An Identity and an Uprising:
The Politicization of Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa

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Abstract

Historically, political mobilization within the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa for homeland politics has been minimal. Yet, since 2011, its members have taken part in a wide range of activities with the hope that they could contribute to the Egyptian uprising and shape the new political environment that arose from it. What compelled them to do so, and why only since 2011? Rooted in both the literatures on diaspora and transnationalism, this thesis argues that there were two simultaneous processes behind their mobilization. First, their sense of belonging to Egypt led some individuals within the Ottawa community to give a new political aspect and meaning to their Egyptian identity, and second, a series of events linked to the Egyptian uprising acted as catalysts to turn these identity-related feelings into action, which subsequently created new rifts within the community.

Contents

Introduction

In the heat of the moment, it was easy to use superlatives and to rely on clichés when describing the 2011 Egyptian civil uprising. The "Egyptian Revolution," as many called it, was an "unprecedented" and "historical moment" that was setting the tone for a "new kind of politics" in the Middle East and North Africa. The "voice of the people" would prevail, and the Arab world was entering its "spring" after decades—if not centuries—of "cultural and political decline."

Four years later, a handful of facts can be held for certain about this uprising: its magnitude and power took everyone by surprise, including many world leaders, but its long-term effects on Egyptian society are obscured by political violence at the hands of a new regime which, by human rights standards, echoes that of Hosni Mubarak's worse days (Human Rights Watch, 2014a). To these I would like to propose something else, if only to be reminded that Egypt goes beyond those 1,000,000 square kilometres of land in the northeastern corner of Africa: the uprising had a substantial impact on Egyptian communities outside Egypt. It touched the lives of every Egyptian residing abroad, whether they were long-time emigrants or they had recently left the country. It shook communities and how they were organized, and it politicized people. So influential was the impact that, as the uprising has lost its vitality, Egyptians abroad continue denouncing violence and urging for democracy, human rights, and the withdrawal of the Egyptian military from politics.

Using the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa since the Egyptian uprising as a case study, this thesis looks at the impact of homeland politics on expatriate communities. In contrast with pre-uprising attitudes, the Ottawa community has become strongly politicized since 2011. Many activities related to the Egyptian uprising took place and political groups emerged for the first time. What caused these changes and what were the processes behind

them? Considering that these events had limited consequences to their lives in Canada, why bother? More importantly, as the uprising in Egypt seems to have fizzled out, why would some Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa continue to be involved in a network of Egyptian expatriates whose objective is to remove Egypt's current military regime from power?

Due to their identity that is rooted in both Egypt and Canada, one could presume that Egyptian Canadians' politicization since 2011 could be influenced either by events happening in Egypt or by Canada's democratic environment. However, anecdotal evidence shows that the process that took place was not as straightforward. As an example, many Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa first met at the Egyptian embassy to protest, but some subsequent gatherings were organized on Parliament Hill.

This research argues that, since 2011, the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa has been going through its own politicization process. Although changes within the community have been prompted by the Egyptian uprising, the process is not a duplicate of the situation in the homeland, as it is also shaped by the living environment, i.e. Canada. As such, the Egyptian Canadian politicization process is not an either-or situation: it is a combination of both the Egyptian and Canadian aspects of Egyptian Canadians' circumstances.

The 2011 Egyptian uprising triggered the process by changing the community's political opportunity structures on several occasions. Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa responded to these changes by continuously reconfiguring the community in accordance with the political changes in their home country, but on their own terms. In fact, they managed their own politicization, and in due course, some community members emerged as leaders who were able to harness a newly-politicized Egyptian identity to promote political activities independent from those occurring in Egypt.

The changes to the political opportunity structures redefined the public space for political action and dissension, giving Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa a better access to Egyptian political institutions and allowing them to become involved in their homeland's politics. Not only were they willing to participate to the uprising despite the distance, but they believed that it was their responsibility and duty to help with the country's democratic transition. However, contrary to the situation in Egypt, where it has become increasingly treacherous to speak out against the military regime, political dissension abroad continues.

This research is relevant on two points. At the empirical level, it sheds light on how Egyptians residing abroad lived and understood such an intense moment in Egypt's recent political and social history. Their ties and their deep sense of Egyptian identity played a major role in how they decided to take part into demonstrations and form political groups. There have been many political activities since 2011, and it is important to understand what those were and how they paralleled simultaneous events in Egypt.

At the theoretical level, this research examines the political mobilization of a group of immigrants from the community's perspective, an area that has received little academic attention. The literature on diaspora—which considers the political involvement of immigrants for their homeland—assumes that such groups either simply exist—and are thus enshrined in some aura of timelessness—or are tools created by the home state. It hardly looks at the role of the communities and their members as agents of political mobilization.

Two reasons motivate the study of the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa to understand these developments. Although much smaller than those of Montreal and Toronto, the Ottawa community enjoys a similar diversity: it comprises both Christian and Muslim Egyptians, each with their particular religious configurations. Community members are both younger and older, and their date of emigration varies from 30 years to as recently as less

than one year ago. Additionally, the political mobilization of Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa was distinctive by their proximity to two institutions unavailable to other Egyptian communities in the country: the Egyptian embassy and Parliament Hill, both of which became important symbolic locations for political gatherings.

This thesis will be divided into four sections. I will first present a literature review that will discuss the general assumptions and limitations of both the literatures on diaspora and transnationalism in order to fully understand current political developments within the Egyptian Canadian community. I will then introduce a conceptual framework to explain the Ottawa community's politicization. Using Tarrow's political opportunity structures, I will first propose that the process is akin to social movements, but with one major difference: instead of being a reaction to changes in the state of residence, this social movement is in tune with the state of origin.

Following this, I will paint a quick portrait of the Egyptian community in Canada to provide general context, and I will locate the Ottawa community within it. This will give me the opportunity to present the social and political structures of Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa before and since 2011, which will reveal the relevance of the changes that are the subject of this research.

I will then move on to my empirical data and present how the politicization process took shape. Focusing on Egyptian Canadians' identity, I will show that it was not set in stone and that, for many individuals, it became politicized since 2011: these changes were reflected in the type of political activities in which they have partaken as the uprising went on. They were not mobilizing randomly, and each activity had a deeper meaning that exhibited a collective understanding of where they fit within the global Egyptian community, and the real impact they could have on the Egyptian government, the Egyptian society, and the

Canadian government. Although most Egyptian Canadians always felt "Egyptian," for many this identity became politicized after 2011, and as such, their uprising-related activities were often political messages targeted at political interlocutors in order to be included in the Egyptian polity. Instead of viewing it as a mobilizing factor, I will show that their identity was a tool that they utilized when performing political activities.

The last chapter will focus on how this politicization process was one that was neither Egyptian, nor Canadian, but truly Egyptian-Canadian. I will first address the reasons why Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa have participated to uprising-related activities by showing that the uprising transformed the political opportunity structure for Egyptians abroad. However, as changes to the structure happened at several occasions since 2011, the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa had to continuously adjust to a new environment and modified their political attitudes, strategies and activities, according to their circumstances outside Egypt. The lasting effect for the community lies in the fact that Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa have become autonomous in their political mobilization. The window of opportunity opened by the uprising may have shut in Egypt, but some members of the Ottawa community are now working with other Egyptians around the world to bring political changes to their homeland.

Methodology and Sample

This research is based on empirical data that I collected from October to December 2014. During that period, I met and interviewed 12 members of the Egyptian Canadian community living in Ottawa and Gatineau. I spent a little over an hour with each of them to discuss what has been happening at the political level with Egyptian Canadians since 2011. All but one accepted that I record our discussions, which I then transcribed for analysis.

Finding these participants was done in two ways. Through preliminary research, I gathered information on political groups in Ottawa that had been or were still active, and they had websites or Facebook pages that provided contact information. I also used the snowball effect method, which was either set in motion after an interview with people in those political groups, or through existing contacts with members of the Egyptian community in Ottawa.

I selected individuals based on three political ideologies that emerged very soon in my research. I attempted to interview four participants for each ideology in order to understand underlying processes for each group. However, with only 12 participants, this research does not pretend to be representative of the entire Egyptian Canadian community, but the different ideologies served as a tool that informed the selection of individuals. The goal of my research being to understand the processes behind immigrants' mobilization for homeland politics, absolute representativeness is, in this case, a lesser issue compared to having a good understanding of how each ideology-based group functioned.

Some statistical data can be pulled out of my group of interviewees. Out of 12 people, 11 were men. I attempted to interview more women, and I did have contact with more than one. However, they were either not available, did not live in the Ottawa region, or were following a political ideology for which I had interviewed enough participants. Unfortunately, with only one woman in my sample, I will not be able to discuss how gender intersects with identity and politicization, as I lack sufficient data.

Ten out of 12 participants lived in the City of Ottawa, and the other two lived in the City of Gatineau. However, these geographical differences are moot to the Egyptian Canadian community, who ignores those borders and is integrated from both sides of the Ottawa River. The participants' age profile is varied, ranging from 25 to 75 years old. The

two age ranges with the most participants were the 25-to-30 (four participants) and the 50-to-55 (also four participants). All participants had immigrated to Canada after 1990, with most of them having done so between 1990 and 2010. Three participants arrived to Canada as skilled workers after 2011. None of the participants came as refugees.

Regarding the participants' socioeconomic profiles, I interviewed twice as many Muslims as Christians, and I did not monitor for this factor when selecting participants. All participants received a university education, either from an Egyptian or a Canadian university. The highest education level reached was mostly an undergraduate degree, although four of them possessed a master's degree. All had studied in professional fields, such as computer science, accounting, or engineering.

Terminology and Clarifications

Throughout this thesis, I will be referring to a series of Egyptian political events and people that may be unfamiliar to some readers, and I have provided a small lexicon for assistance in appendix. I will also be making profuse use of four phrases that may lead to confusion or even controversy, and for which I need to provide some clarification. Those are: Egyptian Canadians, the Ottawa community, the Egyptian uprising, and the 2013 military coup.

Egyptian Canadians

Identity is a controversial topic, and its use as an analytical concept in social science has been criticized by, among others, Brubaker and Cooper (2000), who reject it both for being too vague an idea and meaning too many things at the same time. I recognize that labelling people is a treacherous task, yet it is necessary for argumentation's sake. The

subject of this research concerns the political activities undertaken on Canadian soil by people of Egyptian origin. Their transnational identity is influenced by both their origins and experiences in Egypt, and their current environment, i.e. Canada. For clarity purposes only, I attribute these activities to Egyptian Canadians, regardless of their legal status or sense of belonging to the Canadian community.[1]

Ottawa Community

Residents of the Ottawa-Gatineau region make a distinction between these two cities separated by the Ottawa River, but in this thesis, references to the Ottawa community include Gatineau and surrounding cities in both Quebec and Ontario.

Egyptian Uprising

I define the Egyptian uprising as the political upheavals that have taken place in Egypt from January 25, 2011 to this day. I hesitate to give it a closing date, because it remains unclear whether it has ended. Certainly, the election of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi as president has slowed down the pace of uprising-related activities and ideas, but it is too early in time to judge of its termination. This timeframe is also the subject of this thesis, and I view current developments as still a part of this uprising.

I also make a distinction between the Egyptian uprising, and the January 2011 (or January 25) events. The January 2011 events are typically known in Egypt and around the world as the Egyptian Revolution, a series of sustained mass demonstrations that led to the

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[1] Among the recent immigrants I interviewed, many noted that they have yet to feel "Canadian," something that is not shared by most of those who have been long-time residents of Canada. Additionally, their legal status in both Canada and Egypt make identification complex: some might only possess an Egyptian citizenship but claim to be Canadian, and others will carry both citizenships and view themselves as either one of them. It should be noted that I did not collect data about their legal status in each country, both for privacy purposes and because of its irrelevancy to the research.

resignation of Hosni Mubarak. I do not use the name "revolution" to discuss these events, as I believe that revolutions are periods that are defined against a longer historical perspective. The mass protests and Mubarak's resignation were certainly historical, but it is still unclear whether they led to the changes associated with a revolution.

2013 Military Coup

The terminology "2013 military coup" might be the most litigious one in this thesis, chiefly because the events to which it is linked remain quite controversial, both in and outside Egypt. I refer to the 2013 military coup as the events of July 3, 2013, when President Mohamed Morsi was forced out of power by the Egyptian military. The debate lies on whether the military acted by itself (therefore making the event a coup), or it did so to defend the interests of Egyptians who had been protesting against Morsi's presidency (and leading some to label the event as Egypt's "Second Revolution").

I qualify it as a military coup due to the recent leaks of audio recordings that seem to make a connection between President el-Sisi, his political entourage, and the Tamarod movement (Kingsley, 2015). The July 2013 power grab had allegedly been orchestrated for months by the Egyptian military, which had paid grassroots activists to lead the Tamarod campaign and stir up feelings of disgruntlement among the Egyptian population and against Morsi.

Chapter 1: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Talking about the involvement of Egyptian Canadians in homeland politics conjures up images of an Egyptian diaspora, and this may have some scholars of immigration, globalization, and international relations wondering: what Egyptian diaspora? Many have very strict definitions that can be applied to only a few groups of people, and these usually exclude Egyptians. Meanwhile, others will prefer to describe similar immigration-related activities through the lens of transnationalism, especially when they are initiated by people, and not governments. Also, as both concepts explain phenomena that bear resemblance, some authors tend to conflate the two terms, which sometimes lead to academic confusion.

The purpose of this literature review is to provide a general understanding of both diaspora and transnationalism as concepts, and more specifically how each comprehends the mobilization of immigrants for their homeland. Not only will I present their underpinning assumptions, but I will discuss their limitations in relation to my research. I will then lay out the framework that will inform this thesis. My observations of the Ottawa community indicate that their political mobilization was a reaction to regular changes in their political opportunity structure, but unlike Tarrow's theory, these changes were generated not by Canada (the state of residence), but Egypt (the state of origin).

Diaspora

The concept of diaspora is concerned with cross-border processes and activities carried out by immigrant groups with a common identity (e.g. Jews or Armenians), but, unlike transnationalism, it puts an emphasis on the involvement of the home and host states in those activities, to the point where these activities may actually be conditioned by states.

In this context, diasporas are both a tool to advance governments' foreign policies, and an international relations' actor with varying degrees of potency.

