From state security to human security: a case of archipelago of gender justice in Egypt

Ibrahim Saleh

Centre for Film and Media Studies, University of Cape Town, South Africa

Abstract

The prevailing system of state or national security is incompatible with and is the foremost obstacle to both human security and planetary security. If human security is to be achieved, patriarchy has to be replaced with gender equality and a new thinking about power, because patriarchy privileges a minority of men who rationalize the harm they cause to those over whom they have power. This research attempts to investigate contemporary feminist thinking and practice in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The research offers a hands-on experience with the aim of understanding, critiquing, as well as comparatively analyze the politics of gender in the MENA region. Media miss stories that address the factors that hinder women's effective participation as citizens in governance and decision-making processes, and in politics that make media gender-blind. Mainstream media are a site of potential challenge to patriarchal discourse that normalizes gender hierarchy. News accounts of women frequently invite their audiences to blame victims by including details that can suggest that women provoke such as harassment with their clothing choices, drug or alcohol consumption, or decisions to leave the confines of the home. The research covers current debates on the status of women, and closely examines the processes by which the private/public lives of women are gendered. It addresses women's visibility in society and the mediatisation of women's and feminist movements. The research follows an interdisciplinary and uses feminist pedagogy to challenge orientalist, monolithic, and Eurocentric notions of studying the region and particularly the status of women. It gives equal weight to theory and practice and draws on writings by local and global activists and theorists.

Key Words: Egypt, Gender security, State Oppression, biopolitics, genre mainstreaming, patriarchal norms, 'masculinist restoration', human-security State

Introduction

The essence of human security, wellbeing made possible through the elimination of all forms of violence, assured by institutions designed specifically to achieve and maintain well-being; in short, demilitarizing national security and bringing an end to patriarchy (Reardon & Hans, 2010).

The recent history of Internet use in the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA) includes examples of women starting women-centered news sites, heading women's rights and human rights organizations, creating films that highlight women's lives blogging about their social movements, and using text, Twitter, and cell phone videos to engage in revolutionary action. It is evident that communication technologies are powerful tools to change the position of MENA women. However, government repercussions, global economic concerns, and challenges as to how many and what types of women have access to these technologies must be noted (Newsom, Cassara, & Lengel, 2011).

These debates reflect a larger issue surrounding local constructions of and reactions to women's knowledge and values in response to a global push toward Gender Mainstreaming (GM)[1]. This concept is worthy of careful analysis in the MENA, where the status of women is challenged by cultural juxtapositions, traditional narratives, diverse value systems, and contemporary power structures (Bayat, 2010). Local perspectives are constantly changing, though the status of women in MENA is rooted in the clash between local and global value systems.

The discourse of GM is itself part of the problem. GM discourse is a reflection of global development policy discourse, which has often been cited by postcolonial theorists and grassroots organizers as biased against the local cultures and the values and ideals of women in those cultures (Mohanty, 2003; Ong, 1988; Said, 1978). Additionally, the discourses surrounding technology are critiqued as reinforcing patterns of colonial privilege by valuing Western-style technology and industry over local or cottage industry, technologies, and expertise (Gajjala & Mamidipudi, 1999; Harding, 2010).

The research argues that they provide an illustration of the complexity and dynamism of security. To serve this goal, the researcher here examines security through the notion of societal security as understood by Ole Wæver, and use identity as a 'door' to a broader understanding and use of the concept of security. The focus of the research is gender identity during the current political transitions as an integral perspective of security (Weaver, 2010).

In conjunction with elite-defined state interests, identity articulates the security interests of 'significant groups', supporting the articulation of security needs by individuals and communities. Gender is identified as a 'significant group' relevant to the security dynamic. Using gender identity to understand security requires breaking down rigid and fundamental structures that have been built around traditional notions of security, allowing for articulations of security as it is understood by individuals in general and by women in particular (Hoogensen & Rottem, 2004).

But how is gender related to revolutions? What is the connection between "gender" and women or, for that matter, between gender and women and men? If gender is generally understood to be the social construction of sexual difference, what explains the differences in gendered identities across cultures or over time?

