationships beginning during the catastrophic 2008 Duweiqa rockslide. While visiting very infrequently, these organisations are the only non-state, non-corporate institutions (beyond those working for OHC) that have access to Haram City's residents. When they do come within Haram City's gates, they tend to operate with relative secrecy, avoiding all contact with the administration and remind the Duweiqa community of their rights under Egyptian law. While maintaining lasting dialogue with NGO staff familiar with Duweiqa, I would not expressly cultivate this familiarity when inside Haram City to avoid threatening relationships with some management staff or homeowners.

Finally, Haram City is a (multi-sided) single-site with significant external implications because it advertises itself as a "multiple award winning" project and is promoted in UNDP and World Bank publications as a reproducible case study for public-private affordable housing (OHC, 2012b; UNDP, 2011; World Bank, 2013). It is strategically contingent at a larger scale: an inter-referenced precedent for national and international policy circuits towards the privatisation of post-eviction resettlement and low-income housing globally.

Research Design: Positionality

Many Haram City homeowners fear crime and deflated property values from the impression that a slum is growing in their compound. Homeowner Facebook groups are often platforms for surreptitious pictures of 'A-area' home modifications, pigeon coups, trash piles, and roaming animals 'on the other side,' followed by comments wavering from polite 'I understand their predicament but not in my back yard' criticism to the derogatory and derisive. A common refrain is to portray the resettled as donkeys (implying dumb, crass), and it was to many Facebook users' angry delight when photos were posted of a resettled teen riding an actual donkey around Haram City's official 'mall area.'[1] Other videos circulating on social media are of small homeowner or employee protests in front of OHC's offices in Haram City and in central Cairo, lamenting "dreams" of security, cleanliness, and order "turning into illusions."[2]

B-area residents, in turn, were mostly placed by the governorate with little say on the matter. Disconnected from labour networks, for many not creating markets and opportunities in Haram City equates to destitution (or at least as much as a third to half of income spent on transportation). At the same time, residents from Duweiqa justify their seizure by discussing OHC's land deal as a seizure of "land from the people" (*ard min al-sha'b*), and thus the lesser of two evils. Furthermore, many depict homeowners as hypocritical perpetrators of as many immoral acts (often of a sexual nature) as anyone else behind their high garden walls and closed doors.

At the same time, there is a strong economic interdependence, with newly unemployed A-area residents contributing their labour to home refurbishments, street

[1] 'Mall' and 'mall area' are how many residents refer to a cluster of officially sanctioned commercial and leisure businesses around a town square on the compounds North side near OHC offices. The company term for this area is Tamar Hinna ('date palm').

[2] See, for example, "Adrab amin Haram City" [Security on Strike in Haram City] (Nada, 2015) and "Haram City - 'Fein al-compound, ya Samih?'" [Where Is the compound, hey Samih?] (Sayed, 2010).

vending of watermelons and toys, and domestic gardening and cleaning services. While labour flows from A to B-area, homeowners almost entirely avoid entering their resettlement counterpart, for example citing that in the past they've been falsely accused by "thugs" of gazing at A-area women. At a more prosaic level, while rhetoric can be tense, in everyday terms it is generally in everyone's interest that there not be *too* much trouble, whether to protect home values or encroachments. When confrontation flares, however, it is up to OHC to enforce an order that invariably favours profit made from a homeowner market. In order to participate in daily life with residents across these sometimes expressly tense, sometimes simply idle divisions without compromising trust and balance, it was of utmost importance to continuously reflect on my positionality and update my approaches reflexively so as to be able to fit in while maintaining consistency.

Forms of power and subjugation shadow embedded practices of producing knowledge. In the act of representing situated social relations, an observer's background and institutional position may invoke deeply enmeshed prejudices, worldviews, and ideals. Similarly, while institutional affiliations may remain fixed, one's position may evolve over time. While caution in ethnography is based on extended learning and reciprocity, debates on a 'crisis of representation' continue to animate social science research. Contemporary discussions on methodology in ethnographic research involve protracted disputes on positionality as insider versus outsider and on standpoint epistemologies versus reflexivity. Insider versus outsider debates of the 1970s either privilege the insider with special access to an identity or critique the insider on account of the myopia that may come with familiarity. Since the postmodernist turn, the presumption that there is such a thing as a coherent singular identity, upon which the notion of insider or outsider is predicated, has been roundly critiqued as a positivistic promotion of singular truth (Phillips & Earle, 2010).

From a relational perspective, though still suggestive of insider positionality,

feminist scholars have argued for "standpoint epistemologies" that advocate knowledge production by women amidst the oppressive realities to which they themselves are subjected (Harding, 1987; Phillips & Earle, 2010). On the other hand, to account for heterogeneity within social groups, accounting for class, race, gender, nationality or sexuality, the postmodern legacy preferences polyvocal and intersectional explorations of the social, focusing on continuously evolving and multidimensional subject positions (S. Hall, 1990). Concurrently, amidst colonial legacies of exploitative research in the South, a range of scholars since the 1990s emphasise the hybridised and fluid relations of essentialised "foreign" research subjects (Appadurai, 1996; Gupta & Ferguson, 1997). Avoiding claims to a universal truth, and the paralysis of total relativism in social construction, some seek to centre research approaches by preferencing the production of "truer" understandings (Humphreys & Watson, 2009) and a "good-enough ethnography" (Scheper-Hughes, 1993), embracing limitations with feet on the ground. Still, a central struggle in embedded study persists regarding the ways a researcher is implicated in observation, in the reasons for selecting a study, and in the eventual articulation of knowledge. In this sense, it is important to embrace an inevitably iterative and evolving relationship between the researcher and the researched, shaping a collective experience. Samuli Schielke's writing provides a strong precedent for this, working with youth in the Egyptian Delta region over a decade and across international migrations and returns. I share his faith in a dialogic approach, viewing ethnography as an open-ended conversation that gives room to contradiction, discontent, transformation, and ambivalence (Schielke, 2015, p. 4).

Ethnography based on reflexivity finds significance by acknowledging "researchers as active participants whose identities, like those of research subjects, may be variously shaped by powerful hierarchies" (Phillips & Earle, 2010). This resonates with what Rabinow, much earlier in the context of Morocco, identifies as a vital "co-production of

research" and the creation of an ethical relationship as "temporary commonplace" (1977). In this tradition, geographers such as Gidwani (2008) and Hart (2004) stress the importance of relational and process-based geo-ethnographies that incorporate the evolution of place over time, hybrid-shifting identities, and the growth of an affected "common-place" with the researcher (Anderson, 2012). At the same time, this processual perspective should not mythologise researcher-subject interactions or suggest that a teleological or ideal relationship must be attained. Through a co-produced, dialogic, process-based, and constructivist understanding of ethnography, one can strive to "allow various aspects of difference to remain dynamic rather than become definitively coded" (Thrift, 2003).

In seeking to comprehend how visions of the city array from a multi-sided prism of tension and mutuality, while not being viewed as partisan, embedded long-term research mandated near-constant reflexivity. Just as multi-sited research requires that standpoints adapt quickly and reflexively to varying relations of knowledge, authority, and power (Haraway, 1991, pp. 183–202), so too does this strategically situated multi-sided single-site. As fieldwork shifted across Haram City, I inevitably renegotiated my self-presentation in relation to subjects and sides brought together by their own internal claims of juxtaposition. Gradually, though, it became evident that my 'outsider-ness' — manifested as enthusiastic curiosity that a non-Egyptian had come from far to learn more about this place — afforded me a great deal of perceived neutrality and relatively unconstrained margins of engagement. Initially, over the first months of interaction and acquaintance, my questions about any tension between sides were widely dismissed on the grounds that, before anything else "we are all Egyptians" and second that they amounted to "Egyptian problems" of class that I was presumed to be unable to comprehend. Of course, I was happy to admit that despite extended experience in Egypt this remained quite true — opening dialogue to generalised discussion of social hierarchy

making frequent references to a place we knew in common, central Cairo. From there, I figuratively framed myself as a pupil of my research subjects, encouraging them to guide me through familiarity with "Egypt" and "Cairo" on their terms, building familiarity, respect, and trust, before ever discussing how these terms conflict or mirror in Haram City.

In the process, I also literally became my research participants' pupil, spending long stretches of time not talking about politics, Egypt, or Haram City to necessarily learn very colloquial *sha'bi* Egyptian Arabic pronunciation and street/youth expressions. This took the form of regular quizzes, being shuffled over to friends to display my newly acquired prowess and introducing myself in relation to my host as "my teacher" (*ustazi*), often a humorous experience for semi-literate and illiterate urban poor to see a foreigner show interest in a dialect that some middle and upper-class 'cosmopolitan' Egyptians shun. Ultimately, positioning myself as a pupil-foreigner with keen interest in popular Egyptian musical, satirical, and poetic culture, combined with diligent study and memorisation, framed me as someone from a very different tradition but also as an open-ended person.

For homeowners, Haram City's marketing campaign implicitly draws on the aspirations of migration to underwrite its promise of orderly, propertied, and safe suburban life. As such my foreignness, Italian and US-American, became a useful point of comparison and source of inquiry for residents to speak reflexively about differences between Haram City's promises and reality. Whether middle-income or poor, stories of friends and relatives who had migrated to the Gulf or Europe became an optic for interpreting this development, often explicitly negotiating what the role of "Egyptianness" ought to be in this new and exclusive place. In this dialogic context, my experiences abroad were sought after in order to confirm or deny other peoples' stories about 'abroad' (wherever that may be) in relation to expectations on site. From this

privileged position as a counterpoint for the reflexivity of peers of research subjects, I became, firstly, a novel relief from suburban boredom and approachable through a sense that I am not entangled in heightened Egyptian class politics. Secondly, the presumption that I could become a source of clarity on discrepancies between the promise and realisation of imagined orderly urban life in the North fostered long-form, open-ended and reciprocal dialogues. Gradually, they evolved to address place, class, identity, and eventually ownership and order through the lens of our mutual positionalities in a mutually unfamiliar project.

In this regard, institutional affiliation and, more broadly, the question "why are you here?" were also key interfaces for confronting and updating positionality. Quickly, it became apparent to me that the Egyptian Arabic word for 'researcher' (*bahath*) was also the word for 'investigator' and evoked espionage, an unfortunate association amidst a landscape of legal disputes and government public denunciations of near constant political unrest on malicious intervention by foreign "fingers." Arabic and English words for 'geography,' 'anthropology,' and 'sociology' mostly worked to a similar affect. Accordingly, I shifted to self-describe for first impressions as a 'doctoral student' (*talib-al-doktorat)* and 'writer' (*katib*) based at the University of Oxford and writing a book about architecture and urban planning in new desert cities. This instinctively led to people sharing perspectives on the matter, afforded a much more accurate representation of my interests, and benefited from the positive reputation of fields perceived as both artistic ('writer' and 'architect') and technical ('urban planning'). In this regard, I occasionally purposefully framed my interests as 'finding the general in the specific,' explaining that Haram City is regarded by some policymakers and development institutions as a precedent for future similar projects around the world. Often unaware of this fact and intrigued, it also helped build a common cause as co-readers of the city, framing reflexivity through the lens of "what would you do differently/the same?" While

affiliation with the University of Oxford is certainly rife with complex power imbalances, it served as a useful branding to meet management, sometimes by bolstering my technical credibility irrespective of actual technical abilities.

By the conclusion of months of participant observation, I was at times seen through a different lens of privilege. As one of the very few people openly recognised for having trusted relations across A and B areas, some residents began approaching me to solicit insights on "the other side." Responding to much of this questioning risked breaking assurances of confidentiality and thus required delicate reminders that, as they likely once observed themselves, however prolonged my commitment had been and remained towards understanding, I was still a pupil, outsider, and, fundamentally, the wrong person to ask. In most of these cases, assurance that I still had much more to learn about the city from participants than they did from me was accepted as a sign of judiciousness, humility, compassion, and reminders of 'open-endedness.'

Field Methods

For this ethnography I used mixed methods, including observation, semi-structured interviews, and interactive participatory action based techniques. Throughout, I have been keenly aware of the ways difference shapes observation, analysis, and authorship and engaged in building approaches that are reflexive and grounded.

Living in Haram City, I rented a small room on the threshold between resettled and squatted A1/A2/A3 areas and the officially owned B1/B2/B3 areas. For brief periods of time, I lived with squatters. The principal participants of ethnography in A-area were between eighteen and thirty years old, sometimes self-defining as youth, and relocated to Haram City after the 2008 Duweiqa rockslide. In total, I interviewed and spent prolonged amounts of time interacting with 35 of the 153 squatters (from an original 231) that remained on site over the course of research, focusing lengthy periods

of time with a core group of nine young men and key group organisers. These squatters were not selected by me as much as I was by them. After several meetings with a small Egyptian Centre for Civil and Legislative Reform (ECCLR) — as mentioned an NGO that provided limited legal services and a small electricity generator for the Duweiqa community during 2009 Cairo Government protests — I was given phone numbers for two "head organisers" that might be interested in speaking. On my first visit to Haram City, one organiser was visiting his family in rural Upper Egypt. The other, Karim, an unemployed thirty-one year-old father of three finding occasional jobs as a mason for homeowners, invited me for a tea to share his story and pass time. From this day onwards, we met on a daily basis in his small, occupied garden or the street in front of adjacent homes to prepare dinner, play football, dominoes, and chat. Trust spiralled outwards to his larger group of family, friends, and organisers, with whom I also eventually spent long periods chatting over tea between irregular employment hours. Eventually, it transpired that this group of thirty-five were the most active core of young men coordinating all protests and squatting, with the remainder of people too old, too young, or purposefully withholding from resistance to provide community leadership in the event of a mass arrest.

In a highly class-conscious setting, my non-Egyptian background and commitment to study vernacular expressions under participants were instrumental in assuring that I was not there to judge what many would call theft. Eventually, I was invited to participate in actions negotiating and sustaining access to occupied housing and in the "upgrading" of gardens and homes. I embraced organic relationships and worked with them to establish a gradient of observed interactions, ranging from casual to semi-structured. This included extended informal conversation, 'hanging out,' and game playing (backgammon and dominoes) with peer males in the resettlement community also between eighteen and thirty and closely linked to self-built cafes and food

establishments near the occupation. While remaining attentive to risks and local sensitivities, and towards accommodating the very irregular routines of dislocated people framed as outlaws, I researched at different periods over working hours, leisure hours, and most often late at night. Building on Jeffrey's methods with youth in a state of protracted waiting, my goal was to structure days around a total of four to five hours of observation interspersed with an equal amount of time for composing detailed notes (2010).

Finally, always subject to informed consent, I constructed or participated in some co-productive initiatives: bodybuilding with a group of mixed homeowner-resettled youth under a trainer at a local improvised gym (the only non café leisure facility created by the resettlement community); co-coaching an improvised football team with a key squatter-activist (at times coaching children of homeowners and a tacit assertion of squatters' legitimacy); and photography and video recording between researcher and researched encouraging mason and builder squatters to document structural faults in buildings while comparing to the "better quality" of squatter/resettlement built structures (something recent homeowners were obviously keen to know more about, and a way to solicit employment for squatters). All three efforts, centred on the few points of recreational, collegial, or mutual benefit interaction between homeowner and non-homeowner, working towards highlighting imaginative "hybrid interface cultures" produced between groups (Thrift, 2003, p. 114).

On weeknights, youth football training sessions were organised by one member of the Duweiqa community who encouraged youth from all areas to join. While most members came from resettlement A-area several were the children of homeowners, whose parents eventually donated some money for kits, balls, and other supplies stored in a small building designated as a 'youth club.' The Duweiqa coaching efforts to which I assisted strongly emphasised sport as a vehicle for youth mentorship, instilling values of

discipline and integrity beyond the pitch, framed by the squatter community as not only a public service but as a public display of care, integrity, and legitimacy through committed labour.[3] Most youth-oriented practices not only served to provide channels for improved relations between homeowners and non-homeowners, they specifically aimed to improve infighting between Duweiqa and resettlement communities brought together from across Cairo and assert a common cause of the dispossessed. Spending time with parents of athletes, in their early to mid forties, helped ensure a wide range of views from within the resettlement group, particularly during incidents of gang-like dispute that inevitably follow resettlement patterns that treat people from different 'hoods' like they are a uniform group.

At the same time, I conducted interviews with and participated in the daily lives of approximately 35 Haram City homeowners. These interactions largely spiralled from my initial attempts to find accommodation via a lively broker market for purchased homes in a compound that had ostensibly been subsidised 'for Egyptians only.' If immediately upon entry I had chosen to live or rent from the squatters, it would have irreparably compromised my position in the eyes of the company and homeowners. Furthermore, because non-squatter resettlement contracts technically banned all rentals, such a move prior to building wide trust would have also risked perceptions of partisanship. The fact that violating rules against renting your property before five years would not cause problems in the eyes of OHC, but renting from a resettlement resident would, shows the stark double standards, a skewed playing field, that one inevitably becomes involved in to not be perceived as biased. I therefore sought to rent from a homeowner that kept her property as a second home and who had spent very little time in Haram City to avoid reputation by association. Geographically, it was important that the house be on the

[3] Coaching geared towards instilling discipline, conflict resolution (particularly within groups tormented by gang-like affiliations), and asserts of legitimacy by agonistic labour are all evocative of Loïc Wacquant's seminal study on the "pugilistic point of view" in south Chicago (2006).

street dividing A and B areas, symbolically and spatially allowing me be kept in the loop and to be able to respond precisely yet ambiguously to the inevitable and highly loaded first interaction question, "Where do you live in Haram City?" with, "Between A and B, by the public school." I found this home after getting a hair cut in the Haram City official *Tamar Hinna* "mall" area. Like many hair parlours across the world, the main activity here was not so much providing quick style upgrades, but providing a prolonged platform for idle conversation, gossip, networking, and storytelling. The first time I got a trim here I met Youssef, who, while emerging infrequently in cited material, played a central role in facilitating research.

Youssef was a single twenty-nine year-old *muazin* (a caller to prayer) and attendant at Haram City's largest mosque. He lives in a small apartment in the mosque, just behind Tamar Hinna, and is widely referred to, and refers to himself, as *Sheikh* — a designation of respect and wisdom by virtue of his religious apprenticeship, though usually reserved for more senior positions of social and religious authority. 'Sheikh' Youssef is well known across all of Haram City as an example of piety and kindness, interacting with all residents through his function at the mosque as a representative of both "the youth" (*al-shabab*) and faith. He protected this reputation dearly, for example carefully refraining from spending any time with me in cafes for fear of being observed as a leisurely and mundane consumer, something that he quickly pointed out would compromise his reputation. He was raised and his family still lives in Dar al-Salaam, one of Cairo's largest popular and often irregularly constructed neighbourhoods. However, his family home is on the southern-most edge of Dar al-Salaam, bordering the quite upscale reputation Maadi area and adjacent to the metro tracks that act like a wall between these middle-class and poor areas (perforated by some improvised crossing points to facilitated labour movement). As the crow flies, his house is therefore quite close to a metro station with "Maadi" in its name (Hadayeq al-Maadi), and for Youssef too this precise but ambiguous

response to the question "where are you from originally?" suits him quite well. Stigma among lower-middle and middle-class homeowners against the "mentality" of *'ashwa'iyat* areas and his own desire to fit in mean that giving the location Maadi or, more ambiguously, Old Cairo (a designation for much of the area including and south of the Fustat and Bassatine districts) speaks to both where he is from and where he wants to be. Youssef and I quickly struck-up a friendship and spent long hours discussing ethics, self-fulfilment, his desire for marriage, and politics. This bond lasted throughout research. Although A and B areas have their own mosques, religious figures frequently worked between the two and Youssef's vouching for me was one of the few valued across town.

Eager to get married but without prospects in sight, Youssef feels that it is vital that he supplement his basic mosque stipend. He notes that a women will never marry him, *sheikh* or not, if he doesn't own or rent his own house, and soon. To make up the difference and to generally just pass time not reciting prayer or organising mosque activities, he works as a cashier in a nearby convenience store and provides a wide array of personal connection-for-payment services around town. While strongly rejecting the title *simsar* (broker) for its mundane and materialist connotations and compromising his preferred status as *sheikh*, he works with trusted connections made as pious counsellor to link various material interests towards mutual benefit. If people choose, a small percentage fee is considered proper for the help. After all, any money made goes straight to savings for an eventual marriage, hardly the most selfish objective, and to repairing an old laptop computer he hopes might link him to an elusive non-Egyptian partner (elaborated in Appendix I).

As a *sheikh*-come-*simsar*, the single most abundant source of work is in home sales, rentals, and repairs/upgrades. Always in good faith and unquestionably prioritising his spiritual duty, Sheikh Youssef becomes a *simsar's simsar*, mediating any mediator transgressions for everything to go smoothly for everyone; as cautious new residents

enter the community, often for the first time faced with the prospect of not knowing any neighbours, the mosque as space of trust becomes a vital first point of connection. By getting to know many incoming residents before anyone else, if someone new needs to find another place for a friend or relative, it is to Youssef that they will likely turn to not get cheated. Youssef will then introduce the newcomer to an actual broker that he believes to be respectable and in turn a small cut of an eventual sale materialises. It was shortly after my first haircut that Youssef helped me find my accommodation tailored to my research imperatives. As our relationship evolved, it also became clearer that he derived legitimacy from our interaction, for example inviting me as a role model when mentoring violent or insubordinate youth. He quickly introduced me to a smaller group of five homeowners, happy to host the *muazin*'s new friend, eventually leading to relationships with thirty-five owner households. For official mosque matters, Youssef is also regularly in touch with Haram City's management. Again building on his reputation, I was able to begin a lasting dialogue with OHC's on-site staff from the position of resident-researcher (rather than as one of the occasionally visiting foreign journalist or policymakers) with friendly connections to the mosque.

Participant observation furnishing and embellishing people's properties also often branched off into leisure activities at local cafes and in people's gardens. Towards experiencing the private propertied sphere, with some families I offered my services to help children with English homework, adults with translations, and became some peoples' personal Internet and social media technical support. For many families, however, internal domestic spaces were highly guarded, preferring to meet in the open. Accordingly, a significant fault of this project is the dearth of interviews with women, particularly amongst homeowners. At times there was significant trepidation and reluctance around my interactions with women. In part, this is explainable by the fact that over the course research the compound had developed a reputation for prostitution

and promiscuity. Several homes, for example, were commonly acknowledged as owned and operated by a "Madame." Alternatively, rumours circulated that housing brokers retained copies of keys for many homes and, by keeping close track of who was in town and who was not, sublet rooms on a per-night basis (perhaps without owner consent, a topic touched upon in Chapter 6). I later learned that my own rental was rumoured to have at some point in the past been available as a "furnished, one night rental." Consequently, anxiety over sexuality and shifting norms of intimacy — amplified by preconceptions that Europeans are secular and therefore promiscuous — acted as a significant gendered barrier. This is a shortcoming, but one that could only have been adequately addressed after a year of trust-based discussion on the extent of Haram City's rumoured secret economies.

Scholarship on gender relations in Egypt primarily emphasises the intermingling of visibility, safety, and privacy, something of crucial concern to aspiring and first-time suburbanites. Some research on home privacy describes an inviolable separation between "two separate worlds" of male and female "subuniverses" premised on protection of women (L. Abu-Lughod, 1986; Mernissi, 1987).[4] Yet, as Farha Ghannam critiques, under this view all women's practices are seen as part of the private domain, even when conducted in public which is then sub-gendered into the space of the alley versus street (2002). So while privacy, walls, and security in Haram City are certainly laden with strong implications for women, the interiority of the entire city itself as a walled compound is also understood as, to a small degree, supplementing the gendered function of individual home walls. As Ghannam's writing on Egyptian gated communities notes, both in marketing and lived practices, the class and 'cosmopolitan' legibility of closed cities intersect with gender norms by pushing the space of "modesty" out to beyond the

[4] The veil, for example, has been described as a "symbol of interiority," building on the metaphor private space (Hessini, 1994, p. 47).

development's gates themselves (2014). One of OHC's managers, for example, sees part of his job as enforcing the propriety of peoples' "mentality" towards a compound where anybody can walk the streets at anytime, headscarf or not. In the manager's words, this amounts to an ethic of, "keep your own way of thinking to yourself." And yet, institutional attitudes promoting a "keep it to yourself" mentality paradoxically amplified peoples' concerns that sexual deviance lingered behind unknown doors.

With limited access to women, much conversation on walls did gravitate around gendered questions but from the perspective of masculinity as part of a broader quest for self-realisation. Reflecting on Egyptian masculinity and the impact of scholarship mapping gendered binaries onto the public-private dichotomies, Ghannam notes that a fault of this approach is that "men are often viewed as a unified category with little attention to how young men's access to various public spaces may be restricted by their parents and/or governments" (2002, p. 91). Similarly, young men contrast their current relatively anonymous homes with frustrations over the use of Cairo's public spaces, blocking some networks and opening others. While lacking in female perspectives, I have sought to maintain gender awareness by offering perspectives that at least complicates scholarship asserting a strict gendering of space in the predominantly Muslim city (in Chapter 6).

Beyond the squatters, non-squatting resettled, homeowners, and OHC's management team, I conducted interviews with leaders of a nascent (but still unofficial) homeowners' association, and religious and community support figures in Haram City. "Studying up" beyond the gates, I also conducted extensive formal interviews with the aforementioned NGOs most closely linked to both Duweiqa as well as with others more linked to the promotion of Haram City as a policy solution. Formal interviews were held before, during, and after residence in Haram City, including representatives and lawyers from the Egyptian Centre for Civil and Legislative Reform (ECCLR, Mohammed Abd

Elazim and Baher Shawky), Habitat International Coalition (Joseph Schechla and Ahmed Mansour), the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR, Yahia Shawkat), representatives from the Egyptian Centre for Economic and Social Rights (ECESR), the Shadow Ministry of Housing, Cairobserver (Mohamed Elshahed), Urban Action Egypt (Omnia Khalil), Madd Platform (Ahmed Zaazaa), as well as representatives from the World Bank (Hartwig Schafer, Sahar Nasr), UN-Habitat in Cairo (Katja Schaefer), a consultant for both (David Sims), and more.

This project also relied on a broad range of semi-structured interviews to ground observations and interactions in relations and lives beyond Haram City. In order to have perspective on what residents were comparing Haram City to, I sometimes moved dialogue with residents as they exited and re-entered the compound. A few members of the squatter groups, the resettled, and homeowner late youth brought me to jobs, weddings, or reunions in their original neighbourhoods. Complementing time within gates with semi-structured interviews and 'hanging out' in neighbourhoods of origin brought attitudes over life, economy, and property into sharper relief.

Recorded interviews were transcribed and followed with reflective post-transcription summaries, discussion, and eventually some anonymised note exchanges with academic peers in Cairo to better see how interactions may have been shaped by my own biography. Furthermore, interviews or long focused discussions in the squatter community were often followed by intermittent small group discussions. A central aim of post-interview discussions was to map the spatial economy of the site and fully grasp the distribution of residents and their commercial, social, and leisure activities on site over time. Next, building on detailed field notes I drafted a short series of "ethnographic portraits" of repeat interviewees. "Ethnographic portraits" are detailed and affected vignettes on practices and routines of a few key individuals as counterpoints to formal interviews, helping me build a fuller picture of how life backgrounds correspond with

words in the present (Jeffrey & Dyson, 2008). For an example, see Appendix I on Sheikh Youssef's dreams for a new desert city.

A central priority in discussion and interviews has been to be a pupil of residents as "organic intellectuals" grappling with much of the language of city making, urban planning, and development policy on their own terms and through their own moral frames (Gramsci, 1971). Most dialogue explores residents' reflexivity over dominant portrayals of their home and surroundings. Residents' critical, affective, and normative perspectives are taken very seriously as they evolve, reflect back on previous homes, and promote a future city. As mentioned in the literature review, Duweiqa is one of Cairo's poorest neighbourhoods. Illiteracy is prevalent among the community, a fact often reflected in coordination privileging close working relationships across illiterate individuals with the strongest oratory skills and individuals able to read contracts or documents and thus able to advise on who exactly might be able to further advise. Aware of these internal differences, I also note participant efforts to overcome them and of the fact there was no perceptible correlation between literacy and perceived wisdom/respect within the community. Of utmost priority, I endeavoured to treat peoples' equally laboriously and passionately reasoned arguments despite vast education differences — justifying home invasions, for example — with the same scrutiny and humility that I afford to colleagues in Oxford (if not more).

Finally, it is important to note that all interviews conducted in Arabic were translated and transcribed also through a dialogic, back-and-forth process with a young Cairo-based, Port Said-raised journalist and friend, Ahmed Medhat. For this exchange, I would do a first draft of transcriptions, send to him for thorough additions, I would then provide another set of corrections against original recordings, and then send to him for final review. During this period, we also met over coffee in downtown Cairo every couple of days to discuss linguistic nuances and details in person. Assistance from a

Cairene with excellent English skills but raised in a popular district proved essential for transcribing and translating the deeply inflected and wide-ranging *sha'bi* street vernacular of Cairo's poorest citizens. This form of spoken Arabic is heavily laden with slang, proverb, musicality, inventiveness, euphemism, and elision that many university-educated Egyptians find very difficult to comprehend.

Ethics

Social equity, reciprocity, mutual understanding, and safety are fundamental research values. They are inseparable from the gathering and production of relevant, lasting, and honest knowledge. Dignity, independence, and social interdependence of research participants demand an ethics of transparency, respect, and accountability.

Honest and reciprocal interaction with all people involved in this ethnography is built on full disclosure of my research interests, my role as a student, and my goals as an academic and architect. As mentioned, certain misrepresentations inherent to translation in a semi-literate context pushed me to frame my role through the non-negatively perceived lenses of high-level studentship, technical pursuit (participants frequently frame the legal domain as such), and authorship. I feel that the intersection of these three realms, as interpreted by participants, provides a more accurate portrayal of the daily endeavour that is ethnography, than simply the term 'researcher' (evoking a covert 'investigator'). Through clarity and attentiveness, I have always informed all participants of the nature of our potential interaction and repeatedly given clear options for non-involvement. In the sensitive context of Egypt's long revolution and counter-revolution, relationships grounded in transparency while ensuring anonymity are critical for safety, legitimacy, and integrity of information.

Along these lines, it is important to mention some inevitable ethical dilemmas. Among the resettled and squatter communities, disrupted local economies were

sometimes supplemented with drug dealing. Amidst unemployment and boredom, hashish, *bodra* (a heroin-like opiate, sometimes mixed with hashish), and Tramadol (a pharmaceutical stimulant) were widely consumed among the wider resettlement community and by homeowners. Squatter organisers, however, limited their narcotic consumption to hashish — something prevalent and tacitly accepted throughout Cairo — abstaining from harder substances out of personal choice and tactically to avoid further stigma delegitimising moral arguments for property invasion. While not central to the aims of this thesis, some examples of narcotic consumption emerge throughout mostly to shade in the gradients of complexity within moral argumentation. While aware of efforts to misconstrue research on or around illicit practices as 'giving a bad name to the poor,' it is also evident that *not* discussing these important parts of daily life risks whitewashing structural oppression. In this regard, I follow guidance in Philippe Bourgois's ethnography on crack consumption in Harlem, New York (2003). Bourgois respects a warning by anthropologist Laura Nader: "don't study the poor and powerless because everything you say about them will be used against them" (Bourgois, 2003, p. 18; Nader, 1972). However, like him, while I at times worry about the implications of illuminating controversial and dangerous practices, I believe in an ethical imperative to describe the challenges of structural political-economic processes as they were witnessed without censorship — such as post-eviction resettlement leaving people with few options for survival beyond underground economies (2003, p. 18).

Due to the sensitive nature of many opinions and the delicate state of many resident's housing tenure, as well as a lasting possibility of retribution from management staff, other residents, or the state, all people in Haram City mentioned in this work have been renamed to protect anonymity. Acutely aware of the fragility of people's lives, dislocated away from NGOs, amidst the cronyism of official forums for accountability, and under the "protection"/"threat" of privately managed security forces, I have chosen

to anonymise *despite* repeated and explicit permission to not do so by many participants, from squatters to staff. This is especially true for squatters. Many emphatically desire that their perspectives be heard to combat widespread portrayals of criminality. These same people believe that only by honourably embracing the risks of nominative association can their accounts be read with adequate weight. As recently as August 2015, however, squatters' homes continue to receive sporadic attacks by privately hired Bedouin eviction teams (discussed briefly in Chapter 7) and some have recently been jailed without charge amidst revanchist assertions of power by state police. While 2011–2013 was a period of insecurity, it was also one of empowered discourse and, to a certain degree, decreased daily intrusions into non-overtly political lives of everyday Egyptians. Since late 2013, Egypt's security state has regained its foothold and detention without trial has dramatically increased to become the norm. I therefore insist on anonymity with awareness of an unpredictable future and out of respect for the fact that opinions expressed in one political context will be read in another. Names are unchanged only in the case of widely recognisable public figures, such as OHC's CEO, state officials, and NGO researchers who granted permission and retain strong institutional support.

In cases where written informed consent was not possible, I devised various strategies to ensure my long-term accountability. I remain in touch with many key participants through social media and mobile phone chatting applications such as Whatsapp and Viber. In some cases I helped residents install chat applications on cheap Chinese smartphones to encourage contact. Those with computers remain in contact via Skype. Additionally, at the end of my last visit in May 2014, I left over twenty participant households a small gift: a plastic-laminated A4-size photograph of me with a member of the household (or the entire household if a photo was available) with my full contact information in Arabic and English printed on the back. I hope these gifts act as a symbol of my commitment, create a lasting forum for accountability if ever needed, and give any

future researcher, activist, NGO employee, or policymaker working in Haram City the ability to benefit from the work here within or report any problems.

Egypt's rapidly shifting political landscape has led to both new outlets and new restrictions for opinions, as well as altered concerns over safety in sharing those opinions. Social stigma associated with Cairo's urban poor, particularly in mixed housing arrangements, must be continuously taken into account. As described in the section on positionality, I have been attentive to the ways in which my presence and inquiry may interfere with the lives of others and respected existing livelihoods and positions in a gated community sometimes predicated on division between haves and have nots. In this regard in particular, as with all else, obligatory Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) general training, as well as specific CUREC training for conducting research in politically complex or evolving environments provided excellent guidance at early stages.

Lastly, as research progressed and the political situation in Egypt underwent enormous shifts, some detours and difficulties inevitably arose, at times interrupting my fieldwork. Immediately following the 14 August 2013 Rabaa al-Adawiya killing of approximately one thousand Muslim Brotherhood supporters of deposed President Mohammed Morsi, the University of Oxford Social Sciences Division required that I leave the country. From Oxford, I made the best of this interruption by transcribing field notes, digesting experiences, and identifying areas of research requiring further elaboration. I returned a month and a half later, in October 2013, and remained another three months. While the air of both promise and insecurity that permeated the 2011–2013 revolutionary period largely gave way to "war on terror" rhetoric and publicly incontestable support for authoritarianism, this shift afforded an opportunity to compare participants' positions across contexts for consistency. In these times of difficulty, I have been privileged to consult extremely attentive, supportive, and ever-available supervisors.

Contested grounds: emic versus etic

In navigating open-ended discussions on people's own reflexive views over ownership and order in a new development, the everyday practice of recounting proverbs and "popular wisdom" (*al-hikma al-sha'bia*) provided an important entry point. It also was a way to demonstrate familiarity with linguistically rooted perspectives. Throughout my stay, I kept a diary of the most frequently used proverbs, particularly contemporary youth and inner city ones. Youth proverbs feature prominently (or are invented) in *sha'bi* and *electro-sha'bi* music, allowing regular group listening experiences to also become a common ground for teaching the researcher. Eventually, this proverb list proved quite popular, with people regularly approaching with suggestions and improvisational recitations. A small selection of proverbs is used to frame each paper and chapter, appearing throughout the research. Above all, this list (following its memorisation and recitation) provided a strong methodological role. Proverbs can be very useful ways of expressing difficult sentiments in ways that emphasise humility and a common sense (Obeng, 1996) and in many cases are used to normatively frame moral positions "where the wit of one" becomes "the wisdom of many" (Mieder, 1993). Proverbs are also often quite humorous. In Haram City they frequently grapple with questions of morality, economy, and property, providing a fluid transition from feelings to explicit critiques of Haram City. Remembering and sharing these expressions was invaluable for building trust, for delving into and expanding on moral stances, and for expressing my interpretation of sentiments in well received ways across propertied relations.