Making a discrete appearance in scholarly literature in the 1970s, diaspora has long been identified with the Jewish populations scattered across the world. Early definitions of the term focused particularly on the idea of forcible exile from a native land, in this case the ancient kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Later, the concept would be expanded to include the Armenians' exile out of the Ottoman Empire during World War I, and to this day, purists conceive the Jews and the Armenians to be the only two current examples of diasporas (Sheffer, 2003).

In an effort to open up the concept to other groups that display diaspora-like behaviours (political involvement in homeland affairs from their host country), the term "diaspora" became conflated with any type of immigrant population, and definitions focus mainly on common identity markers. Diasporas may be attributed not only to commercial migrants (Chinese, Indians, Lebanese), long-distance nationalism (Kurds, Tamils), and migrant workers (Poles, Turks), but some authors use it to speak of groups based on language (French speakers, Portuguese speakers), religion (Hindus, Huguenots), nationality (Brazilian, Russian), and cultural markers (Yankees, gay, deaf) (Brubaker, 2005).

Attempts to disentangle immigrant communities from diasporas have led many scholars to propose definitions using strict criteria, but, again, the multiplicity of these new definitions has created numerous debates. Despite having been used for 40 years as an academic concept, "diaspora" is still, strangely enough, up for grabs. Brubaker, among others, offered three simple criteria to distinguish diasporas: 1) dispersion, 2) maintenance of identity, and 3) orientation towards the homeland (Brubaker, 2005, p. 5-6). Here, the idea of "dispersion," closely related to the Jewish exile, is understood in a more modern sense, i.e. in

which populations flee a home state that is unable to protect them. Therefore, there is a certain element of persecution, or at the very least, insecurity that would characterize diasporas. Moreover, this dispersion is understood as being not only across state borders, but over many states. As such, there is an idea of distribution within a group's dispersal.

That definition is problematic in at least one way: the very malleable concepts of "dispersion," "persecution" and "security." Many would not identify Mexican temporary workers tending to southern Ontario fields as a diaspora, yet the fact that they choose to work in Canada could suggest that the Mexican state has failed in providing economic security to part of its population. The same goes with U.S. soldiers refusing to fight in the Iraq or Afghanistan wars and who fled to Canada. Few would consider them a diaspora, yet they fled based on fear of persecution by the state represented by the U.S. military.

Bruneau has tried to make sense of it all in synthesizing earlier definitions by Sheffer and Cohen, and he offered the following six elements: 1) dispersion under pressure, 2) choice of destination, 3) identity awareness, 4) networked space, 5) duration of transnational ties, and 6) relative autonomy from host and origin societies (Bruneau, 2010, p. 36-37). Although the reasons under which people migrated are as muddy as Brubaker's, the four last elements have the benefit of describing what most of the literature would understand as a diaspora: a series of migrant groups originating from a country or region who share common identity markers (be it language, nationality, religion, etc.), and who commonly engage with one another in a more or less united voice to perform political activities related to their homeland. These activities may be achieved through the governments of their host countries, and members of a diaspora may have a political franchise in their homeland.

The types of relations they entertain have to be understood as a web in which the home state is central, or, following Paerregaard, as "multilateral networks and ties migrants

create across regional and national boundaries outside their homeland" (2010, p. 95). For example, Turkish groups in Germany will engage with Turkey, and so will other Turks all across the European Union. These multilateral networks become an expression of the diaspora's identity, which is most often articulated through the group, and not necessarily through the individual. In a diaspora, not everyone in the group must have ties with the homeland to identify with it, but the group does. This is what explains how descendants of certain migrant groups who may have no ties with their ancestors' homeland will still identify as part of a diaspora. As such, identity is more centred on identification with a group made up of people who share common cultural features, rather than identification through personal relations with the homeland.

But what exactly is at the core of that identity? What are those common cultural features? According to Vertovec, the focus should not necessarily be on the features, but on how they are being activated by "structural, conscious, and non-conscious factors in reconstructing and reproducing identities" (Vertovec, 1997, p. 277). As such, diasporas' identities exist in three ways: as a social form, as a type of consciousness, and as a mode of cultural production. As a social form, a diaspora puts an emphasis on an "identified group characterized by their relationship-despite-dispersal" (p. 278), and this would correspond to the classic definition exemplified by the Jewish diaspora: the group's identity is formed around ideas of forced exile and continuous longing for the return to the homeland.

As a type of consciousness, diasporas come about through "describing a variety of experience, a state of mind, and a sense of identity" (p. 281). It is that set of experiences, both positive and negative, that will produce the sense of identification. A possible diaspora understood by its members as a type of consciousness is the Caribbean diaspora described by Hall (2003). In the United Kingdom of the 1970s, people with a connection to the British

colonies of the Caribbean realized that they shared similar experiences despite coming from different islands, and this factor enabled a sense of common identity.

Finally, as a mode of cultural production, a diaspora's identity is revealed through the "production and reproduction of transnational social and cultural phenomena" (Vertovec, 1997, p. 289). Here, Vertovec seems to be conflating diasporas with transnationalism, as he refers to ideas of hybrid cultures and new ethnicities emerging through continuous multidirectional exchanges. While speaking of transnationalism, Glick Schiller (1999) had described this phenomenon as being part of the world's globalization, but it is conceivable to apply it to diasporas. For instance, the Jewish diaspora in the United States, when taken alone, has a very specific identity produced by its social environment (the United States) and its distinct relationship with Israel.

Despite the production of a common identity with which migrants and their descendants may associate, a diaspora remains a heterogeneous mix of people that share different ideas and opinions on a variety of topics related to the host country and the homeland. Therefore, it is very simplistic to talk about a common set of intentions, ideals, and projects held by a whole diaspora. In fact, as Paerregaard (2010) demonstrated with Peruvian emigrants, diasporas are subjected to the same problems as any group: they struggle with class and ethnic issues, and power relations are omnipresent. Sometimes even, different groups within a specific diaspora might have very opposite claims, and thus be in complete disagreement not only on action, but also on objectives.

Fault lines within a diaspora can even lead to the emergence of new diasporas, and here, emigrants from Turkey are exemplary, as it is possible to identify three diasporas originating from the Turkish territory. The first is the Turkish diaspora, a group of people who come from Turkey's national majority and who identify as culturally Turkish and share

Sunni beliefs. The second is the Kurdish diaspora, which emerged in Germany in the 1970s and 1980s following a wave of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey. The last group is the Alevi diaspora, which also rose in Germany in the 1980s. The Alevis are a non-mainstream Muslim minority group that started to face persecution in Turkey at the same time the government attempted to repress Kurdish nationalism (Sökefeld, 2006). Despite the three groups originating from Turkey, each is pursuing political projects that may be antagonistic to the others' objectives.

Finally, because they are conditioned by the fact that they exist in multiple localities across the world, diasporas' heterogeneity may stem from relations between the homeland and the host country. Natali (2007) showed that relations between the U.S. government and Kurds prior to and during the Iraq War were uneven, with the Iraqi Kurds monopolizing the Kurdish discourse and resources, and the Turkish Kurds having no political voice as a consequence of poor relations between Turkey and the United States. Due to this "fragmentation of identities," Natali suggests that the pan-Kurdish movement struggled in its goal for Kurdish autonomy.

Another topic of interest on the concept of diaspora is the tendency by authors to make heavy use of action verbs in the passive voice: diasporas are "influenced" or "fragmented," while identity is "produced" or "maintained." Rarely is the agent behind those actions identified. Although one might believe that elites have the influence necessary to manage diasporas and their mobilization, their motivations are not always made clear. In fact, there seems to be a general academic propensity to fix diasporas in a set of structures to which they would "naturally react," although Bauböck insists that diasporas are political projects created by institutions or individuals: they "have to be invented and mobilised in order to come into existence" (Bauböck, 2010, p. 315).

One example of this analytical shortfall on elite motivation is Carter's (2005) research on Croatian Americans involvement in the Croatian War. He contends that the Pittsburgh, Pa.-headquartered Croatian Fraternal Union conducted a highly successful fundraising campaign, which shipped aid to Croatia to the tunes of US $24 million during the 1990s, but the union's exact motivations remain unclear. One presumes that it was to help with the war effort in Croatia, but Carter does not expand on the reasons behind this motivation, except to say that there was a "revival of *hrvatsko* (literally 'Croatian-ness') in the early 1990s" which motivated "second, third and fourth generation 'Croatians', most of whom had never seen their 'homeland'" (Carter, 2005, p. 56) to join Croatian American social and political organizations.

Current research thus focuses on the role of structure for diaspora's political mobilization, and certain elements are recurrent. Although he has not described them explicitly as such, Sheffer (1986) puts a strong emphasis on diasporas' resources, the political environment of the host country, and the openness of the homeland towards the diaspora. In the following sections, I will review these components to understand how they intersect with a diaspora.

Diasporas' Resources

A diaspora's resources are at the core of what defines it as an effective political organization, and these go beyond financial means: it is the elite's capacity to mobilize the members of the diaspora, and its access to and proficiency at dealing with the media, government institutions (both in the homeland and the host state), and international organizations. For example, the Jewish diaspora in the United States has outstanding social and economic capacity: many of its wealthy members are willing to take part into political

activities—or at least, financially contribute to them—its elite can mobilize segments of the diaspora easily, it has one of the most powerful lobby in the United States, it has excellent relations with Israel, and it has proven very good at enlisting public opinion through the media.

This capacity is acquired over time, and Bloemraad (2005) suggests that the host country's policies dictate what kind and how much resources immigrant communities can gain. Her study of Vietnamese and Portuguese immigrants in both Toronto and Boston revealed that differing policies between Canada and the United States had shaped how the four communities were organized. Specifically, she found that Canada's multiculturalism (established as an official policy in 1971) supported all ethnic organizations, helped eliminate cultural barriers to participation in Canadian society, promoted dialogue between Canada's several cultural groups, and provided funding for ethnic associations, immigrant cultural activities, and foreign language programming for second-generation immigrants (Bloemraad, 2005, p. 869-870).

In contrast, she found that the United States' more laissez-faire approach had left economic migrants (the Portuguese in Boston) mostly fending for themselves upon their arrival. Since the federal government did, however, provide financial support to refugees, she discovered that the Vietnamese community in Boston was much better organized than the Portuguese. Social and economic capital of diasporas is thus related to their host country.

However, resources do not simply derive from the host country's integration policies. Bloemraad hinted at resources migrants bring with them, something that other scholars have identified. Cubans who fled their home country after Castro's arrival to power in the 1960s were mostly landowners and part of the Cuban elite (Pedraza, 1995). Many had previous political experience or had been involved in Cuban politics in one way or another. When

they arrived in the United States, they already had some resources, and this was recognized by the U.S. government, which soon enlisted them to conduct an unsuccessful counterrevolution. Pre-migration political experience was also observed with other migrant populations by Waldinger et al. (2012). Pulling data from the 2006 Latino National Survey, they found that Mexicans in the United States who voted in Mexico's elections and who contributed financially to Mexican political campaigns had previous political experience in Mexico.

Host Country's Political Environment

Beyond immigration and integration policies, the foreign relations between a host country and the homeland play a distinct role in a diaspora's political activities. I mentioned earlier the case of the Kurdish diaspora in the United States throughout the Iraq War, and how the Kurds' different countries of origin created a two-tier system in accessing the U.S. government (Natali, 2007). While Iraqi Kurds had successfully established a relationship with their host country's government, Turkish Kurds did not. The terms of such a relationship were dictated by the homeland—Turkey, a close U.S. ally—who considers Kurds as a threat.

Another example of the influence of the host country's political environment concerns the Jewish diaspora. Sheffer noted that Jewish political mobilization in Argentina was inferior to that of Jews in the United States and the United Kingdom. He attributed this to 1970s Argentine political climate, where "the dominant Catholic culture and tradition and the authoritarian nature of the regime do not encourage the proliferation of free voluntary associations and produce restrictions on organizations" (Sheffer, 1986, p. 270).

This shows that, even if resources are present, diasporas are still subject to the host country's domestic politics, and the international relations between their host country and the homeland. Therefore, social and economic capacity is not enough: the host country must be open to provide a political environment that will be suitable for pursuing those activities. In this sense, host governments may limit the scope of activities in which diaspora will partake.

Homeland's Openness to Its Diaspora

A government's relationship with its emigrant population will depend on that state's willingness to control this particular segment of the polity. As people move around the world and establish themselves in different countries, it becomes increasingly difficult to prevent the shrinking of the polity, so governments will slowly grant political rights to people who live outside their borders, thus "dissociating step-by-step political membership from territorial presence" (Berking, 2004, p. 109).[2] Waterbury suggests that this is part of a nation-building process that preserves the maintenance of "elite dominance at home" (Waterbury, 2010, p. 139).

Political identities such as non-resident Indians (NRI) or persons of Indian origin (PIO) reflect these processes, as the Indian government no longer requires a physical presence or even birth in India to be considered Indian. Also, when former Irish president Mary Robinson claimed that anyone born or residing on the island of Ireland and their descendants was Irish, she claimed a population much larger than the Republic of Ireland's 4.6 million citizens (Dufoix, 2011, p. 542-543). Berking aptly calls this process an

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[2] This dissociation process is also effective in the opposite direction: temporary guest workers schemes, such as in Canada or Germany, prevent migrants from entering the host country's polity.

"extraterritorial expansion" through the "de-territorialization of political membership" (2004, p. 110).

A diaspora's mobilization for homeland politics will certainly be facilitated by such openness, as it opens the communications channels with the homeland. One can also presume that the greater the openness, the greater the influence a diaspora can have on a home government. It is even possible to imagine diaspora elites to play more than a distant role in homeland politics. Coming back to the Croatian diaspora, Carter cites the case of Gojko Šušak, a Canadian entrepreneur who was prominent in the Croatian community. During the Croatian War, Croatia was welcoming of efforts by its diaspora, which, as stated earlier, was able to provide aid to the country. Šušak was part of that movement, and his efforts were soon rewarded when he was named to head both Croatia's Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Return (Carter, 2005).