These questions were posed in dramatic fashion by the political and social changes in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) were initiated with the "Arab revolutions" starting in the spring of 2011. Women were involved in the Arab revolutions, in all their aspects, and women's rights as a feature of citizens' rights have been central to the democratic mobilizations against corrupt and autocratic regimes (Moruzzi, 2013). Yet all too often the gendered aspects of political struggles in the region have been reduced to the volatile symbolism of "the veil" and the question, "How do they treat their women?" "every state regime, no matter where it sits on a authoritarian-democratic spectrum, cannot be reliably understood until it has been thoroughly subjected to a serious gender analysis. Berlusconi's Italian, Pinochet's Chilean, Qaddafi's Libyan, Assad's Syrian, Sarkozy's French and the now-wobbly Japanese regimes – all of them need feminist-informed gender dissection" (Enloe, 2013).

This research aims to unpack the gaps in the study of neoliberalism and biopolitics, by identifying and explaining the powerful new police practices, religious politics, sexuality identifications, and gender normativities that have travelled across an archipelago, which is a metaphorical island chain of what the coercive states in the Middle East and North Africa

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[1] Gender Mainstreaming, an attempt to get more women involved in the development process on a global level is a concept constructed and supported by the United Nations (UN) as part of global development policy. In the information technology sector, this process involves encouraging corporations and governments to increasingly hire women and to incorporate women's issues into technology production, work, and play.

(MENA) face on daily bases that have developed into a governance model of "human-security state" (Amar, 2013a).

The need for radical social change is pressing and the desire for it widespread. The current global scene witness an increasing gender aware politics that struggles to actively pursue goals of social justice, equality, deeper democracy, a social and environmentally sustainable economy and a demilitarised politics are politically active without being members of political parties. Progressive social movements radicalise public consciousness. Generally, however, they are unable to give these shifts in consciousness a wider political coherence (Wainwright, 2008).

The purpose of this research is to assert that gender is a relevant category when analysing politics in any country. Hence, using security as an example urges us to consider a number of areas in which a feminist perspective can contribute to discussion and a deeper understanding of the political transition in Egypt. In the words of J. Ann Tickner, security "has been central to the discipline of international relations since its inception in the early twentieth century" and "is also an important issue for feminists who write about international relations" (Tickner 1997).

The research aims to unveil how a redefinition of security in feminist terms could help uncover uncomfortable truths about the world in which we live; how the 'myth of protection' is a lie used to legitimize war; and finally how discourse in international politics is constructed of dichotomies and how their deconstruction could lead to benefits for the human race.

Mainstream International Relations (IR) theorists; consider security solely in terms of state security, though most wars since 1945 have been fought within states and not across international boundaries (Tickner and Sjoberg 2010, p.203). IR feminists define security more broadly, as the diminution of all forms of violence that includes domestic violence, rape, poverty, gender subordination, economic, and ecological destruction (Tickner and Sjoberg 2010).

One of the alternative ways of considering insecurity using a gender-sensitive approach is considering economic security. Women are disproportionately located at the bottom of the socio-economic scale in all societies due to the gendered division of labour. Women are paid a lower wage due to the assumption that their wage is supplementary, while in actual fact about a third of all households are headed by women (Moylan, 2013). "Structural violence has four basic components: exploitation which is focused on the division of labor with the benefits being asymmetrically distributed, penetration which necessitates the control by the exploiters over the consciousness of the exploited thus resulting in the acquiescence of the oppressed, fragmentation which means that the exploited are separated from each other, and marginalization with the exploiters as a privileged class with their own rules and form of interaction"(Caprioli 2005, p.164). "

According to feminist literature, "the world is made up of dichotomies, and these dichotomies are gendered. For example, masculinity has positive characteristics in international politics, such as rational, strong, dominant, militarized, and public, while feminists have negative connotations that are emotional, weak, subordinate, peaceful, and private. Gender equality might have a dual impact in hindering the ability of groups to mobilize the masses in support of insurrection through the use of gendered language and stereotypes and in reducing societal tolerance for violence" (Caprioli 2005, p. 162).