One proverb used by squatters to explain the complexity of their predicament was particularly instrumental: *illi mayi'rafsh yi'ul 'ads* ('He who doesn't know, says it's [just] lentils'). Its central message appeals to the need for greater understanding of root causes behind events and reservation of judgement — loosely corresponding to 'don't judge

what you can't understand' — but portrayed through the most simple, inexpensive, and *baladi* (countryside, 'salt of the earth') form of nourishment. Its frequent use expressed both the degree of division within Haram City, but also provided a familiar way to establish mutual recognition that actions may have a reason that others cannot immediately see and thus opening a path to discussing legitimacy. Furthermore, when dealing with my own positionality vis-à-vis research participants, this phrase — humorous when uttered by a foreigner with its rural and traditional resonances — could diffuse tension related to either my time 'on the other side' or personal questions about my life in Europe. Most importantly, though, the proverb crisply conveys a broader methodological imperative of this project: alternating between emic and etic research.

As Lett explains, from an anthropological perspective, "emic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analyses expressed in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories regarded as meaningful and appropriate by the native members of the culture whose beliefs and behaviors are being studied" (1990, p. 130). This approach has variously been understood as focusing on an "inductive," "bottom-up," or "insider" approach. On the other hand, an etic approach to ethnography brings from an early stage theories and perspectives from outside of a setting being studied. Lett defines it as such: "Etic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analyses expressed in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories regarded as meaningful and appropriate by the community of scientific observers" (1990, p. 130). Because a researcher always carries a subjectivity and position as an outsider, a purely emic approach is, of course, impossible. Yet, when reflexive and honest with one's limitations it is possible to attempt a "good enough" approximation of concepts and life as they are lived, felt, and described. While a majority of ethnographies inherently blend emic and etic readings, this thesis attempts to give each purposeful space.

In the case of a proverb on lentils, an emic account would understand the norms and beliefs represented within — tolerance and deferral of judgement reinforced by an overt appeal to the traditional. An etic account would interpret the patterns of the proverbs use in terms of context and social function — how and when the phrase gains traction in Haram City, and its link to asserting controversial relations over property in a widely digestible way. I alternate between prioritising emic and etic readings of the relationship between morality, property, and order throughout this thesis, adding to the logic behind four distinct papers. First, this approach reflects an effort to present the coherent value of each interpretation thoroughly in all its own perceived merits and faults. Then, shifting weight in methodological emphasis helps chart the relationship between the reflexive definition of beliefs and concomitant practices to enact them — two sides of normativity, moving from "it *ought* to be" to "it *will* be." So, in Chapters 4 and 6, people's interpretations of property and order in the city are largely discussed on the terms in which they were presented: deeply valued prior experiences and aspirations over urban life framing the present. In Chapters 5 and 7, I assume more of an outsider perspective to present evolving interventions in the city that are directly inspired and legitimised by aforementioned emic accounts, while more emphatically framing them within my own reading of larger social, economic, historical, and institutional power relations.

With this strategy in mind, I approached manual interview and field note coding in tow. Chapters emphasising emic accounts, include extensive quotations emphasising argumentation between residents, and thus are broadly prepared in 'fresh' narrative and chronological form, restricting external interpretation to give complex and even contradictory perspectives their own space, with stronger emphasis on biographical portraits. Chapters with an etic emphasis, have been 'cooked' through wider readings of struggle, urbanism, and statecraft in Egypt and urban settings around the world,

forsaking biographical and chronological narrative accounts for a multi-scalar, cross-cutting, digestion of transhistorical and transgeographical gaps and links. It is my hope that, when read together, insider and outsider points of view can stand in a purposeful tension with each other, as beliefs and action do in everyday life, and as the researcher navigates the two, leaving comfortable space for the reader's own 'third' perspective to fill in between.

New places and political uncertainty: diachronic versus synchronic

In many ways, the interiority of domestic space in Haram City extended to the development's borderlines with the rest of Egypt. During the 2011 to 2013 revolutionary period, for example, sporadic nationwide military enforced curfews became a regularised phenomenon. Curfews mandate that residents be indoors by a certain hour and remain their until a certain hour the next morning. While many Egyptians found ways around this, the rules were enforced by military patrols and in large part respected. Only in gated communities, Haram City included, were they not. In these spaces life proceeded as usual up to the city gates, where a private security team stands guard. While this anomaly was never officially specified, gated community residents and managers universally operated under the belief that these rather coercively enforced temporal rules only applied beyond the collective gates.

I use this example of spatial double standards amidst political transformation to illuminate the importance of geographically differentiated temporality as it informs to research methodology. A critical methodological consideration in any extended research project, from design to implementation, is the resolution of temporal analysis. Will work observe the evolution of people's views and actions with respect to places and compare over time (diachronic research) or endeavour to give a brief snapshot (synchronic) of life by attempting to briefly suspend time? Because the object of research is never fixed,

Schielke, for example, is emphatic about the importance of diachronic work amidst Egypt's political transitions, perhaps requiring a lens that is wide to a degree that may not yet be possible (2015). With more stringent time limitations for a doctorate in mind and based 34km from Tahrir Square (often over an hour by microbus — OHC advertises 20km but that is 'as the crow flies'), a caricatured depiction of the distinction between immense commotion in central Cairo and commuter residential life in gated suburbs would be that the speed of events downtown leave the periphery seemingly frozen in its wake. One might think that amidst central Cairo's constant change, a diachronic analysis would flourish, and that suburban life, often unaware of even curfews, could be well suited to synchronic study. Yet, particularly from a logistical perspective, fine-tuning the pragmatics of fieldwork to accommodate curfews, participant detentions, and protests, the relationship between change and temporality encouraged the opposite approach.

At the geographical scale of the larger city and nation, I offer a synchronic portrayal of a short period unified by particular legal and political uncertainty. At this broad scale of national politics and upheaval, this study therefore begins in the months prior to the presidential election of Mohammed Morsi (30 June 2012) and ends with that of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi (8 June 2014), with much happening in between, including a military toppling of the former (3 July 2013). As several anthropologist working on contemporary Egypt point out, this period was marked by a pronounced and widespread sense of liminality or "antistructure," a period of between-ness pregnant with an incipient future (Armbrust, 2013; Peterson, 2012). Most poignantly, with state security services largely focused on activities and fluctuations in Tahrir Square, the everyday authoritarianism of both protection and control throughout Egypt receded to an unprecedented degree. Much of the researcher community writing on Cairo treated this period in a highly reflexive fashion, noting that while the future was wildly uncertain, there was a peculiarity to the immediate aftermath of revolution that might soon fade.

My own approach to field work was very self aware in this sense, focusing on gathering as much information as possible about sensations of flexibility in laws and their enforcement. In as far as deep institutional and legal uncertainty can be considered 'regular' — a brief status quo — particularly when witnessed from over an hour away, this study can be seen as one particular snapshot in time of Egypt's brief revolutionary period.

At the geographical scale of Haram City, however, between an extended stay and a second two month-long stays, the temporal resolution of fieldwork emphasises an evolving formative history. Opened in 2008–2009, by the time I began taking serious interest in the site (just after reading news of home invasions) the development had been open for less than three years. Time spent in direct contact with the site — from the point of an initial pilot study in May 2012, to my last visit in May 2014, to my ongoing correspondence with residents in late 2015 — encompasses approximately half of Haram City's existence and foundational years. Significantly, the midpoint of fieldwork, in early 2013, coincided with the first expirations on mandatory five-year prohibition of resale or rental of properties. As such, my time straddled an influx of new rental and sublet inhabitants that may not have met age and income restrictions originally set by the Ministry of Housing as condition for cheap land. Similarly, as the state institutions responsible for enforcing public-private partnership contractual obligations (courts, police, a rotating array of ministers) were more generally focused on prominent nation-scale events, OHC quickly assumed greater control over defining and enforcing rules within Haram City. The variety with which OHC and residents approached the official rules that I had read on project documentation in preparation for fieldwork became apparent soon after arrival. It is this rise in the consolidation, implementation, or negotiation of new attitudes and rules to Haram City that therefore, too hard to ignore,

became the core subject of research, and allowed me to anticipate observations of unfolding processes and incipient efforts with reflexivity.

Emphasis on a fine-grained diachronic approach to Haram City's inception from early on was incidentally bolstered by my August 2013 evacuation. Returning after only two months later after Sisi's rise to power and the largest mass killing in Egypt's recent history, it was clear to everyone that a page had turned in Egypt's history. With a return to relative political stability in 2014, not only were the many changes in Haram City still in place, but company and resident approaches to change itself have also remained in place. Since participating in its formative years, it is apparent that the scale and rate of Haram City's early transformation will continue to play an integral role in the project's future.



Figure 9: Resettled residents celebrate youm al tangid (day of upholstery), where family of the prospective bride displays furniture offered to the new couple



Figure 10: Young men from A and B-areas lift weights in a converted garden/"al-Nasr Gym"



Figure 11: Dominoes in a squatted home



Figure 12: A purchased and refurbished B-area home

A-area



Figure 13: A-area home with garden, interior, and pavement converted to sell furniture

4 | Thinking by Profession:

Moral Economy and Theft in Cairo's Gated Suburbs

"In the world there are small thieves, and there are big thieves.
It's the big ones who are two-faced."
(*fi al-dunya fih harami sughayar, wi fi harami kibir.*
Bas al-kibir huwwa al-wishayn)

"One who is bad from the inside thinks everyone is like him."
(*illi huwwa min guwwa wihish wi fakir al-nas kulluh zayyuh*)

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Abstract: *Through an ethnography on some of Cairo's poorest residents squatting homes in a suburban middle-income gated community, this article explores how varied conceptions of property ownership are used to relativise institutional accusations of urban informality by its very subjects. As the squatters develop arguments and build alliances, their description of people and places "thinking by profession" evokes an understanding of moral property ownership based on practical disposition, productive use, and the visible legibility of these qualities in urban form, conveying the value of what has been lost while framing avenues for its recuperation. In order to examine squatter's discourse on legitimate informality, I introduce two literatures rarely used in the context of cities in the Global South: E. P. Thompson's discussion of perception of a "moral economy" underpinning direct action (Thompson, 1991) and literature in legal geography critiquing the "single owner model" of property rights as a normative morality that discounts legal alternatives (Singer, 2000b).*

Keywords: Cairo, informality, moral economy, squatting, suburbs

On August 13, 2010, during the last weekend of Ramadan and five months before the 2011 uprising that led to Hosni Mubarak's fall, 231 former slum dwellers from Duweiqa in central Cairo, evicted and resettled to the urban periphery, seized a block of homes in Haram City, a budget gated community subsidised by the state as "affordable housing." In February 2011, during the occupation of Tahrir Square, squatters consolidated control of the Egyptian vernacular-style row of identical suburban properties, connecting water, electricity, building fences, and hanging signs offering services from each individuals' respective profession.[1] Other contemporary property invasions in Cairo's desert suburbs were repelled by the Egyptian army, private security, and hired armed Bedouins (Atef & Bakry, 2011; Egypt Independent, 2011).[2] However, despite ongoing lawsuits, company attempts to block employment, harassment by private security, and middle class homeowners protesting that a slum is growing within their residential-only refuge, these squatters remain for over four years.[3] Whenever challenged, the Duweiqa organising committee collectively protests that, despite any internal disagreements, given the form of this urban development their actions may be illegal but are also overwhelmingly moral. This ethnography details evolving discourse on the correspondence between the built manifestations of urban illegality and moral property ownership within the squatters' campaign.

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[1] Detailed accounts of both instances were relayed by multiple sources, including homeowners, company management, and squatters themselves. The incidents received brief but widespread attention on television (DreamTV, 2011; Kharsa, 2011; Nada, 2012), in print (Al Shorouk, 2010; Attia, 2011; Naji, 2010; Rabae & Rafat, 2010), and in residents' social media (Nada & Adel, 2010). The Egyptian Centre for Civil and Legislative Reform has also documented aspects of the squatters' ordeal "Medina Macaber" [Cemetery City] - Abdel Azim, 2014)

[2] Evidence of the army's and private security's intervention are widely corroborated and some primary evidence exits in personal videos posted to Youtube.com (Adel, 2011). Several other desert compound raids were reported during the eighteen day occupation of Tahrir square in 2011, particular those subsidised by the government in the name of 'popular housing,' but reports allege that all were evicted (Atef & Bakry, 2011; Egypt Independent, 2011). The hiring of Bedouins from Cairo's desert fringes as coercive force free from accountability was independently verified across interviews with company staff.

[3] Several groups organise on Facebook (Haram City Inhabitants [Sakan Haram City], n.d.; Haram City Activists [al-Nashteen bi-Medina Haram City], n.d.; Compound Haram City, n.d.; Haram City for All [Haram City li-l-gamiʿ], n.d.; Haram city, dewaqa, n.d.) and film ("Adrab amin Haram City" [Security on Strike in Haram City] - Nada, 2015 and "Haram City - 'Fein al-compound, ya Samih?'" [Where Is the compound, hey Samih?] - Sayed, 2010) homeowner protests.

Prior to seizing homes, the Duweiqa community had been living in Haram City for half a year with several thousand other subjects of a Cairo Governorate eviction and resettlement campaign targeting "unsafe areas" on high value inner city land following a 2008 rockslide in Duweiqa itself, one of Cairo's poorest neighbourhoods (Amnesty International, 2011). Haram City opened soon after, and because of its branding as an "affordable" public-private partnership, the developer, Orascom Housing Communities (OHC), was compelled to accept an offer by the Cairo Governorate — needing resettlement sites urgently — to purchase several thousand hastily constructed smaller homes in a corner of what homeowners refer to as a "compound" (Egyptian or 'gated community') (Arabnet 5, 2008). OHC refers to this site as "A1 and A2 areas."

As the only actual rockslide victims and having lost homes prior to resettlement, the Duweiqa 231 lacked proof of property size, necessary for negotiating at least a proportionately sized desert periphery home from the state. After a year of protest encampments against resettlement by Duweiqa victims in front of Governorate offices, the group relented and were resettled to 23 m^2 one bedroom flats per family of up to eight members in Haram City's A areas (Khadr, 2010).[4] Upon arrival, all available company and market jobs were taken by those resettled from other areas labelled "unsafe" following the rockslide, leveraging intact homes to negotiate better resettlement terms. Consequently, most males from Duweiqa households commute from the Sixth of October satellite suburb 42km west of their home quarter, taking up to two and a half hours and three microbuses per trip to reach places where construction jobs can be found — often in New Cairo, the opposite satellite city in Cairo's eastern desert. Infuriatingly, at LE10–15 [£1–1.5] per trip, daily commute costs are roughly equivalent to daily rent in Duweiqa, were work is plentiful. Finding home dimensions and dearth of

[4] This dimension is disputed, with OHC claiming they are 32 m^2. The smaller dimension is supported by the Egyptian Center for Civil and Legislative Reform, an NGO working with Duweiqa families post-rockslide.

opportunity unfair and untenable, the group reorganised. With a view on a rolling grid of vacant properties, marketed as "affordable" but triple the size of resettlement flats and with gardens that could be transformed to practice one's trade, they saw a corrective opportunity.

Over two thirds of Haram City's residents, about 20,000 people, purchased their homes. To retain adequate profit margins after government land subsidies and costs, properties such as those taken by Duweiqa are designed and marketed by OHC according to a definition of affordability that targets demographics able to pay mortgages (the regularly employed) and that own at least one car: aspirational lower-middle class families and just married middle class youth. A potential homeowner is offered a quiet suburban life, free from commerce and industry, with safety for children, and private civic administration, healthcare, education, policing, and infrastructure, all behind the prestige of staffed entrance gates, ready to direct deliveries and visitors. To any resident it is self-evident that many homes are purely investments or vacation homes for central Cairo's elite, circumventing state subsidy maximum income rules. As squatters discovered through online searches and chatter, the development is also promoted as a global poverty solution, the first Egyptian case study in "cooperative" public-private partnerships for low-income housing (UN-Habitat, 2012; UNDP, 2011; World Bank, 2013). In such publications, side-by-side images of rows of garden-homes and slums imply that Haram City offers an orderly cure for urban informality.

As everyday life adapts to coexistence and as homeowners hire some squatters for domestic work, a public debate thrives, contesting the contours of the relationship between legality, built form, and morality in property rights. Homeowners see squatters as "informals" — spreading the *'ashwa'iya* ('slum,' lit. 'haphazard' or 'random') or *bi'a* ('informal') within the formal compound. Their property theft and the "messiness" garden conversions to accommodate labour confirms a suspicion that informality and

illegality are inseparable, the very condition many have sought to escape. Alternatively, squatters see Haram City as formal ("*medina raqiya*," 'a classy' or 'upscale' city) but *more* illegal than the *'ashwa'iya* because it is the product of opaque public land transactions and profiting off of poverty.

Globally, implicit assertions that improvised construction and land occupation manifest a general state of illegality are central to state discourse on housing eviction/resettlement, bolstered by attacks that the disorderly appearance of space reflects "anarchic" ownership and labour relations and a decaying moral character (AlSayyad, 2004; Edésio Fernandes & Varley, 1998; Moser, 1978; Portes, Castells, & Benton, 1989). Recent scholarship in India highlights the influence middle-class norms of civility have on criminalising the "messy" appearance of self-built construction, propelling state aestheticisation of poverty and "nuisance discourse" for legislating the right to be free from improvised urbanism (Ghertner, 2008, 2011). As others have shown, urban law is both mutable and normative, a self-fulfilling process where perceptions of informality facilitate designation of illegality, and perceptions of formality designate legality (Benjamin, 2005; E. Fernandes, 2007). Here discursive references to urban form can both code for, and at times bend, statutory principles.

Other scholars focusing on land transactions emphasise that illegality is pervasive across the range from "formal" to "informal" planning, showing elite institutions instrumentalising the term "informality" to only criminalise poor people's ownership claims (Roy & AlSayyad, 2004). For example, across Southern cities neighbourhoods built incrementally to normalise land invasion can stand beside illegal gated communities, "hermetically sealed spaces" encouraging rigid uniformity through covenants (Graham & Marvin, 2002, p. 222) that may entitle ownership recognition within a development that violates land use regulations as a whole (Roy, 2005). Towards challenging discourses that privilege elites, Roy calls for analysis looking within informality as a broader logic of

urbanism, rather than at the formal-informal divide as discrete sectors (Roy, 2005, p. 149). Yet, there is also a great need for ethnographic accounts of how people interpret their perceived informality, overwhelmingly a moral distinction framing eligibility to residence or resettlement by the state (Simone, 2012). What accounts highlighting the impact of informality discourses by elites, or seeking to pluralise the term away from its discursive role in constituting an object of management, do not fully consider are the ways in which informality discourse is appropriated by its very subjects. Particularly in cases where the term's direct association with illegality is publicly contested, such studies may miss how popular moral mobilisations are framed *through* the term.

In Haram City informality discourses are rooted in the particular experience of resettlement. From Harare (Potts, 2006) to Bombay (Patel, D'Cruz, & Burra, 2002) to Rio de Janeiro (Perlman, 2010), embedded analysis and enumerations of people placed in city peripheries show debilitating increases in cost of living, lost time, chronic unemployment, and removal from a lifetime of material and social investment (Cernea, 2009; du Plessis & UN-Habitat, 2011; Partridge, 1989). It is also well documented that territorially rooted livelihoods are intimately linked to the expression and cultivation of moral norms in transactions and relationality as a form of economic "embeddedness" (Polyani, 1968). While providing detailed accounts of socio-economic impacts, the majority of studies on eviction-resettlement reveal little on the moral experience of what amounts to spatial disemployment. Even fewer shed light on how the experience is inflected by resettlement into the fully private sphere of today's emerging "global suburbanism," where the protection of residential-only property and urban form is paramount (Keil, 2013).

This article evidences how discourse by the Duweiqa squatters' ten-person core organising committee publicly relativises their castigation as informals in the formal development, emphasising the morality of a city that affords the virtues of practical

labour. Through a year-long ethnography residing with squatters, participating in daily meetings, tracing efforts to generate incomes, and attending meetings with OHC management and the Cairo Governorate, I explore the role of morality in sustaining a collective sense of legitimacy in occupation. While squatters refer to themselves as people from an *'ashwa'i* neighbourhood ("informals"), they also differentiate between moral and immoral property ownership and the particular physical form each ought to take. Labour, property, and morality are deeply intertwined concepts, balanced towards asserting the legitimacy of property claims predicated on practical and productive use.

In order to clarify squatters' discursive efforts to legitimise informality without reinforcing the term's normative properties, I introduce two literatures rarely used in academic and policy discussion on the formal/informal or on Southern urbanism: anthropology and history of the "moral economy" as a framework for alternative "embedded" expectations over the economic, and legal geography critiquing the "single owner model" of property treating a spectrum of rights associated with property as indivisible. In Haram City, the experience of resettlement (loss of labour) and discourses of informality (a resulting occupation/modification of homes to facilitate labour) are deeply intertwined. I therefore read literature on the moral economy and the single owner model together, each centring on moral discourse to reframe economic and legal practices vis-à-vis alternative conceptions of productive property.

A slum in the gated community

Settlement in Duweiqa originates from communities leaving the Suez Canal region during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. With increases in rural-urban migration under President Anwar Sadat's structural adjustment reforms of the 1980s, Duweiqa expanded to accommodate migrants from Upper Egypt and the Nile Delta. Many current inhabitants are first or second-generation Cairenes, buying or renting from the original

settlers and retaining strong attachment to home provinces. Duweiqa is just up the Moqattam Plateau from Manshiet Nasser, a much more established and older *'ashwa'i,* neighbourhood which is famously home to many of Cairo's *zaballeen* (garbage pickers). While many *zaballeen* are in Egypt's lowest income quintile, there is a relative regularity to income based on generational patronage networks (Furniss, 2012). As rockslide victims Haram City squatters lived furthest up the hill, at the outer edges for newest migrants and therefore often also the most precariously employed. The vast majority of Duweiqa squatters are therefore carpenters, masons, market vendors, or self-taught electricians or plumbers, without regular contracts and supporting large families on well under LE1000 (£100) per month.

Since the 2008 rockslide killed around 119 people, in Egyptian media the word "Duweiqa" often acts as a metonym for the enormous and varied swathes of Cairo categorised as informal (Rabie & Adam, 2013). Similarly, in most Egyptian policy discourse on urban poverty, Duweiqa is the baseline for broader classification of "unsafe areas." Irrespective of proximity to hills or structural surveys but still designated for demolition, "unsafe areas" distinctly correspond to the boulevards and sky rises in renderings of the Mubarak-era "Cairo 2050" masterplan (ECCLR, 2014). The institutional glossing of informal with "unsafe" remains tremendously ambiguous, and in the public eye it is a catchall term for social disarray and moral depravity.

The rockslide coincided with early stage completion of Haram City as part of Hosni Mubarak's 2005 million home National Housing Program (NHP, *"Iskan Mubarak"* 2005-2012), Egypt's first foray into United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and World Bank promoted low-income housing by public-private partnership and affordable mortgages (UNDP, 2011). To qualify for NHP homes, customers must demonstrate age between twenty-one and fifty, monthly income below LE1,750 (£175) if single, below LE2,500 (£250) if married, and not live in property under rent control or

have previously benefited from Ministry of Housing programs. In the case of OHC, billionaire CEO Samih Sawiris built all internal infrastructure, including roads, water and electricity infrastructure, and waste treatment in exchange for an extremely low LE10.7 per m^2 (£1.7 in January 2006) of prime desert land. OHC purchased 8,400,000m^2 for a first phase of 50,000–70,000 homes between 48 m^2 and 63 m^2, to be priced between LE70,000–110,000 (£7,000–11,000). Prices have risen significantly as buyers remodel and flip properties on the open market, with some residents claiming that prices have doubled.[5] Scholarship on the NHP describes it as a win-win program for authoritarians, a populist election promise facilitating land grabs as political favours but priced beyond reach of the bottom two to three demographic quintiles (Shawkat, 2014). Haram City is located near Dreamland, founded in the early 1990s and much cited by Timothy Mitchell as an early example of proliferating elite gated developments benefiting from Egyptian state subsidies (2002).

After intense media scrutiny following the Duweiqa rockslide and extended protests by victims in front of the Governorate over 2009 and 2010, first lady Suzanne Mubarak requested that a majority of Duweiqa victims be resettled to the Al Nahda and Suzanne Mubarak housing schemes, far in east Cairo and just outside of Duweiqa, respectively.[6] A small group most directly affected rejected this, seeking fairer compensation in proportion to losses. As the homeless's desperation grew, former Cairo Governor Abdel Azeem Wazir negotiated a move to join unrelated evictees in Haram City's A-area, issuing a document stating that OHC should provide homes comparable to those lost. 231 families accepted, only to find one-bedroom 23m^2 apartments. In the meantime, aspirational middle class "B area" homeowners, living row-by-row with neat

[5] Resale is rampant despite a NHP ban before five years ownership. Many homes operate as real estate agencies, in contravention of OHC regulations.

[6] Protests at the Governorate's office continue to this day (Atef, 2011; Michelle, 2011; VideoYoum7.com, 2015).

garden walls in the image of North American suburbia, began perceiving A-area as "dangerous, like the *'ashwa'iyat*," labelling it "Little Duweiqa," as though an ethnic enclave. With any employment already claimed by "unsafe area" resettlements and holding a stamped document promising proportionately sized homes, the group began seizures.

With only 10% of real property registered in 2006, low expectations over the protection of property rights in Egypt might be expected (USAID, 2010). Yet, the invasion and occupation of vacant homes is extremely rare, and unprecedented in a private enclave designed to reinforce sensations of safety by clearly defined property lines. While homeowners refer to squatting as "*'ashwa'i* behaviour," contrary to the overwhelming pattern of self-construction and land occupation, or *wad' al yad* (lit. 'putting a hand on'), the Haram City occupation is not an illegal land subdivision, nor is it a construction without permit or a violation of government land use ordinances; it does not violate the Urban Planning Land Act (Law No. 3 of 1982), the Building Code (Law No. 106 of 1976), the Status Law (Military Decree No. 7 of 1996), or Law No. 53 of 1966 and Military Order No. 1 of 1996, like 90% of "informality" in Cairo. It is telling that any legal charges against the squatters only cite "breaking and entry," property destruction (furniture and doors), and vague accusations of "criminal activity" beyond the space of the house, never mentioning the aforementioned laws for illegal settlement. All cases have been dismissed for lack of evidence.

As Carol Rose notes "visibility runs through property law as perhaps no other legal area" (1994, 269), and in this sense squatted homes may not be welcome but are only perceptually informal in as far as they violate developer covenants limiting garden use to leisure activities. Indeed, in walling gardens, to set up an electrician's shop for example, the Duweiqa community rigorously respects OHC regulations on wall heights (75 cm in cement or brick, with anything above in light metal or plants). This contrasts sharply with

many titled middle-class homeowners, who hire squatters and other resettled to construct ornate walls well over two metres. Many of the very same who lament "a slum in the compound" have added an extra floor to, subdivided, or conjoined homes without consequence, although in blatant violation of OHC regulations and government building codes. Not only aware of this, squatters are dependent on the few jobs found in constructing this double standard. Their own garden spaces, used for subsistence entrepreneurial labour, reject use-based covenants out of necessity while respecting form-based covenants for legitimacy, only to be categorised as informal. Alternatively, homeowners respect use-based covenants as commuters that can afford gardens for leisure, while unapologetically rejecting form-based covenants as property speculations, and are defined by peers and OHC as formal.

Squatter organisers will only leave either if allowed back in Duweiqa with compensation for purchasing new homes, or if they are given deeds to seized homes allowing them to sell and buy elsewhere. Since the invasion, OHC has persuaded only 50 individuals to leave, offering larger houses outside of Haram City but much farther from Cairo. The group was briefly divided over this offer, and the majority who refused express a renewed imperative to occupy with a unified voice to convey moral weight.

Theft out in the open

With only sparse work opportunities anywhere within an hour's drive and needing to always keep a foot on occupied land, squatters have little choice but to spend most of their time discussing. Much conversation centres on accusations of informality with regards to legitimacy. The figurative action of squatting, occupying a house that has not been purchased, rented, or given, is lived through a habitual and literal squatting: on the curb in front of a row of occupied homes, men "just sit" (*'oud*), drink tea and beer, smoke cigarettes and hashish, cook meals, and chat. In these reunions about twenty core

organisers — usually fathers between twenty-seven and fifty, gather to sustain an *esprit de corps* and discuss how their actions are more moral than those of surrounding people and institutions, and how to explain this to judges or officials, a nightly ritual necessary to establish and affirm a shared discourse. Over eleven months I also "just sat" in these curbside circles to drink tea and deliberate the moral contours of Haram City.

In these meetings three individuals are particularly persuasive, leaders in the sense that any further action, such as demonstrating in front of the Cairo Governorate, often only congeals through their consensus. The first is Karim, a thirty-year-old father of three with origins in the Nile Delta and a cement mason who left school at twelve and is illiterate. Karim originally tried to convert his garden into a small kiosk, but could not compete with designated shops. Half of his garden now serves as storage for tools and recycled construction materials. In the other half he grows vegetables. His garden strategically faces the direction that OHC private security trucks tend to come from, meaning that the majority of meetings are held here in plain sight of guards while keeping guards in plain sight of squatters. Ahmed is a second key figure, a thirty-two-year-old father of two and a driver usually transporting goods between Alexandria, his ancestral home, and Cairo. Ahmed's youthful appearance, basic literacy, and proficiency with mobile internet lends him a great deal of authority. Living opposite Karim, he interprets documents, researches them with his phone, explains current events in cogent ways to the rest of the group, and conducts any interviews with journalist or lawyers. Third, Abu Hosni is a fifty-five-year-old group elder of Cairene descent who formerly worked in Cairo's central Ataba market as a shoemaker. Abu Hosni's generational influence is strong, and his words carry experience and familiarity with traditional Cairene norms of negotiation and exchange.

Squatting, embodied when crouching in a circle, also implies vigilance. So every time someone passes by foot or car, they are vocally identified from Karim's curb as

friend, known, unknown, or security guard. With few jobs, this quarter-hourly practice achieves a competitive status, testing skills of perception where the first to recognise a passer-by is collectively applauded. Through the work of perception, solidarities are formed beyond the core community whenever possible. For example, describing an early standoff with company workers assigned to evict them, Karim emphasises a truce leading to "informal" water and electricity hook-ups:

> When we first entered, the company ordered all workers, engineers, and bulldozer drivers to attack us and evacuate the place. We all gathered and decided to use every tool to fight back — exploding gas tanks and stuff. We injured 200 workers from the company's "army" … They left and some of them rethought the whole thing and realised, "They might have rights, we shouldn't interfere" … It was at this point that we started setting up utilities, electricity, and pipes. We did everything on our own, so if the government orders us to leave now, we'll use the gas containers to blow-up our own homes.

As organisers contend, labourers charged with eviction are from a similar social milieu. Some understand the damage caused by disemployment and see legitimacy in squatters' efforts to build infrastructure for generating work, turning a blind eye. From the perspective that labour is as vital as its formative conditions and outcomes, such as visible infrastructure modifications, tactical alliances grow amidst the leisurely middle classes, and public discourse relativising the denigration of informality takes shape. Following this logic, squatters first refute critiques of "inappropriate appearance" of gardens storing supplies by challenging Haram City's self-promotion as a "cooperative," a term associated with Nasser-era (1966–1970) syndicalism. As Karim once told an OHC guard: "If it says 'cooperative housing' on the sign outside … Then how come you buy [public land] for twenty-five piasters (£.025) per metre, or whatever, and then sell it for LE10,000 (£1,000) per metre? An apartment for LE250,000 (£25,000) is not cooperative at all. They just made a compound here." It is transparent to squatters that OHC advertises a "low-income cooperative" to help justify state subsidies, misleading public

perception. If homeowners then perceive actual attempts to create cooperative labour relations as slum formation, than they are dismissed as "saying one thing and showing another."

Sitting perceptible to all as they develop such arguments, the transparency with which one breaks the law is crucial in as far as it signifies legitimacy. In a common refrain relativising their treatment as out of place, organisers refer to inner Cairo Duweiqa as "a traditional city" and "an industrious city," assuring that whatever people say about *'ashwa'iyat* (slums), "In the world there are small thieves, and there are big thieves. It's the big ones who are two-faced! (*Fi al-dunya fih harami sughayar, wi fi harami kibir. Bas al-kibir huwwa al-wishayn!*)." Barefaced about theft and evidencing double standards behind "affordability" and "cooperative," they frame that which homeowners label as informality as spaces openly rooted in labour practices and therefore more fundamentally "straight." A garden's physical form directly manifests one's relation to labour, as opposed to superficial OHC signs marketing and profiting from the idea of solidarity. While homeowners withdraw behind covenant-breaking but uncontested garden walls, these open discussion circles are a ritual public demonstration of that which is in the process of being articulated: work may look *'ashwa'i* but, unlike those around us, we and our buildings have nothing to hide.

Labour is life

Organisers' reference to labour is a vital prism for defending the moral integrity of the informal while driving vernacular deconstruction of "two-faced" formal urban development. Running throughout, the idea that the city ought to *visibly* account for work resonates with E. P. Thompson's notion of the moral economy, "An ideal model or ideology … which assigns economic roles and which endorses customary practices (an alternative 'economics'), in a particular balance of class or social forces" (1991, p. 340).

Thompson recounts eighteenth century "English crowds" reacting to *laissez faire* deregulation of the grain economy, resulting in price hikes and perceptions of profiteering, and patterns of protest deriving from a consensus understanding of the economy in times of dearth (1991, p. 246). When popular conception of "markets," physical space directly linking transactional and labour relations, clashes with "the market," abstract and perhaps duplicitous pricing patterns, Thompson reconstructs the formation of moral arguments about an economy that ought to be indistinguishable from subsistence and work. This discourse helped mobilise food protectionism and buttressed collective direct action practices in the form of forced bargaining with external grain vendors, for example with locals offering to either pay a fair price or to steal the vendor's supply and distribute it themselves.[7]

Before describing the gated community as a monofunctional, residential settlement for the leisure classes, a Haram City squatter's first impression generally evokes imagery of death. If work opportunities sustain life, than Haram City is referred to as *"al-turab"* (the tomb, lit. 'the dust [of the tomb]'), *"medinat al-maqabir"* (cemetery city), or *"harami city"* (thief city), or Fayoum (a city 100 km from Cairo). They describe themselves as "lost" (*dayi'*), "choking/suffocating" (*khanaqan*), and waiting out their "agony" (*al-weel*) where the expensive "affordable" housing economy is "counterfeit/crappy" (*zayy al-zift*). In waiting, Ahmed once noted, "Your state of mind tires." Consequently, increased hashish consumption — already common in Egypt — helps pass the time while deepening a sense of distraction. Ahmed's cousin Hassan, for example, described spending three days in a "coma" (*ghaybuba*) during a sharp spell without work, using slang for marijuana: "wake up, eat, bango, sleep. Wake up, eat, bango, sleep." Abu Hosni summarises this sensation: "Everything is the same as everyday" (*kulluh zayy kull yaum*).

[7] Since Thompson, moral economy is a diffuse topic in anthropology, particularly regarding peasant movements under globalisation (Scott, 1977; Watts, 1983). While labour and land are reoccurring optics, there is scant work on moral economy in Southern cities, let alone in gated cities.

Such descriptions of time suggest the purgatorial effect of expecting that the chronically unemployed respect property covenants premised on leisure. Ahmed, for example, compares his imagination of a balanced working life in Europe to leisure in Haram City in terms of forgetting:

> Ahmed: In Italy do you remember [the days of the week]?
> Author: Yes.
> Ahmed: That's because you're a working community, so people concentrate on what day today is and tomorrow is to know when to work and when to take a day off. But here [in Haram City] things run randomly. One forgets the days.

When depicting wasted time, a central theme is a ruptured relationship between work and place. In contrast to detailed studies on "the politics of waiting" and "doing nothing," the affective quality of the squatters' idleness is not passive, attributable to systemic unemployment, bureaucratic indiscretion, or global economic tides (Corrigan, 1979; Jeffrey, 2010). Here city development is discussed as actively producing the dearth of opportunities, like Thompson's grain production this urban form "chokes" people and leaves little to do beyond discussing alternative positions on the relationship between property and economy. Spaces seen to generate work — whether because they allow modifications of surroundings or because they cultivate networks of patronage or assistance — are held up against a space built purposefully for those who can afford to remove themselves from work.