"Homeland openness" should not be restricted solely to the homeland government, but it should include the willingness of any political actor to engage with its emigrant population. For example, Itzigsohn et al. (1999) found that some Dominican political parties have offices in New York City and Providence, R.I., to collect financial contributions from Dominicans living in the U.S. Northeast, while some research has been done on the Tamil Tigers reliance on the Tamil diaspora for financial support during the Sri Lankan civil war (Bell, 2004).

Transnationalism

The literature on diaspora is therefore rooted in a very structural environment of international relations to which the immigrant group is merely in reaction mode and is managed by the elite's relentless efforts. These attribute is what makes it different from

transnationalism, with which the literature on diaspora shares very similar subjects of study: immigrant groups; their contribution to the economic, political, and social environment in their home country; their role at the centre of such activities; and their identity. Both attempt to conceptualize the immigration-related exchange flows, but it is its starting point that makes transnationalism a critical notion of international relations: it bypasses the state to centre its analysis on the individual.

This is not to say that states are no longer important to transnationalism. When it entered the lexicon of migration studies in the 1990s, it was used to explain why ethnic communities in the United States were engaging in activities related to their homeland. There was an assumption among U.S. policymakers that migrants were assimilating into U.S. society, and that any links or feelings of allegiance with the home country were consequently losing prominence as assimilation progressed. Glick Schiller et al. (1992) suggested that transnationalism was the process by which migrants engaged with their host country as much as they participated in their home country's daily life.

Glick Schiller (1999) later clarified the role of the state in transnational processes. She posited that, due to the recent hastening of globalization, countries no longer controlled their economies, and that the only thing left for states to carry out was state-building projects through the politicization of identities, including that of emigrant and immigrant populations. As such, a home state could claim its emigrant population as part of the polity (either symbolically or through granting them the right to vote at elections) in order to manage their social, economical, and political contribution to the country. Meanwhile, a host state could use an immigrant population to bridge cultural issues and further its economic policies with this population's home country.

However, more recent scholarship tends to shy away from the state and predominantly favours the immigrant individual's agency. Although Smith (2006) asserts that transnational practices can only occur when migrants have access to their home country (thus precluding that both the host and the home countries have policies that allow practices spanning each other's borders), his study of Mexican migrants in New York focuses on the specific relations that have developed between Mexican towns and New York, and on how these activities are controlled by a group of elite migrants.

Because of this focus on the individual as the point of analysis, the transnational network is more concentrated than that of the diaspora. As I explained earlier, the latter is a multilateral network that can be imagined as a web; conversely, transnationalism deals with "processes by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement" (Glick Schiller et al., 1992, p. 1). As such, the idea of multi-pronged linkages that define diasporas is not as present in transnational communities, but it would be misguided to regard transnationalism as having a narrow scope or as looking at a series of disjointed phenomena. At the macro level, Glick Schiller argued that "through their personal investment in transnational networks transmigrants are contributing to politicized identities that continue to legitimate nation-state-building projects" (Glick Schiller, 1999, p. 115), and as such, transnational communities remain important not only for individuals, but for their country of origin and their host country.

At the basic level, a transnational community includes anyone who shares an interest in the different communities that make up the migrant's environment. According to Levitt (2001), membership in a transnational community is not defined by migration, but by a relationship with migrants. Therefore, since they are affected by the transnational exchange flows, parents and children who are not migrants—but to whom they are related—are also

part of the community. Exchange flows are not limited to the material: they also include what Levitt refers to as "social remittances," i.e. ideas, behaviours, and social capital from the host to the home country. These social remittances are what not only allows the creation of transnational communities, but also makes them last.

However, the weakness of transnationalism is that it does not explain how these different transnational communities affect the system of international relations. Because of their situation at the junction of two countries, migrant communities have certainly a role to play, at least when it concerns policies affecting either their host or home country, as proposed by Glick Schiller. There have been attempts by states to affect their emigrant communities, such as Mexico's "Three-for-One Program," which incited Mexican migrants to use government channels to send remittances, but these are initiatives led by governments, not migrants. If transnational migrants and communities can have a social and economical impact on their home or host country, can it do the same with politics? Transnationalism is vague on this question, at least at the empirical level.

Conceptual Framework

An observation arises from the review of both the diaspora and the transnationalism literatures: none can fully conceptualize a movement that attempts to engage with the homeland but that is managed by migrants. While the literature on transnationalism refers to migrant-led social movements, its reservations towards interactions with the state pose a limit on migrants' possibilities to organize for political influence in the homeland. On the other hand, a focus on the work of elites in diaspora mobilization assumes that the group already exists, and that emigrant-home state interactions are led from the homeland.

My goal with this research is to bridge that gap and, so to speak, bring back the "human" in politics. The processes of migrants' politicization are merely understood against structural elements, and possible agency is limited. Also, the literature on diasporas has a tendency to present these groups as monolithic and dodges internal divisions.

Two ideas intervene to construct a framework on the political mobilization of migrants. First, although this research is focusing on community members' agency, structures remain fundamental. As McAdam et al. (1996) suggest, people evolve in a structural context that needs to be taken into account when looking at what motivates their decisions. However, I will use a more lively approach to structures by using Dufoix's (2011) contribution and proposing that certain events in the homeland may create new dynamics between the homeland and its emigrants. As these events can only explain how homeland affairs affect migrants, I will look at Tarrow's approach on political opportunity structures to show that the migrant community is continuously readjusting to the dynamic environment that they generate.

As discussed earlier, research on diasporas' mobilization for homeland politics is a well-established field that puts emphasis on certain structural elements: the resources at the disposal of the diaspora, the political environment of the home countries, and the type of relationship it enjoys with homeland's political actors. These structures explain mobilization from the perspective of a diaspora that is already constituted as a politicized group, but what about seemingly non-political groups of immigrants that suddenly launch into homeland politics? Skrbiš (2007) briefly expressed the idea of "dormant diasporas" without providing more substance to his concept. His research focuses on Eastern Europe and suggests that the Eastern European diasporas became "active" for two reasons. First, the end of the Cold War provided a global restructuration and a realignment of ethno-national units in the region. This

happened simultaneously with the accelerated pace of globalization, which allowed diasporas-in-waiting to increase their capacity at responding more rapidly and effectively to homeland crises through easier access to information technology, transportation, and financial institutions.

Implicit to Skrbiš' examination is the fact that there exists moments, or events, that will bring changes to the homeland, and consequently, to its relationship with its emigrant population. These were identified by Dufoix (2011), who proposed five events that may trigger the establishment of such relations. They are: the modification of the home state's borders, its independence, a war, changes in migration policies, and democratic transitions. These cause "a historical transformation of relations between the interior and the exterior," (Dufoix, 2011, p. 525) in opening a public space for the emigrants' possible political inclusion. From the state's perspective, it allows for tapping into the important resources of the communities residing abroad, such as in the Jewish or Croatian American cases. From the diaspora's perspective, it gives them the opportunity to take part into constructing a country with which they still identify. Such was the case of the Armenians abroad after Armenia's independence. The relationship between Armenia and its diaspora was the theme of a series of conferences in the early 2000s, and it has become a domestic issue for Armenian politicians (Dufoix, 2011, p. 533).

Dufoix's five events explain how the relationship between homeland and emigrants can emerge from circumstances happening in the home country, and it may account for an immigrant community's sudden involvement in homeland politics. What remain unexplored are the processes behind how such a community becomes politicized. For this, I would like to bring in Tarrow's (1998) conceptualization of political opportunity structures, which suggests that political mobilization is the result of an interpretation of a given situation by

people. They weigh all the information available to them to figure out the new political opportunities arising from the situation; as new information comes in, the assessment process is done on a continuous basis and people realign their activities to fit the new environment. This is, however, only part of the process, and many scholars criticized a rigid use of political opportunity structures, including Tarrow, McAdam, and Tilly (McAdam et al., 2000). Instead, they described a more dynamic process that conferred more agency to people: actors "simultaneously [respond] to change processes and to each other's actions as they seek to make sense of their situations and to fashion lines of action based on their interpretations of reality" (McAdam et al., p. 46). Despite this criticism, Tarrow's approach on political opportunity structures is still useful to this thesis, as it offers the potential to understand the role of structures in what appears to be the sudden political mobilization of immigrants, especially in a situation where the community members face no apparent prejudice.

Tarrow identifies six changes to structural elements that may influence political opportunities: increasing access to institutions, shifting of political alignments, elite divisions, presence of influential allies, repression (or facilitation) of collective action, and state strength and its prevailing strategies. These changes to the political opportunity structures, however, seem to happen within the borders of the state in question, meaning that, as changes to the structures occur in a country, only this country's residents may assess their level of political mobilization. However, I suggest that, instead of constricting Tarrow's ideas to some methodological nationalism, they should be expanded to the emigrant population due to the relationship they maintain with the homeland. This relationship may be formal or institutionalized, as in the cases of Armenia or India, but it can also be informal or even metaphysical, through the emigrant's identity and identification with the homeland. In

this case, the relationship does not originate from the home state, but from emigrants who "feel" like they have a stake in the homeland.

As discussed above, this type of "grassroots relationships" that emerges from people (as opposed to relations managed by the state) has been one hallmark of studies on transnationalism, and it is often expressed through migrants' identities, which, though malleable, remain deeply associated with their homeland. As the homeland goes through events that are changing the general structure, migrants must make choices based on new conditions and that are aligned with how they identify with the home state. However, the appeal with Tarrow's work is that these modifications to the political opportunity structures have the potential to happen over and over again, and migrants must make political choices with every change.

As identities within a community are multiple, it is likely that political reinterpretations of the new environments will diverge, and as such, groups with competing ideologies and intentions for the homeland will emerge. This tug-of-war within the community marks the politicization process and is the subject of this research. It will show that members of the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa took different ideological stances depending on their identification vis-à-vis being Egyptian and their footing within the Canadian environment. As the political situation in the homeland changed, emerging leaders in Ottawa were able to harness different transnational identity markers and form political organizations that were both related yet different to those found in Egypt, making the politicization of the Ottawa community a process not driven by the Egyptian state and elite, but by Egyptian Canadians themselves.

Chapter 2: Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa Before and Since 2011

As will be argued in the following chapters, the 2011 Egyptian uprising brought changes to the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa. Prior to it, social networks were mostly built around religious structures, and political organizations were non-existent. However, since 2011, Egyptian politics have taken a preponderant place in the community, and this gave rise to organizations that directed their attention on political debates and the promotion of political ideologies. This chapter aims at providing general context on the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa. I will first chart a quick history of Egyptian migration to Canada and provide national data. Then I will move on to a brief description of the organizational structure of the Ottawa community before and since 2011 in order to understand the changes that took place at the political level in recent years.

According to Assaad (1999), the first large-scale Egyptian emigration movement dates back to the mid-1960s.[3] The Egyptian Revolution of 1952 that ended the monarchy and turned the country into a republic prompted an era of uncertainty and instability that would last for the next 15 years. Its first victims were the Coptic Christian community, who disproportionately filled the ranks of the Egyptian elite due to their receiving support from the British, who still had troops in Egypt (Naff, 1983, cited in Eid, 2007). As nationalization laws were promulgated, their economic and political influence quickly dwindled, and fears of religious discrimination increased. They left for Canada "to obtain a higher level of education, to seek better economic prospects, because their property was nationalized, or to escape political pressure" (Assaad, 1999, p. 456).

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[3] Data on pre-1960s Egyptian migration to Canada are obscured by the Canadian government's practice to use "Africa—not Britain" to record place of origin (Assaad, 1999). This has created confusion as it could include anyone native to the British colonies on the African continent.

During the 1960s, nearly three out of four Egyptians chose to settle in Montreal upon their arrival to Canada, and Assaad attributes the drawing power of Quebec to the French language (foreign education in Egypt was primarily conducted in French); Montreal was still, at the time, Canada's most important economic centre; and Egyptian immigrants, originating mostly from populous Cairo and Alexandria, favoured large cosmopolitan cities.

Emigration continued throughout the 1970s with a mixture of both Christian and Muslim people leaving Egypt and who were motivated by rising poverty levels and the Egyptian government's enactment of laws to facilitate emigration. The profile of Egyptian migrants to Canada changed after 1985, when the Canadian government adopted a policy to encourage investors to immigrate. This attracted wealthy Egyptians who "tended to be more conservative and less exposed to European influences than previous arrivals" (Assaad, 1999, p. 457). This new wave of immigrants was also different in their settlement location, as the majority favoured Toronto. According to Assaad, this shift between Quebec and Ontario is a mirror effect of the first wave of Egyptian immigration: in the 1980s, Egyptians had a better command of English as a foreign language; after the Quiet Revolution and the 1981 referendum, Canada's economic centre had moved to Toronto; and it was a large cosmopolitan city that was still enticing to Egyptians. The result of these two different waves of Egyptian immigrants can be found in the 1991 statistical data: the Egyptian community in Canada was almost evenly split between the two provinces, with 49 percent of the total population residing in Quebec, and 41 percent in Ontario.

In the 2011 National Household Survey, 73,250 Canadians answered one or more of their ethnic identities to be "Egyptian," while 3,570 answered "Coptic," for a total of 76,820 possible respondents with an Egyptian background. The National Household Survey is done through self-identification of ethno-religious identity, meaning that there might be

discrepancies between the survey and the actual population. For example, the number under "Coptic" does not reflect the real Coptic population in Canada, as some Christian Egyptians identify as Coptic, but not all do. Another variation may lie with the 25,885 Canadians who identify as "Berber," a group that is found all across North Africa, from Morocco to Siwa, an oasis on the western fringes of Egypt in the Libyan Desert. Although the number of Egyptian Berbers is relatively small (both in Egypt and within the Berber population), it is unclear whether the data include any of them. Finally, there are also such categories as "North African origins, n.i.e." and "West Central Asian and Middle Eastern origins, n.i.e."[4] A total of 19,415 Canadians were lumped into those categories, which could include two other Egyptian groups: Bedouins and Nubians.

As these distinctions are unavailable in the National Household Survey, I gathered statistics on Egyptian Canadians using data from the "Egyptian" and "Coptic" categories only. The 2011 survey identified that 85 percent of Egyptian Canadians live in Ontario (54 percent) and Quebec (31 percent). Alberta ranked third, with a timid seven percent. While the vast majority of Quebec's Egyptian Canadians live in Montreal (93 percent), there is some geographical distribution in Ontario. Most live in the Greater Toronto Area (69 percent), and the second largest community is in Ottawa-Gatineau (14 percent). The remainder is divided between several southern Ontario cities, most notably Hamilton, the Waterloo Region, London, and Windsor.