Feminist theorists have called for a reconceptualization of power from what has been labelled the traditional sense of 'power over' or 'power as dominance'(Salla 2001). This traditional sense of power is what leads to situations such as the security dilemma, which encourages understanding and joint action.

The spectre of the Iranian revolution haunted the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt whether in the form of threats from Mubarak that Egypt would suffer an Islamic takeover like Iran, or assurances from the Muslim Brotherhood, activists and scholars that these threats were empty.

There seemed to be a consensus across the board that the Iranian Revolution was synonymous with the theocratic and authoritarian state it ushered in.

In a strange coincidence, the Iranian and Egyptian revolutions occurred exactly 32 years apart to the day; they were each born of different eras, different histories, yet they expressed similar popular sentiments despite the fact that those aspirations were articulated through very different frameworks. There are far too many oversimplified accounts of what happened and lest these accounts be continually used to discredit or police the idea of revolution, it is worth going back and recuperating a more complicated understanding of those historic months. This is necessary to counter the revisionism of dominant regional, Western and official Iranian state narratives (Nasrabadi, 2011).

January 2011 Egyptian people took to the streets demanding the fall of a corrupt and authoritarian regime. A revolutionary movement including women and men from different generations, social backgrounds, and diverse political and religious affiliations joined forces to ask for freedom, dignity and social justice. More than three years on from this epochal moment, what are the main challenges that face the politicians, civil society, and the international community? Has the experience of the revolution changed the perception of the relationship between the people and political power in the Arab world? And lastly, what have been the impact of the revolution in the cultural and the intellectual sphere of the Arabic speaking world.

Rather than celebrating the anniversary of its revolution, Egypt is facing great political divisions, aggravated by moves from the ruling party to control the State institutions and restrict basic civil liberties.

Despite playing a significant role in the 2011 Arab Spring protests, demanding greater rights and freedom, women are increasingly being side-lined in transition processes and women activists face safety and security concerns including being harassed and beaten (Saleh, 2013b).

Women from all classes, some veiled, some not took to the streets. "We didn't make a revolution to go backwards," they chanted (Nasrabadi, 2011). Egyptian women, a new phase of struggle against new state forms of patriarchy began at the very moment when the struggle for national liberation was over. Hence, women were betrayed by the revolution they helped to make (Saleh, 2013a). They were marginalized and even excluded from the emerging power structures and the national political rhetoric (Middleton-Detzner et. al, 2011).

This is an in-depth critical analysis of the feminist role in the public opinion dynamics and the political rhetoric in the fight for the costly delays. It also examined the internal diversity of these feminist movements (Lewis, 2010).

The basic relationship between gender and politics is important to remember because analysts so often segregate "women's issues" from others and consider gender dynamics irrelevant to local conditions and social change. Political participation of women has been always dtermined by the entrenched social and cultural barriers imposed by the patriarchal society, which was later reinforced by the wave of Islamic fundamentalism that swept across the Arab world since the 1980s.

Muslim Brotherhood denounced[2] and slamed the UN document because it contradicts principles of Islam and destroys family life and entire society, though in fact it denies the right of Egyptian women to be safe from violence, the right to fight for their rights, indeed the right to be equal as humans.

By 2012, the newly parliament then wrapped in the cloak of religious conservatism and fewer women are represented (Equitas, 2012). The irony lies in the despair looms of how religious

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[2] http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=30731

fundamentalists pushed laws to silence women's voices as they deemed "*awra*" (sinful) (Allam, 2013).

According to the Gender Gap Report issued by the *World Economic Forum* 2012,[3] Egypt was ranked 125 out of 133 in the world; and the rank dropped further after the revolution since 2011 to 128. And the new breed of women under the relgioius groups stated that it is enough to have one woman in the parliament!" (Sholkamy, 2012).

Ttrapped inside politics: Egyptian women and laws

The 1994 United Nations Development Programme's *Human Development Report* helped solidify the concept of human security, although recognition of people's security independent of state security is nothing new (Axworthy, 2001).