Thompson suggests a geographical dimension to disjunctures between the moral and the economy, noting the effect of a proliferation of "rural or dispersed manufacturing districts" and a reflexive awareness of alienation by distance and dislocated communities (1991, p. 256). This reflexivity forms new solidarities within recombinant "crowds" and informs an incipient moral discourse. Similarly, in research on subsistence craftsman displaced to a new worker village on Cairo's outskirts, Julia Elyachar notes that a void of activity, lack of sociality, and large empty spaces evoked

notions of immorality (2005). She depicts worker sightings of 'the Evil Eye' as physical markets clashing with neoliberal market economics, a new space unleashing *munafasa*, profiteering without regard for neighbour or colleague. Notions of envy and competition, normally controlled within mutually imbricated market relations, emerged as economic subjectivities when confronted with a profound geographic shift in designated norms of exchange. At the same time, workers acknowledge lost norms compelling a renewed awareness, expressed in proverbs such as, "When each has had enough, then people do not look at one another" and, "Hunger teaches you life" (Elyachar, 2005, p. 161).

Similarly, the "comatose" and "lost" sensations of the Duweiqa community "placed" in a desert "tomb" inform a joint position on homes, shifting the locus of critique to foundational principles behind 'formal property' versus 'informal theft,' compound versus *'ashwa'iya*. The unproductive city is framed against the productive one, and the immoral against the moral. Specifically, when explaining how Haram City generates unemployment, Abu Hosni understands a moral divide sourced through patterns of ownership: "A company made this city. It belongs to one man, Sawiris. [Cairo] belongs to everyone. This is your house, this is mine, and everyone has his place (*kull wahid luh makanuh*). They're totally different."[8] Just as retributive theft by "English crowds" finds legitimacy by questioning grain prices set by an "invisible hand" amidst hunger, the resettled frame property occupation against unemployment prolonged by the hand of a city's invisible single owner.

Thinking by profession

Ahmed, Karim, and Abu Hosni regularly rank the moral character of specific

[8] A two-month curfew after 14 August 2013, not enforced within compound gates, exacerbated sensations of incommensurability between cities. While homeowners drove to regular work hours and relaxed within gates, squatters blocked from early and late buses were further disemployed.

examples of ownership by identifying the degree to which a practice, object, or even place demonstrates "thinking by profession" (*al-tafkir bil-mihan*), signifying virtue when the skill or labour either required or facilitated is readily discernable. As Ahmed explains, the phrase reflects a positive mentality imbued in material quality because, "Like a craftsman, [someone thinking by profession] knows how to make anything for you" (*zayy al-sani', huwwa biyi'raf ti'mil kull haga*). Patience, tacit skill, craft, and bodily habit appear embedded in objects through their creation, and the moral character of the creator is manifested. In the context of curbside strategising, affirmations of the morality and craft of squatting, "thinking by profession" refers to clever methods of finding employment in the static city or of identifying approaching security guards that may block employment.

Through this practical lens squatters systematically identify physical indicators of hypocrisy in Haram City. Squatter masons often took me to photograph vacant homes with cracks in load-bearing walls, stating, as Karim did with deliberate literal and metaphorical emphasis, "Look, the most important thing in any house is the foundation." As builders, squatters mobilise their labour knowledge of materials and constructions methods to bolster accusations. They frequently counter sales prices for their occupied houses by, for example, demonstrating faulty groundwork on unstable soil, as Ahmed did, stating that houses are "built with weak bricks. [This house] could never be worth LE50,000 (£5,000) … [Samih] Sawiris is a lying thief." If owners or their acquaintances built properties for themselves, it is implied, weak bricks or unstable foundations are simply not an option. The absence of craft in making corresponds with the disconnection between OHC as bulk provider and clients in the open market, rendering accountability invisible.

Builder-squatters extend this approach to architectural design, undermining the official dimensions of original resettlement homes, "sardine cans" violating basic living standards. Ahmed notes, "[Floor area] was thirty-eight metres on the [resettlement]

document. We came and [measured] exactly 24.60 metres. There was no point. It's like one room. You sleep, eat, and shit in the same place. The kitchen is in the bathroom." Abu Hosni, whose profession is linked to commerce, scales his critique up to urban planning, noting the hypocrisy of calling Haram City a "city" without providing adequate market space, beyond a small strip designated for shops: "To build a city without a market is wrong! The cafe down there in the 'mall' cannot be considered a market … [no one] spends money to improve his shop." His nephew Osama concludes by alluding to invisible origins of ownership, "… Because he knows that the shop can be taken away at anytime." Imagining good construction, design, and planning as resulting from craft-based professionalism, a formal suburban plan that excludes possibilities for reasonable employment or exchange is understood as something made by and for hypocrites who don't understand the city's "normal" productive potential.

"Thinking by profession" evokes the Aristotelian notion of *phronesis*, or practical judgment, as wisdom and morality rooted in labour practices and getting by. Celebrated as a common sense virtue, it is an important category for delineating the ethics of future actions. As Samuli Schielke cites Michael Lambek's exploration of *phronesis*, in the context of everyday Cairene religious dispositions: "Morality cannot be simply an act of commission or an acceptance of obligation but includes the reasoning behind choosing to do so and the reasoning that determines how to balance one's multiple and possibly conflicting commitments" (2000, p. 315 in Schielke, 2009). When considering the morality of urban form, a strong affordance for employment — its inbuilt practical judgment — reflects ownership that is situated in a moral economy towards a city that presents avenues for moral life. As a discursive instrument of solidarity, the phrase "thinking by profession" affirms a "semiotic community" (Kockelman, 2005, pp. 261–262), the language, gestural resources, and "tacit knowledge" (Elyachar, 2012) of working class Cairenes and others cognisant of the productive city.

Thompson describes the root of emergent discourse on the moral economy in terms of a similar notion, a "*mentalité*, … the political culture, the expectations, traditions and, indeed, superstitions of the working population most frequently involved in actions in the market" (1991, pp. 260–261), producing a cultural commons, as what Elyachar observes as the re-emergence of "secrets of the trade" (2012, p. 87). For Thompson, this practical reflexivity, when the market is a metaphor for abstract transaction and where "high prices meant swollen bellies and sick children," renews an affective equilibrium or "field of force" where "the weaker still has acknowledged claims upon the greater" (1991, pp. 255, 343). Replacing grain with houses, squatter positions on social relations amidst stark inequality are also consolidated by a maker's ethic. A professional builder's view on home quality is hard for anyone to dispute, let alone for middle class families invested in a first suburban home, a realisation that helps squatters spread the message that bad building practices result from immoral developers. As squatters tell homeowners who occasionally employing them, if they lament squatters' productive use of garden spaces and if OHC enforces covenants limiting ownership use rights, squatters lose the capacity to evidence and repair OHC's own building flaws.

Forming ownership

Through discourse leveraging a "thinking by profession" moral economy, squatters go beyond critique, articulating concrete alternatives to dominant framings of property ownership. As Nicholas Blomley demonstrates, from the homeless to retired workers to indigenous populations, one's position in relation to property has long provided a metric for evaluating individual moral worth (2004, p. 38). If a standard anthropological definition of property is a "network of social relations that governs the conduct of people with respect to the use and definition of things," then squatter discourse reorients relational vectors by insisting on the moral authority of both ownership and owner,

however complex, enshrined by productive use (Hann 1998, p. 4).

Over time, after being repeatedly accused of illegality, home invader denunciations of hypocrisy grew more persuasive. Their sharpest critique is over the conditions of possibility for the development and the opacity of OHC's land value negotiations with the government, contending that public land was purchased for LE0.50 (£0.05) per metre (rather than the already low LE10.7 [£1.70]). They specifically attack the notion that land can be owned when its only function is surplus extraction, evidencing that OHC's retains ownership of all land while exchanging the homes built on top as market commodities. As Abu Hosni notes:

> Do you see this kid? If he wants to buy a sweet he needs 50 piasters. It's not even money. So you can't take the nation's land for this ridiculous price and then sell homes for so much. No. This land belongs to us … The motherland is for all. [OHC] took land and made an investment out of it … Take your money but give me what's mine! To each what he is due.

He then describes OHC's surplus generation with the "people's" land in terms of his own trade, shoemaking, and how the government ought to mediate rather than facilitate profiteering:

> I sell you this for ten franks, but I spent four in sewing and weaving. So I should sell it for only six! Don't profit off me! I'm the origin of this country. This should be the government's role: let's sit together, the government, business, and us, and reach an understanding. If you sell this [house] for LE100,000, then for us it should be LE50,000. Because you built this on my land, but got it for 50 piasters … There's something mysterious and not revealed to the people.

Similarly, when responding to accusations that seizing houses, mass built on public land, is theft, Abu Hosni and Karim suggest that legitimate property ownership both requires and enables use:

> Abu Hosni: If these apartments were sold … Sawiris would have called the owners during the revolution and told them to claim them … There are no owners. [Sawiris] claims that they were already sold. Where are these people? …

> Let's say I'm a car salesman, and I have 500 cars on display. Do they have owners? Not yet … We are those people. We are the ones that occupy them. Look around you. They're all empty … You [Sawiris] constructed all this because you live in them yourself or to sell them? Of course, to sell, to invest, and to profit.
>
> Karim: It's like you bought multiple sunglasses. You bought them to wear all at once? Or to re-sell?

By linking mass home construction to common sense labour practices such as the sale of cars, sunglasses, or shoes, while reminding that homes are built on undervalued state land in the name of the deprived, squatters distinguish between property for productivity and sale, between use and exchange values. They also questions whether ownership inherently includes absolute control over a multitude of rights associated with property, whether manufacturing homes to sell allows one to restrict use to a degree that urgently needed homes remain empty.

As legal geographers focusing on the Global North show, by reflecting the claimant's worth, moral orders are fundamental to institutional recognition of ownership, often irrespective of other plausible legal realities. If a standard metaphor for the variety of legal rights that may constitute property is a "bundle of sticks" — rights to exchange, use, exclude, engage in plural forms of ownership or use, or limiting property removal without consent — then squatters' interrogation of whether it is possible to truly own a sea of unused home, and to sell for purely leisurely purposes, begins to dissect the bundle. Implicitly, they pit their conception of moral property ownership predicated on productive use, on "thinking by profession," against what legal scholar Joseph Singer terms the "single owner model" (or "ownership model"). The single owner model describes an understanding of moral private property as metaphorically akin to a log of wood rather than a bundle of sticks, where ownership rights are absolutely indivisible under one name. Roy, following on Braudel, refers to this conception as the "monopolistic" character of property relations within contemporary liberal economies

(Braudel, 1982 in Roy, 2005). As Singer argues, this dominant model normalises its own morality, intrinsically reaffirming itself as constitutive of the 'good owner,' while silencing a variety of historically prominent ownership rights combinations (Singer, 2000a).

The position that ownership is only reducible to one individual is a powerful and prescriptive imagination, framing any arrangement that does not conform to corresponding interpretations of the public/private binary, even if putatively legal, as existential threat (Donahue, 1980; Geisler & Daneker, 2000). Yet, when considering easements, view or light rights, zoning, complex families, reasonable limits to exclusion (such as airplanes in flight not constituting trespass), mortgage lenders, and Real Estate Investment Trusts, even in the North Atlantic a zero-sum relationship between private individuals and plural ownership contingencies remains mythical (Singer, 2000b, p. 5). Similarly, groups regularly leverage a plethora of legal loose ends around supposedly exclusive ownership to make limited property claims (such as efforts to create ownership involving multiple parties), though often challenged as implicitly immoral for violating the single owner model (Rose, 1998, pp. 140–141).

As Blomley notes, this dominant and market-based imagination of property morality predicated on a single-owner with single-use primarily serves to protect value maximisation (2004, p. 155). While the market value of half a bundle of firewood is as roughly half that of a full one, the 'sticks' metaphor underplays the disproportionate value enhancement of not disaggregating property rights in abstract real estate markets (Ellickson, 2011). By critiquing OHC's value maximisation, agglomerating empty homes under one invisible name, as precluding the virtues of productive use and subsequent value enhancement, squatters illuminate a plurality of rights within property, divisible when inhibiting a moral economy. For example, squatters describe a right to both forfeit and reclaim lost property that is only possible when originally acquired through labour or the by-product of prolonged use. When preparing for the possibility of eviction and

losing furniture while protesting at the Cairo Governorate, Ahmed's brother-in-law Samer describes squatters' sole material possessions preceding resettlement as earned, a lasting quality:

> Samer: You're concerned about some wood in your house? Who brought this wood to you? Is it your hard work or did someone lend it to you?
> Abu Hosni: Our muscles [brought it].
> Samer: Then to hell with the wood (*yaruh fi dahya*). When I take my right (*khud haqqi*), I'll replace it or get it back. Never be afraid over a bed, closet, or blanket.

Acquisition through work justifies squatters' enduring stake in determining an object's future, whether to dispose or to reclaim. Similarly, because OHC's property claim is visibly unearned, they lack a stake in its transactional trajectory, especially if physically imbued with people's reasonable exigencies for work.

While self-built housing for the urban poor entails both use and exchange value (Ward, 1982), squatters evidence that institutional imaginations of 'informality' code for 'all property that is not single ownership.' Instead, they appropriate 'informality' as signifying belief in a labour theory of property, a narrative that echoes the principle avenue of legal recognition for squatter's in the Global North (N. K. Blomley, 2004). In Egypt there are no legal precedents or procedures for adverse possession, the legal doctrine allowing a person occupying land to acquire title provided sufficient time. Yet, unwittingly, the Duweiqa squatters deploy the two most important argumentative criteria for justifying ownership transfer. In most frameworks, adverse possession requires 'open and notorious' occupation, already a constitutive principle in squatter's position that informality is less illegal because of its economic legibility. Secondly, by mobilising a "thinking by profession" ethic they speak to the significance of demonstrating "sweat equity" — moral validation through work — when legitimising claims before a judge (Corr, 1999, p. 19; Roy, 2003, p. 480).

A world moving

Towards a structural analysis of Egypt, squatters often frame the compound as part of *al-dunya shimal* (literally 'the world of the left'). Reminiscent of Robert Herz's "The Pre-eminince of the Right Hand" (1973), left handedness alludes to a realm of indirect or sinister practices predicated on betrayal.[9] OHC's Samih Sawiris is referred to as *Abu* (father) *al-shimal* (of the left). As Karim defines *al-dunya shimal*: "instead of a world coming to us, it's one that is moving away." While literally alluding to vanished opportunities following relocation, his phrase is a metaphor for a growing misalignment between the moral ("us" working people) and the political-legal ("the world").

Haram City is portrayed as one outcome of a broader nexus of Egyptian businessmen and politicians "filled with greed" (*malahum al-tama'*). Referring to norms of justice, it is a city where "everything is mixed up" (*gab al-'ali fil-wati*, lit. 'grabbed from the top by the underhand') so perceptibly that "even a small child has eyes and a brain and understands it." The divergence between morality and economy-in-place is often summarised by the principle that in *al dunya shimal* hypocrisy reveals itself through the very accusation of immorality, or proverbially: "one who is bad from the inside thinks everyone is like him" (*illi huwwa min guwwa wihish wi fakir al-nas kulluh zayyuh*). Squatters use this to suggest that while OHC staff and homeowners denunciate them for being informal criminals, their transparent use of vacant properties must only bother accusers so much because they have something to hide.

As an act of obfuscation in and of itself, finger pointing transgresses "thinking by

[9] *Al-dunya shimal* is frequently used in Cairo, normally by *'ashwa'iya* residents lamenting collapsed social relations amidst precarity, and in contemporary *electro-sha'bi* (electro-popular) youth music. One song in particular, 'Mahragan al-dunya shimal' by Mustafa Mandu, ('Carnival of the world of the left') played throughout my time in Haram City, rhythmically lamenting: "The world is a circus and a performance / and a lot of people have their eyes on us. / Their heart is without love," and, "Whoever walks clumsily and drunk / all his life is full of smoke. / Some search for security /and others forget they're human." (Al Omda, 2014).

the profession." Accordingly rather than merely countering conspiratorial accusations with further accusations, squatters make recommendations for how mysterious surplus generation ought to be repurposed in accordance with their barefaced ownership claims and concordant principles of moral exchange. Speaking of rumours that OHC's billionaire boss's tax evasion and that the Duweiqa rockslide may have cleared land for million-pound flats, Samer notes: "A million pounds will produce for itself as capital (*ra's mal*). But there are people for whom a million is nothing, like Samih [Sawiris] … He spends a million on breakfast like it's one pound." He suggests redistributing his money as productive capital: "In your opinion is [Sawiris' money] really his own? … Imagine how much the people could make for themselves with it in a year. I buy from you and you buy from them, and this works on that, and everyone profits." Karim imagines redistributing such stagnant wealth through a universal basic income or a citizen's dividend: "The essential thing is that you bring the low classes closer to the middle a little, rather than leaving them lying bellow zero. For instance, [the government] could give you a monthly salary that helps reach sufficiency beyond regular employment. For those with children payment increases." Contrasting the value produced by free market elites with the value potentially generated by the "thinking by the profession" multitudes, squatters scale-up discourse sustaining home seizures to visualise a world moving closer.

Conclusion

Minimally defined, a narrative includes three elements: a selective appropriation of past events and characters, a temporal ordering of those events, and an emplotment around events (Ewick & Silbey, 1995). Squatters in suburban Cairo deploy all three towards relativising and reframing elision between illegality and informality: exaggerating land sale prices, chronicling their resettlement and corresponding actions, and asserting a moral gap between property for visible use and for illusive profit throughout.

Collectively, they argue that the public-private partnership market for affordable housing in Egypt is illegitimate given the exigencies of their dearth. Through vigilant dialogue while crouched on the curb they recursively constitute the legitimacy of their own claims, towards rendering them "persuasive and preordained"(N. K. Blomley, 2004, p. 50). They assert a phronetic habitus, a collective disposition and recognition of practical virtue rooted in the moral economy, framing informality as space affording labour and formality as leisurely space in the single owner city-as-commodity. Emboldened by their ability to resist eviction and persuade some homeowners of their utility in protecting their own investments, organisers shape redistributive alternatives within a "world" of deception, where law diverges from morality.

By appropriating and morally vindicating accusations of informality, squatter discourse parallels scholarship questioning informality's normative institutional significance. However, as sociocultural practice, forms and expectations of ownership must be broadly understood as different ways of "relating with the world at large" (Bryan, 2000). As such, squatter solidarity also mirrors scholarship on the moral economy, albeit in a very different context from Thompson's: contemporary permutations of Egyptian structural adjustment and the privatisation of low-income housing. Here too, understanding property and its visible registers through labour (as it is lived in everyday life) shapes how larger economies (abstract property markets) are judged and occupied. A central aspect of this trajectory is squatters problematisation of the single owner model, a globalised conception of property that is "immediately consequential" in its institutional construction as "pre-political, obvious, and unproblematic" (N. K. Blomley, 2004, pp. 5–7).

As Thompson notes: "Is market *a* market or is market a metaphor? Of course it can be both, but too often discourse about 'the market' conveys the sense of something definite — a space or institution of exchange — when in fact, sometimes unknown to

the term's user, it is being employed as … an idealization or abstraction from [economic] process" (1991, 273). For the squatters, if a moral economy is predicated on access to a market for productive jobs, then their placement into an entire city *on* the market, at the hands of a single invisible owner, results in a clash of extremes between the literal and the metaphorical. "Thinking by profession" helps ground this contradiction, bringing into plain sight that "the appearance of order means the disappearance of power," as Mitchell describes reproductions of Cairo at colonial exhibitions (1988, p. 79). Similarly, in surveying ethics in the geographical imagination James Proctor notes: "normativity is not so much something to be added onto place as to be teased out of it" (1998, p. 13). And this is precisely what squatters do, publicly, popularly, and "professionally," with significant implications for interrogating moralities implicit within further institutional discourse.

For example, economist Hernando de Soto's widely adopted single-solution anti-poverty strategy to formalise the world's informal areas through individually titled properties (de Soto, 2003; for critiques see Gilbert, 2002; Assies, 2009; Mitchell, 2008; N. Blomley, 2012) can be critiqued from a Duweiqa perspective as simply an effort to impose the single owner model of property globally and create debt. De Soto has been very active in Egypt, attributing the 2011 revolution to "economic apartheid" against those lacking title (de Soto, 2011). While regularisation and legalisation of property rights are indisputably desired, such institutional attacks on informality push beyond the legal, which often can (and does) accommodate "messy" ownership distributions across the world. More probably, rather than bending land to the law, insistence on individualised, single-use title bends it to abstract market prerogatives, for example to an emerging sector of low-income mortgages that can only exist with access to clear collateral. From this same perspective, the World Bank praises Haram City as a proof of concept for a $300 million (£200 million) Affordable Mortgage Finance Program Development Policy

Loan, in part because only new-build developments enforcing single owner properties can be easily foreclosed (World Bank, 2009, p. 10). As further "affordable" desert developments take shape, often built to benefit from these same lower income mortgage subsidies, a majority remain vacant while all ban the improvised professionalism upon which half of working Egyptians depend (Sims, 2015, p. 154).



Figure 14: 'Souq Duweiqa' (as referred to by homeowner) — a market built on an A-area park, with initial approval from OHC, but significantly expanded



Figure 15: A Duweiqa squatter/mason indicates cracks in loadbearing walls and columns of a vacant home



Figure 16: 'Souq Duweiqa' interior



Figure 17: Two resettled children sell cotton candy to homeowner children in B-area.



Figure 18: Youth from A-area trade songs at their improvised phone repair shop

5 | Sayi‘:

The Urban Outlaw as Rights Broker

“*al-siya‘a* is etiquette, not force.”
(*al-siya‘a adab, mish hazz aktaf*)

“The house without a *sayi‘* loses its right[s].”
(*al-bayt illi mafihush sayi‘ haqquh dayi‘*)

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Abstract: *In a suburban Cairo gated community between 2011 and 2013, a group of homeless urban poor use rights language to organise and protect property occupations, while rejecting any affiliation to revolutionary movements. Amidst hostility from a private housing corporation, sustaining resource intensive squatting relies on outlaw positionalities, strategically resonating with revolutionary rights language but invoked through positive use of the vernacular term* sayi‘ *— commonly understood as an opportunistic bum or idle vagabond. By privileging the sayi‘, squatters reject accusations that homelessness breeds immorality to assert an ethical code of the street in a masterplanned environment. Conceptualising rights as a bundle of essential property (rather than property as a bundle of rights), rights amount to debts that can be accumulated and allocated between the community, rather than as an abstract condition of citizenship. Outlaws traffic rights to sustain solidarity and build legitimacy similar to the well documented role of brokers as mitigators of the “law-in-process” in the city* (Benjamin, 2005). *Towards interpreting rights language behind moral practices that entirely reject both the political-economic status quo and revolutionary affiliation, this article combines rhetoric studies on outlaw discourse* (Ono & Sloop, 1997)*, “broker” positionalities in geography and anthropology* (Auyero, 2007; Bayat, 2012; Jeffrey & Young, 2012; Simone, 2004b)*, and legal scholarship demonstrating the significance of lawbreaking for institutional revisability* (Peñalver & Katyal, 2010).

Keywords: Outlaw, broker, rights, debt, informality, squatting, suburb, legal geography, Egyptian revolution, social movement.

There is a strong need for attention to the application of rights language in the every day livelihood struggles of Cairo's urban poor following Egypt's recent revolutionary era, a time when talk of human rights and social justice became common in public discourse. Scholarship has generally focused on the demands and struggles of downtown tech-savvy youth (Castells, 2012; Shahine, 2011), reformist Islamist movements (Bayat, 2010), and the Mubarak-era middle classes (Kandil, 2012). Consultants and property speculators, on the other hand, have often written about Egypt's urban poor in the context of social movements, suggesting that new-build affordable housing was a key demand of the revolution and an emerging market (JLL MENA, 2011a). There is very little evidence to support these claims, opportunistically advanced by the real estate industry, both in the literature and in my own extensive experiences with revolutionary activists. On the contrary, marginalised youth at risk of eviction from the neighbourhoods of Maspero and Ramlet al Boulaq, at close proximity to Tahrir Square, played central roles in frontline battles with police incorporating resistance to resettlement to peripheral housing in their demands (Ismail, 2013; Khalil, 2014).

Daily improvised survival by Cairo's millions of urban poor has been described as a "quiet encroachment of the ordinary" — action-oriented, non-ideological, non-constituent, routine, short-cut survival politics in the heart of the city — collectively readable as mass "nonmovements" (Bayat, 2010, pp. 19–20). What happens when these same common subjects and everyday tactics manifest themselves, however circumstantially or fleetingly, as an "organised, sustained, self-conscious challenge to existing authorities" at the margins, as Tilly's definition of social movements (1984, p. 304)? As the language of rights circulates through collective action by the urban poor, how does it retain a conceptual grounding in its ordinary, fragmented politics of everyday practice?

This paper provides insights into the political subjectivities of the urban poor, a neglected topic amidst a revolutionary setting, with particular reference to families protesting resettlement by seizing homes in a gated community, via their invocation of the broader ideas of ‘rights.’ Grappling with this matter requires an understanding of how the subjects discuss, counter, and mobilise the normative moral terms, under the law, of resettlement or eviction to the city periphery. In this case study, the result of eleven months of cohabitation and ethnography, squatters frame their endeavour through a language of rights to find their moral bearings in relationship to land and economy, bearings that are seen to be “lost” (*dayi‘)* in the process of resettlement into the private sphere and must be “taken” (*khud*) as material retribution. The recovery of rights relies on the emergence of outlaw positionalities to combat accusations of immorality and assert popular values of just property ownership.

In tracing the lineage between perceptions of dislocated economy and the emergence of outlaw positionalities, this paper argues: a) the framing of “right[s]” (*haqq/huquq*) as socially intact property; b) the importance of vernacular outlaw positionalities — invoked through appropriation of *Sayi‘*, commonly understood as an vagrant or indolent good-for-nothing — to assert a popular (*sha’bi*) moral order; and c) that “rights” — like property — can be brokered by outlaws, towards shifting legal norms.

Outlaw morality/economy

The everyday outlaw is more than just a “gun-toting cowboy.” As rhetoricians Sloop and Ono show, outlaw discourse emerges as a stance and form of knowledge that can be picked up and discarded by a range of actors negotiating the meaning of justice (1997, p. 51). Sloop and Ono recount study of the Atlanta races riots of 1906, and the depiction of residents of “Darktown” who physically protected the neighbourhood from

an attacking white mob. A powerful realisation appears in the observations of witnesses: in the eyes of dominant majority, "colored populations" could never be identified as "good." Rather, they resided in a position condemned to be seen as immoral despite the fact that "it was instead the justice of the out-law, those who were already living by a code of justice outside of dominant litigation, to which … others owed their lives" (1997, p. 50). Loosely related to the notion of the 'trickster' (Armbrust, 2013; Carroll, 1984; V. Turner, 1969), but distinct in the clarity of its moral arch, outlaw discourse has been explored in a range of cases, from commercial airline advertising (VanSlette & Boyd, 2011), to immigration advocacy and policy (Ono & Sloop, 2002), to discourse behind anti-globalisation and Islamist movements (Daniel, 2012). Interrogation of how subjects counter hegemonic structures from marginal positions is a significant tradition in poststructuralist inquiry, stemming from the work of Gramsci and Althusser (Critchley, 2007; de Certeau, 1984; Hardt & Negri, 2000, 2005, 2009). Similarly in postcolonial studies, positionalities defining agency against dominant systems by narratives of a future time or through force underpin strategic essentialisms (Chakrabarty, 2000; Spivak, 1987). Though the literatures remain disconnected, Hobsbawm has detailed at length the role of the "social bandit" historically and globally as outlaws living on the fringes of society which resort to plundering, but are mythologised as heroic, as proto social movements (1965, 1969). In all cases, the outlaw uses his illegality to control the moral terms of debate with, and as corrective measure against, an outlaw dominant order.

It is in this sense that E.P. Thompson notes 18th century English crowds enforcing fair prices through coercion, turning the ethical table on extortionate grain vendors by labelling them as "rogues" instead (1991, p. 350). For Thompson, these actions were predicated on a notion of the moral economy, where price deregulation and profiteering leads to dearth as "a profound psychic shock," interpreted through a disconnection between a market as consensus of literally and morally grounded relations and practices

and a market as abstract forum for exchange (1991, pp. 246, 257). In a 1991 revisitation and defence of the moral economy thesis, Thompson concludes by observing that a common misunderstanding involves whether the "English crowds" of food rioters framed their struggle in terms of clearly defined "rights." While a "theatre of confrontation" was manifested in a rhetoric of threat, including murder, arson, and revolt, he notes that the language of "duties," "obligations," "reciprocity," and "rights" is mostly "our own" — a product of contemporary interpretation. Instead, the essential premises for seeking justice were framed through biblical notions of "love" and "charity" or notions of what is "owed" between humans in times of need (Thompson, 1991, p. 350). These "plebeian discourses" are "almost beneath the level of articulacy, appealing to solidarities so deeply assumed that they were almost nameless" (1991, p. 350). He concludes that "comparative inquiry into what is 'the moral' (whether as norm or cognitive structure) will help us to understand these meanings," referring to the logic underpinning moral claims, outlaws in the eyes of the state.

As legal theorists show, however, the 'law' and outlaws are deeply intertwined in an iterative process of legal interpretation, challenging or affirming correspondence between legal and moral norms. In "*Nomos* and Narrative," Robert Cover argues that lawbreakers and judges "are all engaged in the task of constitutional understanding," exposing the myth of "a unitary law" where moral justifications behind acts of lawbreaking force a lawmaker/enforcer to "choose between affirming his interpretation of the official law through violence against the protesters and permitting the polynomia of legal meaning to extend to the domain of social practice and control" (1983, pp. note 7, 47–48). In this sense, citing examples running from 19th century American 'frontier' squatters to Robin Hood to US civil rights sit-ins, property theorists Peñalevar and Katyal show the particular communicative power of *property* outlaws: "Property's importance and consequent rigidity mean that the law of property will frequently fall out of step with the

values of the community it serves. But, paradoxically, its simultaneous importance and violability will also combine to encourage dissidents to resort to lawbreaking to register their dissent" (2010, p. 32). They show that, when "acquisitive" lawbreaking is also "expressive," property outlaws sometimes manage to prefigure reinterpretation of unjust, inefficient, or outdated laws, offering "a particularly concrete vision of their alternative conception of the law [that] provides the official decision maker with actual, rather than hypothetical, circumstances under which to evaluate his or her commitment to the status quo"(2010, p. 33). Organisation through a relative consensus over moral conceptions of property is central to this endeavour.

Moving from moral, to rhetorical, and to legal aspects of outlaws, subsequent sections ask: what is meant by the non-revolutionary urban poor's application of rights language as a logic underpinning moral claims? How is this logic expressed in the formation of outlaw discourse against dominant norms? And, how do property outlaws circulate ordinary Cairene justice narratives towards collective action and legal interpretation?

Occupying the compound

While the eyes of the world focused on the intermittent occupations of Cairo's Tahrir Square, in the three years since the Egyptian uprising of 2011 a different kind of action has emerged at the city's periphery. On August 13, 2010 and in February 2011, during the 18 days of Hosni Mubarak's fall, a group of 231 resettled slum dweller families from the impoverished Duweiqa district of Cairo, abandoned their 23 m^2 allocated homes to squat liveable ones in Haram City, a budget gated community marketed by developers and development practitioners alike as Egypt's first public-private partnerships low-income housing "cooperative." Angered that publicly subsidised, but privately controlled, low-income housing was being sold to the middle classes, they

joined families from all over central Cairo to claim several hundred flats, bringing water, electricity technicians and microbus stands coordinating transport to the city centre.

A Cornerstone project of Hosni Mubarak's National Housing Program (NHP, "*Iskan Mubarak"*), Haram City was part of the supposed million homes to be constructed between 2005 and 2012 to address Egypt's much-discussed "housing crisis." Completed in 2007 Haram City is majority owned and operated by Orascom Housing Communities (OHC), owned by Samih Sawiris, one of three brothers in Egypt's richest family.[1] On the premise of building a "fully integrated sustainable low-income community," OHC purchased 4.8 Million m^2 of land in the desert behind the pyramids of Giza at a heavily subsidised rate of about LE10 (£0.89) per m^2 (Shawkat, 2014a). OHC is 15% owned by US based Equity International, an investment vehicle for Chicago billionaire Sam Zell (OHC, 2007). Formerly one of the largest private real estate owners in the US, it is one of the companies most closely linked to the predatory mortgages of the US housing bubble. Since selling the majority of US real estate holdings in 2007, six months before the crash, Zell promptly shifted focus to housing in emerging markets (Gallun, 2011).

Promoted by UNDP 'Building Inclusive Markets' as a model case study public-private partnership, and by the World Bank as part of a low-income mortgage drive, Haram City copies are in discussion for Morocco, Romania, Turkey, Pakistan, Algeria, Ethiopia, Yemen, and Ukraine under the UN rubric of the human right to adequate housing (OHC, 2007; UN-Habitat, 2014; UNDP, 2011; USAID & World Bank, 2008). In reality, with houses priced between LE70,000 (48m^2 home) and 110,000 (63m^2) (£7,000–11,000), and with residents claiming that prices have since doubled on the open market to LE140,000–250,000 (£14,000–25,000), the scheme is entirely out of reach for the lower two income quintiles, with a customer base that can be more accurately

[1] Haram City is explicitly marketed to soon to be married youth, as in this TV advertisements: "Ahlamak qadamak" [Your dreams before you] (Haram City, 2010, November 9).

described as aspirational middle class desiring a budget "compound" lifestyle, the Egyptian term for gated community. This demographic must either have enough savings to purchase homes outright, or must demonstrate regular employment to pay by instalments, as well as own at least one car to commute from the far-flung birds-eye-view planning of Cairo's 6th of October desert settlement — all privileges well out of reach of the true urban poor, cobbling together on average between LE1,000–2,000 (£100–200) per month per family. Consequently, homeowners are primarily low-to-mid-level professionals, investing in properties marketed for safety and prestige. These neat rows of garden-houses include private security, administration, infrastructure, and services, celebrated in regional real estate conventions as the global democratisation of North American-style suburbs (see Low, 2003). Many homes are vacant, whether because of a supply-side approach to development or because they are held by the wealthy as weekend homes awaiting profitable resale (see Sims, 2015).

Duweiqa is popularly understood by Cairenes as a quintessential case of "slum crisis," a mediatised and globally circulated depiction of urban plight (Amnesty International, 2011; GTZ, 2009). This is largely due to a 2008 catastrophic rockslide that killed more than 119 and displaced several thousands (Rabie & Adam, 2013). Images of the crumbling site are on the front page and front lines of designating swaths of central Cairo "Unsafe Areas" requiring eviction to the city periphery (GOPP et al., 2010). Publicity and outrage around the incident, coinciding with the opening of Haram City as part of a Mubarak million low-income homes initiative, compelled indicted former housing minister Ahmed al-Maghrabi to convince OHC to take some families on board.[2] This circumstantial compromise resulted in resettling families of an average size between five and ten in 23 m^2 flats. Two years later, during Mubarak's overthrow, Duweiqa

[2] In 2011 al-Maghrabi, along with many Mubarak ministers, was found guilty of corruption, accused of seizing state owned land and wasting public assets. He was acquitted in 2013 and cleared of charges in 2015. Nearly all indicted Mubarak-era ministers have been released (Mada Masr, 2015).

residents who the governorate had deemed undeserving for resettlement either led or entered and defended against the squatter invasion, depending on who you ask.[3] In the process the original resettled group joined in to replace 23m² homes for 63m² ones — dimensions specified on a Cairo governor "resettlement document" — which they still squat to this day. Currently, Haram City contains about 30,000 inhabitants, with 6000–9000 either resettled slum dwellers, resettled turned squatters, or just squatters. The effort to stretch the definition of "low-income" by Zell and Sawiris to account for a market more accurately described as "budget gated lifestyle" while benefiting from World Bank boosterism has been turned inside out.