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[4] Statistics Canada uses the acronym "n.i.e." to refer to respondents' answers that are "not included elsewhere." For the two examples above, these would include, for example, "Maghrebi," "Baloch," or "Circassian."

In Ottawa-Gatineau, a total of 5,735 Canadians identify as either Egyptian (5,440) or Coptic (295),[5] and prior to 2011, they organized around three specific social institutions: Coptic churches, mosques, and the Egyptian Canadian Cultural Association of Ottawa (ECCAO). Ottawa's two Coptic churches (the larger St. George & St. Anthony, as well as the smaller St. Mary) cater to the religious and social needs of the Christian community. Although the majority of worshippers are Coptic Orthodox, the Egyptian Christian community is multidenominational and may include Coptic Catholics and Coptic Protestants. As one participant to this study remarked, all Egyptian Canadian Christians in Ottawa meet at the Coptic Orthodox churches regardless of their confession, as they are the only places of worship available to them (there is a Coptic Catholic church in Toronto). For their part, mosques in Ottawa and Gatineau cater to the region's Muslim community, regardless of their national origin. Muslim Egyptians do not congregate at one particular mosque, but their social network is shaped by the mosques they attend.

Because these two types of religious venues remain inaccessible to the other, many Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa felt that, prior to 2011, the community suffered from the "silo syndrome." No participant described this situation as unacceptable, but many pointed to the limits this separation imposed. For example, some Egyptian Canadians did not know people from the other faith: one Christian participant I interviewed and who has been living in Ottawa for over a decade knows some Muslim Egyptians in other Canadian cities, but none in Ottawa. Another participant described the situation from the Christian perspective as such,

> The church is the community centre, also. It's not really just a place of worship. It's become a place where a lot of the social gatherings and social interactions occur. That's probably why you find that there's a bit of a divide

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[5] In the context of possible discrepancies in the data found in the National Household Survey, many participants to this research claimed that, by their own estimates, the Egyptian community in Ottawa is closer to 10,000 people. This could not be verified.

between Egyptian Christians and Egyptian Muslims. There's no real physical place where the two groups can combine. That's not to say that it doesn't happen. There are Christian Egyptians and Muslim Egyptians – they still interact outside in various capacities. But it's not the same level or to the same extent as Egyptian Christians and Egyptian Muslims interact in Egypt. (Interview 7, p. 1)

One organization in Ottawa, however, attempted to bridge that gap and bring together the entire community. ECCAO is a social group founded in 1984, and on its website, it describes itself as "a united and inclusive organization for Egyptian Canadians and friends" (Egyptian Canadian Cultural Association of Ottawa, n.d.). They hold events such as picnics, coffee meetings, and entertainment evenings on a regular basis. On several occasions I have contacted some of its board members to know more about the organization and how it fitted within this study, but I received no response. One participant suggested that my unsuccessful attempts were due to the nature of my research: ECCAO as a strict no-politics policy, as they are too divisive in nature, which would go against fostering "a united and inclusive" space for all Egyptian Canadians. That said, its relevance and role within the community is questionable, as participants who were recent immigrants did not know about it, and most of the other participants had heard of it, but felt no need to join them.

Prior to 2011, the community's social organization revolved around places of worship and ECCAO, but as my research question and hypothesis suggest, since the 2011 Egyptian uprising, there have been some significant changes in Ottawa. The community has become political, and this is reflected in the appearance of two political groups: a branch of the Dostour Party (which has since halted its activities), and the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy (ECCD). As I will show in the next chapters, they are part of the politicization process specific to Egyptian Canadians, as they came about in reaction to events in Egypt, but operated within the limits imposed by the community's experiences in

Canada. It is possible that the process took similar forms in other host countries, but the scope of this research does not allow to make such comparisons.

The Dostour Party is a political party that was established in Egypt in 2012 by Mohamed ElBaradei, a prominent Egyptian and Nobel Peace Prize laureate for his work as head of the International Atomic Energy Agency. In 2010, just months before the uprising, ElBaradei had assembled the National Coalition for Change to lead a campaign for political reform in Egypt. The coalition had seven demands, which included lifting the three-decade-old state of emergency, allowing international organizations to monitor elections, and giving Egyptian expatriates the right to vote at embassies and consulates. During the uprising, the coalition's goals were carried by the revolutionaries in the name of democracy and social justice, but as months went by, it was becoming increasingly unclear whether such interests would be implemented by President Mohamed Morsi's new civilian government. The Dostour Party was created to pursue those reforms.

In Ottawa, the genesis of the Dostour branch has a lot to do with ElBaradei and the work he had previously done with the National Coalition for Change. As one participant remarked, it was ElBaradei's belief that Egyptian expatriates can contribute to Egypt that made some people in Ottawa contemplate joining the Dostour.

> He had the interest of Egyptians abroad [...] It's what they always repeated, you know. "We want to seek help from Egyptians abroad." And I think that's what made a lot of people over here being excited and being like, "You know what? Well, we want to help out as well. It seems like this party is interested in Egyptians abroad. They know the value, the added value that Egyptians abroad can bring." (Interview 5, p. 12-13)

At its most active time, the Dostour branch in Ottawa had about 12 mostly young professional members. The Dostour ideals extended beyond religion, and this was reflected by the various religious profiles of these young men and women, which included Christians,

Muslims, agnostics, and atheists. They had regular contacts with other Canadian branches—mainly the Toronto chapter—but they had very little interaction with the main party in Egypt. It is not absolutely clear whether the Egyptian side knew about the Canadian branches. The Dostour in Ottawa suspended its activities roughly one year after its creation, at a time when Mohamed Morsi was ousted from power by the Egyptian military.

The second political group that came together since 2011 in Ottawa is the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy (ECCD). Following tense events in July and August 2013, members of the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa organized a Parliament Hill protest to denounce the military coup and its actions, which were acutely repressive towards supporters of Morsi and his government. After this protest, which also saw participants from Montreal and Toronto, a small group of Egyptian Canadians gathered at a restaurant in Ottawa to discuss what could be done from Canada to support Egyptians. The ECCD was born.

The not-for-profit organization is registered in Ottawa, but it is a pan-Canadian group of mostly Muslim Egyptian expatriates with members in Quebec City, Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, and Vancouver (Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy, n.d.). According to some participants, even smaller urban centres such as Sherbrooke, Que., and Fort McMurray, Alta., are represented. Board members are spread across the country, and they meet regularly with the help of Internet technologies such as Skype.

The ECCD is linked to other Egyptian groups worldwide that also stand against the military coup. It signed the founding declaration of Egyptians Worldwide for Democracy and Justice, an organization based in Switzerland, and it has very close ties to the Turkey-based Egyptian Revolutionary Council (ERC). In fact, two ECCD board members attended the

Istanbul meeting that led to ERC's creation, and in April 2015, one ECCD board member was elected as ERC's general secretary for a two-year term.

Although the Dostour and the ECCD have had political activities in Ottawa, this is not to say that the community revolved entirely around them. In fact, these two groups brought a new layer of organizations that catered to the political needs of some members of the community. This is what makes these organizations important, as such needs were either previously non-existent, or did not call for establishing structures that would respond to them. What the next chapters will show is how the Egyptian uprising quickly politicized Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa, and how this was done on their own terms.

Chapter 3: The Politicization of Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa

The first weeks of 2011 were truly exceptional moments for Egyptians. The world had just witnessed Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali abruptly fleeing to Saudi Arabia—wife and kids in tow—after a sustained civil resistance campaign precipitated by the self-immolation of a street vendor in a Tunis suburb. A mere few days later, on January 25, 2011, the story repeated, but this time, it was hundreds of thousands of Egyptians who were marching down to their cities' main squares to demand accountability on the part of their unwavering president. Seventeen days later, these unarmed Egyptians succeeded in forcing Hosni Mubarak out of office after 32 years in charge. The events left everyone speechless.

The footage broadcasted by 24-hour news agencies had a special meaning for the world's Egyptian expatriate community glued to their TV screens, and Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa were no different. At first, many looked on with disbelief at the images of thousands of their fellow citizens invading Tahrir Square, while others worried about their family's safety. Still, some already knew that January 25, 2011, was a new beginning, and this event set in motion a number of demonstrations and political mobilization to a level so far unseen within the otherwise quiet Ottawa community.

This chapter will look at the impact of the 2011 Egyptian uprising on the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa through their political involvement in uprising-related activities. I will argue that there exists different layers to one's identity, and that the 12 Egyptian Canadian participants to this study have made the decision to politicize theirs to justify their willingness in taking part to uprising-related events. As such, the community became conscious of its political identity, or rather, its various political identities—with all the struggles this multiplicity has entailed. I will show that this politicization process was

based on a desire to be included in the Egyptian polity, which was echoed in the community's repertoire of contention, the kind of results they hoped to achieve through their actions, as well as in their choices for locations where those activities would take place. The community's different political strategies mirrored events in Egypt, but undertaken by people in Canada—the basis of their identity.

Then I will move to how this identity was propelled by looking at the reasons that motivated participants to take part in activities related to the Egyptian uprising. None have taken part to all of them, and assessing their thinking process will permit to evaluate how they articulated their Egyptian identity throughout the civil uprising. The stakes were greater for some individuals, but not all. Some participants were long-time Canadian residents, others were recent immigrants, some as recently as after 2011. There were older and younger participants. Yet, there is no real common denominator in their socio-economical status that allows for making broad generalizations. Rather, it is a common feeling to "be" or to "feel Egyptian" that has driven them since 2011, and what is specific to this feeling is its politicization. In fact, anyone in the Egyptian Canadian community may "feel" Egyptian, but not everyone took part in political activities. What differentiates the former from the latter is the importance they granted to politics in their lives and identities. For the participants to this research, "being" or "feeling Egyptian" was more than a matter of culture or ethnicity: it was the justification to their political involvement in the Egyptian uprising.

Identity and Mobilization for the Homeland

According to the current theory on diasporas, their successful mobilization for homeland politics is attributed to the presence of three structural factors discussed previously by Sheffer (1986): the resources at their disposal, the political environment of their home

countries, and the relations they entertain with the homeland, be they institutionalized or informal. Such assertions suppose the pre-existence of diasporas as organized political groups of immigrants with common objectives and working together to achieve them. It also confines diasporas to the rigidity of international relations structures that may be difficult to overcome.

More recently, two scholars of the Croatian diaspora alluded to the importance of identity in diaspora politics. Skrbiš acknowledged that identity plays an important role to "enable the effective mobilization of members of diasporas and transform them from dormant to mobilized entities" (Skrbiš, 2007, p. 220), while Carter (2005) proposed that the Croatian American community underwent a revival of "hrvatsko," or Croatian-ness during the 1991 Croatian War. However, both these arguments are repurposed to fit into the structural discourse of diaspora, which leaves little to no room to individuals' decisions.

Based on my interviews with the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa, I argue that there is a lot more agency than previously investigated. In fact, some Egyptian Canadians made the choice of participating to demonstrations and other events related to Egyptian politics since 2011 based on an understanding of what "being Egyptian" meant to them. I did not survey the entire community, so it is hard to pinpoint actual statistics about who took part in activities and who stayed home, but anecdotal evidence from my own research suggests that at least some members of the Ottawa community kept away from Egyptian politics. This is not for lack of structural factors or the absence of elites, as these have been present and played an important role in shaping the community, something that will be analyzed in the following chapter.

Rather, I suggest using the transnational perspective on identity to understand what it means to "be Egyptian." Radhakhrisnan (1991) suggested three identity phases through

which migrants go: suppression of ethnic identity, refusal of national identity, and integration of ethnic with national identities. For each period, migrants activate one part or the other of their identity, depending on their needs for self-actualization within the society in which they live. Levitt (2011) goes one step further when she proposes that the navigation between one's ethnic and national identities may be done on a daily basis. She cites as an example how some Dominicans in Boston believe that the U.S. legal system protects them, but how they circumvent the law to open small businesses without the necessary permits. This may seem like a contradiction, but it is entirely justified, as these Dominicans revert to strategies used in the homeland for economic survival, and they see "these minor infractions as rule-bending, not rule-breaking" (Levitt, 2011, p. 120).

Both Radhakrishnan and Levitt restrict this process of identity-activation to the ethnic and the national ones, but I suggest that it goes further: one identity may be expressed in several ways, and migrants will choose what layer they wish to activate within that identity not only according to their reading of a situation, but in a way that will further their personal interests. Smith tells the story of a Mexican woman who was unhappy in her marriage and would refuse to leave her husband—a commendable feminine trait found in her community in Mexico—but at the same time, she would defy him publicly—thus showing a lack of *vergüenza,* "a central element of Mexican female morality" (Smith, 2006, p. 97). Activating different characteristics within one's identity is not a capability reserved exclusively to migrants, but it is important to remember that they have the capacity to do it. Often there is a tendency to reduce a group of migrants' identity to a few traits and to forget that a community is made up of individuals who make complicated decisions based on more than just culture.

In the case of Egyptian Canadians, I argue that the people I interviewed activated the "political" element of their Egyptian identity. The choice to go to demonstrations was done not necessarily "because they had to," as some suggested, but because Egyptian politics had become an important facet of their lives and identity. This, I will argue, was reflected at a personal level in the choices made regarding what events they would attend and the locations where these events would take place. To look at it from the individual perspective is also important in order to understand the processes happening in Ottawa in the first year or so of the uprising. As I will show, political elites had yet to emerge, and although some activities were organized by groups of people, most of the demonstrations arose quite naturally. People congregated to the Egyptian embassy or on Parliament Hill on the spur of the moment, once again because "they felt it."