Within the UNDP report, human security is defined as 'freedom from fear, freedom from want', seen as consisting of four characteristics: universal, interdependent, easier to ensure through early prevention and people-centred (UNDP 1994: 23–24). The UNDP report additionally identified seven primary categories: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security (Axworthy, 2001).

Local knowledge, as described by Geertz (1983), refers to the social, historical, and cultural experience of individuals within a distinct culture or locality. Local knowledge differs from "Western" or "scientific" knowledge in "the ways it explains and establishes knowledge claims. Previous scientific assessments have been based on a particular Western epistemology, one that often excludes local knowledges, ignores cultural values, and disregards the needs of local communities" (Salas, 2005, p. 5).

The local experiences, identities, and definitions of women and gender that are not tied to essentialized, global categories need to be encouraged and empowered. In some fields such as agriculture, reliance on local knowledge has been seen as a necessary ingredient to truly sustainable development (Feldman & Welsh, 1995).

Perhaps especially in MENA, there is a well-established tradition of authoritarian governments incorporating women as equal political subjects through state-sponsored policies of secular modernization, but no one as participatory political citizens (Totten, 2012).

Patriarchal norms, often legally enforced, have frequently been invoked by liberal capitalism to maintain social order alongside the unregulated freedoms of the market. The ideology of unfettered economic freedom has provoked a corollary ideology of desirable social controls; despite possible libertarian experiments, modern capitalist social orders have mostly privileged the family as an idealized site of naturalized obligation for all concerned. But patriarchy also involves the domination of men; it is a system of hierarchical order for everyone, gendered but also aged, classed and raced. Status is inflected by position relative to the familial model of the singular patriarch, and although patriarchy provides rigidly limited social identities, the position of any individual within the hierarchical structure is essentially dynamic. One is not born but becomes a patriarch (Moruzzi, 2013).

It was only in the nineteenth century that veiling became such a contested symbol of Islam as a religion and a culture. At the nexus of imperialism and nationalism, the veil became variously the representation of women, culture, oppression, liberation, piety, tradition and fanaticism. Though contradictory, these understandings of veiling cast its meaning as fixed and absolute. Research has consistently shown, however, that both the form and the meaning of veiling as a practice change over time and place (Ahmed, 2012).

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[3] http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2012

Women in fragile and conflict-affected states face a unique set of issues and challenges, and these are reflected in *UN Security Council Resolution 1325* and subsequent resolutions. Gender dynamics often play a part in what is driving conflict, and can also provide pathways to peace. This means that taking a gender perspective is important to fully understand a conflict and to be able to design programmes that can effectively address it.

It is important to refer to the issuance of the *Constitution 1956* gave women the rights of political practice within the six major principles in order to establish social justice among gender (Saleh, 2013b). It was crystallized with their participation in the 1957 parliament with two seats (McGrath, 2009).

In November 17, 1962, the law on the formation of the *Preparatory Committee of the National Conference of People's Power* recommended the represnetation of at least (5%) and in September 7, 1975 a socialist union decision of women organization was issued, and its 242 committees comprised of 249862 members nationwide (Morgan, 2011).

Presidential Decree of Law No. 21 of 1979 allocated at least 30 seats for women, with the possibility of the nomination of women to win any other seats, which was then followed by *Law No. 114 of 1983* of the People's Assembly issued to increase the number of seats allocated to women one seat. But in 1986, *Law No. 188 of 1986* was provided for the cancellation of this allocation.

Presidential Decree No. 20 of 2000 established the National Council for Women to promote human rights and freedom. Later in 2009, the law of the People's Assembly was amneded and allocated sixty-four-seats for only two legislative periods to support the role of women's parliamentary participation and political actors, reflecting their positive role in all areas (Morgan, 2011).

Female parliamentary representation declined since 1984, when women occupied 36 of the 458 seats in the *People's Assembly*, the lower house of Egypt's parliament. Women secured just nine of 454 seats in the last legislative election in 2005. Only four women were elected, the rest were appointed by the president.