For squatters the cost of three microbuses (LE10–15/day, £1–1.5) to work and back surpasses rent in their rockslide-demolished homes (LE200–300/month, £20–30), minus three hours of good working time per day. As craftsman, builders, and small-scale market traders, some have managed to find one-off jobs with homeowners investing in properties, constructing ornate garden privacy walls for example. Others have attempted to convert their squatted gardens into storage/vending space for raw materials or into vegetable patches. The most a squatter can earn for his family in the compound is around LE100–150/week (£10–15), below subsistence, and so most time is spent waiting and deliberating over collective distribution of resources borrowed from distant relatives. Inevitably, though, a small economy — and corresponding urban form — is emerging within the occupied quarter. Houses are dismantled and reassembled, walls are knocked down between flats, and commercial spaces selling bread or clothing or a small gym replace front lawns. Teetering pigeon coops jut from many roofs, goats and cows roam in butchers' lawns, utilities infrastructure is rewired, and a market of repurposed tin and timber has grown in a park. From within identical homes, but upgraded with elaborate

[3] Given ongoing legal proceedings, the specific role played by the Duweiqa squatters amidst invasion remains highly contentious. OHC management contends that squatters invaded and encouraged others to do so. The Duweiqa community sees invasion as legitimate given their resettlement terms and the imperative to protect against other invaders to reinforce legitimacy of their own efforts as self-evident.

landscaping and parking for new cars, homeowners lament this corner of Haram City as "Little Duweiqa," as if an ethnic enclave "slumifying" (*ba'a 'ashwa'ee*) the gated community. A "Haram City Homeowner Activists" group discusses the matter fortnightly in one of Haram City's more upscale cafes, complaining that the gaze of lawless "Egyptian chaos" (*zahma al-masriyya*) was their very reason for suburban flight.

Taking rights

The Duweiqa squatters vividly recount illegitimacy in their resettlement to one-bedroom flats and murky circumstances behind OHC's purchase of public land at negligible cost. With explicit reference to Haram City's self-promotion as a state-backed low-income "cooperative" as duplicitous and for the rich, eliding the state and oligarchic corporations as one, squatters proudly demonstrate their seized houses as honest theft for survival in a world of theft for profit. To quote Abu Hosni, a senior organiser in the community, first referring to those responsible for resettlement and then to OHC's billionaire CEO Sawiris:

> We went to the vice governor, the one who we beat and destroyed his car … We were talking to him about apartments and dialogue in Haram City. So, suddenly he says, "These apartments are not yours." Then, he laughed to test our reaction. Up to this point I was silent. But when I heard this I hit the table and shouted, "do you live in an apartment? What area is your apartment in?" He said, "Calm down Haj." I said, "I haven't done any pilgrimage. You are sitting in a big flat with a big kitchen and bathroom. Hey man (*ya ragil*), let me have the place that you live in. Why do you get to live better than me?" I was close to grabbing him by his clothes and said, "Are you better than me? In what? Because you studied and have a degree? I do more than you do. I fight my way, climbing through work. You took the path of the pen, the notebook, and the studies. Let me live with even a quarter of what you have."
>
> …
>
> Who are you the son of? Your mother had you after nine months, and so did mine. So you can't live like a daisy while I live underground. We should live together. I agree that God made different classes, but not to the extent that you live with [LE] 20 billion, enabling you to always step on my throat forever. I can never catch up with you. It can't work … How can you spend years judging me while sucking my blood. Enough! Now I know, and all the people understand

> that you are a thief. If I have a motorcycle, I will hit you with it. I am better than you. I've lived in desperate poverty, but I'm cleaner than you. It is enough for me that I can sleep comfortably after twelve hours of work, where you sleep fearing that someone might kill you for stealing the old and the young. And if they put you in a glass cage, I will get you. I will get you.

A striking aspect of Duweiqa's grievances over what they see as profiteering in the name of the needy is that, not only are Thompson's observations of a "rhetoric of threat" vividly present, but they are almost always expressed in reference to "rights." In forceful and often violent language, rights are framed materially, always in terms of "taking rights" as if an artefact rightfully theirs but in authorities' possession — a natural right beyond that sanctioned by the state and even beyond that mandated by religion. The lost right that needs to be taken back stands in for housing in this case, particularly when it comes to politician promises of social justice. As Karim, a thirty-year-old mason and father of three whose garden functions as brick storage and meeting space, notes:

> Abu Hosni: Since you have a right, you must take it (*inta lik haqq, yi'ba lazim takhduh*)… Will we be silent? We won't shut up. If you try to twist my arm out of here, I'll take out your eyes and bring them with me. This [house] is mine! By principle, by right, and by god's law, and not only God's. You demolished my home. Should I sleep in the street?
>
> …
>
> Author: Is what you are doing linked to social justice?
> Karim: Yes, and everyone should do the same. Everyone has a right and should do it this way — just take it. If my right is with my friend, I can leave it. But if your rights are with the state you should go and take it.

In another encounter, when discussing OHC's contention that squatted houses already have owners, Abu Hosni suggests that OHC take the issue up with the governorate as a matter of taking their own rights. In the process he observes that rights are something one owns: "No sir we are not renters! We are owners of property. We are owners of rights (*ihna ashab haqq*). Don't ask me for one pound or anything. You can request your rights from the government. Take your own rights however you like."

Property is traditionally understood in both legal and anthropological terms as a bundle of rights to land, goods, services, and to use and exchange value (Acheson, 2011; K. Davis, 1949). As legal scholar Joseph Singer notes "almost every interesting dispute about control or access to property can be described as conflict between property holders or between conflicting property rights" (2000b, p. 6). Attributing total control over the myriad of rights that constitute property, also known as the "single owner model" of property, results in scenarios where "ownership becomes aggregated into a bundle of legal sticks, with which one can beat one's neighbour" (N. K. Blomley, 2004, p. 37). For squatters the conception is reversed, and rights are framed as a bundle of essential properties.

This interpretation is consistent with studies on the complex relationships that sustain or undermine common pool resources. Elinor Ostrom, for example, delineates five discrete categories of rights: access, extraction, management, exclusion, and alienation (Schlager & Ostrom, 1993). In this context, goods can be defined by virtue of two properties, *excludability* and *subtractability* (Ostrom, Gardner, & Walker, 1994). Excludability refers to the facility with which others can be kept from using a resource, while subtractability refers to the degree to which a person's use subtracts from another's (Acheson, 2011). A public good is defined by difficult excludability and low subtractability. Police protection is a classic example. On the other hand, private goods can be depleted (highly subtractable) and have owners capable of excluding use subject to reasonable cost. Squatters' claim to be "owners of rights" fits this definition of private goods, where the state selectively attributes rights privileging the wealthy (high excludability) and rights are given and taken for benefit and loss from/by companies and the state (high subtractability). While rights lose salience as abstract obligations, they also strongly mirror James Ferguson's recent exploration of a "politics of the 'rightful share'" (2015). Documenting politics of distribution beyond gift or market, both Ferguson and

squatters frame rights as “ownership shares” in the national commons and indebtedness by a custodian state.

Sayi‘

The notion that rights can be owned, lost (*dayi‘*), and so ‘you have to take them’ (*lazim takhduh*) by force or effort — like property — is a central component in numerous contemporary Cairene inner city pop songs and proverbs emphasising morality and the law.[4] A frequently repeated one is “the house without a sayi‘ loses its right[s]” (*al-bayt illi mafihush sayi‘ haqquh dayi‘*). Defining the term *sayi‘* is, in the words of squatters themselves, complicated with multiple context-specific meanings. Traditionally the term has highly negative connotation, most literally meaning ‘bum,’ ‘vagrant,’ or ‘good-for-nothing,’ strongly implying loose morals in a life of indolence, bearings lost through geographic rootlessness. The term is generally aimed at young men, and the above-forty generation might use it interchangeably with ‘thug’ (*baltagi*).

In one recent article in Egypt’s majority stated owned newspaper Al-Ahram titled “Egypt’s Coming Urban Catastrophe,” a Professor of Planning at the University of Alexandria may very well have this definition of sayi‘ in mind when he states: “The law abiding citizen is now a rare commodity. Constantly abused and taken advantage of, this figure is invariably ridiculed as gullible, naive or passive, while *the schemer, the corruptible, the cunning and the devious becomes a new national norm*. What a combination of national traits [emphasis added]” (Zahran, 2014). The urban planning educator sees the “virus of squatting” as a “dangerous national malignancy of grave consequences,” and by virtue of its migratory rootlessness, hosting “volatile, breeding environments for crime, violence, insecurity, drugs, disorder, illiteracy, immorality and disease… an affront to society,

[4] One example is the song *Nahnu Nuridha Hals* (We Want it Depraved) by inner-Cairene *electro-sha‘bi* musicians Oka and Ortega (2011). The first line after chorus is “I’ll get mine [my ‘right’] with my arm [i.e. my strong arm] … even if I die I’ll never back down” (*haqqi bi-dhira‘I ba-gibuh … lau ha-mut ‘umri ma-asibuh*) (Armbrust, 2015).

communality and urbanity, environmentally, socially, physically, culturally and politically."

On the other hand, sayi' has become a rather popular appellative amongst Cairene youth, rich or poor. As youth appropriation, particularly the middle and upper class variant, it can be defined as "bad boy": someone reckless, with pretence to being successful with women, but also someone who a middle class friend described to me as "sound[ing] like he knows how to do anything but sometimes it doesn't mean that he does." In studies of masculinity in Cairo's popular quarters, Ghannam makes passing reference to the term as "a bum or going around hassling people" implying "a worthless or useless man" (2013, p. 192). She also observes that in some cases it can refer to "an eclectic knowledge of ways of doing and being that is earned by not adhering to social norms and proper manners, but is ultimately used for good ends" (2013, p. 192).

For squatters, sayi' applies to positions of organisation and coordination as an honorific. Samer, perhaps the most frequently called sayi' by peers, in part for his boisterous humour and captivating public speaking, plays with this recognition through quixotic aggression in tone and rousing discourses at regular evening sidewalk reunions. One evening, over a liver dinner cooked on the street, as friends gathered contributing ingredients from their gardens, he boasted about tactics that make him particularly proficient at finding money to lend within the group, helping to pay for bail or home/work space conversions. Here, he defined himself as sayi' while separating it from a common term for bandit, *qati' al-tariq* (lit. 'road-cutter'), saying, "there is an open minded (*maftuh*) sayi' and there is a bad (*wihish*) sayi'." His friend Ahmed interjected to explain, "you see, sayi' has a lot of meanings. There is the sayi' who travelled the whole world and saw everything." Samer followed: "Open minded, smart, and no one can fool him." Karim describes sayi' as "someone who can think well but has no job." His visiting cousin explained that sayi' is related to the actualisation of opportunities: "you lost your

home, you lost your family … but [a sayi‘] takes [opportunity] and guesses it well, creating new opportunity. Using others to make your dream come true — sometimes in a bad way.” Another neighbour defined sayi‘ simply as “professional.”

Sayi‘ may very well have been the term 20th century Egyptian novelist Albert Cossery had in main when describing the protagonists of his novel Proud Beggars as “a beggar who sets his own conditions” (1955), a disposition not dissimilar from that of Sal in Jack Kerouac's On the Road (1957). Perhaps the closest non-Arabic term is the Italian *furbo*, if one replaces the association to homelessness with cheating. As Cohen notes: “*Furbo* is a double edged word. It states both malice and admiration. To be *furbo* is to be cunning, shrewd, and crafty. A furbo has the unerring ability to discern the angle in every situation and to turn it to one’s self-interest. To be *furbo* is to take advantage of others, who become *fessi* (fools). Accusing a person of being *furbo* is usually, but not always, an insult, a statement of denigration. It also signifies genuine admiration” (2010, p. 70). Alternatively, Schneider & Schneider state that *furbizia*, the state of being furbo, “celebrates astuteness … when it contradicts the public welfare or legal norms” (1976, p. 85). Cohen elaborates: “*Furbizia* conceptualizes the treacherous nature of interpersonal relations. It expresses the central idea that cunning duplicity and calculating self-interest are integral in all relationships” (2010, p. 71). The etymology of sayi‘ is unclear. One possibility is that it retains a shared root with the classical Arabic word *sa‘*, meaning ‘a bushel of grain,’ as in the expression *al-sa‘ bil-sa‘,* meaning ‘a bushel for a bushel’ or ‘tit-for-tat.’ It is far from verifiable, but this raises a possibility that sayi’ has roots in ideas of reciprocal justice and decision-making. Relatedly, Thompson goes to great lengths to demonstrate the centrality of people defining gallon-to-“bushels of flour” ratios in period debates over food prices, noting: “[c]hanges in measure, like changes to decimal currency, tend by some magic to disadvantage the customer” and “[m]any corporations throughout the [18th] century made a great show of supervising weights and measures,

and of punishing offenders" (1991, pp. 218, 222).

Haram City squatters' use of the term reappropriates the link between homelessness and immorality to suggest that an improvisational life can be ethical for those who have lost rights to a dominant order, not forsaken them, justifiably focused on taking them back by any means (Zahra, 2012). Ahmed signalled the possibility of ethical 'ends justify means' thinking with another popular proverb: "al-Siya'a is etiquette, not force" (*al-siya'a adab, mish hazz aktaf*). This expression uses the adjectival noun *siya'*a, as a normalised state of being sayi', implying a way or lifestyle (like 'furbizia' to 'furbo'). Here a 'good-for-nothing' is an ontology of respect codified by a consensus morality. Ahmed explains: "If I called you sayi' it is not because you carry a weapon and drink and walk around attacking people. No. You should have manners. I *know everything* but act with politeness." As a street ethic used in the context of forced resettlement, it codifies opposition to dominant systems of recognition premised on moral rootedness in place of origin, insisting on the possibility of an ethical stance by and for knowledge gathered through mobility.

In the context of theft in times of dearth, sayi' can be understood as a positionality and discourse that actively embraces the position of the outlaw. Sloop and Ono define outlaw epistemologies as "loosely shared logics of justice, ideas of right and wrong that are different than, although not necessarily opposed to, a culture's dominant logics of judgment and procedures for litigation" (1997, p. 53). In this sense, the "good-for-nothing" "bum" as ethical outlaw reclaims global stigmatisation of unemployment and homelessness as moral threat (see Jeffrey, 2010). Abu Hosni for example, vividly demonstrates the outlaw stance as core to his sense of masculinity and as a concrete act of "taking" through tactical recklessness, transcending abstract notions of civic government and human rights:

> I wake up at five in the morning, put my trust in God, and fight my way to bring food and a home to my family and make something useful for the country. So I have rights in this country or don't I? So that they can grow, I work and support my children. Should I throw them into the street? Where are the human rights? Human rights won't bring me my rights and neither will the law. But I know how to fight for them on my own… It is not a shameful thing nor is it prohibited by God (*haram*) … I wont bully you on the street and ask you to give me what's in your pocket … But if this unjust government comes up here to take away my wellbeing? No. I would rather die and stay a man, so my children can walk knowing that their father was a fighting man (*ragil harb*) that got them their rights.

We are not revolutionaries

Through an emic understanding of sayi‘ and "rights," it is possible to form an etic interpretation of how the Duweiqa squatters build their case around outlaw discourse to recuperate a moral economy in times of dearth. The Duweiqa squatters describe their housing struggles in terms of shock similar to those of Thompson's "English crowds," where unemployment abounds in the new market-free city as free market commodity. Though without reference to Thompson, outlaw discourse research advances study into his final appeal for comparative enquiry into what "the moral" is in "plebeian discourse… almost beneath the level of articulacy." Accordingly, Ono and Sloop argue that there are two primary characteristics of vernacular discourse with relation to a dominant discourse: cultural syncretism and pastiche (1995). Pastiche refers to how discourse may borrow from popular culture, beyond mimicry, to constitute a culture outside of hegemonic ideology *by* retaining some fragments of the dominant language. Cultural syncretism, on the other hand, refers to how the borrowing of language may inadvertently affirm the dominant ideology it seeks to reject.

As a pastiche of dominant revolutionary language, but on the squatters' own terms explicitly as a material endeavour, rights struggle — always framed as a process of "taking" (*akhod*) — is not fighting for a condition of citizenship but for a material exigency. On the other hand, the use of dominant language of rights can affirm dominant notions of homelessness linked to moral depravation, intrinsic to the notion of

sayi', as cultural syncretism. For example, when asking Ahmed what he would do if he were president amidst an upcoming constitutional referendum, he describes housing as the single most important issue facing the country — a gateway to all other social expectations: "The first thing is that I will take care of housing, to make the people comfortable." I reply: "Housing? Before schools or hospitals?" Ahmed continues: "Before anything, we need housing, education, and public health. The foundation is all three of them. But if you live in the street you won't be able to have any education. Education is what gives a person his value … if you grow up without a home, and then without an education, what would you turn out to be? You would join the mafia selling drugs or heroin." In framing rights materially, homes are the condition for more conventionally understood abstract rights such as health and formal learning, reinforcing the Alexandria planning professor's definition of sayi' as depraved by homelessness.

Herein lies the duality in outlaw discourse, and in the strongly polarised meanings of sayi', condemned to the outside and never able to be deemed as "good." Indeed, lofty appeals to social justice during the Jan 25th 2011 uprising are always seen as abstract, irrelevant, or even complicit to an order in which they cannot partake. Ahmed, for example, acknowledges that the most significant aspect of any movement is the disruptive power of sudden gatherings: "the beautiful thing about January 25th was that it was not arranged, not preplanned (*metrateba*) … a totally spontaneous reaction." Yet, he continues: "I don't find any social justice. I can't even make my voice heard." Regarding any future elections, Karim continues: "I won't vote for anybody. Not a president or anything. Neither [Mohammed] Morsi nor Hosni [Mubarak] nor anyone. They are all the same." Even the April 6th movement, a youth activist network central to mobilisation in January 2011, is described as "a bunch of spies." Both the Muslim Brotherhood and Abdel Fattah al Sisi are "all rubbish, they are all working for their own benefits." For Ahmed and Karim a real revolution will only come out of true dearth, struggle felt by a

majority in nonabstract terms: “in Egypt, if there is no work, then the [real] revolution will come…If a revolution is forming it won’t need permission from anybody. You and me are on the verge of exploding, and we won’t be afraid of a stupid permission. At that time there won’t be two people, but millions.”

Behind rejection of the notion that the January 25th movement was built around rights is frustration with public denial over the extent to which policing enacts a legal order constituted by their outsider position. When I ask Ahmed if, like many revolutionary activists, he sees the police as thugs (*baltagiyya*), he refuted: “A thug is better than the police. A thug will threaten you for a while and then leave. The police will threaten you forever.” For the outlaw, a criminal thug is better than the police because at least he shares the same basic moral frame as the more righteous sayi‘. However deviant a *baltagi* may be, he remains within this same moral framework, while “forever” reflects the hegemony of systemic parameters defining exclusion and revolutionaries’ disconnection from them.

Brokering rights

Squatting is a resource intensive practice. Collective cash-based objectives and liquidity are essential for mitigating precarity (such as arranging utility connections) and for transportation to and from downtown Cairo for negotiation with the governorate, court dates, and bail hearings. Having established the squatter’s metaphorical reference to rights as actionable through “taking” according to violations of a moral economy, how is the sayi’ — as urban outlaw — established in practice? If we accept the metaphorical description of rights as a bundle of property (rather than property as a bundle of rights) and the rules and formalities for moral exchange, then in Haram City the outlaw’s organising prowess derives from ability to circulate subtractable ‘rights’ on behalf of the larger community.

In the case of Haram City, being sayi‘ with etiquette, *siya‘a adab*, builds on a variety of distinct codified principles or rules to secure, fund, and transfer "rights." Two codes stand out for their emphasis on brokering: aligning resources through the reoccurring theme of dearth as test of loyalty — "hardship distinguishes the good from the bad" (*al-shidda hiyya illi bit‘araf al-hilw min al-wihish*) — and distributing resources fairly through emphasis on expanding circles of in-group reciprocity — "everything [done] by love and principles" (*kulluh bil-hubb wi-l-usul*). As will be observed in dialogue over the management of debt, forms of aligning and distributing illustrate how an outlaw position builds a survival platform rooted in moral terms.

Getting by collectively in the city has long been an arena for a wide range of middlemen, fixers, facilitators, and brokers mediating between the state and the slum. These "people as infrastructure" (Simone, 2004a, 2004b), and the communicative channels they induce as "phatic connectivity" (Julia Elyachar, 2012b), mobilise a wide range of resources and connections to generate value and actualise property claims. Navigating "grey zones" of bureaucratic norms from Buenos Aires (Auyero, 2007) to Bangalore (Benjamin, 2000) through gift, favour, or piracy, brokers aggregate assets and facilitate, normalise, or subdue electricity/media/internet hook-ups, roads, deeds, and even riots between the state and "unruly" citizenry (Sundaram, 2010). This "para-legal" mode persists, despite enormous pressures to map and control its spaces, whether by "quiet encroachment" into the public sphere of neoliberal cities turned "inside out" (Bayat, 2012), by insurgency (Holston, 2009), or by market strategies "integrating, refracting, resisting and modifying neoliberal practices all at the same time" (Simone & Fauzan, 2012). As in the case of Dalit "fixers" securing employment or college admission for student migrants in India, scholars observe that brokerage practices may have a negative effect on social movements by perpetuating notions of self-interest (Jeffrey & Young, 2012; Mosse, 2010).

For Egypt’s rich and poor alike, middling agents play a central role in all aspects of everyday life. Across a vast range of perceived legitimacy, brokers include the *simsar* (housing agent, but often much more), *mutawasit* (middleman), *maslahgi* (facilitator, implying high self-interest), *mihtal* (hustler), *khirti* (hustler focusing on foreigners), or *nassab* (broker without scruples or principles, lit. ‘swindler’). These figures mobilise an equally wide vocabulary for that is being shifted, such as *maslaha* (benefit), *wasta* (hook-up), *sabuba* (‘opportunity’ with highly informal connotations or ‘object or service accruing benefit for both recipient and broker’) or a *gamil* (favour, tip, or bribe, lit. ‘beauty’). In Cairo savings are overwhelmingly held in housing, with “benefit” emerging at all points along a chain from landowners, developers, service suppliers, ministries, governorate agencies, to land grabbers, building managers, tenants, self-builders, garbage collectors, and neighbourhood committees (Bell, 2009; Deboulet, 2009; Dorman, 2007; Sims, 2011; Soliman, 2004b).

Sitting over tea on the front steps of Karim’s or Ahmed’s squatted home, day after day, conversation always eventually returns to everyone’s debts to each other. Dislocation to the desert periphery exacerbates irregularity of labour dramatically and amplifies reliance on mutual support; nearly every squatter is simultaneously indebted to one family and loaning to another. References to a sayi‘ are most frequently made when organising debt related to collective battles. Stories recount previous acts of loyalty or disloyalty, asserting their “good” (*hilwa)* or “bad” (*wihish*) nature, identifying practices that ought be praised or frowned upon. In these narratives, the word for “debt” (*deen*), whether referring to food or money, is interchangeable with the word “right” (*haqq*).

In one story, Karim recounts a protest camp-out in front of the governorate and selfish behaviour over the distribution of food and cigarettes delivered by relatives, told amidst anxious debate over whom might not repay the LE1000 (£100) collectively gathered for bail for dozen detained squatters. Referring to one of the detained bringing

food to the encampment, Karim's friend Gamal explores immoral rights practices by asking, "Didn't he right you (*haqq*, meaning debit you) for the shrimps as well?" Karim responds, referring to a small gift to authorities during the encampment: "He even took his right (*khad haqquh*, meaning indebted us) on the soda that we bought for the sergeants." Gamal then brings up the case of some Chinese cigarettes and another individual's inability to share, to Karim's response: "you shouldn't play the part of the sneak (*brim*, lit. twist) … If you get an abundance (*al-lamba*, lit. the light bulb) then light-up everyone else as well. It's not possible to say 'this pack is mine, I will divide it as I like'." Considering that time spent protesting is time not creating income, Karim then recounts another dispute over chicken as lesson:

> [The chicken] was too small, and part of it was already eaten! Abu Hussein gave me five portions, and of course I distributed them among the people and saved one for me. He grabbed a leg and asked, "What is this? Is this the chicken my mother sent me?" Then he threw it away. I said to him, "why are you making a scene in front of everyone?" I put three big portions of meat in front of him and said, "Eat. It all ends up in the toilet anyways. But you are too stupid to understand this." I swear, he ate all three pieces! When we divided the remainder among us, we had enough for the next day. That's why I always say "thank hardship for teaching me my enemy from my friend" (*tushkari ya shidda illi 'araftini 'aduwati min habibi*).

In this quotidian example of organisation, Karim emphasises his reputation as a moral broker — how resource allocation ought to be conducted — by reminding peers of an inappropriate debiting, or "taking of rights," from allies during particular dearth. In the process, he establishes rules for aligning inclusion in brokering practices. He contrasts this with his own legitimate outlaw violence against authorities in defence of the weak, while in custody:

> I beat up a sergeant for a *Sa'idi* [Upper Egyptian] and was about to be put in prison for three to seven years. He's still grateful to this day. I didn't want to leave him alone in jail because he was a good guy and didn't have anyone. The sergeant was being harsh with him (*qirs aliya*), so I beat him up. I really gave it to him (*firmatuh firmatuh*, lit. minced him). I told him, "If I'm going to be prosecuted

> tomorrow, I might as well show you what I can do." [The Sa'idi] asked me, "do you have a hook-up (*wasta*) in here?" I told him, "My hook-up is God." Then I was brought in front of a general prosecutor. As I left the room, I saw my Sa'idi friend. In front of him there was a row of tough guards that can beat you until you disco dance. They summoned the police officer and asked him, "Do you want Karim?" He said, "Everyone at the police station says that Karim is a good man." The prosecutor asked, "What are you saying?" Of course, everyone knew: I'm good with the good and bad with the bad. So the prosecutor told me to go home! I said "thanks boss," and flew downstairs. I got downstairs and everybody knew that I beat a sergeant. They couldn't believe that I was free and wouldn't let me leave until we returned to the prosecutor to check. On my way back, I pushed another sergeant into a glass window and it shattered. The prosecutor said, "Collect the broken glass, Karim, and leave." God was with me on that incident. To this day, that guy never forgets how I jeopardised myself for him.

Regardless if true or not, by emphasising rejection of dominant authority, sacrifice, a higher sense of justice, and the use of corrective force, it is a classic example of outlaw discourse as defined by Sloop and Ono. In an immediate context of anxiety over bail loans, outlaw justice is asserted by the moral rights broker. Demonstrative defence against exploitative rights taking — by either shaming within the group or physically beating outside the group — delineates territories of loyalty accruing credibility for mitigating debt. As self-proclaimed *siya'a adab* actions, they reinforce a collective code of moral principles within ordinary, mobile, 'good-for-nothing' day-to-day life.

Law in translation

Central to scholarship on the broker, but often underemphasised, is the ability of broker practices in everyday urban life to not only mediate dominant norms and laws of the state on behalf of the urban poor, but also to actually induce legal changes in them. Scholars focused on regularisation practices, particularly in land tenure, have emphasised the utility of a *de facto* ownership brought on by regularisation practices that emphasise a "perception of legality" over *de jure* ownership, towards a slow assembly of the bundle of rights within ownership (Durand-Lasserve & Royston, 2002; Fernandes & Varley, 1998). A striking example of the importance of perceptions of ownership is given by Simone in

his depiction of central Phnom Penh residents reframing the underground economy of their building as part of the "creative industry," acknowledging international legal expectations for land protection to secure recognition by their own government (2008). Dharma Kumar has emphasised the importance of a "land controller," existing between owner and broker, incrementally gathering surplus from a variety of rights, from use, to representation, to sale, over bureaucratic time (1998). Accordingly, Solomon Benjamin appeals to a strategic emphasis on the conventions and practices of government, rather than the law, as "law-in-process" by virtue of its direct impact on tenure (Benjamin, 2005, p. 253; Razzaz, 1998). These studies parallel the significance given by legal theorists — rejecting the individualist conception of property in favour of a dialogic one — to the morally compelling property outlaw, transacting in the "communicative power" of property's violability towards "symbolic and substantive" legal evolution (Peñalver & Katyal, 2010, pp. 15, 32). Arranging the material subcomponents behind acquiring "rights" between lawyers or funding sources and the squatter community effectively, whether documentation or loans, plots the first course in mobilising around legal conventions.

Within the group, acts perceived as subterfuge profiting on desperation abound. One particularly dramatic incident involved an elder and respected squatter, Abu Hassan, claiming to have found a governorate resettlement document the clearly stated required home dimensions, collected by OHC upon entrance but that they supposedly immediately after denied the existence of. As Samer once noted, this formal request with the governorate's signature (but not a contract) is a crucial material foothold in the administrative materialisation of rights: "This [document] will allow me to go to work without being apprehensive for the house and not worried about my family and children … Without security how can I work?" Such "resettlement documents," as questionable as they may be, facilitate the installation of official water meters on improvised plumbing,

the single most tried-and-tested channel for progressive tenure recognition under Egyptian law (Séjourné, 2012, p. 102). Water meters require naming on a deed, produced for the occasion, and prefigure legible individual property ownership (El-Shorbagi, 2000). Over long dinners on the sidewalk, Samer, another key rights broker and strong public speaker, cast doubt on the authenticity of Abu Hassan's claim and the LE10 (£1) per family he collected as "company processing fee." Samer leads Karim, Ahmed, Abu Hosni and others to the realisation that these documents were most likely forged by Abu Hassan or an OHC administrator to make a quick buck.

In this case there are two prominent leaders, Samer and Abu Hassan, proven in their ability to negotiate rights on behalf of others, being differentiated as an moral sayi‘ and one who is not. Samer is careful to not lay too much blame on Abu Hassan, while clarifying that he will not be associated with him:

> [Abu Hassan] should contact the guy who took ten pounds from each one of us … although, we should treat this ten like a hash cigarette you throw away. But if you wait for the document that he claims to be getting, I'll separate myself from your case in court … We would hit a dead end. The company would benefit, as would the governorate.

All agree that they want their money back before attending any meeting with Abu Hassan. After declaring his happiness to not be in charge, insisting everyone work "by his own mind" (*kull wahid luh dimagh*), Samer directly expresses his opinion:

> There was no document in the first place. Don't be stupid. If a document like this went missing, all hell would break loose after it … It was a bluff to get money. If it wasn't you would have received an official report about it … I don't know where Abu Hassan's head is leading him … I swear Karim, even Sawiris can't come up with this document.

Similarly, he appeals to tangible, clear, and quantifiable proof when discussing fears of imminent eviction as reason to follow Abu Hassan's plan: "[eviction] won't happen overnight. It takes time to deploy this force, you need studies and statistics and

whatever." He asserts that if any document appears, it must come through their volunteer lawyers: "frankly when people see a lawyer they trust him and run behind him. But if someone like us started taking the shots he would get screwed (*biytla'luh kam b'bus*, lit. 'He would take how many fingers'), and people would never stop talking about you. So why suffer?" The role of the outlaw rights broker here is to acknowledge the limits of their domain for taking action, including that anything "official" must be accredited by a capable ally, and then to assume a distributive role accordingly. Samer goes on to question Abu Hassan's plan requiring different amounts of money from different people, and without a timeline for producing "rights." He gives two examples of how brokering debt and rights ought to occur. First he tells a story about loaning to others to secure a home:

> Let's say Karim wanted a pound from me. I will ask him "why do you want it?" He says, "I want to demolish this wall." So I give him the pound. If he manages to demolish it than it's ok. If he couldn't do what he promised, he would say, "I gave the money to others to do the job." If he brings me my money from them, then no harm is done. If not, I will take my money from his guts. I don't like that you don't do anything. I might forgive you if you tried and failed. If you tried, broke one brick out of this wall and the Governor stopped you from continuing, then you've earned the pound that you took. But if you told me "give me one pound," and when I ask you why, you say, "you don't need to know" [deep snort], I will ruin you (*da ana ashkharlak wi-amdilak 'ala 'aha,* lit. 'I will snort at you and sign it with a fuck you')! … What does it mean: you don't need to know? Are you bullying me?

Timeliness, clarity of purpose, communication, and effort are all emphasised as moral for the indebted, and even cause for forgiveness of debt. Describing how he acquires larger loans himself for only the most essential group initiatives, such as bail, similar expectations hold but amplified to match an official source, a government bank:

> The foundation is to return money on the exact date agreed … This isn't his money. It's the bank's, money of the government. The day he desires, I give him the world … I contacted him and said, "by Saturday I want LE500 [£50]." He

> told me “your money is not my own” … so if I say Saturday, I say it reliably. Then Saturday night I went to his house so he feels in his place. He came out covering his tracks regarding [opening] the safe at an instant and arranged paperwork with the bank accordingly … The problem is repayment … If he brings the money, he is the proper one … but if it were his private money, I would say “[I’ll pay] in a month” then keep him ringing for six.

For Samer, connections between official and unofficial realms are crucial. More important is the means of understanding and meeting expectations of institutional norms, even for illegal ends. Retaining a principled way and etiquette when breaking the law for the greater good, he translates everyday moral exchange into recognition by a dominant ‘formal’ logic — something Abu Hassan is seen to completely lack. Indeed, bank loans without a bank’s knowledge are a dangerous, highly specialised resource only justified by collective home-officialising rights-taking, and not personal emergencies. Furthermore, attitudes towards fair distribution of benefits from high-risk moves also distinguish Samer from Abu Hassan as rights brokers. As Ahmed once observed regarding moral versus immoral indebting of rights within the group:

> It is useless to say, “I am the one who brought it.” It should be … anonymous. And this is the essence of peace: doing a good thing and not waiting to benefit from it. A bad guy would use this situation and boast all over the place, telling you how much it cost him. This is a curse (*sharr*) not a charity (*khayr*). Like Abu Hassan: he gives things and asks for money … if your heart is good then you will love all people. Here the bad don’t love anybody. “Everything [done] by love and principles” (*kulluh bil-hubb wi-l-usul*).

Abo Hassan is singled out as not distributing by the outlaw broker code “everything [done] by love and principles.” When I inquired about the connection between love and principles, Ahmed replies: “Both. Principles and love are the same. They complete each

other… principles and love walk and meet on the same path."[5] Similar reference to "everything by love" was given by many individuals identified as sayi' to explain the meaning of "everything by principle," of outlaw etiquette. When asking if love/principles relate to retributive justice as "an eye for an eye" (*al-'ayn bil-'ayn*), Ahmed agreed, but emphasising positive reciprocity: "if you are good to me I will be good to you. But the opposite too." In this sense, Ahmed shows that love/principles extend across concentric circles of in-groups, each united against those beyond: "If Karim and I are fighting, but if you made a problem with me, not only will I be your enemy, but Karim will also beat you. My cousin and I are against the stranger, and my brother and I are against my cousin." Presented as a common sense prioritisation for outlaw broker rights-distribution, legally self-aware collectivism builds through growing scales of loyalty.[6]

Conclusion

This paper has sought to illuminate the ways in which the seizure of prebuilt suburban homes sustains itself in a hostile setting — a place labelled as a slum in the gated community — through individuals brokering livelihoods in line with continued resistance. By interpreting rights as a bundle of essential goods — where the words 'debt' and 'right' are interchangeable — the often-illegal nature of property exchange is contested in the face of dominant judgment. Shunning revolutionaries as part of a dominant moral order, squatters build legitimacy in the self-expressed concept that "vagrancy is etiquette, not force," evoking established forms of outlaw discourse. Twisting the negative implications of rootlessness to emphasise the virtues of

[5] This code is a variation on the proverb "everything [done] by love, reason, and principles" (*kulluh bil-hubb, wi-l-'aql wi-l-usul*), also appearing in *Nahnu Nuridha Hals* (We Want it Depraved) (footnote 4): "I'll be a hypocritical person, with a thousand faces / I'll wound from behind, but laugh to your face / After our lives have become lies upon lies / Everything by love, and reason, and principles." Squatters' version and explanation resembles a prominent saying of the US Civil Rights Movement - "love is what justice looks like in public" (West, 2014).