The politicized Egyptian identity was central to the mobilization of Ottawa's Egyptian Canadians in the early months of the Egyptian uprising. According to one participant, he, like others, took part in political activities not because others told him to do so, but because he is Egyptian. He talked about it in these terms,

> Egypt is engraved inside me. It's never going to go away. It's not just a place that's my country of origin. That was the place I was raised in. It's something that I lived all my life at, and the way I am – with all the good and bad in my life, and how it is, it's from Egypt. Because I have my family there. (Interview 10, p. 19)

To present how Egyptian Canadians' identity became politicized after the 2011 Egyptian uprising, I will first present how the politicization process took form through the listing of the community's repertoire of contention and its different interlocutors. Then, I will look at the Egyptian identity in Ottawa, and how it has become an important tool in the community's involvement in homeland politics. I will show how participants to this study

have added a political layer to "feeling Egyptian," which served them to justify their political activities since 2011.

Egyptian Canadians' Political Performances

Establishing the Egyptian Canadian repertoire of contention is useful for understanding how the Egyptian identity's politicization took shape in Ottawa since 2011. As Tilly suggests, cataloguing such events and putting them in their social context allows recognizing "the interactive, negotiated, contingent, culturally shaped character of repertoires and identities" (Tilly, 2002, p. 6). A careful reader will note that all the activities that make up this list are not all contentious in the sense of "antagonistic." However, Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa have certainly made public claims to advance political objectives, the biggest one being their inclusion within the Egyptian polity, something to which I will come back. As such, I believe it is important to document all their political pursuits rather than sticking solely to the confrontational actions, as I am not concerned with the political success of Egyptian Canadians' activities during the Egyptian uprising, but with how their Egyptian identity became politicized.

There are many reasons why people decide to become involved in political actitivies. Gamson (1992) identified three components of collective action frames, i.e. the sets of beliefs that are shared by a community and that lead to collective actions: injustice (or moral indignation), agency (or one's consciousness of his or her ability to affect a situation), and finally, identity. He described this last component as "the process of defining this 'we,' typically in opposition to some 'they' who have different interests and values" (Gamson, 1992, p. 7). Individuals have the capacity to frame their own sense of identity.

Before 2011, the range of political activities of the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa had been small. The Coptic community had tried with various levels of success to raise awareness regarding the Egyptian state's abuse of their fellow worshippers in a religious minority situation, but these efforts remained minimal. The only other type of political activities pursued by participants to this research was the writing of political blogs by a few Web-2.0-savvy youngsters. They were read mainly by friends, and as one participant commented, were nothing "influential" (Interview 5, p. 3).

Things changed in January 2011, when it seemed that, all of a sudden, Egyptian Canadians were everywhere on the news, especially as they demonstrated in front of the Egyptian embassy in Ottawa. According to several participants, in the first days of the uprising, there was no coordination between members of the community to organize large gatherings: people would just show up. There was no widespread advertising on social media, at the church or at the mosque, and very little word of mouth, except between small groups of friends. However, as the mass protests in Egypt went on, patterns emerged, and Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa expected gatherings at least after the weekly Muslim congregational prayer held on Fridays.[6] One participant described the situation at the time as such,

> During [the first] two weeks, I would say [the movement] was very very sort of random. And that's why I'm saying [...] we would go and then the next day, there would be another demonstration that we didn't partake on, but there were different people who just went. There was no synchronization at all. There was no organization. (Interview 5, p. 5-6)

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[6] From 2011 to 2013, Fridays in Egypt have become synonymous with both *jumuʿah* (Muslim congregational prayer) and mass protests. Muslim men would gather at the mosque for the midday prayer, and by the early afternoon, they would be joined by women to demonstrate in squares around the country. Many Fridays have become symbols of the uprising, such as the Friday of Anger (January 28, 2011), during which mass protests in Cairo forced the Egyptian army to take over police duty, and the Friday of Departure (February 11, 2011), during which Hosni Mubarak stepped down as president.

This absence of organization is an essential aspect to understand the later emergence of political groups. The literature on diaspora focuses on the role of elites and the importance of their resources for political mobilization of the community, but the Egyptian Canadian case suggests that something else prevails. However fragmented the community may have been prior to 2011, some networks did exist, and it is on this "degree to which individuals are already embedded and ontologically invested in various kinds of social structures and practices" that McAdam et al. (1996, p. 26) insist when analyzing contentious social movements. In Ottawa, networks borne out of churches, mosques, and ECCAO were the starting point, and it grew from there: mailing lists started to circulate, and new social ties became possible as people started to meet outside places of worship and ECCAO. As religious leaders did not take the helm of the movement (and with ECCAO's refusal to be involved in politics), there were no elites to mobilize the community, and that role was up for grabs. In the meantime, people started to label each other, based on with whom they associated. According to one participant, it became easy to identify, for example, who was a "liberal" and who had links with the Muslim Brotherhood. These early protests would set the tone for the development of new collective identities as time went on.

This is not to say that these new social ties and networks became significant and obvious right at the beginning and that the new leaders were able to quickly take over. In fact, some activities still happened in isolation, and one example of this is a protest organized in the fall of 2011—10 months after the start of the uprising—to protest Egypt's imprisonment of activist Alaa Abd El-Fattah, well known for his outspokenness against the Mubarak regime. In October 2011, he was arrested for inciting violence against Egypt's military, and in Ottawa, one concerned Egyptian Canadian posted on Facebook that he would go to the Egyptian embassy to protest. It was an individual action, and as much as Abd El-

Fattah's arrest was part of the general context of the uprising, it did not garner much attention from other Egyptian Canadians due, according to one participant, to lack of advertising of an event in Ottawa. Only five people showed up.

Although they were the most popular means of political action in Ottawa, protests were not the only way to partake in the Egyptian uprising. I previously mentioned that two groups were formed since 2011: a branch of the Dostour Party came together in 2012, and the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy (ECCD) was created after the 2013 military coup. What set these organizations apart are their main objectives, which are purely political, a novelty within the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa.

One participant described the Dostour's objectives in Ottawa as "[creating] awareness for politics in general and to also... And afterwards, the next step is to create awareness for the values of the Dostour Party, and the values of the revolution" (Interview 10, p. 16). This political leaning led to initiating such events as a candlelight vigil to remember the 2011 Mohamed Mahmoud Street protests in Cairo, public forums on Egyptian politics, food-and-movie nights, as well as demonstrations.

However, it is probably with the Tamarod movement that Dostour members in Ottawa achieved the greatest exposure within the community. Tamarod was a grassroots movement that emerged in Egypt during Mohamed Morsi's one-year tenure as president. Quickly after his election in June 2012, he grew increasingly unpopular with many Egyptians, and some feared that he and the Muslim Brotherhood were taking steps to ensure a long-lasting hold on power. In the spring of 2013, political activists started to collect signatures to force Morsi to call for early elections and threatened for civil disobedience. This movement led to mass protests on June 30, 2013, and to the Egyptian military successfully carrying out a coup against Morsi three days later.

The Tamarod movement had echoes around the world, including in Ottawa, and it was the members of the Dostour Party in this city who managed its petition. According to one participant who was part of the effort, it became one of the most significant activities undertaken by the Dostour Party in Ottawa.

> We were really campaigning for this, and how to target people, and send emails, talk people into this. We used to go where we would find Egyptians at. We had someone go to the church – two churches – talked to people, and had some people go to the mosque after Friday prayers, and try to talk to them, and tell them, "You want to sign Tamarod." We needed people to sign. (Interview 10, p. 19)

The group was very successful in getting Tamarod's message out, and it gathered more signatures than the rest of Canada, according to a participant. The signatures were sent to Toronto, from where an Egyptian Canadian was travelling to Cairo ahead of the June 30 protests. On that day, Ottawa's Dostour members, along with other people, marched from the Egyptian embassy to Parliament Hill.

The other group, the ECCD, was formed in Ottawa in September 2013 to coordinate activities between other Egyptian Canadian organizations across the country that denounce the Egyptian military's violent political repression and oppose the coup. They organized protests with such evocative names as "Protest Against 529 Sentenced to Death in Egypt" or "Stand in Solidarity Against the Military Coup in Egypt." In addition to this, the ECCD has been active in Canadian media, granting interviews for such high-profile stories as the fate of Canadian journalist Mohamed Fahmy, and it has provided its support to the campaign to free Khaled Al-Qazzaz, an Egyptian Canadian jailed in Egypt because of his role as aide to former president Morsi. The ECCD leadership has also been active on Parliament Hill, meeting with members of Parliament, and organizing panels to discuss such topics as human

rights in Egypt, along with Amnesty International and prominent Canadian activist Monia Mazigh.

More institutionalized forms of political activities also occurred. The Egyptian expatriate community at large has been invited to vote at Egyptian elections and referendums, and many exercised this newly-operative role granted to them after the Egyptian uprising. Egyptian law never de jure prevented Egyptian expatriates to vote, but there were some strict rules in place that made it almost impossible for them to do so. The major hindrance was that they could only vote in their home riding at polling stations supervised by judges, and these could, in effect, only be found in Egypt. There were thus important implications to this rule: Egyptians had to travel to Egypt if they wanted to vote, and they had to carry a valid identification card on which their home address is recorded, since passports were not deemed an acceptable form of identification for election purposes. Valid identification cards must periodically be renewed at police stations in Egypt, and therefore, Egyptians who had been away from the country for a long period of time needed to include a trip to the police station to put their papers in order. According to one Egyptian Canadian in Ottawa, the unfairness of elections under an authoritarian regime was one more motivation to give up the troubles of renewing his and his family's Egyptian passports and identification cards.

Once Mubarak left office and the military council took over to head the government during the transition to a new president, it became a priority to give Egyptians abroad the possibility to vote at embassies. Over the next months, a jurisdictional battle ensued between the executive and the judicial powers over whether Egyptians abroad would be able to vote, and when and how they would do so. There was a movement within the Egyptian expatriate community around the world who demanded that this right be more accessible. A Twitter

campaign developed under the #right2vote hashtag, and there were demonstrations in major cities around the world, most notably New York and London. The final decision to let Egyptians expatriates vote from abroad was finally made a few days ahead of the parliamentary elections.[7]

In Ottawa, many people took part in those and subsequent presidential elections and constitutional referendums. This in itself is remarkable, as I met people who had never voted in Egyptian elections since they came to Canada, while some had never voted in Egypt. At least one person interviewed had not even bothered with elections in Canada, despite having been a resident for almost ten years. Since voting could only be done at the embassy in Ottawa, Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa were favoured by proximity compared with those in Toronto, Montreal, or in Western Canada. However, there have been news reports in the Egyptian media describing how, in at least one occasion, Coptic organizations in the Toronto area organized buses to drive Egyptian Canadians to Ottawa to cast their ballot (Rose, 2014). Some people in the Ottawa community offered the Egyptian embassy to monitor elections, a demand to which it agreed.

Another way of being involved in Egyptian politics was for some in Ottawa to publish their political opinions on social media. I interviewed one such person at the beginning of my research, and his name came up many times in subsequent conversations with other members of the community, without me prompting it. He was often cited for his influence and wisdom. He published comments on a regular basis on Facebook, and they were public. Participants from all political leanings showed respect for his views, and at least one other participant mentioned that he often relied on him to understand the political implications of the uprising's many twists and turns. That being said, other members of the

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[7] I have not met anyone in the Ottawa community who was active in the #right2vote movement.

community were also active in writing blog posts or letters to the editor for newspapers, while others were asked to provide commentaries on radio talk shows or appear on local television.

One last mobilization effort should be noted: petitions addressed to the Canadian government to outlaw the Muslim Brotherhood were circulated by a small group of Egyptian Canadians. Up until 2011, this organization had been deemed illegal in Egypt, but it remained more or less tolerated by the Egyptian state, depending on various political and economical factors. As such, despite their illegal status, they were able to provide health services through 22 hospitals and several health clinics around Egypt, and children attended their network of 500-plus schools (Harrigan and El-Said, 2009, p. 104).

Following the January 25 uprising, the group was legalized, but after the 2013 military coup, the Egyptian military added the Muslim Brotherhood to Egypt's list of terrorist organizations. Following this, Egyptian Canadians petitioned the Canadian government to follow the likes of Russia, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates to include it on its own list. Two petitions were presented to the House of Commons in 2014 and 2015 by Brad Butt, the Conservative member for Mississauga—Streetsville, but the Canadian government has yet to follow suit.

Establishing such a list of political activities performed by Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa since 2011 is helpful in two ways. First, it provides the general context for the political mobilization that happened and how it contrasted with the pre-2011 era, which was more oriented towards religious and cultural activities. There have been clear changes in the Ottawa community's activities, and these connected people in new ways. Second, such a list can assist in understanding in which ways the Egyptian identity was being politicized throughout these years. The community performed a wide range of actions to which not all

Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa participated. This reflects the variety of political ideas that were present within the community and the presence of a plurality of identities. The next section will focus on the goals of these activities and the differing interests of the community to highlight that plurality.

The Symbolism of Interlocutors in Ottawa

Political mobilization from abroad is a true exercise in symbolism. Compare Egyptians in Tahrir Square chanting against Mubarak, torture and a general decline in socioeconomic conditions with a handful of Egyptian Canadians doing the same in front of the Egyptian embassy in Ottawa. What does it mean? Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa are not personally subjected to Mubarak's regime and his torture chambers, even less to worsening living conditions, and there are close to 9,000 kilometres separating the Canadian and the Egyptian capitals. So what exactly are they trying to achieve?

This section will clarify the meanings of the Ottawa community's political activities and messages. This will be done through the lens of the community's political interlocutors, which can be observed in the choice of locations for holding particular events. Analyzing interlocutors is potent, as political performances are constrained by the conversation's two interlocutors for it to make sense. Therefore, participants must "concentrate their efforts within a narrow range of symbols, utterances, and interactions" (Tilly, 2002, p. 117), and as such, a political action embodies the relationship binding the two interlocutors. Since this relationship is set in a historical and cultural context, it becomes possible, for the case at hand, to decipher how Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa reflected on their multi-layered political identity. A protest on Parliament Hill does not have the same meaning as one in front of the Egyptian embassy, and a choice has to be made regarding the location of such an

event. Even at the same protest there might be different interlocutors, and the different messages represent the plurality of interests and goals. Taken in the single context of the Egyptian uprising, it also shows how Egyptian Canadians were able to play with various levels of their identities.