Women's representation in the parliament remained minimal and insignificant with the exception of the periods that have adopted Quota systems for women and the Proportional list system in 1979, 1984, and 2010 (Arabic Network for Human Rights Information, 2013). The representation has further declined from (12.5 %) in 2010 to (2%) in 2011.

In 2010, the *World Economic Forum Gender Gap Report* ranked Egypt 125th out of 136 countries in terms of the disparity in rights between men and women (Hausmann, Tyson & Zahidi, 2010). In three of the four categories Egypt ranked in the bottom (20%) of countries assessed, based on the level of education of women, the number of women in the labour force and women holding political positions (McKellogg, 2011).

A poll by the *Gallup Center for Muslim Studies* established casuality between social challenges and the role of women. Before the revolution, (76%) said they felt safe walking alone in the streets at night, and after the revolution, only (57%) feel that way, while (37%) who said they felt safe walking emphasized that they are not reluctant to express freely their views (Aziz, 2012).

On the economic levels, unemployment among women continued to rise in 2012, to (24.7 %), compared with (23.6%) in 2011 and (22.76%) before the revolution. In addition, (84%) of women feel less financially secure now than before the revolution and (39%) believe that women's employment opportunities have decreased (Solovieva, 2013).

Women were not mobilized around women's issues but rather as citizens seeking to oust a corrupt regime (Henderson, & Jeydel, 2007). Alluding to the marginalization of women, Carla

Power writes, "Women are good for revolutions, but historically revolutions haven't been so good for women" (Xan Riee, 2010).

Gender and sexuality in revolution: politics and power in Egypt

The main question in this section is how is gender related to revolutions? If gender is the social construction of sexual difference, experienced through daily practices and conventions as well as institutional enforcement, then the relationship between gender and politics is fundamental.

The new political expressions and rebel formations can only be understood by taking account variables that the culturally-oriented theories and pedagogies that dominated Middle East studies have neglected. Given the diverse historical trajectories and current developments, it is crucial to look more closely at specific contexts, rather than engage in sweeping generalisations about gender and revolutions in the Middle East.

For example, the situation in Syria, with the largely militarised uprising and an incredibly violent crack-down by the regime, is dramatically different from processes in Egypt and Tunisia. Bahrain, Yemen or Libya is also radically distinct political, economic and social contexts (Al-Ali, 2014).

Neither gender nor politics is exclusive of the other, nor absolutely determinative. Gender saturates political relationships and the subjective identities of all political actors; collective political change shifts the possibilities for individual experience, including gendered expectations and realities (Nadim Centre, 2013).

Particularly during periods of revolutionary upheaval, gender norms become unstable. If the state itself is under threat, so is the family order sponsored by that state, as was posited as far back as Aristotle. In describing the origin of the polis (the self-governed city-state), the Greek philosopher argued that the first human social relationships were based on reproduction and kinship. With regard to politics, however, "the state is by nature clearly prior to the family and to the individual, since the whole is of necessity prior to the part.

Women's motivations for joining feminist groups are under researched (Lewis 2004). Perhaps the explanation is the society's resentment is an appropriation of religious symbols and rhetoric for legitimacy among politicians and activists alike, works against secularization theory (Smith 1987).

Masculinities and femininities are constantly in crisis, which emphasize a continuous state of contestation, polarisation and struggle over that are closely linked to the political economies. In the Egyptian context, the impact of structural adjustment and neo-liberal policies cannot be overstated.

As Pratt (2013: 2–3) expressed that the intensification of neo-liberal economic reforms has been largely dismantled "ideal" gender relations for working and lower middle class families, but at the expense of the sustainability of social reproduction, thereby creating nostalgia for "traditional" gender relations', in addition to 'the securitization of authoritarian regimes often provoking feelings of emasculation among the victims of security forces (Pratt, 2003).

When talking to Egyptian men and women of low income and middle classes, the nostalgia for a glorified past in which men could be 'real men' and women could be 'real women' often becomes apparent. Besides, there is an overall shift towards more conservative gender norms and relations that are driven not only by Islamist political constituencies but many ordinary people as well.