[6] This mirrors Richard Rorty's virtue ethics, a moral philosophy framing "justice as a larger loyalty" (1997).

improvisation and opportunism, they reassert the transportability of a moral economy according to a set of mutually recognisable principles. Principles such as “we are the owners of rights,” “hardship distinguishes the good from the bad,” and “everything by love, everything by principles” help broker ‘rights’ — identifying, allying, and distributing — towards common sense norms of justice. Accordingly, the ethical outlaw as broker codifies self-conscious organisation in the everyday and protest in practical transaction.

Emphasising the broker’s ability to pick and choose from dominant institutional laws and norms, Adjay Gandhi describes broker practice by a community of squatters in Delhi as “informal moral economies” where hawkers exchange the use of place for votes and thus “negotiate ‘paralegal’ processes that bend formal bureaucratic norms” (2012, p. 61). In certain circumstances, this “well-worn pattern” of exchange appears to dictate how state policies are implemented, but are only understood as “moral” by Gandhi in as far as they prioritise a gift economy to provide a smooth circulation of goods above all else (2012, p. 51). Figures such as the *dada* are understood as self-styled brokers that exercise social power by invoking tropes of the masculine and at times violent strongman (Gandhi, 2012, p. 58; Hansen, 2001, p. 72). In this sense, a *dada* exhibits similar articulations of agency as the Egyptian *gada‘*, a local neighbourhood strongman studied by Farha Ghannam and Julia Elyachar as materialising the “the moral universe of Egyptian popular classes” such as “intelligence, valor, toughness, reliability and decency” (Julia Elyachar, 2005; Ghannam, 2013). Sayi‘, may resemble *gada‘* or *dada*, but in its reframing of indolence as attendant opportunism and on rootlessness as ethically virtuous — ‘getting away with it’ both metaphorically and literally — it highlights the socio-legal and organisational significance of the “moral” in “informal moral economies.”

In Haram City, brokering also frames itself in opposition to dominant legible systems of exchange, but this is not an end in-and-of itself. Distinct from the self-

interested 'strongman' or 'thug,' outlaw discourse appropriates the state's politics of moral judgment over those who can never be deemed good to constitute a broadly shared moral legitimacy in and by daily confrontation. As Sloop and Ono state, the power of outlaw discourse to navigate norms is that "one is placed into the position of having to recognise momentarily the contingency of one's judgment and also one's logic of judgment, to compare it to another, and, ultimately either to renew or to transform one's own values and judgments" (1997, p. 61). As property theorists' studies on the outlaw's role in legal evolution show, such confrontation exposes the myth of a 'unitary law' — where lawmaking and lawbreaking are part of a dialogical interpretative spectrum — leading to a prefiguration of property norms that is vital to the constitution of social movements (Cover, 1983; Peñalver & Katyal, 2010). In Haram City this forced recognition is visible through the use of rights language as the very object of trafficking and transaction according to proverbial norms. In the process, squatters continue to remain in homes for over four years, have organised repeated demonstrations in front of the governorate towards regularisation, and have avoided any criminal charges brought by OHC. Organising a collective and self-conscious moral vision in *the name of* rights as an ordinary, 'plebeian' discourse, encroachment forces confrontation between an existing legal regime and a popularly defined moral one. Treating the urban outlaw as a subgenre of the broker understands survival activities as, at times, going beyond material trafficking and coercion to also incorporate the active translation of logics of moral judgment.



Figure 19: A vacant home adjacent to the squatter settlement and for sale by a broker



Figure 20: Haram City residents from Duweiqa watch a talk show about Morsi's deposition in an improvised A-area cafe



Figure 21: Squatter homes with improvised garden enclosures



Figure 22: Grandmothers and child from Duweiqa



Figure 23: Two squatted homes, one displaying an Egyptian flag and the other a sign offering plumbing services

B-area



Figure 24: A privately owned home in B-area, respecting wall heights regulations while growing natural privacy barriers

6 | Dreams and Illusions of the Suburban Self:

Variations on Propertied Autonomy in Cairo's First Affordable Gated Community

"In the town where nobody knows you,
undress and run [be free] through it."
(*al-balad illi mahadash yi'rafak fiha, shalah wa igri fiha*)

"There is no valid friend, everyone has self-interest."
(*mafish wala sahib salih, kulluh bita' masalih*)

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Abstract: *In Cairo's first state subsidised "affordable housing" gated community, aspirational middle class homeowners seek self-realisation through new spatial norms in propertied suburban life, framed as "internal emigration." Amidst Egypt's history of desert development as "comprehensive civilisational strategy" (Sadat 1977; in Wahdan 2013, 36; T. Mitchell 1999), notions that North American suburban homeownership constitutes liberal autonomy (Perin 1977; Low 2001), and promotion of Egyptian suburbs as a "liberal incitement to individual autonomy" leading to a "subjectivization of morality" (Asad 2015), homeowners define "freedom" by separative property through multiple forms of communal self-hood: immoral "self-interest" versus moral "self-respect" and "self-management." As residents share practices for constructing propertied propriety, anonymity grows, "dreams" become "illusions," and walls are seen to formalise obstructive moral disarray previously attributed to urban informality.*

Keywords: Autonomy, Property, Morality, Gated community, Affordable housing, Middle class, Cairo.

> Your dreams are before you.
> This is a reality in your days.
> And you will find that what you dream of for your children
> is here, in your country,
> in its cities and suburbs,
> built for you to blend in.
> And you'll find proper neighbours,
> and beautiful company for all the family.
> Orascom Cooperative Housing:
> begin in safety and grow in that same place.
>
> Haram City television advertisement song (2009)[1]

In a series of television advertisements promoting the opening of Haram City — Egypt's first affordable housing gated community — satirical snapshots of chaotic Cairo life are contrasted with the familial idyll of low density detached housing and the promise of safety, order, and personal growth. In one, burglars tiptoe with flashlights through a dark apartment building entryway, careful not to wake a crouched *bowwab*, a building guard and caretaker, as he snores instead of fixing a power outage. Cutting to suburbs, it shows a smiling security guard wearing an officer's cap and epaulettes, strolling wide streets and proactively confirming to a woman in a car that she can move about safely.[2] In another, someone's view looks onto a man sitting on his inner city balcony, crammed with old furniture and laundry, struggling to read a newspaper as a *roba bikya* man, a mobile merchant of used items shouts below. It cuts to a view from one of many identical two-level homes, looking onto a park surrounded by children and perfectly parked cars.[3] All images contrast a backwards downtown with dreams of a developed future, allowing one to realise dreams free from intrusion and neglect, but materialised now and "here, in your country."[4]

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[1] "Ora 60 S" (Haram City, 2012, April 4).
[2] "al-'amin fi Haram City" [Security in Haram City] (Haram City, 2010, June 15).
[3] "al-khadara fi Haram City" [Greenery in Haram City] (Haram City, 2010, June 15). *Roba vecchia* is Italian for 'old stuff.'
[4] See also "misaha fi Haram City" [Space in Haram City] (Haram City, 2010, November 9),

While derision of the inner city and romanticisation of the single-family home are commonplace in advertisements for an array of super-elite gated enclaves emerging at Cairo's fringes since the 1990s, this campaign is particular in targeting the lower-middle class. At the cusp of family life, regularly employed, and with savings to afford company prices of LE70,000 (£7,000) for 48m^2 homes and 110,000 (£11,000) for 63m^2 by instalment (double if from brokers on the open market), many in this demographic hope to flee the high density, low privacy life of popular quarters.[5] Promoted as a UNDP case-study for public-private partnership affordable housing (UNDP, 2011) and a testing ground for World Bank subsidised mortgages (World Bank, 2013), Haram City is a frontier in Egypt's long history of state privatisation and shift towards consumption-based class dynamics. As the first Egyptian development of its kind, very little is known about how first-time suburbanites critique the inner city, frame aspirations through property in private communities, and evaluate newly reconfigured local social relations.

Invocations of safety and privacy through exclusionary homeownership strongly resonate with liberal, North Atlantic, values of personal autonomy by property. From the advent of the gated community, ethnographers have shown how politics and relations within are informed by ideals of atomised civic life. In studies on social order and land use in 1960s–1970s US suburbanisation, Perin notes how single-family homeownership in residential-only environments was widely seen to generate "personal autonomy, ego enhancement, control over the immediate environment, and competence," as well as ," "changes in behaviour [away from] the unstable and transient" (1977, 72). Similarly, across 1990s–2000s US gated suburbs, Low demonstrates that for the vast majority of homeowners fear of crime and others, protection of children, and desire for private

"al-khidmat kullah huwalik fi Haram City" [Services all around you in Haram City] (Haram City, 2010, November 9).

[5] For other advertisements deriding Cairo and promoting suburbs as emigration, see: "Mountain View – al-baltagi, Hyde Park" [The Thug] (a'lanat masriya, 2013, July 15), "Mountain View – Chillout Park 60s" (Egyptian Ad's, 2015, June 22), "Porto October 2" (Abd El-Aziz, Mohamed [AMER GROUP], 2013, June 6).

governance align as a pursuit of autonomy (2003). And in ethnography of 1980s US suburbs, Baumgartner argues that the valorisation of propertied autonomy forms a particular "moral order of the suburb" privileging an atomised "culture of avoidance" (1988, p. 11).

Property scholars also note that suburban home configurations marketing and naturalising overtly exclusionary boundaries between neighbours manifest a foundational moral framework of the liberal legal tradition — the Blackstonian ideal that property be "the sole and despotic dominion on which man claims and exercises over the external things of the world, in total exclusion of the right of any other individual in the universe" (Blackstone, 1776 in Singer, 2000, p. 3).[6] In this enlightenment tradition, property is a conduit to a certain understanding of freedom — freedom as "property in [one's] own person" or self-ownership — where acquiring rights to privacy bring one closer to an ideal "separative" political self (Nedelsky, 1990). It follows, as Nedelsky asserts, that "individual autonomy is to be achieved by erecting a wall (of rights) between the individual and those around him. [Property is] the central symbol for this vision of autonomy, for it can both literally and figuratively provide the necessary walls" (Nedelsky, 1989, p. 12 in Blomley, 2007). Haram City's promise of liberation through privacy, walls, and safety for Egypt's aspirational middle class strongly resonates with this, where adverts depict potential suburbanites as slaves to neighbourhood intrusions on personal space (see also Smith, 2012).

At the same time, scholarship on aspiration, freedom, and agency in Egypt has often challenged social analysis through the lens of Northern liberal autonomy for ignoring the complex expanse of relational constitutions of self within tightly knit, often non-secular, communities, particularly with regards to groups existing between 'poor' and

[6] From Hume onwards the protection of property plays a central role in enlightenment discussions over the role of autonomy in morality, often framing a core concept for justice (Moore, 1976; Schneewind, 1998).

'elite' (Benhabib, 1992; Mahmood, 2012, p. 13; Young, 1990). One response has attempted to redefine autonomy through its affective, emotional, and socially contingent qualities (Friedman, 1997; Joseph, 1999 in Mahmood, 2012, p. 13). Yet this literature misses phenomena such as Haram City's explicit incitement that local relational constitutions of self have collapsed under a moral decay that compromises one's future (repeatedly invoking children growing up, for example). Dislocation to a new-build low-density desert frontier is presented as panacea precisely because it offers a community 'reset button' amidst like-minded property-centric values. Indeed, as Roy and Ong demonstrate across India and China, bold institutional claims of the rising middle class are constantly implicated in the making of 'world-class' city spaces (2011). And across the South, scholars observe how the construction of 'ideal' propertied and atomised environments is often represented as necessary for forming 'ideal' middle-class citizens (Caldeira, 2000; Gandy, 2008; Ghertner, 2012). This ethnography seeks to contribute to a key research gap on the way upwardly mobile Cairene's themselves — rather than institutions — evaluate this 'idealising' relationship between environment and class aspiration, everyday pursuit of moral self-hood responding to the market's incitement to autonomy.

In interviews with over thirty first-time "affordable" gated community homeowners and participant observation with the daily travails of seven men over eleven months, owners evoke international migration to frame desert frontier relocation as a fundamental shift in relational commitments. Methods are dialogical, mobilising my own role as a migrant-researcher to prompt comparative discussion. Amidst the 2011–2013 revolutionary period the word "freedom" (*hurriya*) was ubiquitous in media, political, and cafe discourse. This ethnography revolves around a central question: "did buying a home and relocating to Haram City give you more freedom?" Many qualified the definition of freedom itself, so intimately linked to both autonomy and property in liberal discourse,

and subsequently evaluated the inner city, expectations for a new life, and the promise of private urbanism through the relationship between property, morality, and self-realisation. Language for describing an incitement to autonomy often appeals to a spectrum of relational self-hoods: negative "self-interest" is distinguished from positive "self-respect" and "self-management." Tracing the evolution of resident discourse on relational commitments, sections follow the chronology of frontier migration from aspirations, to realisations, and to frustrations with suburban self-hood.

Middle-class morality and self-hood

Across the Global South, the term "middle class" has a complex and shifting history. It is not a category "out there," readily quantifiable through institutional demographics and concrete citizenship criteria (Davis, 2010, p. 241). Rather, 'middle-classness' can be defined as a "moral and ethical claim to being a specific kind of person…covering many income and wealth categories" (Srivastava, 2012, p. 57). Amidst Egypt's extended neoliberal turn and shifting alliances between small-scale entrepreneurs and the state (Denis, 2006; Elyachar, 2005; Mitchell, 2002), the middle class is a category of self-definition and subjectivity between "the poor" and "the elite," coherent only in as far as aspirations, frustrations, and consumption find a common normative discourse inter-referencing with postcolonial modernities (C. Jones, 2012; Lawson, 2012; Roy, 2012).

Scholarship on Egypt's middle class focuses on three broad categories of self-identification. A first group is grounded in the vast expansion of public sector jobs under the presidency of Gamal Abdel Nasser (1956–1970). This group sustains a strong sense of belonging to modernist state culture, often enrols at state universities that may prove inadequate for private sector work, and resorts to poorly paid government jobs while supplementing income part-time (Ryzova, 2014; Schielke, 2012, p. 27). A second group,

sometimes identifying as "new" middle class, projects globalised cultural references and standards of living, is educated in private English language schools, and works as medium scale entrepreneurs or in large multinational companies (de Koning, 2009; Peterson, 2011). Often benefiting from economic liberalisation in the 1970s and 1980s, there is considerable overlap with the former category as families moved from public to private sectors. As de Koning (2009) and Fernandes (2004) show, however, this "new" middle class, with its cosmopolitan tastes and aspirations, often builds its class position by distinction from those lacking access to "first world normality." The lines between distinctions, of course, are somewhat fluid, and it is not uncommon for someone with an "old" middle class background to identify with tastes and aspirations of a "new" middle class.

This presents a final category, a "lower-middle class" that does not institutionally qualify as poor, generating income above the bottom quintile distribution through a variety of improvised urban enterprises. Without access to the symbols, education, and consumption of either established state bureaucracy or 'new' cosmopolitans, many retain the cultural and linguistic markers of popular inner city quarters. This is Haram City's target market, aspiring to enter either "old" or "new" lifestyles but deeply reliant on neighbourhood relationships for economic mobility. It is also a group regularly pursuing transformation in cultural frames and moral claims of class reference by emigration and return. Remittances and savings are generally invested in property, and a significant minority of Haram City owners have done just that. Like for the majority, with affordable mortgages or paying by instalment, Haram City offers an unprecedented short-cut to established middle-class references — signalling gated prestige, freedom from judgment within, and the ability to afford luxuries such as food delivery and a private car commute.

In a recent meditation on Egypt's middle classes amidst a post-revolution

redoubling of liberal-authoritarian economic restructuring, Talal Asad observes that the merging of ideas of freedom of the individual with that of the free market is increasingly prevalent in broader demographics (2015). Citing numerous Egyptian commentators perceiving widespread fragmentation of moral order, he evidences a sense that traditional social commitments are being exponentially undermined as those who depend on them for survival begin to look to the market instead. While reminding that families and associations persist, he suggests that it is precisely an ideals of the autonomous self that commentators allude to as the middle class expands from below, a "liberal incitement" creating considerable tension between individualist and relational aspirational routes. He calls for research to trace evolving discourse on "the increasing subjectivisation of morality — that is to say, the increasing shift of moral authority to the 'conscience' of the autonomous individual" (Asad, 2015). Priced for this same lower-middle class, Haram City offers "affordable" property as moral promise: the ability to individually legislate one's transcendental principles through the 'prestige' of clear separation between neighbours.

However, in studying Egypt's aspirational middle-class buying into the incitement to autonomy, the term "autonomy" itself may not adequately explain the lived experience of subjective self-fashioning. In her ethnography of women's mosque movements in Cairo, Saba Mahmood explicitly distances emic notions of freedom from a reported sense of autonomy. Critiquing certain feminist stances on autonomy — where in order to be free, actions must be the result of one's "own will" rather than custom or tradition — as a principle that delimits necessary conditions for an ethics of freedom, she stresses the active choices of Egyptian women on a pious path as much as they may circumscribe individual action (Mahmood, 2012, p. 11). Beyond poststructuralist critiques of autonomy as a performance of the rational lending universal authority to political-economic projects, Mahmood delinks *self-realisation* from autonomous will as a broader

virtue, accounting for how agency not only resists or subordinates as subjectivisation (Butler, 1997; Foucault, 1982), but also "the multiple ways in which [agency] *inhabits* norms" (Mahmood, 2012, p. 15).

Therefore, in order to evaluate Asad's commentary on an expanding middle class's social fragmentation through a Mahmoodian critique of 'autonomy' as inaccurate for how Cairene's discuss agency, the more flexible concept of self-realisation is paramount. Indeed, in dialogue with young men in Egypt's Nile Delta region, Schielke evidences that "self-realization" (*takwin an-nafs*, or 'self-fashioning,' "expressed in the aim of finding wealth and a place in life and, less outspokenly, of widening one's horizon of experience") is a social norm itself, one of many "normative registers" through which participants categorise moral avenues of agency, or freedom (2009, p. 167).[7] Numerous other recent ethnographies on the complex nature of the understanding of freedom, as well as moral practice more broadly, similarly interpret a dialogical relationship between multiple parallel or temporary "teleologies of the subject" (Foucault, 1990; Gregg, 2007; Meijl, 2006 in Schielke, 2009, p. 165). Framing people's grappling with moral choice amidst Asad's "subjective self-fashioning" while emphasising such normative registers accounts for the observation that, while moral action often strives for coherence, choice is often lived inconsistently, situationally, and collectively (Schielke, 2009, p. 166). Applied to potent global imaginaries around property, focus on self-realisation accommodates entangled descriptions of moral self-hood as they navigate the relationship between becoming middle class together and living in a separative environment.

[7] Schielke's other normative registers, not incommensurable or necessarily distinct, include religion, respect, good character, family, social justice/rights, and love.

Frontier dreams as class migration

Haram City is located in 6th of October City 34km west of central Cairo. Planned in 1979 by Anwar Sadat, 'October,' as it is known colloquially, is Egypt's first of many desert satellite cities across the Nile's desert fringes. As planner David Sims shows, twentieth-century Egyptian technocrats perennially propose such "desert dreams," obsessing over the recuperation of 90% of Egypt that is barren desert (2015). This enduring "topological imperative" for governance sustains populist developmentalism, with rulers announcing grossly inflated megaproject targets to much fanfare, deflecting attention from obstinate inner city problems, and only partially realising goals while shifting public resources to elites (Sims, 2015, p. xix). During the second half of the twentieth century Egypt led the world in new city construction with fourteen settlements built from scratch. Timothy Mitchell similarly attributes such high modernist, birds-eye-view government strategies to a generalised assumption that the Nile basin is dangerously overpopulated amidst a deluge of rural-urban migration (2002). Statistics reveal that such rhetoric is false. Egypt currently has one of the lowest rates of rural-urban migration in the Global South, falling since the 1970s to an 8% ratio of migrant/total working age population (Sims, 2015, p. xx). For comparison, rates in Morocco are 35% and in India as high as 60%. Furthermore, Egypt's population growth rate has decreased from 2.28% in 1980–1985 and is predicted to peak at .69% in 2045–2050 (UN-ESCWA, 2015).

Beyond this "topological imperative" and its political utility, much satellite city construction mirrored World Bank promoted structural adjustment policies under Anwar Sadat's economic *infitah* ('opening') (Mitchell, 2002). Following the 1973 Arab-Israeli 'October' War, Sadat's pivotal October Working Paper proposed new cities as part of a "comprehensive civilisational strategy" towards a "new map of Egypt" (Sadat, 1974, Footnote 6, 1977 in Wahdan, 2013, p. 36). The overwhelming majority of housing designs subsequently aimed to shift spatial relationships between neighbours towards

small, car reliant, nuclear families (Wahdan, 2013). As Sims states, this planning ethos at a nexus between altering economics and citizenship endures, cultural engineering by low-density homeownership to "nurture new generations of modern Egyptians, free from the backward-ness and apathy found in the Valley" (2015, p. 122).

In 2007 Orascom Housing Communities (OHC, *Orascom li-al-Isakan al-Ta'auni*, lit. 'Orascom Cooperative Housing') opened Haram City as a cornerstone of Hosni Mubarak's final million home desert dream, the National Housing Program (NHP, *Iskan Mubarak,* 2005–2012). As Egypt's first public-private partnership low-income housing, OHC purchased 4.8 million m² of state land at a negligible price of LE10.7/m² (£1.7 in January 2006) in exchange for private provision of nearly all services and infrastructure. OHC is a subsidiary of Orascom Development, with minority shares owned by US real estate investment trusts (REITs) Equity International and Blue Ridge Capital, and Mexican housing operator HOMEX. The development is regularly depicted as directly tackling Cairo's 'housing crisis,' claims of explosive unsustainable growth generally coupled with images of *'ashwa'iyat* (slums, lit. 'haphazard' or 'random,'). While continuing the logic of topological imperatives, this narrative is also a myth: with estimated 30% vacancy rates throughout Egypt and 60% in desert new towns, 'crisis' has little to do with housing stock and more with a structural mismatch between supply and demand (Al-Araby al-Jadeed, 2015 in Sims, 2015, p. 150).

Haram City's units were designed by Mamdouh Hamza, one of Egypt's most prominent engineers and a household name on the fringes of national politics.[8] Hamza once showed me his original drawings: a cross between Orange County, California suburban street plans and domed postmodern "Egyptian vernacular" style, reproducing 1960s architect Hassan Fathy's own reproduction of Nubian dwellings. In the tradition

[8] Hamza briefly gained renewed notoriety for organising food, loudspeakers, blankets, tents, and waste collection trucks for activists in Tahrir Square in 2011 (Jadaliyya & Ahram Online, 2011; Tolan, 2011).

of grand civilisational strategies, Hamza's plans were originally intended for his own mega proposal: a million square meter desert conquest running from Cairo to Alexandria. Lacking investors but eager to test plans, Hamza accepted contracts for OHC's 300,000 person "fully integrated" vision. From conception, this plan was priced for a vanguard lower-middle class, with affordability criteria approximating those set by World Bank sponsored mortgages requiring proof of regular employment.

When OHC's on site management speaks of potential customers' dreams they often state that these are dreams for Egypt itself, albeit unattainable within the spaces people already know. Tarek, Haram City's customer services manager and effectively its private mayor, describes himself as a "dream manager," directing an office staff of six and working six days a week to personally address any complaints. Explaining how he sustains such individualised commitment, he cites a degree in Tourism Management and twelve–years working in hotels that allows him "to realise the psychology of people":

> T: There are many [kinds of] people in Egyptian society that I haven't had a lot of contact with. Instead, I've made contact with foreigners. So I started to use my experience from the hospitality field to deal with [the housing] field. All [Haram City residents] have dreams and imagination … I have to deal with all of them [to know] how they dream for the city to be nice, clean, and more developed. Above all, I have to come down and deal with the psychology of a person.
> N: What is the dream?
> T: First, these kinds of people dream of *owning* a flat. Now they have it. Second, they dream of having [their own] garden. Now they have it. Third, they dream of living in a city trying to be green, trying to reuse sewage water, trying to always be *clean* … You bought this unit because you dream of living in a closed community, a better community, and we have to provide it … They have never seen such a thing.

The demographic Tarek refers to represents a company definition of low-income as earning below LE2,500 (£250) per month for couples and LE1,750 (£175) for singles, primarily targeting newlyweds or late-youth men needing homes as condition for finding a spouse. Theoretically enforced by the Ministry of Housing, these limits appear low but are just above the minimum total income necessary to afford monthly instalments and

prohibitive for the irregularly employed. Many residents effectively earn more than limits by, for example, not disclosing family financial assistance. For first-time "affordable" buyers, distance — over an hour from downtown Cairo in traffic — is often celebrated as a consumption based class signifier. Ahmed, a young activist visiting from downtown to chat in a Haram City cafe, for example felt an uncanny presence in adjacent patrons, coming from a similar economic background as his own but appearing simultaneously provincial and cosmopolitan:

> Like those two guys who are sitting here at those tables. They are escapees. They are like me but want to be as far away from Cairo as possible. They've blocked Cairo: "now we are here in Haram City, and we don't care. We don't want anything to do with Cairo or those people in it." These people don't care.

From his perspective, this was the first city for the *"hizb al-kanaba"* (lit. 'The Couch Party'), an expression invented by revolutionaries to describe a middle-class politics at the nexus between home-improvement consumption, uncompromising prioritisation of stability for production, and leisurely indulgence in propagandistic television far from Tahrir Square (see Klaus 2014; Aziz 2012). Looking over my shoulder at two men discussing new shoes, Ahmed establishes that they are waiting out the revolution while protecting modest income gains. "You know this revolution was ruined because of these middle-class people," he concludes — rather than bringing the country into the future by fixing its leaks, they abandon ship and criticise from desert city rafts.

As a conglomerate with a multinational portfolio of elite resorts, the Orascom brand holds cachet as having reliable "international" standards reflective of the global consumer. Ahmed sees the desire for branded distance as one for a place closer to the future, existing in parallel to, but also undermining, centralised revolutionary struggle in Tahrir Square, both places where "temporal problems could be addressed with the spatial solution" (Mains, 2007, p. 660). It is a frontier condition reminiscent of other middle-

class urban developments at borderlands, such as in Rihan Yeh's ethnography of Tijuana, where the "middleness of the middle class" is revealed with particular clarity as a "delicately negotiated suspension between the national and the foreign, past and future, backwardness and modernity" (2012, p. 190). Accordingly, when Tarek describes customer "psychology," his tourism background, and "dream management," he is speaking about aspirational middle-class attenuations to the "privilege and burden in mediating modernity that seems to always come from 'outside'" (Liechty, 2003, pp. 61–86; in Yeh, 2012, p. 190). What registers to visitors as sitting awkwardly between two worlds is about more than consumption signifiers. What was planned as a civilisational frontier is managed in the day-to-day on the premise that customers seek orderly homes to transcend ways of thinking and being together, to create opportunity free from the present beyond walls.

Motivations: autonomy as self-respect

Over a cumulative eleven months subletting a unit in the very centre of Haram City's two square kilometre grid of uniform houses, most research involved single men between their late-twenties and mid-forties. This focus derives from solicitations by people living alone to share their homeownership with new guests and grew to incorporate thirty recent homeowners hoping that a suburban move would help secure marriage. Rapports developed into a calendar of reunions scheduled around football matches, commutes, and prolonged assistance with homeowners' hobbies, such as sculpting, chatting with foreigners on Facebook, home improvement, gardening, or backgammon. A vast majority of dialogue about life trajectories took place on the *hizb*, or couch, often still covered in a protective plastic wrapper. In the background, a television invariably flickered images of the latest demonstrations, political detours, or urban mundanities regarding traffic and power outages. As images glowing the room

intermittently grew too pronounced to ignore, conversation arched back to the haze of inner Cairo and "dreams" impeded there within. Looking from the outside, these young men independently frame motivations for relocation through a similar set of everyday concerns, presented to the foreign interlocutor as representative of a contemporary Egypt.

As Schielke notes, colloquial Egyptian use of the word 'dream' *(hilm*) is almost synonymous with the word 'aspiration.' It is the tangible plotting of plans, imagining consumption, strolling to encounter a potential partner, arranging harmonious family relations, and framing the good life 'there' or 'then' — not "only something that happens inside one's head…[but] as something to pursue rais[ing] the question of realization" (2015, p. 152). The logic of imagination may act in pernicious ways, though, and actual goals attained may differ greatly from those projected, as is frequently the case following migration (de Boeck, 2012; Mains, 2007). One recent homeowner, Sherif, a bachelor in his late forties, was raised in a poorer area of Giza not far from the prosperous Dokki neighbourhood, and recently left a job as a bank teller. He now makes a living raising Labradors in his walled garden and selling them online. The right dog can sell for as much as LE200–1000 (£20–100) in more elite gated communities nearby, such as Dreamland, and the market for mutts with Haram City residents citing safety concerns was growing. Once while observing new neighbours move in and wondering whether they'd become clients, Sherif speculated on what Haram City represents to newcomers:

> Many [residents] have worked in Saudi Arabia or Dubai and are trying to emigrate to the US, Australia, or Canada. They want to travel to start a new life from scratch. [But] many others feel that if we plan for it, if we have good planners, we should travel inside Egypt [instead]. An *internal emigration* … starting fresh, new cities, new projects, a new life.

Many homeowners make reference to international trajectories when explaining their move to the suburbs, soliciting stories or rumours from friends who have lived abroad

for comparison with the gated community. When detailing expectations for the growing community from this point of view, Sherif hopes for a gradual amelioration in "the quality and level of people" rising "according to prices." He fears nuisance and negligence from new neighbours unaccustomed to the "dream," violations, for example, of a quest towards an ideal privacy: "I want [to be able [to] sleep! You can't have a workshop, a mechanic, and a cafe under your house." He defines nuisance as part of a broader trouble of conscience, a condition of generalised negligence directly related to his belief that, "If you ask any Egyptian about something he never heard about, he will answer as if he knows everything, as if he is an expert about it." Sensing my doubt, he challenges, "Ask most Egyptians for directions," asserting that the respondent would rather answer incorrectly than admit ignorance. Shifting to "direction" as a metaphor and speaking of Egyptians in the third person, he believes that the reliability of *any* assistance has become fundamentally ambiguous and everyone ends up "lost":

> S: Time is nothing for them.
> N: What do you mean?
> S: [Egyptians] don't evaluate time. Because I am wasting your time [by pretending to know something]. [They] are not responsible. When you ask me directions, and I don't know or am uncertain, it saves you time and effort to just say, "Excuse me, I'm not from this area. You should go ask in this shop. He lives here and can tell you better than I can. I'm sorry." Done! You're a responsible man. You can thank me for this. But if I say, "Ah, go there!" thinking, "I might try, maybe it's right or maybe it's wrong," then you end up going in circles. The [person] is not evaluating time as a treasure. In everything, if you are a fair man you have to put yourself in another's chair.
> N: Is it the same with privacy? Putting yourself in another's chair?
> S: Yes. Self-respect (*yahtarim nafsuh*).
> N: To respect yourself is to respect someone else?
> S: It is to respect another's time, respect his privacy, respect everything.

When discussing neighbourly assistance for unknown arrivals, four other homeowners shared similar anecdotes, and when shared by me to others, such as to Mahmoud, many concurred. Mahmoud's parents acquired his house as an investment hoping that he would raise a family. At twenty-nine and educated in sociology at Cairo University, he

spends most time alone at home downloading movies. His home is sparsely furnished, and he lives on a small stipend from his parents, supplemented by work at a newspaper. When explaining dreams for Haram City, he first relates motivations for leaving downtown Cairo's activist circles to problems of denial and respect:

> "Go straight, then right, then left, and you will get there" Ha! I'll tell you something: there is a theory called 'the bottom of the pyramid theory.' Do you know it? There is no group that wants to admit being the bottom. Everyone wants people lower than them. We are not a good country. We are not in a good situation. We don't have good communication. We are not giants, not geniuses. [Egyptians] are very, very, very normal people and we have a lot of mistakes, troubles, and problems which make us losers … If we can admit it, we can succeed to change it. If we don't admit it, we'll never change.

Asserting that public denial and public space are inseparable, he relates forced directionless-ness to political disorientation by endemic conspiratorial thought:

> When someone says, "there's a universal conspiracy against Egypt," I answer, "Is this because we are the greatest country?" He replies, "Yes." So [I ask if] we have the greatest economy? "No." The greatest army? "No." The greatest people? "No." The greatest scientists? "No" … How can you tell people that they are losers? It's not easy. Especially if they don't have the will or way to change … To change anything, you must admit to everyone "I'm a loser" … "I'm a loser because I don't have a good education." But instead [they say], "No, I have a Masters and a PhD!" But Masters and PhDs from Egyptian universities are worthless … You can't imagine how much it hurts. I don't know why they insist on going the wrong direction. Even if there is a right way, then [Egyptians] will create a wrong way to destroy [it]. [9]

Amidst Egypt's 2012–2014 tumultuous political transformations, partisanship and pessimism over social commitment were common topics, particularly for youth. For first-time homeowners, though, aspirations for *collective* self-respect directly frame the material fulfilment of a frontier community. Where respect for time is defined as intrinsic to respect for others, nuisance and negligence self-perpetuate by forcing others to

[9] Mahmoud's invocation of conspiracy as symptom and cause of self-interested public disarray evokes research showing high correlation between belief in and willingness to commit conspiracy (Douglas, K. M. & Sutton, R. M., 2011).

conform in a race to the bottom. Accordingly, vigorous appeals to self-respect are directed to new arrivals, manifesting in public arguments over placement of laundry or parking. But in shouting to assert self-respect, an obvious contradiction emanates in bursts to all neighbours involved, and the fragility of its logic is exposed.

Numerous ethnographies have explored the impulse to migrate in terms of boredom, the perception of an expanded and slowed time (Gaibazzi, 2012; Mains, 2007; Masquelier, 2013; Schielke, 2008). However, here aspirations are hindered by an acceleration of time. Aspirational lower-middle-class "constraints" (*quyud*) are described in broad affective and ethical terms derived from the speed and frenzy of self-interest, rather than purely material or interfamilial social limits (cf. Schielke, 2009, 173). Selfishly wasted time flies by, disrupting social commitments that buttress the formation of one's trajectory. This echoes with Talal Asad's proposition that in new middle-class Egypt "emphasis on the sovereign consumer … disrupts the time necessary for cultivating trust that goes beyond the interests of the individual" (2015). Yet, rather than emphasising consumption, these residents distinguish between oppositional framings of collective self-hood: self-interest opposes self-respect, disrupting time-based relationships of care, a precondition for finding 'direction' towards a fulfilling future.

In mediating conflicts between newcomers with reference to attitudes that should be left behind, homeowners assert normative codes of conduct that parse between these two collective self-hoods. As Samir, a twenty-five year old tourism student living alone in Haram City during term, once observed over a backgammon match: self-respect is fundamentally an issue of "etiquette — don't push people in the street … if I push, someone will fight me." As ethicist Sarah Buss argues, the distinction between etiquette and ethics has long been overstated in post-enlightenment thought, instead seeing moral commensurability where "to treat someone 'with respect' is to treat her in a way that acknowledges her intrinsic value, or 'dignity'," and to acknowledge intrinsic value is to

evaluate based on what someone *is* rather than what someone *does*, necessary for "accommodating our ends to the ends of others" (1999, pp. 796-797). As Asad also notes, in non-secular modern Islamic ethics "the line between morality and manners (a crucial distinction for the worldly critic) is obscured and the space of choice narrowed" (2009, p. 36).

A simultaneity permeates depictions of neoliberal reform in a national imagination where pursuing a "world class aura" is contingent on an "unmistakable subtext of exclusivity and exclusion" (de Koning, 2009, p. 43). Dreams of 'development' for both landscape and self are "ways of living at home abroad or abroad at home — ways of inhabiting multiple places at once, of being different beings simultaneously, of seeing the larger picture stereoscopically with the smaller" (Pollock, 2002, p. 11; in Schielke, 2015, p. 153). "Internal emigration" to Haram City is a paradox that congeals aspirations between privatised modernity and nostalgias of Egyptian conviviality, converging on a new landscape as both domestic in the future and the foreign now. For homeowners, over time a tension builds: restoration of the rupture between etiquette and self-realisation, replacing self-interest with self-respect, is pursued by clearly constructed boundaries between people, by building social commitments *through* exclusionary property rights.