Most protests attended by Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa took place at two sites that are specific to the national capital: the Egyptian embassy, located in the Sandy Hill neighbourhood, and Parliament Hill, home of the Canadian legislature. These two sites are specific to the Ottawa community's activities, and only one other Canadian location carried the same level of symbolism: the Egyptian consulate located in Montreal's downtown. What these venues have in common is that they already carry a meaning that needs not be constructed: the embassy and the consulate are direct links with Egypt through the ambassador and its diplomatic staff, and their extraterritoriality turns them into a metaphorical homeland where it is possible to connect with fellow Egyptians, at home and abroad. On the other hand, Parliament Hill carries the meaning of Canadians, both as the Canadian public, but also as another constituent part of the Egyptian Canadian identity. It also means "democracy," a message that would soon become very important to the community.

Overall, the Egyptian embassy remains to be the one site where most of the demonstrations in Ottawa took place. As was observed earlier, there was no organization behind the protests at the embassy in the early days, and no one formally indicated that this should be a gathering site. Yet, Egyptian Canadians who closely followed the news at home did not hesitate in going to the embassy to support their fellow citizens, and soon enough, it became the rallying point for Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa.

The significance of the embassy rests in its capacity to converse with both Egyptians in Egypt, and the Egyptian government. Some protests in Ottawa were held with fellow Egyptians in mind: times were hard at home, and the instability that the uprising had created made it difficult to bear. In Egypt, it was perceived that crime rates were on the rise, many people had lost their jobs, and as the country's economy faltered, goods became more expensive and shortages were frequent. As such, some Egyptian Canadians went to the embassy carrying very specific messages for their fellow Egyptians.

For example, after Morsi was sent to jail following the 2013 military coup, one participant to this research went to the Egyptian embassy a few times to remind Egyptians of the importance of Morsi's presidency for Egypt's democratization process. He remarked that he did not go because he approved of Morsi, but he believed that the country needed a civilian president. "Once you lived in democracy, you know the value of democracy. I saw that many Egyptians didn't understand what democracy is, because for example, if someone – some youth born during the Mubarak era, and until now, they're 32 years or 33 years old – they know nothing else" (Interview 8, p. 10). This man was going to protest at the Egyptian embassy not against the military or for Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood: his goal was to speak directly to Egyptians to remind them of the value of democracy.

Another participant was more explicit in how his actions were directed at Egyptians in Egypt. In his view, he does not believe that a little group of Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa can have any influence on the Egyptian government, so when he goes to a protest, it is to support Egyptians. When I spoke with him in late 2014, he was planning a vigil at the embassy for Egyptians who have been jailed by the military regime due to their political dissent.

[Interview 4] We are doing it just to make people in jail feel that they are – they have supporters outside.

[A.F.] I see. So it's kind of like a show of solidarity with Egyptians in Egypt, showing that we're not there, but it's difficult and we understand.

[Interview 4] Yes.

As interlocutors in those performances, Egyptians in Egypt become a reflection of how Egyptian Canadians viewed themselves. In this case, they staged protests and vigils as active participants in the uprising, just like any other Egyptian. As such, these actions represented not only a loyalty towards Egypt and other Egyptians, but a demonstration of their Egyptian identity, that they, too, were Egyptians and that what was happening in Egypt touched them directly.

The other interlocutor at the Egyptian embassy was the Egyptian government itself. For many participants interviewed, the protests held between January 25 and February 11, 2011, in Ottawa opened the communications channels with the Egyptian government, just as they did in Egypt. As such, many participated to protests at the Egyptian embassy to voice specific grievances. One such grievance was recounted by a participant who had owned a business in Egypt. One day, he was confronted with a delicate choice: in order to keep his business running, he would have to bribe state officials. He refused to do it, and according to him, this triggered his immigration to Canada. He always resented the situation and he blamed it on the Egyptian government. When I asked him why he went to the protests at the Egyptian embassy during those early days, he said, "I was always against what's happening, the regime. It must go to be able to rebuild the country. That was my idea" (Interview 8, p. 9). Similar feelings were held by another participant who participated at demonstrations at the Egyptian embassy to protest against Mubarak. "Yes, for me it was just like – it's not even something I thought about. I never wanted anything more than this guy [Mubarak] to be out,

so – Just the fact that you saw that, 'Oh, okay. There is a big thing happening over there.' You just felt right away that you want to be part of it" (Interview 5, p. 8).

One particular event shows the significance of the Egyptian embassy as a main site for demonstration. Many Egyptian Canadians who participated to this research attended two separate rallies with different messages that were both held at the embassy on June 30, 2013. On one side of the street, people gathered for the Tamarod movement and demanded Morsi to resign, while across from them, another group demonstrated for Morsi to stay as a legitimate president and in the name of democracy. This situation—two groups choosing to hold a rally in front of the Egyptian embassy on the same day, but with contradictory messages—confirms two things: that it was a strategic location for speaking to specific interlocutors, but also that the Ottawa community was not united around the same goals, interests, and political identity. There was one group who believed that the office of the Egyptian president should be more accountable, while another party believed that, because he had been elected on a specific platform, that same president had the liberty to carry whatever plans he deemed fit for the next four years.

However, what do these events say about the Egyptian Canadians who did not take part into them? While some Egyptian Canadians felt that the January 25 events were historic moments and they fed on the energy of the protests in Egypt, not everyone in the Ottawa community shared those feelings. Are they less Egyptian? Do they not care about their fellow Egyptians? Not necessarily. For many, it is the volatility created by these mass demonstrations that kept them away from joining their fellows at the embassy. Some remain incredulous about the events, while others feared for their family members during the tense days before Mubarak resigned. There were reports of looting in Cairo, and security breaches at Egyptian prisons meant that some prisoners were released or were able to evade. Police

officers disappeared completely from the streets, and some police stations were set on fire. Moreover, in an attempt to control protesters who relied heavily on social media to coordinate their actions, the country's authorities cut off all access to Internet and shut down cellphone services: from January 28 to February 2, 2011, worried Egyptian Canadians could not communicate with their family.

This is important to consider, as it reflects people's agency and individual priorities during the uprising. I argue that people made the choice to gather at protests and partake in political activities outside of elite influence. This is also indicative of the way Egyptian Canadians' identity was being politicized: there was first an awakening moment when some of them felt like what was happening was important and there were issues that needed to be addressed. Others chose not to be involved because it was not part of their interest or gave less importance to their identity's political layer.

Another popular site for protests for the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa is Parliament Hill, where I recorded at least five events that were held by Egyptian Canadians: one on February 12, 2011 (the day after Mubarak resigned), one around July 3, 2013 (the day Morsi was ousted), and a series of at least three demonstrations from August 17 to September 8, 2013, that highlighted the Rabaa Massacre. For each of these protests, it was not so much the interlocutor that was important, but Parliament Hill's symbol as a site of democracy.

For some Egyptian Canadians, both Mubarak's and Morsi's demise represented hallmarks of Egypt's democratization, and they gathered on Parliament Hill to celebrate the beginning of better times. However, the purpose of the August and September demonstrations was less festive, but it still carried a democratic symbolism. Soon after the military coup on July 3, 2013, a group of Egyptian Canadians rallied on Parliament Hill to

reaffirm the democratic principles that had been at the heart of the uprising, and which had been wiped out by Morsi's imprisonment. Then, on August 12, 2013, pro-democracy militants in Egypt were killed during sit-ins, and some Egyptian Canadians felt that these events needed to be denounced as another blow to democracy. In this case, Parliament Hill became a better choice to hold demonstrations than the Egyptian embassy.

The last site for protests in Ottawa was very event-specific and it requires some context to grasp its significance. It is also an important site to understand the dynamics between interlocutors and political identity. To my knowledge, only one protest was held at the U.S. embassy in Ottawa, and it was carried by a group of Coptic Christians after the Maspero demonstrations, a deadly protest held on October 9, 2011, in front of Cairo's Maspero Television Building.[8]

The Maspero demonstrations were triggered by the destruction of a church in Aswan, the southernmost Egyptian governorate along the Nile, on the border with Sudan. The previous week, a Coptic church in the small village of El-Marinab had been destroyed by fire following an attack blamed on Muslim radicals (BBC News, 2011a), and the incident was the latest in a series of similar events that had been taking place around the country over the past few months (El-Gergawy, 2011). Fearing that authorities were not doing enough to protect the country's religious minority, a group of mostly Coptic Christians marched from Cairo's Shubra district to the Maspero building, unarmed, and demanding the resignation of Aswan's governor and accusing the state television of fuelling anti-Christian sentiments. After their arrival at Maspero, the military opened fire on the protesters and used armoured

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[8] "Maspero" refers to the building's address on Maspero St., itself named after French archeologist and former head of Egyptian Antiquities Service Gaston Maspero. The Maspero Television Building houses the headquarters of the Egyptian Radio and Television Union, the state entity that owns all non-satellite Egyptian television channels.

vehicles to roll over the crowds, leaving 24 dead and hundreds injured. According to an official statement by the military, the protesters had attacked first.

In Ottawa, these events were denounced by a march to the U.S. embassy. Participants I interviewed justified such a site because of a widely-held belief that the U.S. government was, at the time, protecting the Egyptian military. In fact, the official statement from the White House never condemned the military's actions, and solicited restraint from both sides (Office of the Press Secretary, 2011). In the views of some Egyptian Canadians, the U.S. government was complicit in the Maspero demonstrations by providing economic and military aid to Egypt.[9] According to one participant, a group of Coptic Christians "went to the American embassy to make them wake up and [have them] ask our [the Egyptian] government not to kill the Christians like this" (Interview 9, p. 13).

The site of the U.S. embassy should also be interpreted as a reflection of the difficult relationship between the Egyptian state, Egyptians in Egypt, and the Coptic Christian community outside Egypt. As one participant explained, Egyptians are generally wary of foreign interventions, due to their long history of foreign rule.[10] Even the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, the military body that governed Egypt between Mubarak's and Morsi's presidencies, played on those sentiments at times. For example, it staunchly refused elections monitoring from international observers and it ordered the raid of the Cairo offices of both the International Republic Institute and the National Democratic Institute in December 2011 on suspicions of foreign intervention.

As such, one participant explained that this fear of political meddling by foreign powers has always put the Coptic Christian community outside Egypt in a difficult position.

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[9] Egypt is the second-largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid after Israel. It is delivered both in the forms of economic and military assistance since the 1978 Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel.

[10] In the past 500 years alone, Egypt was governed by the Mamluks, the Ottomans, the French, and the British.

As expatriates, they are viewed as foreigners by the Egyptian community, and their activities to defend the Coptic minority in Egypt are thus very limited. Trying to get the Canadian government involved is even more a sensitive affair.

> Sometimes you have a lot of Coptic Christian people here in Canada or in the United States saying, "We're asking these foreign governments to do something." What that particular something is, nobody really knows, but whatever it is, there's a very real chance that in Egypt, it's going to be interpreted as foreign intervention. (Interview 7, p. 14)

In this context, a march by Egyptian Canadians to the U.S. embassy in Canada about events that happened to Egyptians in Egypt becomes rational. Caught between a desire to denounce the treatment of Christians by the Egyptian state and the fear of inducing greater reprisals on them due to perceived foreign intervention, sites for protests are limited. The U.S. embassy, as the representative of a state that has poured money into the Egyptian military, becomes highly symbolic and effective in excluding the Canadian government and Egyptian Canadians from the equation. In fact, such a march becomes a general call for the U.S. to stop funding murderous activities—an overt message to the United States, and an implicit message to the Egyptian military.

There is another interlocutor with whom Egyptian Canadians have engaged during their political performances, and it is the one that may have had the most impact on the construction of their political identity: themselves. In the absence of elites who would attempt to impose a vision or create a collection of meanings around Egyptian politics, the collective process of self-definition took hold at a later stage. In fact, it is when the community started to show signs of disunity that it became necessary to define what it meant to be Egyptian Canadian and what role they could play in the uprising. The political groups that were formed in 2012 and 2013 took matters in their own hands to organize events that would help the Ottawa community in internalizing political discourses, and "rearrange their

meaning, according to social determinations and cultural projects that are rooted in their social structure, and in their space/time framework" (Castells, 1997, p. 7).

I have mentioned that the Dostour Party in Ottawa organized food-and-movie nights, as well as public discussion events. The Dostour's core leadership—which fluctuated between six and 12 individuals—had a specific goal in mind for these activities: to build a political party with a solid base of supporters. According to one participant, the group developed such a long-term vision based on the idea that Egypt had entered a democratization process. As such, they were ready to do things properly, even if it meant at a slower pace.

> So the idea was, "You know what? Let's first build a community around us (...) We need the people, because there's no point. You're a party, at the end. A political party, what's the goal? It's to bring people, bring membership, bring money, in a way, and have some kind of political effect, right? (Interview 5, p. 16)

For some events, the Dostour members put an intentional focus on that party-building endeavour, preferring to give politics a back seat. In order to grow their base, they conceived of a plan to attract people through food and sign up for their mailing list, but because they were a political organization, they would not miss the opportunity of spreading their political views to their audience. The food-and-movie nights followed that plan, and according to participants I interviewed, they were deemed successful by the Dostour leadership in Ottawa. In fact, each of these soirées attracted about 100 people.

> [Interview 10] We started to do more social stuff, with a little bit of political twist to it. We would do movie nights, but independent movie nights. Not just any movie.

> [A. F.] With a message.

[Interview 10] Yes, exactly. So we do movie nights. We do movie nights, and to make people interested to come, we do Egyptian food with it. We did kushari once. Next time, we did ful and taameya.[11] (Interview 10, p. 18)

Other events, on the contrary, were intentionally political. For the Dostour members, it was not enough to gather people; there was a real concern for wanting to create political awareness on Egyptian current affairs within the Egyptian Canadian community.

[Interview 10] Of course, we were more inclined towards the revolutionist ideology, and we were trying to promote this, of course. But first of all, we knew that our audience here, they were just (...) people (who) were born and raised in Canada and people who have been here for 20-30 years (...) Egypt for them is something that they follow on the news.

[A. F.] Okay. And so you're trying to change that attitude?

[Interview 10] Yes. We were trying to create – they need to be aware. (Interview 10, p. 16)

For example, when rumour reached Ottawa that Egyptian Social Democratic Party founding member Mohamed Abou El-Ghar[12] was speaking in Toronto, the Dostour members reached out to the organizing committee to have him speak in Ottawa as well. Despite him being part of a rival political party, the goal was to create some level of political awareness within the community. "He made a presentation, told people what was happening, how they're planning to confront the Muslim Brotherhood, and all that stuff" (Interview 5, p. 17).