However, it is not a simple matter to limit the explanation as patriarchy and misogyny the honing in on women's dress codes, their mobility, their sexuality, and their presence during protests, actually the honing in on the fact that they are political actors. The context is radically different, and has been getting there for some time. Hence, it is imperative to introduce the term "masculinist restoration" to signal that when patriarchy as usual no longer feels secure; it requires a higher level of coercion and the deployment of more varied ideological state apparatuses to ensure its reproduction (Kandiyoti, 2013)

To my mind, these rather desperate attempts by the state to reinstate more clear-cut gender norms and relations play right into the insecurities, frustrations and anger of men outside of the political elite who feel challenged by women's aspirations, activism, disobedience and desires.

In the meantime, Islamist organizations preached that the women's place is in the home, by manipulating the interpretation of verses in the Quran to justify discrimination against women (Khalaf, 2012).

Gihan Abouzeid, *United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)*, consultant and managing editor of *Ikhwan Papers* magazine: "We are actually facing two types of challenges. The first is on the policy level because of the conservative religious government and how they understand Islam, and the second is on the cultural level."

Since 1981, Egypt became a signatory to the *United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW), but constraints were mitigated or exacerbated by class position, family culture, and a woman's relative position in intersecting economies of power and influence (Tucker 1993).

Egyptian women still confront daily patriarchy in every sphere of their lives (Abu-Lughod 2001). The patriarchal society limited women's roles to stereotypical domestic responsibilities, deeming them incapable of holding high office.

"Egyptian family law is also biased against women. According to Egyptian writer and women's rights activist Nawal al-Sa'dawi, "the family code in Egypt is one of the worst family codes in the Arab world. ...The husband has absolute control over the family" (Socolovsky, 2011).

The "neo-patriarchy" added to the intnsity of the situation is a product of the intersection between the colonial and indigenous domains of state and political processes (Sharabi, 1988). "The higher you go in the political hierarchy and into the decision making levels, the fewer females you'll find," says Nehad Aboul Komsan, head of the *Egyptian Center for Women's Rights* (Afifi, 2011).

Hidden histories of gender and the state in Egypt

Most studies of women's political participation in the Middle East focus on the problem of low levels of female representation in government, and more particularly, in elected parliaments. This line of research considers the structural and cultural conditions that make it difficult for women to be nominated as candidates and to win political office as well as the behaviour of female parliamentarians once in government.

Most literature support the argument that it is not about 'their culture', but it is about political economies. It is about authoritarian dictatorships and conservative patriarchal interpretations and practices. It is about foreign interventions and invasions. It is thus pertinent to mention intersectionality; that is, that the struggle for women's rights intersects with the struggle against other inequalities, which might include the struggles against imperialism, authoritarianism and, racism crucially as well, sectarianism (Al-Ali, 2014).

The political marginalisation of women and extremely socially conservative attitudes towards women and gender relations need to be analysed by reference to foreign interventions and authoritarian regimes, but surely cannot be reduced to them. This sentiment is not very popular among many progressive academics and activists based in western contexts, but have certainly shaped the way people perceive and react to events unfolding in Egypt.

The question of how *everyday* women respond to the opportunities and incentives presented by parliamentary elections has been largely ignored, however, in favour of studies of the political prospects for female elites. In particular, current studies fail to investigate the extent to which gender considerations impact voter recruitment strategies in competitive parliamentary elections (Blaydes & El Tarouty, 2009).

The gender discrepancy suggests tangible criticism of both the local and the colonial patriarchal cultures that clearly labels "women's ignorance" as the main cause of Egypt backwardness (Al-Ali, 2000).

Feminist movements in Egypt are still seen as essentially western and secular in aligns with the current international (western) paradigm of social theory (Zuhur 1999). Ironically, the space of freedom enjoyed by female intellectuals at the dawn of the 19th century is far wider in comparison to that at the disposal of women a century ago (Sorbera, 2013).