Realisations: autonomy as self-management

When exhausted by discussion over motivations behind leaving the inner city, respite is found by muting the television and moving to conversation on self-realising in one's present home and community. Here the topic of freedoms through privacy frequently arises, and property is foregrounded for its ability to assert negative liberties, freedoms *from*, as an essential precondition for positive liberties, freedoms *to*. For example, another frequent fellow tea-drinker, Hossam, argues that to control one's own

future one must be able to manage public interpretation of one's self. Hossam is a single man in his mid-forties who, after visiting Europe over a decade working on container ships, recently spent savings on a home in Haram City and is employed by its waste processing company. Sitting at a small café, he explains, using "running" as a metaphor for forward-moving agency, "I can do many things here in Haram City that I cannot do in my city … As we say: 'In a city where no one knows you, undress and run [be free] through it' (*al-balad illi mahadish yi'rafak fiha, shalah wa igri fiha*)." He argues that when the pressures of localised social networks disappear, replaced by garden walls providing space, constraints such as shame diminish and freedom to accelerate along one's trajectory grows. He links this to another generalisation about national identity: "Egyptians don't like to work for others. We all want to be bosses of ourselves (*ra'is nafsak*)." As example he cites the number of housing brokers flocking to Haram City: "all you need is a telephone, your mind, good relations, and then you collect money." Relative anonymity by property, he suggests, presents an interpersonal clean slate that might allow "good" rules of conduct, including economic conduct, to flourish freely.

Being *ra'is nafsak* — ruler or boss of your self — seems to evoke liberal constructions of autonomy as property in the self. Yet, a prerequisite anonymity speaks to conditions within social ties that burden self-realisation. It is not the act of homeownership that is itself symbolically and practically constitutive of self-ownership (as described by Perin 1977 in US suburbs, for example), but the protection of dislocation — shedding debilitating networks "in a city where no one knows you" — for control over recuperating profitable modes of mutuality to move forward. To be "boss" of one's self through controlled anonymity orients agency within norms of management over one's surroundings and self, rather than ownership itself. Like breaking a damaged bone to reset it, he maps this intuition onto the idea that Haram City's clear streets and walls responsibalise minds, encouraging self-managed lives instead of self-interested

materialism, offering that downtown *ra'is nafsak* has shifted direction: "[there] *ra'is nafsak* means all people do zig-zag zig-zag — not strait, not honest. Why? Because you are not honest either. Everybody just cares about himself. This feeling is not good." This sense of being "boss of yourself" in a 'straight' collective fashion, rather than atomising and colliding, as means for attaining aspirations is best captured by Henri Lefebvre's emphasis on citizen's *autogestion* ('self-management') as an ethical ideal constitutive of an emancipatory right to the city (2003). As elaborated by Purcell, Lefebvre posits, "The struggle to manage our own affairs for ourselves … must necessarily involve struggle by urban inhabitants to manage the production of urban space" (2013).[10]

Accordingly, for Hossam it is not only separative property, but propriety — signalling norms of respectability by performing the "straightness" of property in public — that distinguishes the inner city from "expectations of modernity" within Haram City (Ferguson, 1999; J. L. Jones, 2010). Many describe a sense of relief in extending, painting, perforating, ironworking, or planting on garden walls, controlling intrusion while cultivating a visual culture of self-management. In these practices privacy is presented as a sub-component of "safety." Gamal, a friend of Mahmoud who migrated to Germany in his twenties only to be deported, summarises this relationship:

> Egypt is not Europe. When I was in Germany I noticed that they don't have fences, that their gardens are open. Here you are in danger of a little boy tearing down your plants, so we make walls. [Walls] help you be comfortable that you don't get hurt [emotionally] (*'ashan matitgirihsh*) knowing that someone can see you from outside.

Elision between a petulant boy "zig-zagging" over plants and physical harm by visibility evokes more than concerns with modesty by total privacy. As Osama — thirty-four, son of a shop owner, Vodafone call centre employee, and sculptor — observes: "we are all

[10] Fittingly, the Arabic word for the Italian *gestione* ('management' or 'administrations'), *'idara,* also means 'stewardship' and derives from the root *dar*, meaning 'home,' 'soil,' or 'homeland.' The related word *daar* (دار) translates to 'wandering' or 'new direction.'

seeking privacy." He defines privacy as "six meter walls…a Jeep Cherokee with a driver and [tinted] glass … a bubble." However, he is happy that Haram City is not completely separative — some people can still see if he is home. Upon arrival Osama felt isolated and strives for something between "bubble" and "out there," where "in just one street you can say hello to two hundred people." He perforates his garden wall accordingly, sharing techniques for making openings with neighbours — a practice "for safety" because it allows him to fine-tune flows of conviviality.

Neighbourhood talk on suitable degrees of anonymity, strait walls and relationships, aims to establish norms of freedom by codifying self-management. It challenges sensations of helplessness associated with what Jeffrey & Dyson call "zigzag capitalism" — everyday entrepreneurialism amidst economic restructuring across the Global South that eschews regulated business for the constant hustle of opportunism or making do — Hossam's "bad *ra'is nifsak*" (Jeffrey and Dyson, 2013; Newell, 2012; Jeffrey, 2010). For example as Jones shows, youth in Zimbabwe use the term *kukiya-kiya*, or *debroullier*, glossed as "zig-zag," to express a "necessary" hustle albeit "mired in the short-term" (2010, p. 298). As in Haram City homeowners' lamentations, participants in these studies share the spatial metaphor of 'straightness' to criticise "lack in 'direction'" and loss of time from self-interest (J. L. Jones, 2010, p. 298). Similarly, Jones and Mbembe & Roitman show that social instability rooted in the "profoundly provisional and revisable character [of contemporary economic expectations]" is the source of deep moral uncertainty (2010; Mbembe & Roitman, 1995, p. 342). For Hossam, Gamal, and Osama, however, asserting self-management does not preclude entrepreneurialism, 'making-do,' or even hustling. It expresses a recuperation of moral agency in making-do — reclaiming "being the boss of yourself" from "zig-zag" — when tempered by norms of "safe," self-managed, conviviality.

Spatial metaphors such as "straightness" have also long been instrumental in legal

and ethical language, concepts bound in "interiors, exteriors, and boundaries" (Hamilton, 2002, p. 122). Often they mobilise static conceptions of space that deny the lively connections and heterogeneity in property relations (Blomley, 2007, p. 648), enacting an "art of separation" (Walzer, 1984, p. 314) that extends to social realms. The public/private space dichotomy for example has long been disputed for problematic mappings onto legal/illegal binaries (Varley, 2002), its self-reinforcing attributes (Lacey, 1998, p. 71), and for emphasis that property claims exclusively fulfil rational individualistic ends rather than contingencies on cooperation or public acknowledgement (Benhabib, 1992; Rose, 2007). Indeed, the concepts 'property' (from *proprius,* meaning 'own') and 'propriety' (signification of conformity to that which is proper) share more than etymology; they are deeply entangled socio-legal functions (Blomley, 2007). For example, in an ethnography in North American suburbs on garden maintenance practices delineating spheres of privacy — rituals soliciting public acknowledgement of proper maintenance — Blomley observes that while privacy seems to "invoke feelings of control, personal pleasure and caprice, and autonomy … [Property] requires a sustained iterative audience … a 'doing' rather than a static condition" (2007, p. 650). For many in Haram City, rather than simply pursuing a logic of autonomous "bubbles" in the materiality of land itself, dialogue on propriety (i.e. wall modifications) celebrates the 'doing' of property. Communicative work delineating norms to "run free" in "safety," self-realising by self-management, are both means and ends.

Practices 'doing' property by establishing norm of anonymity are also often contentious. As OHC's Tarek describes official wall regulations: "when you buy the flat, you own the land underneath it. But I am the owner of the rest of the land … the streets and the services … and so I am owner of your garden." Contractually, homeowners hold personal gardens under usufruct, or use rights permitting regulated construction, such as that permanent wall structures remain below seventy-five centimetres. For Tarek this is

the exact margin that allows homeowners to self-manage "safety" while allowing OHC to monitor properties "for the safety of neighbours." Tarek sees this dual visibility as necessary but also vexing homeowner relationships: "[residents] feel more independence here [so] they also interfere their noses into others' lives even more. " Sherif makes a similar observation: "More space is more privacy, a new life … [But] a lot of neighbours don't know you and this is a problem … They want to know everything about you, but you can't know anything about them." Even Sherif, who complains about nosy neighbours when hosting guests, reveals that he "suffers" from being "a good watcher sometimes." Where everyone is boss of himself, he notes, everyone also has "different measurements" for 'doing' property and privacy. He hopes that by gradually getting to know neighbours, norms for managed anonymity may converge.

Frustrations: autonomy as illusion

Many settled into suburban lives for over a year express concern with growing tension over anonymity, centring on the coherence of moral norms for respect and management. Gradually, conversations increasingly focused on rumours about unknown neighbours. Nine months after meeting Mahmoud, he changed tone on the importance of privacy. Whereas Haram City used to offer escape from self-interest, it now represented a distillation of society's fringes: "[Haram City is] somehow an example of all Egypt. Baha'i, Shi'a, Sufis, Christians, Atheists, Communists, the poor, the less poor, the middle class, some high class … Prostitutes and Islamist radicals living next door." Anonymity, he suggests, attracts, shelters, and distils the true plurality of religious, political, and social affiliation excluded from dominant nationalist self-representations. Despite controls on who may buy property, Mahmoud suspects that anyone can, resulting in "not a legal place":

> [If] you are not legal enough to a buy a place elsewhere because you are running away from jail or something, or if you work with drugs or prostitution, you just go to the office, ask for a place, and they just check your money. No questions asked.

He alleges that OHC employees accept personal payment for homes, intentionally inflating the housing market. Property purchased for and by anonymity comes with a catch: "After, when [OHC] asks you to do something for their security [company], you help, and they pay you. So day after day, [Haram City] becomes a gangster's paradise."

Some perception that this "illegal place" caters to "illegal people" is corroborated by news and long-term residence but in conflicting ways, mirroring complex aspirations for recalibrated knowability by anonymity. Following the August 2013 Rabaa al-Adawiya massacre of seven hundred Muslim Brotherhood supporters, for example, anxieties spread that many had found refuge in Haram City, and police raided homes allegedly used as weapons depots (Manfy, 2014). Yet, weeks later at Haram City's gym self-professed Muslim Brothers openly discussed recent bombings with mid-ranking military officers while spotting each other on a bench press — an improbable sight amidst virulent 'war on terror' state rhetoric. Similarly, despite government imposed citizenship rules for home purchase, several hundred Syrian refugees live and work in Haram City, reporting that the gated city affordably protects from rampant persecution. More broadly, rumours flourished that new neighbours are escaped convicts, inventing new names, addresses, and lifestyles. A few acquaintances revealed themselves as functional *bodra* (heroin) addicts, emphasising that the protection of separative property amounts to protection of narcotics procurement. Another source of moral anxiety is the disproportionately high prevalence of sex workers, owning properties or keys to vacant homes and openly negotiating over shisha at a central café. As one customer noted, "There is not much police presence [so] a lot of [prostitutes] live in the area, away from their families and independent, because no one is watching … everyone minds his own

business," and another, "Sex is top quality here. This place is advanced in it. Why? Because here homes close their doors on secrets." Much discussion dances around whether unlit homes are owned by wealthy Cairenes as affordable but respectable retreats for mistresses. Others describe a perfect mix of affordability and safety for up-and-coming contraband delivery services, conveniently adjacent to numerous upscale gated communities.

Suspicions aside, there is little doubt that OHC permits private home broker services to flourish despite regulations banning home resale before five years. Many *simsar* (broker) offices start in affordable homes and specialise in buying properties, embellishing walls, and flipping for profit. These houses are particularly prone to rumour regarding clandestine, non-residential, or pay-per-night use. Stories of violent fights between broker bosses abound, including stories that one might defeat and incorporate competitors. As Gamal, a broker apprentice, summarised, in this open property market, "We are the ones who 'put deception in the bag'" (*ihna ili 'bayna "al-awanta gowa al-shanta"*). Reference to deception is also ubiquitous in homeowner campaigns protesting both construction defects and moral disarray. Facebook groups document faulty construction and aggregate reports of immorality under slogans such as "Haram City: City of Illusions" (*medinat al-awham*) (Zakaria, 2014). Posts describe "dreams" reduced to "illusions" as cracks grow within walls, between neighbours, and within norms of etiquette. A conversation between Mahmoud, his Haram City hairdresser, Sameh, and a group of friends waiting in turn summarises a sense that dislocation now propels illusionary, rather than aspirational, self-realisation:

> Because [residents] are from all over Egypt and no one knows anyone for the first time, everyone pretends. One man says, 'I'm a general.' Another responds, 'I'm a business man.' Another, 'I'm a police officer.' No one can tell who is lying because everyone is always lying … They ran away from something. I'm someone who wanted to move out of the Egyptian crowds, and I don't want to live with my family, so I ran away too. But others might work as a broker now, and act like

> high-class businessmen. Six months ago he may have just been a broker living gangster dreams. A year ago, he was a gangster and nothing more. Before that, he was a security man [helping police], and in 2009 he was just out of prison. And it's the same person … Everyone in Haram City has two great stories: a false story and a true story. Everyone. Even the kids.

Here, Hossam's proverbial freedom to "undress and run naked" becomes the freedom to also 'put on new clothes,' an officer's uniform or a businessman's suit, and separative self-fashioning forms the illusory self. Omar, a twenty-nine-year-old who entered Haram City in 2009 and tried to organise a collective farming initiative, frames this deception as the height of self-interest. He sees Haram City's self-promotion as a cooperative as "only an illusion by name," continuing, "People's way of thinking is very strange here. The problem is selfish people in this city only love themselves, lazy and selfish … [If you suggest collaboration] they treat you like you are a fool or are deceptively seeking your own interests." Referencing discovery and invention, he concludes that illusory relationships are a missed opportunities to realise by grounded and collective norms: "Do you know Isaac Newton, the great scientist? He was sitting, an apple fell on him, and he realised [gravity] because he took time to think. If he were in Egypt, he would have just eaten it." Similarly, Mahmoud sees an experiment in collapsed conviviality, linking illusion, property, propriety, and class:

> [Haram City] is bringing out the new middle class. The low class becomes Machiavellis, and does anything to get money. Once rich, you can tell others anything about yourself. They'll believe it because they see money in your house … This Haram City class has no code, no constitution, no law … It's the embryo of a new society.

As Simone observes, many city peripheries represent frontier jurisdictional conditions, under-coded and "implicitly conceded as a space available to a certain *métissage* (mixing)" (2007, 463). This "mélange of temporalities" (in this case development as both 'then, now' and 'there, here') allows for sporadic gatherings of marginal and incipient

phenomena, "a kind of fantasy space — a zone where the 'real' city is unleashed in all of its possibilities" (2007, pp. 465, 469). Anxieties stem from this ambiguity while resonating with some insecurities motivating dislocation by gated suburb in the North (Davis, 1990; Low, 2001) and in divided Southern cities such as Sao Paulo (Caldeira, 2000) and Johannesburg (Beal, 2002). In Egypt's first "affordable" gated community, however, instead of fears uniting against the outside, over time they gradually internalise. Perceptions of self-interested moral disarray, both "outside" and "inside" gates, strongly condemn self-interest, and Asad's "subjective self-fashioning" is perceived as an intractable rising tide. For many, the contradictions of "internal emigration" unravel, and the dream to find convivial opportunity in separative property, to float away from "illusion," turns inside out. As Asad concludes, in Egypt "the individual legislating his or her transcendental principles for him/herself stands in tension with the legislation of the sovereign state" (Asad 2015). When considering the frame of "internal emigration," Haram City registers this alienation through the eyes of its residents in strikingly literal ways.

Conclusion

This ethnography portrays a vicious circularity in Cairene responses to the incitement to liberal autonomy. Aspirational middle class critiques of autonomy as self-interested disorientation and illusion motivate flight to affordable gated suburbs, spaces premised on private administration of the separative self. In confronting this tension, residents distinguish between forums of self-realisation — self-respect and self-management — as collective endeavours and distinct from entrenched self-interest. What is seen as the only viable strategy for creating a space of collective self-realisation — the dream — is premised on an exclusionary reassertion of "lost" communal codes and principles. The inherent tension in finding a "safe" collectivity through exclusion is

manifested perniciously in struggles over managing visibility and respect between walls, unravelling when anonymity raises suspicions of the self-interest that drove migration to begin with.

Haram City explicitly markets the promise of self-realisation by order, space, and protection in suburban homeownership, evoking tropes of propertied autonomy described in ethnographies of gated spaces globally. Yet, building on broader conceptualisations of property as a series of persuasive acts and claims (Rose, 1994) suggesting that 'public' and 'private' speak less to clear realms than to manners of acting (Steinberger, 1999, p. 308), Blomley observes that in settings privileging atomised property relations "we act privately in public, and publicly in private" (Blomley, 2007, p. 650). From this stance, the proverb "in the city where no one knows you, undress and run [be free] through it" suggests that anonymity allows for the distinction between public and private to collapse to a degree, while also accommodating those who might have something to hide.

As Simmel observed, the power of the "stranger" lies in objectivity, or being "not radically committed to the unique ingredients and peculiar tendencies of the group … distance and nearness, indifference and involvement" (1950, p. 403). As precondition, though, the stranger need be "by nature no 'owner of soil'," both in terms of property and norms (a "life-substance which is fixed" in an "ideal point of the social-environment") (1950, p. 402). Inverting this proposition, in Haram City "owner[ship] of the soil" is offered as a precondition for a fluid social environment. Persistent moral unease with atomistic self-interest reflects a drive to escape subjective self-realisation (autonomy) through normatively *managed* self-realisation (autogestion). Both depend on degrees of anonymity, being a stranger in different ways. However, whereas the former state is seen as unbounded by lost norms, such as self-respect, it is hoped that the latter can be bound by propertied propriety — a process of codifying norms. As a land of

propertied strangers, Haram City is therefore located within the tension that anonymity may facilitate new measures of knowability, entangling communitarian and liberal expectations drawn from an ambivalent constellation of temporal and spatial references (Keith, 2005, p. 15).[11] Overall, as Sherif summarises on perceptions of immorality in Haram City: "we relocated to 6th of October now with a background from the past. Nothing changes here." Tarek shares this sentiment, sensing a magnification of surveillance while blaming regional identity: "Maybe [watching] happens more here than outside. You know why? Because this is a habit of Eastern people."

Desires to shift norms through urban development sit firmly within enduring patterns of state-led frontier construction and privatisation of state resources and services, a phenomenon that also seems likely to not change. Just ten days before the 25th January 2011 uprising, then housing minister Ahmed al-Maghrabi (rumoured to be worth about £8 billion) announced that 25% of all public investment would be directed at new towns (Armbrust, 2011; Sims, 2015, p. 147). In the last year alone, sometimes directly referencing Haram City, President Sisi has promised two improbably large housing projects, much of which is to be financed through variations on public-private partnership (state land exchanged for administrative privatisation): one million homes with Saudi Arabian company Arabtec called "For Egypt's Youth" (cost £25 billion), and a new Egyptian capital on a desert parcel the size of Singapore with twenty-one of forty-six districts for residential use (£32 billion) (Kingsley, 2015). Leaving aside that Egypt's current cash reserves are under £11 billion and that GDP was expected to grow by only 2% in 2014, these projects follow several other large housing schemes, including in 2012/2013 (only about 50,000 constructed) and in 2006/2007 under Hosni Mubarak

[11] In reasoning through the paradox of "internal emigration" tautology becomes necessary. Retaining the language of liberalism, one might describe the tension as such: the promise of (collectivist) autonomy to protect against (individualist) autonomy via exclusionary property rights simply recalibrates and formalises (individualist) autonomy.

(less than a third constructed) (Shawkat, 2014). Most proposals promise "affordability" and, increasingly, subsidised mortgages to incentivise relocation and the invention of new middle classes. The strong motivations and frustrations expressed within this pilot scheme may therefore be prescient.



Figure 25: B-area purchased home with modifications in progress



Figure 26: Elaborate renovation of B-area home



Figure 27: A B-area home with carefully maintained hedges in addition to walls and layered security and privacy infrastructure



Figure 28: Two B-area homes, remodelled, conjoined, and advertised by a private housing broker



Figure 29: An A-area resettled resident's home modifications amidst vacant flats

7 | Seeing like a City-State:

Upgrading Behaviour and Simulating Law in Egypt's Public-Private Partnership Gated Community

"I love my job. It's like my favourite game: CityVille on Facebook."
Customer Manager, Haram City

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Abstract: *This article provides an ethnographic account of governance strategies in Haram City, a privately managed and serviced "affordable housing" gated community in Cairo, Egypt's '6th of October' satellite suburb. Faced with resettlement of urban poor into a development sold to aspirational middle class homeowners, amidst ambiguous civic laws specifying conditions for private services and infrastructure provision, land-use planning, or property disputes, a company management team works to invent governance practices codifying behaviour and morality. While Haram City is the product of expert-driven "seeing like a state" masterplanning (Scott, 1998), the day-to-day resolution of community disputes over 'offensiveness' and 'reasonableness' in mundane city life, and corresponding access to or restriction from infrastructure and services, requires forms of interpersonal and subjective adjudication otherwise addressed through deliberative and revisable local planning law — what Valverde terms "seeing like a city" (2011). In this model project (UNDP, 2011) for promoting public-private partnership low-income cities and (social) development by (real estate) developers across the Global South (Cityscape Global, 2013; UNDP, 2011; World Bank, 2010), "seeing like a state" and "seeing like a city" conflate in authoritarian ways: managers simulate local law for behavioural "upgrading" and "training," justifying paternalist order through technical, traditional, and biological logics.*

Keywords: Governance, Property, Suburb, Gated community, Affordable housing, Authoritarianism, Behaviour, Paternalism, Urban law, Cairo

State approaches to managing the urban poor's behaviour have long been a central topic in studies on modernity in the city. From Scott's "seeing like the state" (1998) to Mitchell's "techno-politics" (2002), analysis of expert-driven and bird's-eye-view enumeration, mapping, and disciplining of society, particularly of the most vulnerable, remain critical aspects of persistently high modernist and neoliberal governance regimes. As both works show, laden within hierarchical articulations of power are enduring projects of normative moral delineation, allocating and extracting resources along ideological criteria of perceived behavioural eligibility. Osborne and Rose rescale and de-periodise this understanding, focusing on the city as an enduring project for diagraming human, conduct, subjectivity, and life itself in the name of government (1999). In the last decade alone, an abundance of grounded research demonstrates accelerated top-down and paternalist behavioural policy approaches often accelerated by or specific to urban neoliberal governmentality (Foucault, 1991; Harvey, 2005; N. S. Rose, 1999), from means-tested welfare (Soss, Fording, & Schram, 2011) to "penal-fare" (Wacquant, 2009), and from bio-developmentalist microfinance initiatives (Roy, 2010) to highly selective global evictions patterns (Simone, 2011).

Beyond centralised regimes presuming objective expertise in poverty management, behavioural evaluations of the urban poor are also naturalised through more everyday, plural, and intersubjective relations, to considerable institutional consequence. Working in Delhi, Asher Ghertner has documented shifts away from purely "techno-rationalist" instruments of poverty management to more prosaic and aesthetic notions of middle-class "civility" discourse between neighbours, adopted by the state to present slum evictions as democratic (Ghertner, 2008, 2011, 2012). Operating well within existing laws, such movements, for example, resuscitate 19th century colonial nuisance regulations. Nuisance is an especially fluid legal concept, benefiting from the more contestable edges of property law, and relying primarily on notions of "reasonableness"

over infringements to rights external to the boundaries of property (H. E. Smith, 2004, p. 967). Such subjective appeals also delineate moral-behavioural norms, founded in embedded notions of bourgeois interiority expanded into the public realm (Ghertner, 2012, p. 117), as well as abjection from an environmental gaze over "matters out of place" (Douglas, 1966; Sibley, 1995).

Such deliberative and local behavioural management is explicitly distinguished from Scott's "seeing like state" by criminologist and legal geographer Mariana Valverde as lasting projects of "seeing like a city" (2011). While commensurable with the bureaucratic imposition of norms, "seeing like a city" describes the maladjusted, contested, and improvisational ways that urban-specific legal instruments — property entitlements, zoning, licensing, nuisance, and policing — work to rationalise deeply embedded moral biases over time. At this rescaled vision of governance, where imposing 'objective' rules may falter, land-use planning diagrams and ranks nonquantifiable subjective 'offensiveness,' blurring public and private law. Here legacies of premodern planning law may mutate in unexpected ways to naturalise segregation — for example in racist zoning derived from 19th century US industrial public health concerns (P. Hall, 2002) or classist Anti-Social Behaviour Ordinances in UK public housing derived from 18th century Blackstonian preventative justice to protect highways. Such technologies of governance are not inherently tied to specific rationalities, where an array of inbuilt legal exceptions, conditions, and definitions raise the judge's pertinence above the Euclidian planner's (Valverde, 2011, p. 279). Whether planning law helps consolidate a vertically imposed means-tested developmental future or recodes neighbourhood moral norms within colonial era principles over time, therefore, "'seeing like a city,' in practice, consists of being able to flexibly use a variety of legal and regulatory tools of quite contradictory provenances and logics" (2011, p. 309).

When considering a rising trend in the Global South for state-subsidised suburban "cities from scratch" targeting lower and middle classes (C. W. Herbert & Murray, 2015) and the trend for infrastructure, security, and welfare in megaprojects to be privately governed (Graham & Marvin, 2002), how does the everyday delineation of what is and is not "out of place" occur? How do normative behavioural projects in masterplanning — "seeing like a state" — and the regulatory codification of local subjectivities — "seeing like a city" — intersect in the invention of private suburban spaces serving formerly public functions?

In Egypt, studies of local management of the urban poor have demonstrated a sharply hierarchical cultural politics, with a particularly strong behavioural emphasis. NGO's working in the poorest areas primarily emphasise a lack of "sanitary discipline" (Furniss, 2012, p. 162), state attitudes towards popular areas as a "nuisance" to justify "compulsory land acquisition" for undesignated "public use" (Deknatel, 2012, p. 117), and urban legislation both chasing and supporting encroachment by a "backwards" urban poor to justify "world class" urban restructuring (Bayat, 2012; Dorman, 2007; Ghannam, 2002; Khalil, 2014). Concurrent writing on the Egyptian government's desert conquest by "satellite cities" emphasises birds-eye-view planning, frontierist rhetoric of a "comprehensive civilisational strategy" for developing middle-class lifestyles, and a genealogy in structural adjustment policies from the 1980s (Sadat, 1977; in Wahdan, 2013, p. 36; see also Denis, 2006a; T. Mitchell, 2002; Sims, 2015). As non-elite new private cities emerge for aspirational middle-classes as well as relocation sites for the urban poor, grand scheme class politics are increasingly contested at the property line.

This paper recounts the mandate, practice, and naturalisation of governance techniques by the management team of Haram City, Egypt's first public-private partnership "affordable" gated community, in the satellite city of 6th of October, 34km West of Cairo. Supported by the World Bank, UNDP, and subsidised by the Egyptian

government as a case study for social good (UNDP, 2011; World Bank, 2013) but sold by its developer, Orascom Housing Communities (OHC), as a "fully integrated" "self-sufficient" community to the middle classes, Haram City's infrastructure and civic services are almost entirely privately owned. Managed onsite by a team of seven, with all urban initiatives, resident consultations, and decisions unilaterally taken by a lead "customer services manager," Haram City exemplifies trends towards ideologically driven state devolution of responsibilities (Swyngedouw, 2005) enabling authoritarian private governance (Ekers, Hamel, & Keil, 2015). While research on elite private governance emphasises shared secessionary goals coordinated by homeowners' associations (M. Davis, 1990; Low, 2003), there is need for research on emerging forms of order-making in gated communities targeting people most reliant on public goods and services, particularly in the Global South. Here, amidst state withdrawal from civic legal roles, as residents dispute the widening range of livelihoods within "affordability," questions over political distribution — who is entitled to what infrastructure, services, and protection from a company — foster a rearticulation of what is unreasonable, or indeed immoral, use, form, and behaviour for a new city.

While state planning creates the conditions for private jurisdiction over lower and middle-income groups, in order to detail *how* private governance from scratch "sees like a city," I give a procedural account of OHC's management work. Over an eleven month ethnography living with residents, participating in OHC's planning process, and regular interviews with the individual exercising complete everyday planning authority, I detail: a city manager's preemptive definition of behavioural norms, homeowners' moral positions coalescing as political mandate, day-to-day governance establishing norms of conduct that simulate urban law, and attempts to naturalise intersubjective hierarchies by third party intervention. Throughout, paternalist practices diagramming what is 'out of

place' echo intertwined "contradictory provenances," including forward-looking (technical), backward-looking ('traditional'), and static (biological) logics.

Affordable for whom?

From its opening in 2007, Orascom Housing Communities (*Orascom li-al-Isakan al-Ta'auni*, lit. 'Orascom Cooperative Housing') has walked a fine line by promoting Haram City as "affordable housing." While OHC officially abandoned "low-income housing" terminology in 2010, UN and World Bank publications and OHC's billionaire CEO Samih Sawiris continue to use these terms interchangeably (UN-HABITAT, 2014; UNDP, 2011; World Bank, 2013). Haram City was constructed as part of former president Hosni Mubarak's LE34 billion (£3.4 billion) six-year million-home National Housing Program (NHP, *"Iskan Mubarak"* 2005-2012), one of several million-home schemes since 2006. In all of these populist megaprojects promises far exceeded implementation, with between one-fourth and three-fourths of NHP targets met (Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, 2014). OHC purchased 4.2 million m^2 of land from the New Urban Communities Authority for about LE10.7/m^2 (£1.7 in January 2006) — extraordinarily cheap for state or military owned desert — while providing all internal infrastructure (sewage, electricity, water) and private services (policing, schooling, healthcare). NHP customers are technically subject to Ministry of Housing upper income controls of LE2,500/month (£250) for couples and LE1,750/month (£175) for singles. Yet, unit payment plans requiring proof of employment, mirroring World Bank affordable mortgage initiative recommendations, invariably exclude the 55% of Egyptian workers between fifteen and sixty-four who the World Bank itself defines as irregularly employed (2014). Principally, amidst general reluctance to adopt mortgages, rows of identical suburban semi-detached homes-with-garden priced between with houses priced between LE70,000 (48m^2 home) and 110,000 (63m^2) (£7,000–11,000) — doubling when

purchased on the open market to LE140,000–250,000 (£14,000–25,000) — are purchased by the middle classes, often just married "youth" able to source the bulk sum from family assets irrespective of personal income, sometimes as a second home investment. With little oversight, homeowner "affordability" stretches to satisfy profit margins for OHC and minority stakes by international property speculators, including Chicago based Equity International — a major investor in US subprime properties before shifting to emerging markets (Gallun, 2011; Orascom Development, 2010a, p. 11).

Haram City's opening roughly coincided with a 2008 rockslide killing about 119 people in Duweiqa, one of Cairo's poorest neighbourhoods, and numerous subsequent government evictions of supposed 'unsafe areas' on valuable central land in vicinity (Amnesty International, 2011; Rabie & Adam, 2013). Following prolonged protests by Duweiqa victims refusing desert resettlement, the Cairo Governorate initiated a short-lived resettlement scheme into Haram City, purchasing 1300 smaller homes back from OHC (which, in turn, donated 600 more) to first negotiate other evictions over 2008–2009, followed by resettling the 231 exasperated rockslide protester families in 2010. Subsequently, tensions have flared between the resettled-by-eviction, the resettled-by-rockslide, and aspirational middle class homeowners over whom "affordable" gated living ought to include. For most resettled, 42km from livelihoods and unable to afford LE15/day (£1.50) commutes, radical physical transformation of their homes to accommodate stores, workshops, and commerce (in contravention to OHC's covenants) is a necessity. For homeowners, the suburb promises safety and class distinction behind high walls, privately serviced by an international conglomerate but priced within reach, while signalling private car ownership, away from perceptions of unsanitary and immoral inner city life. As owners commission elaborate garden walls, built by and designed to

exclude the resettled, many lament that an *'ashwa'iya* (Egyptian for 'slum,' lit. haphazard or random) is spreading from within their *compound* (gated community).

As of 2014, Haram City is below half occupancy, hosting about 28,000 residents, with 12,000 resettled from *sha'bi* (popular) districts Manshiet Nasser, Dar al-Salaam, Ezbet Khairallah, Establ Antar, Bassatine, and Duweiqa. These homes are located in "A1" and "A2" "subzones," clustered into a quarter of OHC land where tenure is not secured by deed or contract but by an ambiguously legal, Cairo Governor signed, "letter of guarantee" for unspecified duration. This semi-official document is sold between the resettled and outside families, while the particularly disenfranchised Duweiqa victims have squatted unsold large homes since January 2011, demanding dimensions closer to that stated in separate "written promises" from the Governor.

Separated only by main roads, "A3" and "B1–B3" "subzones" contain homeowners and unsold properties. The highest-ranking member of OHC's onsite staff, and person responsible for homeowner satisfaction, is Tarek, Customer Relations Manager. Tarek studied tourism in university and prior to OHC worked primarily with foreigners as a hotel manager, a source of pride and the self-professed benchmark for Haram City.[1] Commanding an office of six young staff, as well as leading all services staff, unless orders from central Cairo headquarters specify otherwise, he implicitly has first and final word on everything, from staffing private security, guaranteeing residents' utilities, directly planning urban layout modifications, to resolving neighbour disputes, selecting stores to occupy the central "mall" shopping strip, and enforcing compound covenants. Tarek's authority is centralised to a degree that he claims that any prolonged civic dispute over property rights between all 28,000 residents are arbitrated in his office. From parking space disputes to noise disturbances or problematic views onto drying laundry, to advising on paint colour, like an ever-present judge his daily duty involves

[1] All names anonymised.

hours of listening, rejecting, negotiating, planning, and intervening on newly propertied relationships.

Upgrading people

During the first of regular meetings in his office and fortnightly invitations to attend a variety of direct community interventions, both the interpersonal scope and influence of Tarek's position were quickly evident. In fluid and assertive English, he focused conversation on sustainability credentials, boasting about citywide recycling, water management programs, plans for a 66 megawatt power plant towards "total self-sufficiency" from the state, a twenty-four hour private health clinic, and passive cooling of buildings. He asserts that all homeowners are "low-income," mentioning affordable mortgage programs, an onsite private orphanage, and a nonprofit textile factory for street women, all in proficient NGO "best practice" terminology. Only after I mentioned resettlements did he describe the Duweiqa rockslide, omitting that victims were squatting in protest and that a majority of A-area residents were separately evicted from a variety of neighbourhoods and backgrounds. He attributed community separation not to ownership conditions or recent history but to anomalous behaviour, even by "low-income standards," that must be fixed:

> These people have a different kind of social level. They are even lower than our owners. But we started to develop them with the government, with the concerned ministries, and with NGOs. So if you take a tour now, you will find a difference in the shape, atmosphere, and the kind of treatment [you receive]: another kind of people, another kind of personality, and another type of lifestyle. You must consider that we reached this point after four years developing them. You can imagine what kind of people we had. We are still developing them.

The notion of developing people — like infrastructure or the city itself — was a central managing principle for OHC staff. Intended literally, Tarek regularly intervenes on forms

of behaviour deemed errant as he would on pipes, fixing broken things and people interchangeably. While scholars have theorised "people as infrastructure" in cities of the South for their flexible networking skills (Simone, 2004b), or the "phatic labor" of communication transmitting economic value (Elyachar, 2010), OHC acts on this principle towards very different ends. Tarek and staff contended that if behaviour does not accommodate the human connectivity suitable for this city's "self-sufficiency," then it can and must be "upgraded." Over months, Tarek also began describing his job as "dream manager" and "psychologist." When I pointed out that, given his strong personal approach, a more accurate job title could be *Mohafez* (Governor), he affirmed: "That's right. I handle the residents, I am trying to handle Duweiqa, and I am trying to handle the waves [of new clients]. I am trying to put everything in its place." However, he stressed that a governor's duty to upgrade people inevitably amounts to psychology, literally: "[Residents] bring their personal problems [to me] from inside their house. They ask for our help because they trust us … this creates a mysterious link between us and the residents."