Another such event organized by the Dostour was a one-time political panel styled "Current Political Standoff and Constitutional Crisis in Egypt." It came on the heels of a call by President Morsi for a referendum on a new constitution, which had been marred with controversy. Constitution-related disagreements surrounded the content itself (it failed to protect religious minorities and did not put an end to military trials for civilians), the

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[11] Common Egyptian dishes. Taameya is also known as falafel in other Mediterranean cuisines.
[12] The Egyptian Social Democratic Party was founded after the January 25 uprising as one of the many groups that held a so-called "liberal" ideology in Egypt. It is a consultative member of the Socialist International, and an observer member of the Party of European Socialists.

legitimacy of the body that wrote it (several political parties boycotted the Constituent Assembly over its overrepresentation of Islamist parties), and the hastiness of the referendum (Morsi wanted to pass the new constitution before an impending ruling by the Supreme Constitutional Court tasked with assessing the Constituent Assembly's legitimacy). The Dostour's poster for the event was clear in its goal to educate and create political awareness:

> As members of the Ottawa Chapter of the Dostour Party, we believe that the public, Egyptians and non-Egyptians, need to be well-informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed Constitution in post-Revolution Egypt. We believe that such open discussion can cultivate reason and understanding, which is badly needed in these hard times, with us so far from the homeland. (Al Dostour Party, n.d.)

The Egyptian Canadian community's latest interlocutor is the Canadian public, especially the Canadian government, and this shift occurred during the summer of 2013. Between January 2011 and July 2013, the focus of the community's political activities remained mostly onto showing support for Egyptians in Egypt, protesting against measures taken by the Egyptian government, and raising political awareness among the Egyptian Canadian community. Since the 2013 military coup, Egyptian Canadian politics have changed. As I will demonstrate in the next chapter, emerging political divisions within the community have crystallized, and there are now two major camps: one that believes the way forward for Egypt is with a military regime, and one that believes that the military is an illegitimate ruler and that Egypt must return to a civilian government. However, both sides have tried to spread their message using the same concept of "democracy," which shows how the community's identity has been politicized over the previous months. With one side supporting the coup and the other opposing it, how can democracy be used as a justifier in both cases? While the pro-military camp believes that the military acted on Egyptians' demands to toss out President Morsi (thus making a move towards a better democracy), the

anti-military camp views Morsi as the true president, having been elected by popular vote a year earlier.

As such, the two groups in Ottawa have held demonstrations for the safeguard of Egyptian democracy. While the pro-military side has slowly left the public arena, the anti-military side, represented in Ottawa by the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy, has performed political activities to raise awareness on the military regime's ills, including vigils, protests against torture in Egypt, and even meeting with Canadian parliamentarians. One participant described the message they had for Canadians:

> This president [Mohamed Morsi] was kicked out by a bloody military coup. This coup has not to be supported (...) This [Abdel Fattah el-Sisi] is a bloody person. He [shouldn't] be in the United Nations. He killed thousands of people and he burned them. And he is the chief of an army, and when the chief of the army comes to power, it is a military coup. (Interview 11, p. 21)

Despite their attempts at publicizing these events through the Canadian media, educating Canadians on what is happening in Egypt has proven to be a difficult task, according to participants to this research. One in particular remarked that talking to parliamentarians was the easy part; it was getting a reaction from the Canadian government that was problematic. Egyptian Canadians understand that many factors affect international relations, but there are many hurdles. Some people I interviewed believe that the Canadian government is more prone to listening to Coptic Christians, although Coptic Christian lobbying efforts have also been met coyly by the Canadian government.

This analysis of Egyptian Canadians' interlocutors in Ottawa shows the complicated issues with which they, as a community, had to deal. Although decisions were all made in the same context—the Egyptian uprising as perceived from Canada—a diversity of messages were addressed to different people: the Egyptian citizenry, the Egyptian government, the Canadian public, Egyptian Canadians, and even the Canadian and the U.S. governments.

Different strategies for different interlocutors also demonstrates how Egyptian Canadians perceived themselves in this environment, and over time, trends emerged, which can be associated with this collective political identity that was being constructed. The fact that many differing opinions and ideologies emerged is no surprise, as "plurality is a source of stress and contradiction in both self-representation and social action" (Castells, 1997, p. 6). Yet, it is the common messaging behind the political projects that exhibit this identity. That both those who oppose and those who support the 2013 military coup explain their position through "democracy" validates a collective understanding for the concept, and how it ranks in their social structure.

The two previous sections about contentions and interlocutors presented the outcomes of Egyptian Canadians' politicization of their identity since 2011. It mostly catalogued activities and contextualized them to understand what was achieved during that period of time. In the next section, I will address the process by which this identity politicization took place.

Feeling Egyptian: Giving a Sense to Politics

The last examples presented in the previous section documented how Egyptian Canadian political groups had specific plans for creating something political, which was, in itself, a novelty for the Ottawa community after 2011. I have described many activities performed by the Dostour Party in Ottawa, but the mere phenomena of political protests, as well as the establishment of the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy, show a community-wide desire to become involved in homeland politics.

During the interview process, I asked participants to explain this desire, and invariably their response was straightforward and, in some cases, assertive: they do it

because they are Egyptian. The next chapter will present how this involvement goes beyond identity, but for now, I would like to argue that identity itself does not explain much, as most participants always strongly identified as Egyptian. If identity was the reason to be involved, why would Egyptian Canadians not be active in homeland politics before 2011?

Identity needs to be understood as something that is always present, but with which an individual can play. As such, "being Egyptian" is not the reason why Egyptian Canadians would participate to protests and form political groups. Rather, one does those things "as an Egyptian," i.e. in the way an Egyptian would do it. What happened in 2011 is that, for the Egyptian Canadians I interviewed, "being Egyptian" took a new meaning: that of being a politicized Egyptian. Moreover, because they maintain ties with the homeland—in the form of their cultural practices, kinship or even property ownership—they are part of the Egyptian community. Therefore, the decision to take part in political activities was based on an individual perception of one's Egyptian identity.

Kastoryano refers to "the establishment of bonds of solidarity arising from identity— national, religious, linguistic or regional—beyond the state borders" (Kastoryano, 2010, p. 579) as an ethnic community's diasporization, but it is a common feature of migration movements. Levitt (2011) portrays the same phenomenon when defining a transnational community as being characterized by the ties between migrants and their homeland, thus including not only the migrants, but everyone affected by the act of migration, i.e. the migrants' children and parents who have not migrated. More generally, the community is imagined by its members and it is bound by cultural and historical ties (Anderson, 2006). It is less physical than it is psychological, and when a group of people demonstrates in Tahrir Square, it resonates with all Egyptians who share the same concerns, notwithstanding where in the world they may be. This is why Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa gathered at the

Egyptian embassy or on Parliament Hill: they "felt" Egyptian, and failing to be in Egypt, they extended Tahrir Square to Ottawa to be part of the community.

This Egyptian identity adds another layer of meaning to their participation to Egyptian politics from abroad in revealing how it was used for mobilization purposes. "Being Egyptian" was a way to justify their political involvement, but only because they wanted to do something. Such feelings were not shared by all members of the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa: for example, I contacted several other Egyptian Canadians for this research, and many declined to be interviewed. They cited reasons such as feeling disconnected from Egypt, or believing that the country should be left to Egyptians in Egypt. They were Egyptian just as much as any other, but they did not feel the need to protest or join political groups. For various personal reasons, they wished not be part of the Egyptian polity, at least the one that would drop by the Egyptian embassy or would attend Egyptian movie nights.

To be able to understand how the participants' Egyptian identity became politicized, I propose to look at the meanings the participants attributed to "being" or "feeling Egyptian." Such a methodology is necessary to understand the participants' perspectives, i.e. the "psychological knowledge structures that result from the interaction of identities, values, and interests" (Walsh, 2004, p. 2). I will present several scenarios that may seem disjointed at first, but the combination of all these narratives will explain how identity helped individuals make choices. As their decisions were based on a similar sense of "being Egyptian," it slowly set in motion the politicization of the community and its involvement in Egyptian politics

It is possible to separate Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa met during my research into two groups: people who had immigrated to Canada at least a few years ago, and people who

had immigrated as late as 2011 and 2012.[13] I will not discuss the role of identity for the latter at length, as the process of activating one's Egyptian identity for politics is more obvious. In fact, most of them had participated in one way or another in political events when they were still living in Egypt, and their political involvement in Canada was merely a continuation of activities in which they had been invested in their homeland, although, as one participant put it, "I didn't come here to be a political activist abroad. As soon as I settled in, I explored the city, met some friends, and everything, and settled down" (Interview 10, p. 9). That being said, despite having no political intentions, it was only a matter of weeks before he went to his first protest in Ottawa.

Among the participants whose immigration predated the 2011 uprising, about half of them had moved to Canada during the 1990s, and the other half during the first decade of the 21st century. All of them maintained regular contact with their immediate family, with some being in touch with members of their extended family. Some had rarely returned to Egypt (either for financial reasons or because of bad timing, including studies and childbearing), while others went back more often. In all, Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa remain a mostly heterogeneous group, except for one thing: they all possess a professional degree (e.g. engineering, accounting, business administration) acquired at universities in either Canada or Egypt. As one participant explained to me, this is relatively unremarkable within the community, as most Egyptians who immigrate to Canada do so as skilled workers, and therefore need a degree to improve their chances. Even the few participants who grew up and were educated in Canada had completed a university degree. However, it is unclear if this or any other socioeconomical factor played a role in their politicization.

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[13] None of the people who immigrated after the 2011 uprising did so specifically because of it. Many had study-abroad plans, and others had applied for their residency permits months before the uprising.

Instead, I would argue that the way one politicizes his or her identity for the homeland is found into their discourses, which are marked by a willingness to be included in the Egyptian polity. One participant moved to Canada in the 1990s with his wife. They have two children, both born in Canada. During our meeting, he put a strong emphasis on his love for Canada, and he often repeated that he was Canadian, and that his children were Canadian. When I asked him why it remained important for him to vote at Egyptian elections and referendums, he replied, "Take that opportunity to teach the kids a lesson: that they can also go and vote for the good of Egypt. Because we still have a lot of close people. Although my father and mother died, my sister still lives there. Her daughters and son live there" (Interview 1, p. 14). He added that he still has cousins, aunts, and uncles in Egypt, and they were all part of his social network. "And I want them (his Egyptian relatives) to live a better life, because I live a better life" (Interview 1, p. 15). His family—both close and extended—is important to him, and he feels a connection that is unconditional. He both feels like the ones who stayed in Egypt and he wants them to experience what he has, albeit outside Egypt. One's geographic location becomes irrelevant, as long as he or she is part of the Egyptian community.

This desire for inclusion was also mentioned by another participant, but for him, his Egyptian identity came as a form of pressure that seems to be self-inflicted.

> On the one hand, you have Egyptians in Egypt, you know, they look at the quality of life that Egyptians in Canada have, and think, you know, "You should be the first people to come out and support us." They're looking for that support. They're looking to say, "You're still Egyptians even though you're living abroad. You need to go out and support whatever it is that we're doing here in Egypt." And we try to do that, right, because we don't want to be seen as just, "Okay, we've forgotten about Egypt. We're just living our lives here." (Interview 7, p. 23)

Feelings about one's identity are by no means easy to describe, and many participants made similar contradictory statements: one is Canadian, then one is Egyptian; or Egyptians are looking for the expatriate community's support, while expatriates must demonstrate unselfishness. Such statements are meant to justify their activities; they are not the core reasons for their involvement.

One participant lived in a few countries before immigrating to Canada. She loved Egypt, and had never thought of leaving her homeland, but she followed her husband. She kept in touch with her immediate family, but their regular contacts did not include political conversations of any kind. She even admitted that she was very removed from Egyptian politics up until a few months before the beginning of the uprising. "I wasn't talking about politics at all before this, and I wasn't even – I didn't know that there were so many problems in Egypt" (Interview 9, p. 4).

One incident reconnected her with politics, and it is strongly linked to her Coptic identity. On January 1, 2011, as worshippers were leaving a new year's service, an explosive detonated outside a Coptic church in Alexandria. The bomb killed over 20 people and injured about 100 (BBC News, 2001b). The participant was aware of discrimination against Christians in Egypt, but this incident infuriated her. "This was something that was very unacceptable at all to happen, because people are celebrating the new year" (Interview 9, p. 8). She went to the Egyptian embassy to denounce what she regarded as a massacre, and when protesters marched on Tahrir Square a few weeks later, she became very involved. She claims to have participated to all protests in Ottawa, and she is quite active on Facebook. She believed that the uprising would herald better times for the Coptic Christian community in Egypt, and she saw her activities as moving this issue forward.

> I started, of course, to care about what's happening so much. And you know, I was telling people on Facebook, "Please go and vote. Please go and give them papers, and distribute petitions on email, sign this and go, and so on and so on. If you want a ride, I can drive you," and things like this. I mean, I cared so much. I love Egypt. (Interview 9, p. 9)

While some participants felt that there was nothing that set apart Egyptians in Egypt and Egyptian expatriates—bar their geographic locations—others emphasized the distance as something useful for all Egyptians. One participant suggested that Egyptian expatriates possessed one advantage that Egyptians in Egypt did not: the luxury to think. Many participants shared the belief that Egyptians in Egypt might be too close to the uprising to be able to see the whole picture. As Egyptians, expatriates were able to provide insight on issues that they understood, and by being removed from daily difficulties brought upon by the uprising, participants I interviewed considered that they could offer productive viewpoints. "People active in politics here – looking at Egyptian politics – see it from a much more different perspective. You're looking at it from a distance. You're not really in the needy-gritty of what's going on the ground. You see things in a different perspective" (Interview 7, p. 23).

Therefore, claiming an Egyptian identity served Egyptian Canadians in two ways: they could be included in the Egyptian polity along with all Egyptians in Egypt, while their absence from Egypt gave them the benefit of a new perspective on political developments, all for the betterment of Egyptians, a community in which they hold membership. Although all participants I interviewed claimed that "being Egyptian" was the main reason to become politically involved, there is one discrepancy to note: they were always Egyptian. However, what "being" or "feeling" Egyptian did was to define their involvement in very specific ways. In demonstrating and showing support to other Egyptians, and in raising awareness for

politics within the Egyptian Canadian community, they were claiming to be part of the Egyptian polity. They politicized their own identity, outside any elite or state involvement.