The first generation of Egyptian feminists adopted a secular liberal ideology, without denying members' religious background (Abbott, 1942). Feminism was built on Islamic modernist discourse as nationalist liberal elite, which supported women's social claims, but not their political feminist demands (Fenoglio & el Aal, 1988). These aliegnated ideas were agitated by the rising Islamist movement from the 70s and 80s, which monopolized gender discourses, and labelled feminism as anti-Islamic.

The rise of second wave was characterized with high educated, international networks and high levels of specialization in the field of social sciences. Yet, it was crushed between two powers: the regime stopped every independent initiative and appropriated "gender issues" under its name on one hand, and the Islamist opposition that succeeded in mobilizing the lower classes on the other hand (Toubia, 1987).

As of the 1990s, security police delegitimized them and intimidated them with thugs. Baltagiya[4] are identified as terrorist enemies of the security state (Ismail 2006). The Minstry of Interior recruited these same gangs to flood public spaces during times of protest (Tisdall 2006). Thugs were determined to make the female activists look like 'terrorists'; while beating civilians and doing property damage in the area of the protest (El-Nadeem 2006).

Security police deployed and revived the Islamophobic, gendered and working-class phobic metaphor, by rendering peaceful political movements with an overwhelming public support into hyper-visible. Such hyper-visible para-human subjects were regularized by discourses that cohere around powerful metaphors (Carver & Pikalo 2008) in particular, the 'time-bomb', 'predator' and the 'slum'.

Sexual harassment is rampant: A 2008 study by the *Egyptian Center for Women's Rights* reported that (83%) of women had been harassed, with more than half of the male respondents blamed women for provoking the harassment, an indication of the mindset of many of the perpetrators (Krajeski, 2011).

Female protestors were sexualized and their respectability wiped out in public, by arresting them as prostitutes, registering them in court records and press accounts as sex criminals and then raping and sexually torturing them in jail (Tisdall 2006).

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4 The gangs of 'thugs' and networks of violent extortion rackets seen as emanating from the informal settlements surrounding downtown Cairo

Between 2003 and 2010, feminist movements advocated anti-harassment projects that demonized working-class youth masculinities as well as 'disreputable' public femininities to intensify the policing of the city and discipline public sociability (Amara, 2011).

Women, particularly those visibly marked by class and/or moral bearing as pious and respectable, stood up against the police to subvert it to some extent (El-Nadeem 2006; Al-Dawla 2008). This has eventually made it difficult for the Egyptian police to continue drawing upon class and geopolitical phobias to portray them as terrorists; and the 'thugification' tactic or "baltagi-effect" unravelled (Baron 2007).

Gender & security: from January 25, 2011 to June 30, 2013

Gender is the fundamental construct for how a society understands difference. Regardless of which state we are talking about, tolerance for street harassment, rape, domestic violence, and restrictions on reproductive freedom are among several indicators of gender inequality rooted in such difference. These behaviours correlate to state security in multiple dimensions (Chemaly, 2012).

Religious groups clew back rights that women had fought for and gained before the revolution, and attempted to change divorce and custody laws, push FGM (female genital mutilation), and reduce the age of marriage from 18 to nine years old."

The process of insurgent popular political transformation has followed rough logic of 'turning the security state inside out' (Prince, 2011). The enthusiasm for freedom and democracy has been jeopardized with the realization of the politics of gendered securitization[5] (Amara, 2013).

Estimates put women's participation in the protests at up to (50 %) of the total, (Krajeski, 2011) with the aim to be empowered socially and politically to rise up against the patriarchal society to establish a better for future for all in Egypt (Rakhan, 2011).

Women's groups were further incensed when the constitutional committee introduced Article 75, a proposed amendment to the constitution that implied that the head of state would be a man, effectively excluding women from Egypt's presidency (Nelson, 2011). A petition was presented to alter the criteria for selecting and forming the panel (Khan, 2011).

The United Nations Development Program's *Arab Human Development Report* focused its entire volume on 'The Rise of Women in the Arab World' (Regional Bureau for Arab States, UNDP 2006).

In a study that looked at 23 separate studies over three-quarters (79%) of images of women in Arab media are negative. Most often women are pictured as sexual objects, or as illiterate and dependent on men (Allam, 2008). In contrast, international media reflected a very positive coverage (Huang& Oi Ling, 2011).