Effort to put "everything in its place" directly evokes more than social exclusion of the "out of place" (Sibley, 1995) or the title of Constance Perin's classic ethnography on propertied order and ideals of social life in 1970s American suburbia (Perin, 1977). It speaks to an active imperative to rationalise space according to behaviour, discerned through interpersonal dialogue and analysis of minds. Unlike most research on North American gated suburbs focusing on common interest organisations codifying covenants and deed restrictions (M. Davis, 1990; Low, 2003, p. 390), legal mechanisms formalising suburban homeowners' associations do not exist in Egypt. While a law was proposed in 2010 based on building maintenance associations, progress halted with 2011's political

turmoil.[2] Tarek noted that this law would be "very strong and powerful" for managing group behaviour because of "the right to move you out of the community if you don't pay fees or do something wrong." However, while envying the mandate such a "council" would give to evict non-compliant people, he believed Egypt's affordable market could not coexist without non-elected, scrutiny-free, and top-down intervention: "I have a very close vision for this place, for this community. I don't think you will ever find that these kinds of people can manage it together." He believes that self-interest would undermine civic goals in distributing services and infrastructure at the scale of a small municipality. Here too, the logic of managing complex technical problems, "seeing like a state," underwrites the rationale for managing propertied disputes over behaviour, "seeing like a city." Where city maintenance replaces building maintenance — problems with very different distributive politics — the unarticulated legality of intersubjective rule by homeowners' association presents a void company staff must fill, rendering discourse on person-to-person norm-making and top-down new town planning logistics indistinguishable.

City hackers

While some homeowners associate over social media to form complaints, Tarek is compelled to convene personal meetings over an issue that unites the propertied, providing a mandate for influence: fear of disorder. This collective discourse also laments self-interest, seen to be rampant in urban life and relieved by the promise of an exclusionary lifestyle and space between clearly enforced property lines. For example, Mohammed, a thirty-two-year-old unmarried artist and recent homeowner, described Haram City's A-areas as perpetuating the condition that motivated his abandonment of

[2] The proposed law is likely called: *al-qanun Itihad al-Shaghalin bi al-Nisba li-l-Manatiq al-Mudun*.

downtown Cairo's art and activism scenes. He emphasised parallels between the resettled's commercial auto-construction and downtown's mushrooming street vendors, amidst the revolutionary period's legal uncertainty:

> M: These places are not for them. You know? No, don't be a hacker of the road.
> N: Hacker?
> M: Hacker. Like computer hackers. Don't be a hacker of the shopping mall. You can sell, ok. But not in this area … If someone dies in a car accident and the ambulance needs the road, it's a problem. Find solutions for your problems but don't make problems for others in doing so.

The English word "hacker" resonates strongly, though perhaps unwittingly, with the etymology of the Egyptian term for 'thug,' or *baltagi*, from 'balta-' (axe) and -gee (Ottoman suffix for 'person of the'), meaning 'person who hacks.' Mohammed's use of "hacker" to refer to survival-based informality emphasises a zero-sum game of people finding life solutions in the city, while highlighting his class position as a net-savvy artist. Short-sighted behaviour is seen as cheating the rules of a preordained social order, as if hacking a computer game, and a source of deep vulnerability.

For Mohammed and his peers, class identification and pursuit of the promise of suburban self-realisation work together, constituting a sense of mutual vulnerability as a characteristic of citizenship, or something Peter Ramsey terms an ideology of "vulnerable autonomy" in recounting the origins of behavioural ordinances in British law (2008, p. 175, 2012). Noting the space that vulnerable autonomy creates for paternalistic governance practices, Ramsey follows: "The key question that human vulnerability raises for a jurisprudence of security is the extent to which … [it] legitimates demands on the state for the deployment of preemptive coercion" (2008, p. 177). In this sense, perceptions of constantly flouted laws in a formerly rule-laden central Cairo find refuge in the unlegislated anomia of the ungoverned desert edge, behind gates and open for preemptive normative cultural-material definition against "hacking" (see Delaney, 2004,

2010). Tarek responds directly to this call in populist language, citing it as mandate for secession, ending reliance on Cairo, broadly defined as government services and infrastructure as well as disrupted communities: "It is not a matter of building a city in a desert and building a community. It's a matter of providing everything."

In discussing his own sense of vulnerability, Sherif, a single homeowner in his mid-forties, details the mandate he lends to OHC's to be paternalistic in profoundly moralising and coercive ways. Often lamenting Cairenes' interpretations of freedom and rejecting a legal system that caters to it, he sees norm-destroying behaviour spreading to his yet-to-be normatively defined refuge:

> S: Many people don't understand the real meaning of freedom. They understand only 'I will fight everywhere, I will smoke drugs everywhere and be a *baltagi* [thug] because now I am free … Here some people, like Duweiqa, [think], "because I am free to get naked, I will do just do it" … Do you need to do this? "No, but ah! It's my right!"

To protect his home and future from reckless pursuits of freedom and rights, Sherif hopes Haram City "will become more organised" as "the level of the people, the quality of the people, changes according to prices." More actively, he observed that specific disciplinary methods targeting behaviour can be used to habituate and restore everything to its "place." Sitting over tea with his friend Ahmed, he cited the case of a *bowwab* (lobby-dwelling doorman in Cairo apartment buildings) ignoring or threating apartment owners for tips:

> A: If you respect him, he doesn't respect you.
>
> S: It means he is a wild horse. If you are clever enough and hone him to break the horse, next time he will be very calm. Break the man like you break a horse … For a long time he was a slave. And this kind of slave wants someone weaker than him. He needs to show himself. If you respect him, then he will rise to ride you, to break you. So you have to break him first. Put him in his place and that's it.
>
> A: For a month.
>
> S: For one month, like breaking a horse.

> …
> N: Is one of the frustrations that people might have with Duweiqa that they are not able to break them?
> S: Yes. [Here] it's like fish. The big one eats the small one.

The sensation that A-area communities represented a new, amplified challenge amidst collapsed social hierarchies was also reflected by another regular interviewee, Mahmoud, a single man in his late twenties whose parents had purchased a home in Haram City as investment. With a degree in sociology from Cairo University, he considered himself more understanding than peers and criticised evictions. Nonetheless, he entirely avoided A-areas, noting that, amidst a project promising to reset urban norms outside dysfunctional state law, any remnant of a "law of the slum" had also vanished to unleash unprecedented freedoms and self-interest:

> [A-areas and the inner city] are different, very different. There is a code in the *'ashwa'iya*. They have rules. They have their own law. But in Haram City there is no code … If someone did something to harm you in Manshiet Nasser you can find *al-Kabir* [the Big One] and he will get you your rights. But in Haram City there is nothing.

For Mohammed, Mahmoud, Sherif, and Ahmed, resettling people into their private sphere engenders a distinct sense of collapse in not only the material order of things, but also the moral order. Understanding this, Tarek sees the reintroduction of both orders as crucial, a mandate where the moral and material upgrade each other against "hackers." When speaking about A-areas to homeowners, he carefully specifies degrees of threat, forming a class analysis within those who must be "upgraded" and ranking threat: "the lowest is Duweiqa, [the others] are [more] middle class… [For example] Masr al-Qadima sees that when Duweiqa came they reduced the level of their living by taking A3 units by force." Irrespective of complex chronologies behind land tenure, Tarek maps shades of moral behaviour to property claims: moving from clear legal title, rental, "guarantee

certificate," sublet of "guarantee certificate," resale of "guarantee certificate," to direct occupation. With reference to his work as "an experiment for all of Egypt," Tarek elaborated how diagraming behaviour hierarchically at the intersection of community, habit, hygiene, and morality delineates opportunities for "enhancement":

> T: [In the beginning] we faced lots of social problems with these people because they have a very low social life and very strange habits — very dangerous also. Many were criminals. Many were selling drugs and working as hookers. This kind of social life was inside their community, inside Duweiqa.
>
> N: Are you saying that this comes with poverty?
>
> T: It was normal between them. But when they moved here and started connecting with normal Egyptian people, they refused to work or to have any contact. So we started [intervening] … to enhance their behaviour. We started with cleaning, washing, showering, anything [regarding] diseases affecting your body. At the same time we crossed this with behaviours: how you behave with your child, husband, wife, others. From time to time we control them, monitor changing behaviours in people. They were very aggressive …[but over] four years they have started to change.

In distinguishing between "normal" and abnormal Egyptian behaviour, linking sanitation to crime to class, Tarek projects his personal benchmarks for human development onto the city. He defines a paternalist mandate while constituting a social hierarchy in collective behaviour.

As an international exercise in the privatisation of the housing and resettlement sector, a model case study for further structural adjustment significantly underwritten by US property speculators, strong moralist commonalities with the rise of "New Paternalism" in "workfare" discourse of North Atlantic neoliberal policy circles are noteworthy. At its core, "New Paternalism" is a grand normative moral scheme portending that poverty can be rationalised according to degrees of indolence, understanding lack of discipline to make "behavior consistent with intention" as an economic metric, and requiring a coordinated state vision that explicitly "treats adults like children" (Mead, 1997, pp. 5, 26). Yet, while focus on behaviour modification classes,

means-testing, and conditions for welfare eligibility "intersects with neoliberalism as the primary organizing principle of governance," its proponents begin from a fundamentally illiberal premise, a view shared by OHC to assuage the vulnerable: the poor lack the competence to manage themselves and were not created equally (Soss et al., 2011, pp. 2, 25).

An urban repertoire

Occasionally, Tarek describes love for his job as an extension of love for the social network based city planning simulation computer games SimCity and CityVille. Like in games, his passion stemmed from an ability to rapidly zoom in and out, between birds-eye-view tinkering with design and the micromanagement of people, melding planning and civic governance towards a mastery of rules. Asked if he had considered sanctioning "reasonable" livelihood-focused building modification allowing resettlement communities to upgrade themselves, he unequivocally refused. A-area self-sufficiency, he believed, would result in it "getting bigger and bigger, and we will return to an *'ashwa'iya*." He conceded, though, that he struggles to halt construction: "If we remove them, we have to do it with our own hands, and they will kill us … there won't only be protests but a lot of murders."

From conception, the form of Haram City was designed to modify behaviour. Several engineers and staff noted, for example, that domed roofs were not only meant to look "traditional" but serve the primary purpose of blocking vertical self-construction and rooftop storage. Even this architectural move, though, has been circumvented by A-area residents, many fabricating stilts to brace a dome's circumference carrying decks for leisure, storage, and pigeon coups — a common feature in dense Cairo. For OHC, a cat-and-mouse game blocking self-upgrades by enforcing planning covenants is a losing

strategy. With re-eviction of the resettled impossible, "upgrading lifestyles" psychologically — fine-tuning peoples' awareness of offensiveness — is a more tactical practice for upgrading environment. Similar to a supervisory approach reducible to "incentives and penalties" prescribed by New Paternalists (Mead, 1997), Tarek seeks to shift values through "training" and "security." These instruments are oriented to also accommodate the "different psychologies" within B-area, a dual mandate, vis-à-vis A-area:

> There is a lot of hating inside [homeowner] psychology. Hating the company for bringing [the resettled] and hating [the resettled] for destroying the company. But when they deal with them, they act nicely because they need their services. These people need someone selling vegetables … watermelons during summer, mechanics, someone to fix their things. They need them, but after they finish, they don't want to live beside them. There are different psychologies inside the same person … You have, in Egypt, very expensive places and very low places besides because those people serve them. These people cannot live without smaller people.

Knowledge that self-built communities often emerge from the privileged developments they service has been a key theme in critiques of informality's attribution to a marginal poor (Perlman, 2003; Roy & AlSayyad, 2004), of urban restructuring and social movement responses (Caldeira, 2000; Vargas, 2006), and of utopian modernist urbanisation (Holston, 1989). OHC recognises this as a common sense relationship, complicating homeowner "nuisance talk" lamenting poverty's proximity (Ghertner, 2012). Premeditated protection of B-area's conflicting interests establishes relative "powers of freedom" (N. S. Rose, 1999) *within* the "fully integrated community," codifying neighbourhood land-use relationships "through the double helix of liberty and sovereignty, of freedom and protection" (AlSayyad & Roy, 2006, p. 8). In managing B-area by limiting or conditionally allowing access to resources, a series of governance principles delegate freedoms and reproduce urban legality around the homeowner

community's constitutive moral hierarchies.

Accordingly and inadvertently, OHC staff's daily strategies for managing A-area simulate six forms of planning law central to "seeing like a city," applied in sequence toward specific behavioural outcomes: *Selective licensing* (establishing rapports with power brokers), *nuisance tribunals* (bringing interpersonal disputes into OHC administration), *situated covenant advocacy* (forming publicly recognisable behavioural benchmarks) leading to *limited entitlements* if compliant, or to *indirect coercion* if non-compliant, and cementing relationships by stealth *re-zoning* (exclusive/inclusive landscaping). Not described legalistically as such, but practiced iteratively in absence of public local law, they emerge as codified instruments for private paternalistic governance.

Selective licensing

While OHC refuses to officially sanction improvised construction in A-areas, Tarek turns a blind eye to some modifications. OHC contracts specify that ownership of unit gardens — the site of most auto-construction — is technically retained by the corporation, delegating maintenance and enjoyment to homeowners through usufruct rights with restrictions (limited wall heights, removable coverage, paint colour limitations, and prohibition of commercial use). However, to avoid provoking unrest by demolishing an investment of time and money, less essential services can be withheld from noncompliant properties (such as rubbish collection and street maintenance) and blaming residents for the further messiness that ensues. This passive approach is only used selectively. Unchallenged presence of rooftop pigeon coups, for example, frequently corresponds to the social influence of a resident below. In this way, nonintervention amounts to *de facto* licensing of self-built commercial space, a tactic ensuring that certain select A-area residents stay put, as Tarek explains:

> If they sell [homes], they are selling what they don't own. To whom are they going to sell? To such a person [as themselves]. So the volume [of resettled] will not reduce … I know some for three or four years now…I have managed them from the beginning and shown that I am powerful.

De facto licensing, then, becomes a psychological instrument. Tarek's conditioning and knowledge gathering efforts target power brokers. *Not* consenting implicit commercial rights would compromise his overall reputation, and, in any case, the volume of residents to "upgrade" would not decrease. Selective licensing keeps his targets close by allowing them to make a living and opens connections to further embedded influence.

Nuisance tribunals

With key A-area relationships cemented, OHC's management office is opened to address not only "official" service provision disputes but also personal intra-household arguments. Amidst compromised neighbourhood relations provoked by recombinant resettlement, local brokers are encouraged to direct fighting and disputes over offensiveness to Tarek for personal consultation. Professing openness and a willingness to help, like a therapist these conversations require "direct eye contact, to be a good listener — listening to problems and to understand — and then to reply to vital problems …[so that] other customers understand you are on the same line." By ushering outsider families into formal office space to resolve their arguments, he officialises behaviour problems and incorporates them into his professional duties on a continuum from interfamilial connectivity to street connectivity. As some A-area residents accustom themselves to this arrangement, once occasional conflict resolution meetings grow into regular nuisance tribunals:

> They fight with neighbours and want someone to go through these problems and solve them. Sometimes they ask for help because they know that both parties trust us. So it becomes not only about helping on the official side but also the personal side … We never say "no" to anyone. Only, "OK, we are trying to solve this."

Linking personal issues to official company work, nuisance disputes are solicited by stressing powers of inclusion into a "fully integrated" social-infrastructural community:

> You are a low-income person, and you are in a very special community, trying to improve your life, trying to upgrade your lifestyle. We want to help connect you with neighbours and other groups in the city, residents and even management, to make just one community, one big family.

Nuisance is an inherently relational and contentious discourse and legal mechanism seeking to establish consensus over 'right' or 'wrong' things in 'right' or 'wrong' places (Valverde, 2011, p. 294). Such notions are deeply linked to the self-definition of community as the product of particular moral, aesthetic, and geographic expectations (Novak, 1996). In absence of land-use laws to work through, nuisance is incorporated into management as a triangular relationship (two litigants and a judge) towards normalising homeowners' subjective hierarchies (as though a jury) while presented as objective neutrality. Throughout dispute resolution language, reference to a "big family" underwrites the paternalistic stance. For example, in a dispute over an unmarried man looking into his neighbour's home too eagerly and making inappropriate comments, Tarek instructed the accused, who professed innocence: "Ok, maybe you were just talking on the phone and they understood it the wrong way. When you say something like this, please don't look directly at the lady because you are embarrassing her." Tarek's stated aim is to "change their custom" towards keeping "your own problems and your own way of thinking" within property lines. Yet emphasis on custom as aesthetic and performative behavioural modifications — not punishing harassment but scolding

against getting caught — indicate that the priority of nuisance tribunals is not only to reorient norms, but to maintain the appearance of being above the fray.

Situated covenant advocacy and limited entitlements

Once an air of neutrality is established, management introduces a politics of suggestion. Shifting from the personal to the realm of built space and back, suggestion aims to incorporate recalibrated OHC building covenants into behaviour formation. For example, Tarek suggests certain paint colours to A-area resident homes, especially self-modified ones, with claims that colour conformity reflects on identity:

> [The resettled have] complicated relations and complicated colours. Everything is complicated in front of them. When they came here they found everything in its place: clean and painted … He doesn't fit in in this place. He feels that this is a new place for a higher standing of people. So he wants to destroy or damage it, to not feel like he's with these strange people.

A procedure for suggestion follows:

> We tell them, "don't destroy this … It belongs to you, so we paint it … Why are you doing this? What's your name? … Look at these people who live in [B-area's commercial centre]. All their homes are clean." So they start looking, until one sees that a hundred metres away a neighbour [spent] LE100,000 [£10,000] on his good-looking house. So they start to stop themselves and ask us to repaint theirs too. And they start to look at gardens, and how we build fences. And they starts to make copies, but with their touches. All their fences are a copy of fences here [in B-areas], but they put their touch, which is not an artistic touch. Because such a person never felt art, he never felt these colours … But he wants to upgrade himself, so he puts paint with his touch. It's just a fence, but *at least* it's a fence.

Here fences code for moral character, equating aesthetic quality to behavioural normalcy. Of course, most A-area residents can neither afford nor care to follow such advice. They have modified homes incorporating commercial ventures to avoid spending half of income from pre-resettlement jobs on transportation. Nonetheless, OHC staff regularly prescribe such advice in nuisance deliberations and actively surveil form, colour, and general respectability of construction. This politics of suggestion turns situated covenants

into behavioural benchmarks, standardised and publicly visible criteria for future reward or punishment. As reward for good, propertied-looking appearances OHC may offer employment in private infrastructure and security companies. Such jobs target an enormous demand for local regular employment. They can lead to preferred access to infrastructure and security, whereby a resident-employee can guarantee provision to his regular, semiregular, or improvised connection, simulating propertied entitlement to uninterrupted city services. Furthermore, security employees provide further utility to OHC's behavioural management as nuisance informants.

Indirect coercion

When suggestions are flouted without tacit approval to do so, a resident faces physical coercion, indirectly administered to protect management's appearance of objectivity. Persistent smaller violations might lead to encounters with the state police, rarely entering city gates if not by OHC's invitation. As Tarek reported: "When we catch someone like this with what he stole [company land]…we send him to the police and the police have their own ways to take a confession from him." Punishment is focused on extracting admissions of impropriety, rather than restitution, setting examples for the legitimacy of norms. Harsher yet, when dealing with open and notorious empty home invasion OHC-hired non-state, non-corporate, third party security:

> Sometimes, we contact [squatters] with Bedouins. These people protect [OHC] land from the desert, preventing residents from attacks by anyone outside. But sometimes the situation is out of control with [Duweiqa] people, so we call them. They know that for Bedouins it is very easy to kill and walk away. Very simple. No trial after. So they respect them.

Property developers frequently conflict with Bedouin land claims on the Nile's desert fringes. OHC likely negotiated undisturbed construction by paying Bedouins to defend against 'anonymous' desert attacks (from Bedouins themselves). As a small extralegal

mercenary force, members occasionally roamed Haram City's cafes smoking shisha pipes and carrying very large rifles. Here too, punishment centred on contested legitimacy: attacks on squatters seemed geared to provoke violent resistance thereby affirming stereotypes of 'thuggish' immorality and legally discrediting land claims. Inverting the provocation, squatters countered Bedouins with threats to explode their occupied homes using cooking gas canisters, a potential public relations disaster for OHC.

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There are no OHC or Cairo Governorate guidelines detailing how to address the accidental presence of true low-income residents in a private "affordable" scheme. Indeed, in discussing coercive practices in particular, Tarek and homeowners spoke intuitively, heavily relying on common sense, "it's always been this way," "customary," and "traditional" framings of the urban poor to defend both paternalist and vulnerable stances (e.g. Sherif "breaking the horse"). It is fruitful, then, to briefly contextualise governance practices in the history of moral attitudes behind poverty management in Egypt. As AlSayyad & Roy note, the enduring presence of squatter settlements, enclave communities, and camps as sites for constituting and managing freedoms and sovereignty, at times resembling premodern guild memberships, challenges teleological narratives of progress often assumed in discussions of modernity (2006). Valverde shares this transhistorical lens, showing how shifting exclusionary outcomes from deliberative land-use law over periods are a definitive feature of "seeing like a city."

Policies explicitly observing and managing the "morals and manners" of Egypt's rural poor (the ancestors of Cairo's rural-urban migration) were a cornerstone of the British colonial administration, particularly through the lenses of sanitation in textbooks such as *Health Measures Against the Habits of Egyptians*, published by the Ministry of Education in 1862 (T. Mitchell, 1988, p. 99). Nubar Pasha, a member of the colonial landowning elite and three-time Prime Minister post-occupation, framed political goals

through belief in a strong correlation between developing infrastructure and "moral order." In one memorandum he refers to progress with "the army, the railways… bridges and roads, the health and sanitation services" to argue that "what has been done in *l'ordre materiel* (material order) must be done in *l'ordre moral* (moral order)" (T. Mitchell, 1988, p. 100). Eliding materiality and psychology, such injunctions aimed to modify moral order specifically by enforcing private property as an abstract "code" for evaluating community behaviour, via a European legal system (1988, p. 101).

In strikingly similar language, Tarek justified attacks on squatters stating only: "We are trying to upgrade all the city, and we are trying to upgrade the people themselves … we are building community, and we are building habits." Noting his frequent invocation of traditional culture, I asked if this task might be described as "cultural engineering," and he affirmed: "In a gentle way, because it is very sensitive." Indeed, as Mine Ener notes in her history of late-nineteenth, early-twentieth century urban Cairo begging prohibitions: "dichotomies of indolence versus hard work, unsightly loitering and street hawking versus regulated activities, and respectability versus inappropriate behaviour pervaded the language of British residents and colonial officials, Egyptian reformers, and Egypt's rulers," resulting in the introduction of behavioural "training programs" (Ener, 1999, p. 321). Managing vagrancy as proxy for sensations of vulnerability from rural-to-Cairo migration, the government introduced a taxonomy of locale, legislating access to residence and work by degrees of "right to the city" (*Haqq al-Mahrusa*, lit. 'right of the protected') (Ener, 2003). As in Haram City, discourse over both the appearance of public space and mounting fears of public security blaming the poor's unruly behaviour was central in these policies. Specifically, the reintroduction of Ottoman-era *tadhkira*, permission documents containing physical descriptions, place of origin, and destination, came with frequent references to *dabt wa rabt* (regulating/controlling and binding)

behavioural conditionality (Ener, 2003, pp. 29–32).[3] As Chalcraft notes in his history of early-twentieth century Egyptian labour movements, invocation of *dabt wa rabt* was also nearly ubiquitous in guild membership documentation, distinguishing protected city workers from rural-to-urban ones by their behavioural commitments and introducing a behavioural lexicon lending legitimacy and solidarity to labour movements (2012, p. 220). Both the city and guild were tightly regulated, behaviourally determined enclaves predating statist techno-rational growth imperatives in grand modernist schemes as well as neoliberal paternalist workfare.

Re-zoning

Beyond day-to-day privatised "upgrading" of city and citizen, *l'ordre materiel* and *l'ordre moral*, in ways reminiscent of urban law, OHC carefully designs its short and long-term visions. Ultimately, Tarek believes that homeowners "want to be eliminated from Duweiqa," meaning all slum-like behaviour. As stated, though, he also anticipates homeowners' lasting reliance on cheap labour. To reconcile these visions, he seeks to physically re-zone Haram City on behavioural grounds. However, in the process of doing so it must not undermine the complex game of punishment and rewards, perceived neutrality, and codified behavioural hierarchy.

During one meeting, he showed me a very large, very detailed map of Haram City. Pencil in hand, he diagrammed the process of incrementally creating permanent barriers to movement, timed to deflect resistance. His plan is purposefully designed for

[3] The legacy of *tadhkira* is perhaps still a central part of Egyptian urban life, in the form state-issued ID cards. Though not regulating mobility, reference to location of origin/residence is still prominently displayed, determining not only schooling and voting rights, but also the source of place-based discrimination in police or bureaucratic settings that require ID card demonstration. Duweiqa rockslide victims are put in extreme difficulty by this legacy of control over origin. The Cairo governorate is reluctant to issue new IDs citing residency in 6th of October City — some suggest as retribution home invasions — and so they are unable to receive symbolic acknowledgment of new homes for welfare purposes, including transferring children to Harm City schools. Currently, some Duweiqa children commute to schooling for over two-three hours per day in total (at a prohibitively high cost of about LE60 per week per child).

tautological argumentation, self-fulfilling with each action 'obviously' justified by the one before: "Now we are starting to separate some areas as a pilot project. In B4 subzone you will find that we have closed some streets by putting [plants]. When this green becomes bigger, it will become a natural fence." Once all plants filling B4 access points become large bushes, he explained, they will require a metal fence for support. A fence will then require a gate or access becomes impossible. Once a gate is created, a security guard must be placed to ensure it functions properly. This "pilot project" would then be the first in a series of other "pilot projects": "So we are going to close B4 zone, then all [other] B-zones, then A3 zone, then A4, all away from A1 and A2 … We will take them like this and like this, and *fwssht!* Add this part here. Then it will be a closed community."

In this vision, Haram City is still in the process of becoming a closed community. Rather than simply walling problematic areas, legible as a punishment, Tarek uses the promotion of property rights and city beautification ("you dream to live in a closed community, a better community, and we have to provide it") to close the most proprietary areas one by one as reward, until only A-area is left. Sub-zones will then become permanent sub-enclaves and renamed after flowers ('Jasmine,' 'Acacia,' 'Poinciana,' 'Gardenia,' and 'Rehan'). Leftover "A-areas" will be renamed more generically as *Zuhur* (flowers) and only then will OHC add services that currently are limited to homeowner areas such as reliable telephone access, again framing exclusion and rights of resettlement as reward conditional on behavioural compliance. A final move would invert the exclusion: "After closing [each homeowner area], I will reopen them again [to each other]." This involves the introduction of internal ID cards specifying domicile sub-enclave, and permitting requisite closure and openness:

> If you are a resident and want someone to go to your home to fix something, just leave a message at the gates saying who can pass tomorrow to work on my flat for ten days. On day eleven, I will prevent him from crossing … It's *not* a wall between Duweiqa and other people because it's not a completely closed area but a *kind of* closed area, allowing only some people to go there and back … Owners

> will show me their [official] contract, and I will give them an ID.

As Valverde notes, zoning has long been understood by legal scholars as the "codification of nuisance" (2011, p. 292). While nuisance disputes are actively solicited for the purpose of moral categorisation and influence, what is initially visible as behavioural re-zoning is designed to self-fulfil as a hierarchy of sub-enclaves. It entropically territorialises the delegation of "powers of freedom" by projecting local and fuzzy "community" talk into bounded objects (Rose, 1999, ch 5; Valverde, 2011, p. 294). Registering the resettled as visitors will further instrumentalise behaviour modifications by reward and punishment, amounting to a tariff on commercial self-employment and microenterprise.[4]

Fundamentally, the introduction of an internal sub-enclave ID system presents a highly artificial imposition of behavioural categories defining access to space. Post-eviction resettlement livelihoods have already been hugely disadvantaged by displacement to the desert, and the initial terms of resettlement implied full right to access Haram City's resources and services. In this sense, one could read sub-zones as a private variant on post-Ottoman *Haqq al-Mahrusa* (right of the protected) policies through the *tadhkira* (permission document) system. Indeed, the tadhkira specifically stems from sensations of vulnerability over migrant influxes and perceived dereliction of public space (Ener, 2003, pp. 30–31). Just as exceptions to *tadhkira* limitations were granted to non-Cairenes on the basis of temporary labour relations or through guilds, demonstrating moral worth by adherence to *dabt wa rabt* (regulating/controlling and binding) behaviour, so will it will be in Haram City's floral sub-zones.

[4] Tarek showed me a sample ID, with photo, name, and sub-zone all indicated. It will permit full access to any ID restricted areas and the non-restricted *Zuhur*, irrespective of homeowner sub-zone, and therefore sustaining an illusion that it is not resettlement areas that are being closed off, but individual B-areas themselves.

Anaemia and anomia

When describing A-area to outsiders, OHC staff will often emphasise the role of in-house NGO work as testament to benevolence and sign of best practice low-income development practice. The only NGO officially permitted to work with resettled residents is the Association for the Protection of the Environment (A.P.E.), under the name "Project for Poverty Reduction and Environmental Upgrading." A.P.E. is funded and managed by the Sawiris Foundation for Social Development (SFSD), with OHC CEO Samih Sawiris on the board of trustees, and his mother Yousirya Loza Sawiris as principle trustee. A.P.E. is also a direct affiliate of Haram City's waste management and recycling joint-stock company, Ertiqaa: 'The Enhancement of Integrated Services and Waste Recycling' (Ertiqaa translates to 'Upgrade'), where both Sawiris are also principle shareholders. Ertiqaa works directly with A.P.E., servicing its participatory recycling initiatives and employing residents from areas where A.P.E. operates. Both organisations are presented in promotional documentation as neutral civil society partners with extensive experience working in evicted neighbourhoods (OHC, n.d.; SFSD, 2011, pp. 57, 60). However, in internal annual reports and press releases, they are depicted as wings of Sawiris's asset portfolio uniquely enabling an all-in-one "self-sufficient," "integrated," private community development — from housing, to infrastructure, to social services (OHC, 2010, 2012a).

Tarek refers to A.P.E. as a central component of larger environmental upgrading efforts, ranging from "teaching how to compost and recycle" to "teaching the benefits of taking a shower," and from "stopping anaemia in women and children" to "reducing aggressive mentality." The organisation runs weekly "behavioural training" workshops for resettled families — primarily women — with "graduation ceremonies" where participants receive a Diploma in good habits and a large plastic bag of food. At one graduation ceremony, in a large purpose-built tent in the heart of A-area, Tarek was

introduced as guest of honour before several hundred participants. On stage, behavioural trainers listed accomplishments of the latest three-month intervention, asking the audience, "Why did we make this project? All together!" The group responded in unison, "Because we want to take care of our children and treat their anaemia." Nearly every subsequent environmental and sanitary lesson, from recycling to washing food to washing the self, culminated in a single performance evaluation metric: anaemia blood test results.

The Sawiris Foundation's declared focus is on slums and the effects of environmental degradation on health, specifically from a lack of sanitation infrastructure (SFSD, n.d.). According to the World Health Organization, anaemia — acute iron deficiency — can be attributed to two principle factors: nutritional and infectious. While nutritional causes principally involve dietary access, infectious causes are attributed to diseases that cause blood loss, such as malaria (WHO, n.d.). The role of waste infrastructure in preventing anaemia, therefore, is primarily in the prevention of infectious diseases. Moving from infrastructure to nutrition, pipes to people, World Bank funded research on anaemia in Cairo's urban poor has also stressed failures to adopt "satisfactory personal and domestic hygienic habits within homes" (Tekçe, Oldham, & Shorter, 1994, p. xi). While the importance of basic sanitation practices and waste management for public health are indisputable, there are some significant misrepresentations that arise when applying an anaemia-centric approach to Haram City. Absent in A.P.E.'s anaemia focused policy — as symptomatic of environmental degradation and a metric for evaluating environmental improvements — is that A-area trainees have been living in newly built standardised homes with masterplanned private services for four years. If A.P.E.'s operative, World Bank-supported stance for low-income areas is to attribute low blood iron levels to inadequate waste management, poorly designed living spaces, and inadequate health services enabling "bad habits" (see

Furniss, 2012, pp. 158–163), then to say that a majority of resettled residents had been suffering from anaemia only three months before "graduation" is also to say that Haram City's (Sawiris incorporated) recycling, sanitation services, and home construction caused it, and thus are equivalent in performance to 'informal' homes and infrastructure. Planned and managed from the ground up by the same directors as the NGO itself, this would seem to contradict OHCs promotion of superior performance by private infrastructure to justify cheap public land acquisition. Alternatively, use of the single "upgrading" metric of anaemia in Haram City is directed at habits presumed to be so maladjusted that they can cause illness *despite* state-of-the-art private infrastructure. In this latter sense, "behavioural training" for life in Haram City centres almost exclusively on culturally determined "habits" and "psychology" inseparable from poverty. This is exemplified by a lesson summary repeated to the graduating class, with two project managers shifting fluidly from medical-behavioural concerns of nutrition to economic-behavioural concerns of rational choice:

> Congratulations for good results fighting anaemia … These days I call "savings days." I showed you that you don't need a lot of money to eat healthily. It's cheap and available. A wise woman feeds her family healthy food … We asked mothers "how much money do you give your child every day to eat at school?" They said "two to five [Egyptian] pounds (£.20–.50)." That's a lot of money. We taught you to stop giving children all that money … For instance, why would he buy sweets from shops if mother can bake him banana chocolate cake? It only costs four pounds and is this big … We taught you how to save [cooking] oil by spraying instead of pouring, and it turned out delicious … Together we will continue learning economic and health tips. We will live with little income, and maybe we can live with even less. We will earn from income saved by habits we learn. Being careful about health, we will save money by not needing doctors or medicine. We will win our children's health and will save money for entertainment … [But] if [your children] have anaemia, then treat it because if not treated by a certain age, their mental growth will stop and not reach normal. Your children are gifts from God; you should take care of them.

In this highly paternalistic formulation of benevolence, decisions over nutrition are elided with decisions over home finances, implying that economic ignorance is the cause of both anaemia and perpetual poverty. The resettled poor are told that negligence and

profligacy (as derivative behaviours) can even lead to mental retardation. In this framing, the high prevalence of anaemia justifies training around the idea that participants do not take care of, or indeed sufficiently love, their own children. These efforts surpass notions of "responsibalising" the poor, fundamental to neoliberal paternalist politics, instead medicalising poverty along a mental spectrum between irrationality and abnormality.

In Egyptian Arabic, "anaemia" can also be known as a condition of "poor or light blood" (*al-dam al-khafif*), and can be used metaphorically, like the word itself in English, to mean lacking power, vigour, vitality. This everyday connotation for trainees, many of whom are wholly or nearly illiterate, combined with its numerical diagnosis, strongly evokes stereotypes of innate indolence and deviance — ever-present in the history of poverty management in Cairo's public spaces (see Ener, 2003). A select group of top participant 'lessons learned' presentations performed the internalisation of stereotypes:

> I am Madame Nesma, mother of Habiba, age five, and Farah, age four. We learned a lot from the program in public health. We used to have headaches that lasted a long time whatever medicine we used. Then we learned that it could be psychological. We should treat psychological reason first to get rid of the headache.

> My name is Manal. I have a son and daughter. I learned effective forms of contraception, family planning, and I learned about reflexive urination. I learned that when my son pees himself, I should not punish him. Instead, I should be kind. I also learned that breastfeeding helps the womb return to its original place.

> My name is Madame Entesar. I learned a lot from awareness classes. I used to always hit my children. Now we are close. I started giving them confidence and support, and now when they have problems they come to me. In the past I beat them. Now I control my anger, hug them, and tell them right from wrong.