Many young women in Egypt strive for women's rights and justice within a religious framework is often passed over (Jassat, 2012) and the Egyptian journalist Mona Eltahawy explains, "These young women were saying, 'we will not be scared away. We are standing up for our rights to be active and equal members of Egyptian society" (Martin, 2011).

International media have focused on non-popular feminists such as Aliaa Mahdy, the 20-year-old Egyptian blogger who posed naked online as a political statement in November 2011.

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[5] The use of gender by the Transportation Security Administration reduces security for the nation.Gender is one of the few pieces of biometric information currently in use, and biometric information is seen as the "holy grail" of securitization (Currah & Mulqueen, 2011)

Aliaa's name and Twitter hashtag *#NudePhotoRevolutionary* attracted a lot of attention across social media networks; names of women who have challenged the abuses of women's rights received minimal attention.

The politics of integrating gender to state development

Gender mainstreaming is too often treated as an end in itself rather than as a means to an end. Simply encouraging women to participate in politics does not alter the status of gender in any society, especially the one that still fights violence against women and girls and to bridge feminism and communication rights in the MENA.

Many of the local narratives conflict with the feminist ideologies and global values at the core of GM policies. Western assumptions of MENA women's complicity have been critiqued by MENA feminist scholars for decades (Kandiyoti, 1988; Makdisi, 2009; Muslim Media Watch, 2010) and reinterpreted from local and postcolonial perspectives as using

Western standards to interpret something that has to be understood from the "Othered" point of view (Abouzeid, 2008; Abu Lughod, 2001; Mohanty, 1986; Said, 1978).

This research examined the mutually influential interactions of gender and the state in Egypt. Locating watershed moments in the processes of gender construction by the organized power of the ruling classes and in the processes, has conditioned state-making, which offered a fresh insight that was lacking in previous studies of state formation.

Understanding security through gender identity forces us to re-evaluate traditional security politics, where security and securitization are traditionally understood as the top of the state hierarchy, where securitization is the exclusive domain of extraordinary measures as defined by perceived threats toward the state and where securitization is a negative process that demands emergency action 'outside the bounds of normal political procedure' (Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde, 1998). Securitization understood thus means failure: failure to address the issue within 'normal bounds' (Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde, 1998). Securitization is a threat–defence sequence that we are told we must avoid.

The very best indicator and predictor of a state's peacefulness is not wealth, military expenditures, or religion; the best predictor is how well its girls and women are treated. But gendered issues are processes of continued negotiation and reformation that continue well after power has officially changed hands and revolutionaries have cleared the streets. "Things have not changed; they are changing," said Mozn Hassan, the executive director of the women's rights research organization Nazra for Feminist Studies (Otterman, 2011).

The notion of the 'masculinity games' (Enloe, 2000) constituted the power of the authoritarian security state in undergirding the geopolitics of 'harassment feminism.' It also emphasized that the feminist voices still struggle to be heard amid the current political uncertainty.

After the initial euphoria has abated and the reality of rebuilding the government has set in, women are blatantly absent from the constitutional process in the second republic in Egypt. But "there's also a new level of confidence and self-awareness among women as a result of their integral role in the revolution," said Hoda Badran, chair of the Alliance for Arab Women."

There is no doubt that elements of the Egyptian authorities are using violence, including sexual violence, that is, harassment and rape, in a targeted manner to intimidate women and assert control. Yet, this form of gender-based violence does not exist in a vacuum and both research and activism need to address the continuum of sexual and wider gender-based violence.

Long-term, Egyptian feminists are challenged to intervene in debates and policymaking to address the increase in poverty, the inadequate redistribution of wealth and resources, high unemployment rates and neo-liberal economic policies. At the same time the biggest dilemmas is to avoid the extremely unhelpful rhetoric of 'male mob violence' while actively addressing widespread lawlessness, a normalisation of violence, and misogynistic attitudes and practices.

Address correspondence to: ibrahim.saleh@uct.ac.za

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