Blaming their own behaviour for medical and social problems before the wider audience, all public self-reporting on training substantiated psychological improvements with blood tests. There is a wide and varied literature on forms of "blaming the poor," particularly in the treatment of African American and homeless urban poverty in the US (Greenbaum, 2015; D. Mitchell, 2003), as well as scholarship on cities of the South specifically linking

problems of sanitation to discipline (McFarlane, 2008; Roy, 2003a). Yet, in the form of a nonprofit outsider, A.P.E. provides 'evidence' for OHCs 'neutral' judge-like supervisory repertoire of local governance practices, couching normative medical guidelines over behaviour and morality in profitless benevolence. The mandate for governance by homeowners' vulnerability is further justified: amidst investments in their upgrading, not only is A-area 'choosing' poverty, but it is naturalised as an inherent, self-admitted trait that, despite OHC's best efforts at incorporation into a new suburban code, must be 'sub-zoned' out. As Sherif once reflected on the prospect of dividing Haram City, "they are not poor, they just *behave* poor." By "seeing like a city," OHC's re-zoning towards compounds within the compound is presentable as descriptive rather than prescriptive of "organic" communities, not discreditable as top-down imposition but conveniently cast as "nothing but law adapting itself to life" (Valverde, 2011, p. 288).

Conclusion

In this ethnography of a 'model case study' in gated affordable housing, I have emphasised the ways that "seeing like a state" frames opportunities for "seeing like a city." The evolving behavioural codification of community concerns is managed through the reproduction of urban law, yet conceived through technical language of "upgrading" both people and pipes. In the private management of affordability, post-eviction resettlement, and civic services upon which non-elites particularly depend, "seeing like a city" manifests as a means to an end. Simulating city legal administration over subjective notions of 'offensiveness' and 'reasonableness' naturalises categorical, technological, and moral imperatives — similar to "seeing like a state" — through mundane, interpersonal, and propertied relations. For these visions of governmentality to match, OHC must constantly work through subjective community perceptions to maintain the appearance objectivity. Projective ways of "seeing like the state" and adaptive ways of "seeing like

the city" often rely on each other dialectically. However, under limited accountability, beyond the law, and amidst income inequality each vision of behavioural governance recursively validates and consolidates the other. Coming full circle, the resulting acute paternalism, indeed authoritarianism, of 'seeing like a suburb' in OHC, whether framed benevolently or coercively, might also be justifiably termed 'seeing like a city-state,' in a transhistorical sense. As Valverde notes, on the shifting, premodern origins of contemporary land-use planning: "we cannot assume that techniques of governance are hardwired to particular political rationalities" (2011, p. 309). To this effect, OHC invokes a temporally ambivalent range of paternalistic logics — from technical, to traditional, and biological.

It is important to emphasise that this account represents a condensation of one year's participant observation. Overall, OHC interventions happen on a complaint-by-complaint basis, with an overriding preference for stability. As long as home sales continue, so will the status quo — a tacit, unsatisfied, but laboured coexistence. However, it is also visible how, free from mandate or legal obligation to provide universal access to resources, social engineering occurs in the most literal, albeit gradual ways. Cultural, environmental, and psychological concerns are folded into each other, diagraming freedoms with the stated goal of keeping the technical/traditional/natural role of landless servants close but far. Conversely, it is important to remember that this confluence of political rationalities also inevitably contradicts itself: the rationale behind behavioural experts eliding anaemia with economic rationality is self-evidently undermined by the private provision of 'superior' planned sanitation infrastructure to Haram City's poor.

As David Sims notes in his survey of Egypt's Desert Dreams, social engineering has been the explicit goal in repeated rounds of Egyptian desert investment, promising to "nurture a new generation of modern Egyptians, free from the backward-ness apathy

found in the [Nile] Valley" (2015, p. 122). Such expert-driven visions are hardly only an Egyptian phenomenon, whether considering legacies of "high modernist" projects (Holston, 1989) or the rise "Ecocities" (Datta, 2012), and, broadly, massive vacancy rates driven by supply-side approaches show that "nasty details of costs, phasing, and economic feasibility, not to mention … who will live there and why, seem totally secondary" (Sims, 2015, p. 296). There is mounting evidence across the South that, like Haram City, large gaps in mega-plans are being filled by secessionary community-scale private developments (Shatkin, 2011), and that increasingly they will be packaged as public-private partnerships for the masses (Benjamin, 2008, p. 725; N. Smith, 2002), placing infrastructure-dependent livelihoods under the control of city managers rather than mayors. Indeed, most contemporary 'emerging market' real estate conventions dedicate entire sessions to urgent opportunities for "integrated affordable housing" (Cityscape Global, 2012, 2013; Global Real Estate Institute, 2012, 2014, 2015). Industry magazines cite Haram City in articles with titles such as "A Million Homes are Not Enough" (Cityscape, 2012), despite 60% vacancy in Cairo's new cities alone (Sims, 2015, p. 150). Many major industry conferences host talks by Sahar Nasr (Cityscape Egypt, 2015; Euromoney Conferences, 2015; Global Real Estate Institute, n.d.), former Lead Economist in the World Bank's Finance and Private Sector Development Department of the Middle East and North Africa, author of the World Bank's Egypt "Affordable Mortgage Finance Program" (USAID & World Bank, 2008; World Bank, 2009, 2013), and currently Egypt's Minister of International Cooperation responsible for foreign investment in social development. Orascom Development alone, OHC's parent company, has had negotiations for affordable cities in Morocco, Romania, Turkey, Pakistan, Algeria, Ethiopia, Yemen, and Ukraine (OHC, 2007; UN-Habitat, 2014; UNDP, 2011), most recently winning a government tender for one million "low-income" homes in Jakarta (Milad, 2015).



Figure 30: Post in Haram City homeowners Facebook group showing a non-homeowner family climbing gates of B3 re-zoning trial



Figure 31: A.P.E. "Behavioural Training" graduation ceremony



Figure 32: Homeowners lament the nuisance of "donkey" [crass, uncouth] A-area youth riding an actual donkey through B-area's "mall" [cosmopolitan propriety]



Figure 33: Part-improvised, part-company infrastructure modifications between A-area homes



Figure 34: Haram City at the Orascom Development booth, Cityscape Egypt 2013



Figure 35: Graffiti on a purchased but vacant B-area home

8 | The commons as détente?

"The most beautiful thing is that nobody knows anything."
(*ahla haga mahadish 'aref haga*)

Microbus proverb

In Haram City, amidst uncertain legality, two visions of the city in the Global South come together within shared walls. Under a private developer marketing "affordability," residents perceive the rise of a 'slum' inside the gated community and contest the relationship between morality, ownership, and order in space. As the common and the compound converge amidst an *ex nihilo* plan and widespread political uncertainty, many of the institutional assertions around property rights and city management are publicly questioned and physically challenged. My aim has been to document and interpret how the ensuing normative discourses take form and are put into practice, where the scales of legitimacy have been upended.

The thesis began with a framing essay presenting snapshots of local binary visions of a divided Cairo, inflected with strong class prejudice. Noting in the introduction that this rhetoric is regularly given the dual prescription of new housing construction and rigid law enforcement, I briefly summarised the plurality of perspectives on new housing from within Haram City amidst local, national, and temporal factors unsettling residents' faith in legality. Considering Egypt's tradition of mass desert development schemes and a

growing international development organisation/real estate industry drive for low-income housing by public-private partnership, subsequent chapters stem from a central question of inquiry across fragmented groups of residents: in the squatted "affordable" gated community, where local legality is undefined and openly contested, how is ownership given moral weight and used to assert order?

Shifting from side to side, chapters examined the adapting lives of squatters and of a group of homeowners and company management acting in their name, dividing each section into discourses over moral ownership and then practices asserting a concomitant vision of order. Benefitting from the 'four paper DPhil route' to zoom in and out from emic to etic perspectives, I have sought to illuminate rather than necessarily describe gaps between varied perspectival resolutions: how "thinking by profession" may motivate *sayi'* 'rights broker' coordination of home occupations, and how migratory aspirations for suburban self-hood defined against self-interest may mutate into "behavioural upgrading" programs. Transversally, I also aim to surface the interface between how practices of outlaw organisational strategies and simulations of urban law may be responding to each other, and how discursive appeals to a moral economy and to self-realisation by self-respect or self-management may have more in common than each suspects. Throughout, whether residents invoke the moral economy to justify 'informality' (Chapter 4) or critique an incitement to propertied autonomy (Chapter 6), assert 'rights as property/debt' (Chapter 5) or simulate behavioural legality evoking both local history and global policy circulations (Chapter 7), territories of justice and loyalty are drawn and redrawn towards asserting this compound-in-progress's rightful community.[1]

Looking beyond, the thesis aims to advance a comparative theoretical approach to challenge key themes in the field of urban studies, specifically in Cairo and elsewhere in

[1] See (Rorty, 1997) for discussion on how justice might be conceptualised as a larger form of loyalty.

the Middle East North Africa region. As such, it aims to assert a vocabulary that is rooted in time and place but that borrows from critical approaches to normative legal projects to remain suitable for global research on gated communities, real estate flows, affordable housing, public-private partnerships, post-eviction resettlement, studies on informality, private urban governance, middle-class urbanism of the Global South, squatting, and property/rights theory. Cases of prolonged direct home invasion, particularly where the builder or owner is well aware of it, are practically unheard of in Cairo. However, participant observation of this unlikely occurrence through a "perspectival dance" that "refus[es] to allow theoretical categories to settle" (Keith, 2005, p. 188), sets out bearings for a productive tension between the general and the specific: first, struggles between Haram City residents speak to (and are often categorised by residents through) a constellation of processes and sentiments common throughout urbanism in the Global South; and second, the seemingly irreconcilable yet enduring coexistence of these processes compels residents and researcher to both self-consciously question prevailing conceptual tools. Many such interrogations — for example squatters rejecting accusations of informality by invoking discourse on craft moral economy — compel the introduction of bodies of research that already reflect on Cairo's intricacies at high resolutions but may not be specifically framed in terms of 'the urban.' Accordingly, while this research approach and language opens itself to global comparison, its conclusions do not lose grounding in the specificity of Egyptian cities or Greater Cairo.

Perhaps most readily generalisable is this work's methodological experimentation with legal geography, an approach that grew out of participants own "organic" legal geographical ruminations (Gramsci, 1971). While most work in this small but burgeoning discipline constrains itself to questioning people's assumptions over space and legality in the Global North, it offers a particularly effective vocabulary for taking disciplinary categories apart and putting them back together as an interwoven assembly of intimately

related but rarely connected research. Instead of reasoning by analogy, these tools help researcher and participant dig for first principles common across institutional and resident talk on the city — in this case ownership, morality, and order — and enduring binaries within urban studies become interpretable through parallel, better-established, and *in situ* debates (for example, approaching the personal significance of exclusionary homeownership in suburbs through Talal Asad's exhaustive work on secular liberalism and Egypt's middle classes, as discussed in Chapter 6).

Furthermore, it is my hope that an extensive documentation of the formative history of a project likely to be reproduced in Egypt and abroad will also illuminate avenues of relevance. As Steve Herbert notes, confidence in generalisability becomes possible when an ethnographer can demonstrate that a phenomena will likely become more widespread, or "the shape of things to come" (S. Herbert, 2000, p. 560). He goes on to give the example of Gans's study on the early Levittown, describing it as "an exemplar of the now ubiquitous American suburb… discern[ing] the contours of a developing way of life" (Gans, 1967; 2000, p. 560). While no one can be certain if, like the 1950s Levittown, gated affordable or low-income communities will become more widespread globally, policy recommendations by the World Bank, the Egyptian state, and major global real estate investors, developers, and trade groups indicate that, at the very least, they all believe so (see Chapter 7).

Indeed, much international development advocacy for subsidised affordable mortgages and mortgage financing in the Global South evokes the success of US President Harry Truman's postwar Housing Act of 1949 (IMF, Erbaş, & Nothaft, 2002) - policies centring on federally financed slum clearances combined with federal mortgage insurance. The 1949 Housing Act bolstered the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) together with the Federal National Mortgage Association (currently known as Fannie Mae) and later the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (currently known as

Freddie Mac), both of which underwrote Levittown's 30-year mortgages with no down payment and monthly costs the same as rental, initially on the condition that the development be racially segregated (Gans, 1967; Kushner, 2009). In Haram City, under the World Bank recommendations for Mubarak's National Housing Program (USAID & World Bank, 2008), the Mortgage Finance Agency and Government Housing and Development Bank offer mortgages for the price of rent over eight to twenty years after a 10% down payment. In some pre-2008 international development documents making a case for changing Egypt's mortgage laws and laying the foundation for Haram City's sales model, the privatisation of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are directly cited as strong precedents (USAID, 1999). Both were privatised in the late 1960s and early 70s — set up to be perceived to be government-guaranteed, although not government-owned — and their eventual collapse sparked the US sub-prime mortgage crisis and the Great Recession of 2008. In response to the crash, just six months after making the largest private equity deal in US history (selling 573 properties in 2007 for $39 billion) and at the same time buying a 15% share of Haram City, Sam Zell of Equity International reflected: "This country [US] needs a cleansing. We need to clean out all those people who never should have bought in the first place, and not give them any sympathy" (Bagli, 2009; Clark, 2008). The events documented in this research are at the forefront of the global reproduction of pre-crisis US housing policy, financial speculation on affordability, and are therefore shadowed by severe social and economic consequences of such policies in the recent past.

Currently, some of the most active support for mass public-private affordable housing and affordable mortgages as an emerging market seems to be disseminated by analyst Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL), particularly in the MENA region. The Egyptian government, international investors, regional developers, and local media almost exclusively cite JLL housing reports and statistics that often seem inherently geared to

producers over consumers, companies and institutions over citizens.[2] Fundamentally, in tacitly referencing an American Dream of universal middle-class homeownership that propelled Levittown-style suburbs, documents promoting the mortgage financing initiatives for which Haram City is a template distort very different circumstances and quite basic qualitative knowledge — for example, the enormous pressure largely unemployed male Egyptian youth are under to possess their own home as requirement for marriage and to affirm their masculinity is glossed as 'demand' when it may equally mean incredible vulnerability to predatory lending.

In the event that projects like Haram City become more widespread, perhaps the most salient lessons can be drawn from Part B regarding how customers are targeted and management efforts to mould order in their name. While fear of self-interested inner city disorder may propel people outwards, ultimately the sense that incitement to autonomy by property only harbours a more proprietary state of immorality may become widely shared. Alternatively, in private authoritarian governance of the urban poor at the intersection between "seeing like a state" masterplans pursuing "civilisational imperatives" and "seeing like a city," behavioural training may also become more common — characteristic of scalar disconnection in public and private roles. To give the most obvious example of this procedural mismatch in space: when OHC turns a blind eye to free-market home resale within the compound, not only are fears of unknown neighbours' 'immorality' inflamed, but prices for homes and staple goods rapidly inflate. While price inflation is in developer and homeowner interests, it rapidly (within about a decade) unravels already inadequate government guidelines for true affordability. When low-income residents then resort to supplying affordable goods in improvised ways, they become a convenient target for deflecting that very same suburban fears of disorder,

[2] For the latest example regarding the MENA region, see: JLL, 2015. JLL now uses 'middle-income' and 'affordable' housing interchangeable, rather than 'low-income.'

otherwise attributable to a high homeowner turnover (see Appendix II: Ten Policy Recommendations). In this first extended ethnography of public-private urban governance for the aspirational middle classes and the urban poor and of a gated community in the MENA region, conflictual relations between homeowner, resettled, corporation, and government interests appear almost inevitable from the project's conception. By providing an account of how the resulting debates transpire and become claims perhaps some pitfalls of social development by real estate developers can be avoided, if not reconsidered all together.

A détente

Despite Egypt's return to national authoritarian politics privileging militarised security and business stability above all else, the Duweiqa squatters have managed to hold onto their claims. One explanation, as given by squatters, may be that they counter violent threats of eviction with threats of sabotage — to explode their own occupied homes with cooking gas (Chapter 4) — well aware of the public relations embarrassment that would ensue for a company marketing middle-class safety. As one squatter, Ahmed, remarked while watching then General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi give a televised speech about prioritising stability before freedom to justify the death of up to one thousand people at Rabaa al-Adawiya, Cairo on August 13 2013: "How can I choose between security and freedom when I have never felt secure in my entire life? Morsi, Mubarak, Sisi, and revolutionaries: it's all the same." Indeed, squatters' scepticism of all political movements over the last five years and faith in their own methods as tried, tested, and morally rooted unlike the rotating door of politician-businessmen alliances has perhaps sustained a relatively stable, albeit rigid, tension in Haram City.

At the same time, the cumulative arc of this thesis represents a distillation of events that unfolded slowly. Between conversations, everyone's life is preoccupied with

mundane obligations as time passes and politics revolve, something easy to forget but essential to asserting ownership. Time is an inherently normative process — simply, people must work, provide, and adapt, and in order to do so some things must be treated as more or less 'normal.' Watching scenes from Tahrir Square together in Haram City's desert cafes, the rich and poor, Syrian refugees and Sufi orders, Muslim Brothers and disillusioned communists are united in their common suburban idleness. Whether as a middle-class status symbol, as a curse of chronic dislocated unemployment, as a place to lie low for a while, or as a spiritual necessity for calm, when people are not working they all retreat to squat (*'oud*) in circles of chairs. Mutual passivity beyond city walls in times of political transition lends some sense that, irrespective of differences, everyone is 'waiting it out' together. As Hicham, a young resettled resident who hustled enough savings to open a small video game café for homeowners but saw that future entrepreneurialism was blocked, once lamented: "every single person in here is frozen."

In 'waiting it out,' the discourse of ownership claims invariably grows more persuasive; while things appear frozen, they may simply be moving very slowly. What started as a coercive stalemate, and perhaps remains so nominally, shapes a forum for broader claim making that invariably circulates across communities. As property scholar Daniel Bromley notes, fundamentally, "what I own depends on what you agree that I own, not what I assert that I own" (Bromley, 1998, p. 25). Ownership claims are not only protected because they are property, but "by virtue of being protected they become property" (N. K. Blomley, 2004, p. 13). As residents continue to protect claims themselves, over the course of years, presidents, and constitutions those around are compelled to recognise a mirror of their own tenuous legal protection, and that each home coexists as "a subset of the universe of property relations" (Razzaz, 1998, p. 351).

At present, squatters have maintained 'open and notorious' possession of properties for exactly five years. In most dependable legal jurisdictions around the world,

after about five to ten more years adverse possession laws would apply, transferring ownership to those who have made most efficient use of the property without interjection by previous claimants (Peñalver & Katyal, 2010, pp. 149–151). The detailed documentation of those first five years presented here within has practical importance, if for no reason other than facilitating a discourse that prefigures legal avenues by suggesting, "look, in many countries of the world operating on similar legal foundations, we have fulfilled all the criteria for this property to be officially recognised as ours." Irrespective of clear legal avenues, though, there is an intuitive aspect to relatively stable, 'open and notorious,' morally defensible claims. It is the very act of acceptance, tacitly accorded by not evicting or demolishing home additions (if only because everyone lacks the ability to do so), that commissions a common condition — a détente, or 'unthawing' of tension, like prestressed concrete aligning the balance of loads under the weight of time.

'Waiting it out' together, incentive grows for almost all residents to continue the common practice of upgrading homes and garden with limited regard for OHC's (selectively enforced) covenants. Whether as an investment in a basic livelihood or in class mobility, under cover of fixity and passivity both A and B-area residents share an *ex post facto* logic to communal regularisation that protects the persuasive possibilities of expanding claims, summarised in the expression: "don't ask for permission. If needed, beg for forgiveness." In order to solicit forgiveness from company or neighbours the moral justification for home modification must remain widely compelling, but a general avoidance of public protest becomes self-affirming. As urban rights advocate, planning consultant, and one of Cairo's most astute young observers Yahia Shawkat once noted when asked about legality in Haram City:

> The only ones getting anywhere [in Egypt] are the informal part of society. It's the part of society that says, "to heck with all this. We're just going our way, and we are going to meander." Look at the dream and the reality: the dream is this so-

> called formal system, but then it's completely unreal. It's the illusion of a formal system. You are sort of indoctrinated with following it because you're told, "this is the only way to get on with life. There is law, there is I don't know what." But then you find out that it's a complete illusion and you're not going to get anywhere. For *anyone* to get *anywhere* they have to follow the informal system. It has its risks, but when you are born and bred in it you understand this, and it's normal life (2014b).

While some complain about informality, if pushed most residents across town admit such statements remain true throughout the country, suggesting a further commonality. While Haram City's residents give multiple shifting perspectives on ownership and order, in the long term almost all perspectives on property in some form or another eschew the supposed sacredness a self-contained castle (a "bubble" in the words of Sherif) in favour of ownership deeply implicated in relational commitments. The "single owner model," where an owner expects all rights bundled in property to be at her indiscriminate disposal, is embedded in political projects elevating property as foundational to citizenship (what Roy terms "paradigms of propertied citizenship"), as well as in related assumptions that propertied life inherently aligns self-interest towards order (2003b).[3] As Singer notes, even in settings most invested in absolute ownership as an organising social logic, "full consideration of property rights in the same person is the exception rather than the rule" (Singer, 2000b, p. 27), denial of which some scholars describe as a "mutual conspiracy" (N. Blomley, 2012, p. 27; Gray, 2010). It is true that many residents' aspirations for an orderly life may derive from homeowners viewing A-area alterations and self-built markets as a 'tragedy of the commons' (Hardin, 1968), attributing 'messiness' to uncertain ownership, self-interest, and lack of responsibility over that which is shared. It is equally true, though, that *both* the resettled and homeowners alike frame all of Haram City as suffering from an abandonment of social commitment that might be described as a 'tragedy of the anticommons' (Heller, 2010),

[3] For more from the perspective of legal scholarship, see debates between Henry Smith's *Property as the Law of Things* (2012) and Joseph Singer's *Property as the Law of Democracy* (2014).

where any collaborative effort, including community building, is lost over total rigid compartmentalisation of claims. If a tragedy of the commons captures why things are likely to fall apart, then a tragedy of the anticommons captures the difficulty of putting them back together (Fennell, 2009b), and the more time passes in Haram City the more residents come together in mutually recognised frustration over the latter dilemma.[4]

One possible way of framing this détente as a more pluralistic and inclusive normative order, then, is through codification of an emerging shared awareness of the 'semicommons' (Fennell, 2011b, p. 17; H. E. Smith, 2000, pp. 135–135).[5] In this legal framework, mutual recognition of clearly established but plural uses and claims — owned in common at one scale, but in private at another, simultaneously meshed together — can limit impulses toward self-serving behaviour (H. E. Smith, 2000, pp. 146–154).[6] As most long-term residents would agree, all neighbourhoods, but especially private ones built on expectations of new solidarities through recombinant social relations, invariably constitute "mixed systems of communal and individual property rights" (Ostrom 1999, pp. 351–352), becoming "nested enterprises" (Ostrom, 1990). As each Haram City home is modified, each owner (aspiring or otherwise) accepts a neighbour's changes in order for their own to be accepted, and there is a sense that the whole territory is gradually becoming an amalgamated property claim against or in parallel to OHC's own, partly managed individually and partly modified in common (C. M. Rose, 2011, p. 32). Perhaps defining this détente as a purposeful semicommons might create avenues for more inclusive forms of codifying order, and, if residents were ever allowed to fully self-manage, an ambiguous but territorially contained legality could

[4] The tragedy of the commons is associated with too many dispersed "use privileges" and the tragedy of the anticommons with too many "exclusion rights" (Heller, 1998, p. 677).

[5] The semicommons was first coined by legal scholar Henry Smith to describe medieval English fields accommodating both farming and grazing at multiple scales under different ownership regimes, with interwoven strips of farmer-owned land constituting the totality common grazing territory (2000).

[6] Meshed property relations also purposefully obscure some boundaries and therefore people's idea of whether a particular action will be to other's benefit or detriment, encouraging people to err on the side of safety (Fennell, 2009a, p. 20).

diagram a forum for legal experimentation.

Overall, in Haram City the notion that property rights are contestable, distributed, and overlapping is publicly discussed common knowledge. Even if continuously evolving claims are temporarily 'regularised' by one institution or another, from squatting to commercial conversions, and from sublets to expensive remodelling — each equally in contravention to increasingly incongruous company covenants — it is unlikely that reasserting rigidly atomised propertied life will do anything but inflame tensions across and within already fragmented communities. While all residents demand a comfortable life, stable shelter, and the means to provide for families, when top-down suburban planning adapts to "affordable" Egyptian life, most residents increasingly see a harmonious relationship between order and ownership as a pattern of inhabitation resembling more of a meshwork than an archipelago. Where each home's 'bundle of rights' can begin to interlock with those adjacent to it, like a network of knotted roots, a spectrum of claims is strengthened in common.

APPENDIX I: ETHNOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT

Sheikh Youssef's Desert City Dreams

Youssef spends a lot of time dreaming. He mostly dreams about finding a foreign wife - having me help him speak with non-Egyptians through various Facebook games - or he dreams by Google-searching improbable Chinese creations - like a supposed 'flying tuk-tuk' - for possible development in Egypt. Often with an air of resignation to what he sees as his own fate as a single man, he is also unable to advance in the career as religious advisor due to his inability to afford proper instruction. He hopes, at least, to have lots of animals to befriend and care for, and Haram City's stray dogs allow him to do this. One day, he asked me why I would be doing a PhD on social issues around housing and urbanism in Egypt when I could have been an engineer: "If you are an engineer from a good university like Oxford, why wouldn't you invent something?" Engineering, he believes, can make great value from little material, a sum greater than the parts: "An inventor is even better than a discoverer, because he invents a thing that was never there." He sees invention as the most admirable form of accomplishment, because of the materialisation of previously unknown possibilities that it represents. So, his flying tuk-tuk plan, for example, "is easy. I could get a motor from the refrigerator, connect it to a fan, have some metal wires and belts, tie it to a chair and, with the proper weight, there you go." However, he insists:

> I would do this project in America; it is not suitable for Egypt … People here never encourage you to do something good. They will only encourage you to do something bad. If I were in America, my brain would invent many things. But here my brain is going to rust … Abroad, if you have an idea they will improve it until it becomes a reality. Here in in Egypt they would steal it from you and beat you up … Ahmed Zewail [Nobel Prize winning Egyptian chemist] is successful because he went to abroad.

When I asked why he focused on the United States, he replied, that - though he believes the US poaches Egypt's greatest scientists actually, it wouldn't matter: "If I'm in any other country, I would invent many things. But in Egypt I can't." He explains the

reasoning with a short anecdote that he hopes I might be able to relate to given my English education: "To invent is like Isaac Newton. The man who discovered gravity. Do you know him? A great scientist. He was sitting and an apple fell over him. And he realised [gravity] because he takes time and thinks. If he was in Egypt he would have just eaten the apple."

As Haram City's sales jingle states, "this reality is here in your days" followed by, crucially, reminding the listener that it is "in your country," a promise that something about the foreign is *here now*. The campaign promises of shift in time - the teleology of western development - and in space - back from 'abroad' and outwards to the unconquered potential the desert. It is a dream image that evokes complex spatial and temporal imaginations of progress and development. In this framing, geographical vectors (outward) become entangled with temporal ones (forward), with the desert frontier perhaps able to reconcile of both. It is paradoxical chronotope - or place-time that resonates simultaneously with utopian imaginations of modernity at home (Karlström, 2004), abroad (Knauft, 2002; Mawani, 2014), and materialised in orderly propertied urbanism. Indeed, Mikhael Bakhtin's coined the term 'chronotope' in part to describe the promise of the agora (Bakhtin, 1981 in Valverde, 2015, p. 14). Others also linked their move to Haram City to a kind of migration, evaluated upon the criteria of how much it might have facilitated invention. So for example another youth, and acquaintance of Youssef in the Duweiqa squatter community, related rumours of countries benefiting from frustrations in Egypt to poach its inventiveness:

> The inventor who invents something, do you think they are truly Americans? No. Most of them are Egyptians, who went there because America has the possibilities to support inventions. If I tried to achieve my ideas here they will never happen, so I travelled to a place that can help me fulfil my dream. Let's say I invent a phone just like this one. So they put my name on the invention and then consider my nationality to be American. And it is fair to agree to this, because my own country didn't help me.

When pressed to provide an account of how his dreams of invention relate to his move

to Haram City, only rarely and in private Youssef speaks of his original lingering hope for "a city of self-sufficiency" (*medina al aktafa' dhati*), a promise he found reason to believe from beyond the gates in Orascom Housing Community's self-promotion as a 'cooperative':

> You know what I dream of? Making this city self-sufficient. You wouldn't understand me, maybe. Self-sufficiency in the city … We gather all the wise and respected men, and together we reach self-sufficiency. We get a piece of land from the city, and we plant it with tomato and lemons and carrots and whatever … We could build a bottle or a lighter factory, or anything … And the fruits of our labour will be divided among us. This way we could build our own community. The company may help with water and security. Or with some trucks to irrigate the land. I dream of something like this. But no matter how I speak, no one will hear me. But if you suggested something like that, it could be done immediately: to close the city on ourselves as one family.

As a start, he wishes for the formation of a Haram City *shora* ('council') where everyone, including janitors, can equally give their opinion and be heard. In this passage we see that Youssef's 'ideal city' is remarkably similar Aristotle's definition of a polis:

> A community of clans and settlements, [the essential trait of which is] a perfect and self-sufficient life. This is namely a good and happy life. Thus the community of a polis is founded for the sake of good deeds and not for the sake of merely living together (*Politics*, 1280b39-1281a4 in Psarros, n.d., p. 1).[1]

Importantly, Youssef's emphasis here is not on moral-behavioural liberal conceptions of self-help or "pulling yourself by your own bootstraps," rooted in the assumptions of responsibilisation over the inability to independently overcome negative liberties. Rather, self-sufficiency is expressed in the sense of autarchy (from the Aristotelian notion '*autarkeia*' and not to be confused with 'autarchy' - the idea of rejecting government), distinct from autonomy as self-determination in its emphasis on communitarian conditions for moral self-realisation.

Youssef, a thoroughly devout and pious mosque attendant and Islamic Revivalist, entirely avoids moral religious claims for self-sufficiency. In fact, he often explicitly insists that his vision is grounded in engendering solidarity between Egypt's religious and

[1] For an alternative translation, see Aristotle, 1995, p. 30.

ideological diversity, perceiving a general tendency towards atomisation of social solidarities and commitments. Youssef's emphasis on collective, rather than individualistic, self-sufficiency delineates parameters for self-fulfilment inextricable from the greater whole. The invention of communal self-sufficiency is contingent on not 'eating the apple,' individualistic material self-sufficiency, and promissory for further self-realisation through invention.

The notion that interconnectedness is vital for self-realisation as a separative group is difficult to render accurately in the English language. It is perhaps most accurately captured in Ibn Khaldun's notion of *'asabiyyah*.[2] *'Asabiyyah* loosely translates to 'solidarity,' but its precise meaning as used by Ibn Khaldun exist at the intersection of the following notions in his text: 'socio-psychological solidarity,' 'esprit de corp,' 'common will' (in German *gemeinsinn*), 'common sentiment' (*gemeingefugl*), 'social cohesion' (in the sense of social capital/networks), 'irrational feeling of solidarity,' 'clanism,' 'group rationalism,' 'organic solidarity,' 'collective conscious,' or even — from a modern perspective — 'nationalism' (Chabane, 2008, p. 341; Ibn Khaldûn, 1969). Youssef's specific geographical awareness around this term as a circumscribed territory, then, is closely associated the relationship Ibn Khaldun describes between *'asabiyyah* and urbanisation (*'umran*) as an organising logic for the world, and an equally slippery term containing notions of: 'civilisation,' 'culture,' and even 'sociology/society.' A central theme for Ibn Khaldun is *'umran al-'alam* ('universal urbanisation') - a collective historical-materialist march towards city-ness (where city-ness also means civilisation) and leisure, but also, inevitably, crisis (Chabane, 2008, p. 332; Ibn Khaldûn, 1969). For Youssef, getting closer to a spatialised sensation of solidarity is important amidst Egypt's tumultuous politics, even if it's a small effort: "Some people say if all the country is a mess why should we look at this small

[2] Historiographer, historian, and philosopher Ibn Khaldun was born in Tunis (1332), worked and travelled widely in the Arab speaking world, and died in Cairo (1406) under the Mamluk Sultanate. He's perhaps the first historian to explicitly look at the effects of space and the environment on society and people.

city? But I will start with myself. If succeeding to generate [collective] revenue, it will be an example."

Over time and many conversations however, Sheikh Youssef - who often sympathises with (but does not proclaim himself to be) the Muslim Brotherhood - began to revise his views on discovery, invention, and self-sufficiency. Ten months after first meeting him and after the 14 August 2013 Rabaa massacre, when I inquire about updates on prospects for his "self-sufficiency" dream, he responded: "The only problem is that there are selfish people in this city, who only love themselves… lazy and selfish." When I made reference to Orascom Housing Communities' Arabic name as Cooperative, he replied, "it is only cooperative by name" and that "people's way of thinking is very strange in this place." He then expressed nostalgia for his home neighbourhood in central Cairo: "If you go to Maadi for instance you will meet simple and ordinary people. But here people are always thinking 'he has money, how can I take it from him.' They think very strangely." One of the only ways to bring self-sufficiency, he argued, would be if people collected money together, "but if we give everything to Samih Sawiris (CEO of OHC) then it is useless. He has enough." He briefly slipped back into his dream, offering that the Haram City's recycling plant, for example, should be fully run and controlled by residents, with money returning to them. But even proposing this, he conceded, would lead people to "consider that you are a fool or seeking your own interest." Recently, Youssef had also been thinking a lot more about *Jinn* in the desert city - ghosts mentioned in the Koran that inhabit the realm between the living and the dead - asking me frequently about my own views on the matter. He concluded:

> I'm an ordinary young man, but I usually think about the future of mankind instead of my own. If I died broke without getting married then it is God's will. But I can't think by myself. When you are alone you are weak, but fifteen people will make a difference. Each one will provide an idea, and you push each other. If you are alone, forget it.

APPENDIX II: TEN RECOMMENDATIONS

This thesis remains highly sceptical of the democratic potential or public benefit offered by public-private partnership social housing, particularly considering tremendous incentives to not enforce contractual commitments in the long-term. If they are to become a growing reality in the Global South, as seems plausible, perhaps some things can be done differently. Rather than being ignored, the inevitability of complex questions over legality in private governance of low-income people should be engaged with towards experimentation with innovative 'unbundled' approaches to property rights for productive conviviality. Towards a more inclusive and less divided compound, supporting resettled and low-income needs, I offer ten recommendations based on several years of engagement with Orascom Housing Communities' Haram City:

a) Twenty-year moratorium (at least) on sublet, resale, or rental (rather than five), and enforced by banning estate agent/*simsar* offices within the compound.
b) Government must play a direct role at *point of purchase*, within company offices. Distanced control between bureaucracies creates many opportunities for circumventing requirements.
c) Create mechanisms for purchase and sale of rights and liabilities within a property, allowing home conversion to generate labour opportunities. A market for rights and liabilities, explicitly unbundling entitlements in property and making them alienable, could take the form of a 'menu' with a variety of fee schedules (for a detailed proposal on mechanisms for exchanging "unbounded" property entitlements, see Fennell, 2014).
d) If the troubled goal of creating an affordable mortgage market persists, mortgages must be mandatory in middle-income developments — circumventing

a majority of people who claim low-income but make one-off purchases on home. Many lump sum purchases are most likely second homes that are rented out for significantly higher prices, inflating prices throughout.

e) At current pricing targets (assuming they are respected) government upper income limits will be the exact and only client base. Targets must be structured around both maximum and minimum income brackets for demographic clarity.

f) Gear subsidies to homeowners (rather than to developers) with mandatory links to specific developments that a family/person has been approved for.

g) Research, design, and incorporate forms of payment suitable to irregular employment. Not doing so *by definition* excludes a vast majority of Egyptians, and virtually all low-income Egyptians.

h) Contractual obligations for public-private partnerships should include full transparency of company profits and expenses. Accurate figures for OHC are not available (At present OHC staff have claimed 25% profit, interviews with Samih Sawiris claim no profit, housing advocates and some residents claim 70% profits).

i) 'Low-income' must be defined beyond income quintiles and with respect to original area of residence and form of employment. Currently the term is structured to ambivalently refer to both "youth" and poor families. In the former case, the son of a billionaire would technically be able to claim independent assets below government thresholds.

j) In all Egyptian new town developments it is currently prohibited for residents to create shops, services, workshops, or offices (Sims, 2015, p. 154). Because low-income survival largely depends on building local social-commerce networks, it is vital that developers creatively accommodate them in some form. By providing adequate space and infrastructure for *all* residents to practice their trade, it is unlikely that they will resort to dismantling their own home.

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