Being politicized Egyptians separates them from two other kinds of Egyptian Canadians: those who did not partake in uprising-related events, and their former selves. No one I interviewed in the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa was ever as active in Egyptian politics than since the uprising. They, too, always felt Egyptians, but starting in 2011, they managed that sense of identification to add a political meaning to it: "being Egyptian" now meant to chant Egypt's ills in front of the Egyptian embassy or to carry torture-denouncing signs on Parliament Hill. Their Egyptian identity was not what triggered their activities, as they would have presumably performed them for many years already. After all, abuses of all kinds under Mubarak were well documented. In the next chapter, I will present what prompted such heightened levels of political participation on the part of Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa: the 2011 Egyptian uprising created a public space for dissension for all those who claimed to be Egyptian.

Chapter 4: Egyptian Politics Come to Ottawa

After looking at the different ways Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa participated to the events linked to the Egyptian civil uprising and the meanings they gave to their activities, I will turn to understanding how the civil uprising acted as a catalyst for their political involvement. Most participants to this research have expressed a common feeling of solidarity with their fellow Egyptians through the use of such phrases as "being Egyptian" or "feeling Egyptian." They do not believe that their geographic location outside Egypt excludes them from being part of the Egyptian polity, and in fact, they regard it as something that allows for a different perspective and contribution to Egyptian politics. However, this sense of identity alone cannot explain why they chose to be involved in homeland politics since 2011.

There was something in the uprising that compelled Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa to protest and form political organizations. In the previous chapter, I argued that Egyptian Canadians' politicization was a process that was influenced by their identity, but in this chapter, I propose that their politicization was triggered by events in Egypt. I suggest that the Egyptian uprising introduced changes to Egyptian Canadians' political opportunity structure, but because of their geographic location outside Egypt, they adapted to these changes in ways that were specific to their circumstances in Canada. Slowly, the community reorganized itself along political ideologies similar to those present in Egypt, but with the difference that the fault lines in Ottawa are more pronounced. To discuss this phenomenon, I will come back to Dufoix's theory on diaspora mobilization and I will tie it to Tarrow's theory on political opportunity structures. I will argue that the Egyptian uprising, from a political opportunity point of view, must be viewed as three different phases that redefined the Ottawa community each time.

I will then present the Egyptian Canadian reaction throughout these three phases. I will show that new social networks based on Egyptian politics were created in Ottawa. I will distinguish between three groups that emerged over time, and how their ideologies played out since 2011 to shed light on the tensions currently stirring the Ottawa community. Finally, I will address how Egyptian Canadians' politicization continues to follow current events in Egypt, yet remains an independent process. To this effect, I will look at the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy's attempts at creating alliances with other Egyptian groups around the world to discredit Egypt's new government.

The 2011 Egyptian Civil Uprising as a Political Opportunity Structure

As discussed previously in the conceptual framework, Dufoix (2011) proposed five types of events that occur in the homeland, and due to their likeliness of bringing changes to that state's political environment, they may trigger the establishment of a formal relationship between the homeland and its expatriate community. These situations are the modification of the home state's borders, its independence, a war, changes in migration policies, and democratic transitions. As political alliances reorganize and relations between the state and its citizenry are reshaped—both at home and abroad—these may affect both interior politics and foreign relations.

The 2011 Egyptian uprising is one example of such circumstances. On January 25, 2011, no one could predict the dramatic turn of events that Egyptians would later experience, but as weeks went by, there were many hopeful talks in the media, among Western governments, and in Egypt itself that the country was entering a period of transition towards democracy. From the perspective of Egyptians in Egypt, there is no doubt that the 2011 uprising changed its relations with the Egyptian government, and as events unfolded, they

had to make a series of choices about types of events with which they had limited know-how: participation to public criticism of previously-untouchable institutions, behavioural changes in the absence of police on the streets, and logical interpretation of an all-powerful president's resignation.

For Egyptian expatriates, these questions were more abstract, as there was no need for protection against looters, and one had the capability to criticize the president or the military without fear of repression. Yet, as they viewed themselves to be part of the Egyptian polity like their fellows in Egypt, the events of January 25, 2011, had an effect on them. As I have described in the previous chapter, how Egyptian Canadians view their identity and social ties with Egypt are aspects that explain the different ways in which they would take part to political activities from abroad. Generally speaking, participants expressed that their activities in Canada were "supportive" of their kin and their country. But why now? The Egyptian uprising—and more specifically the events surrounding January 25, 2011—opened a public space for dissension that had been kept staunchly out of reach by the Egyptian government. It was the beginning of the new relationship described by Dufoix.

Political mobilization comes as the result of how people interpret specific situations and other actors' actions (McAdam et al., 2000). They weigh all the information available to figure what political opportunities may arise from new situations, and this is what happened with Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa: the witnessing of what was happening in Egypt—compounded with their Egyptian identity—compelled them into being more active, show anger at their home government, and support their fellows in the homeland. However, as new information came in, this act of assessment was being done on a continuous basis, and as the situation evolved, people repositioned themselves in the new environment.

Tarrow identifies the main political opportunity structures that can have an impact on individuals' decision-making processes: increasing access to institutions, shifting of political alignments, elite divisions, presence of influential allies, repression (or facilitation) of collective action, and state strength and its prevailing strategies. In the case at hand, the 2011 Egyptian uprising certainly caused an increased access in Egyptian governmental institutions and it shifted political alignments altogether: the military disaffiliated from the presidency, the Muslim Brotherhood was legalized, and a plethora of mostly-unknown actors were able to meaningfully influence Egyptian politics.

It is this colliding of Egyptian identity, political awakening, opening of the public space, and the many changes to the political opportunity structures that caused this sudden political busyness within the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa. One participant to this research had been one of the Egyptian state's many victims, and his experience had shaped his specific view of the government. "I was always against what's happening, the [Mubarak] regime. It must go to be able to rebuild the country. That was my idea" (Interview 8, p. 9). When asked why he was never involved in Egyptian politics before 2011, it is the lack of public space that came first to his mind. "Because it was impossible. It was impossible. At least, they [the government] put in your head that it's impossible. And it was impossible that people came together" (Interview 8, p. 9).

The Mubarak regime had succeeded in preventing any form of protest that would be damageable to its existence, and it had been equally successful at making people believe that there would be consequences to any intervention. Since critical mass was important to undertake dissenting actions, he was aware that there needs to be an organized movement, and that, by himself, he could not do anything. How pressure groups in Egypt were able to organize and stand up to the Egyptian government is not the subject of this thesis, but its

effects are. For Egyptians abroad, it created the momentum necessary to open a space for political discourse and activities, and seize the opportunity to become vocal about Egypt's ills. When Mubarak quit the presidency in February 2011, the effects of the civil uprising were crystallized, as it proved to Egyptians both in Egypt and abroad that their voice could be heard and meaningful changes could happen. Participating in Egyptian politics became a worthy undertaking. One participant explains how Mubarak's resignation acted as a game changer for the future:

> I think it's because the fall of Mubarak was very symbolic. I think it was nothing other than symbolic. That's what we learned after that, that it was just symbolic. But that symbol, in a way, I think is what let people not to fear anymore. If you can take down the guy who has been there for 30 years, then you can do anything. And you shouldn't really be afraid. (Interview 5, p. 4)

The voice of the expatriate community was soon recognized in the following months by the interim governing body, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, a group of 20-something senior military officers headed by then Field Marshal Mohamed Tantawi. As early as April 2011, it was announced that Egyptians abroad would be eligible to vote at embassies and consulates for all future parliamentary and presidential elections, as well as referendums. The communications lines between the government and the Egyptian expatriates were becoming more formal, or in Tarrow's words, there was an increased access to Egyptian institutions.

One participant mentioned that, now that he has the right to vote, this is not something that he would relinquish, because that is his way to present his concerns to the Egyptian government. Before the expatiates' right to vote became a hot issue in Egyptian politics, he said that he trusted his fellow Egyptians in Egypt to make the right decisions, and that he did not care whether he would be allowed to vote from abroad or not. However, once he secured that right, it became an important tool for his participation in Egyptian politics.

> I'm Egyptian. I carry an Egyptian passport. I didn't give away my Egyptian nationality, so I have the right to vote, whether other [people] don't see a reason for it. Although I understand this opinion. And I told you: I didn't mind that they didn't extend the vote to people who live abroad. But I can argue also that, in terms of equality, in terms of – Because you treat all citizens equally, right? So, from that perspective, I have the right to vote and I will vote. (Interview 1, p. 15)

In this regard, the 2011 Egyptian uprising modified the structure determining the relationship between Egyptian Canadians and Egypt. New structures meant that people adapted to the new environment, and previous opinions and behaviours changed. While the Egyptian identity of Egyptian Canadians had contributed to a willingness to be active in homeland politics, it was the opening of the public space that modified their behaviour.

The same participant who said that no one can take his right to vote away visited Egypt in the summer of 2011. He does so annually with his two children, in order to "strengthen those ties with the family and with their roots" (Interview 1, p. 2). The family was vacationing on the Mediterranean coast when mass protests erupted once again in Tahrir Square in Cairo, some 300 kilometres away. He felt it was his chance at being able to participate to the uprising "on location," so he packed the car, and drove back to Cairo. The next day, he, his wife, and their children met thousands of other protesters in Tahrir Square to voice their concerns, and the experience strengthened his outlook on being able to vote from Canada.

> It was a good experience. After that, we participated at every election. And the reason is exactly the same as the reasons why I go to every election in Canada: I want to participate. I want to have a voice, whether it's going to be heard or not, counted or not. (Interview 1, p. 10)

However, as mentioned earlier, not everyone in the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa felt safe to protest, at least at first. A young participant in his mid-20s who identifies with Ottawa's Coptic community talked about a sense of indifference for what was

happening in Egypt in January 2011, before Mubarak stepped down. He had been following

Egyptian politics for some time, and he knew about the larger issues the country was facing.

Yet, he recalls feeling removed from the events, something he says was shared by other

young churchgoers in Ottawa. When I asked him what caused that indifference, his thoughts

were focused on assessing the new political environment brought by the uprising.

> From talking with some of the more youthful members of this church or other
> organizations, some people never really saw the usefulness of participating [in
> the protest movement]. They think, "Well, I'm here [in Canada]. Everything
> that's going on is there [in Egypt]. What effect am I going to have by
> attending this protest or going to this particular event?" One thing I noticed is
> that it took a really particular event for people to be convinced of
> participating. (Interview 5, p. 16)

Another participant also attributed these ambivalent attitudes within Ottawa's Coptic

community to the uncertainty regarding the future of the Christian minority, especially with

regards to the Muslim Brotherhood's possible involvement in Egyptian politics in the future.

"From Day 1, they knew, 'Okay, you know what? We don't know what this revolution is

going to bring us. It might bring us the Muslim Brotherhood'" (Interview 5, p. 29). This fear

played a big part in people's calculations, but the mass protests of January and February

2011 became so powerful that they became increasingly difficult to ignore. According to

some participants, the ongoing events reached such a level of potency that even the

disbelievers had to share in the optimism.

> Because how much the revolution was gaining popularity, they [Coptic
> Christians] tried to show that, "Okay, we're not too upset with what happened.
> You know, a revolution is a good thing." Everyone at that time was playing
> the game of, "Oh! Revolution! It's great! Everyone is happy!" (Interview 5, p.
> 30)

At that point in time, the tide had turned against Mubarak, and there was no more

room for critical outlooks and opinions. According to participants, this anti-uprising

discourse was repressed by most of the community, but it would resurface after the initial

euphoria regarding Mubarak's resignation wore off and more changes to the Egyptian political opportunity structure occurred. As such, the Egyptian uprising was not an event that changed everything radically at once; rather, there would be regular events that would have an impact on the political environment, leading Egyptian Canadians to reassess it and make new decisions for their mobilization.

The importance of understanding these changes to the political opportunity structures lies in the fact that they had a profound effect on the Ottawa community. Not only did they lead some Egyptian Canadians to infuse some political sense into their Egyptian identity, but they created fault lines in the community. In this chapter, I will first present how these divisions originated from the dominant political discourses that were held in Ottawa, and how the oscillating prominence of each led members of the Ottawa community to form political organizations and contributed to its reorganization. Following this, I will argue that the changes brought by the different changes in the political opportunity structure are typically Egyptian-Canadian, as they are reactions to Egyptian politics, but are conditioned by a Canadian environment. To substantiate this claim, I will focus on the activities of the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy, which opposes the current regime of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

Dominant Political Discourses in Ottawa

The January 2011 events in Egypt had clear repercussions on the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa. They opened a space for political dissent (or at least dissatisfaction) that the Mubarak regime had previously been able to control, even amongst Egyptians living abroad. It also changed the way the community was socially organized in adding political groups to their existing structures. Before 2011 in Ottawa, social networks and cultural

cohesion revolved around the two Coptic churches and the mosques for the Muslim community (and to some extent, the Egyptian Canadian Cultural Association of Ottawa). Today, these religious institutions are still important, but there exist new ways to socialize which revolve around politics: the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy has an active chapter, and the Dostour Party, which has now frozen its activities, was also present in Ottawa.

How did the civil uprising reshape the community this way? Who are these people and why is the community divided this way? During the interviews I conducted with community members, it soon became clear to me that the divisions are deep enough to the point where not all Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa know the existence of each organization. They may know the existence of the political discourse promoted by each, but not the organizations specifically.

There are three dominant ideological discourses in Ottawa, and although this reflects what is happening in Egypt, the situation in Ottawa is not identical: only these three ideologies are, or have been, actively present in Ottawa since 2011. For example, the revolutionary ideology in Egypt is defended by many groups, which can be sorted between the left-wing (the Tagammu Party, the Socialist Popular Alliance Party, etc.), and the liberal parties (the Egyptian Social Democratic Party, the Justice Party, the Free Egyptians Party, etc.). However, in Ottawa, left-wing and liberal supporters joined forces under the Dostour Party banner, a liberal party.

One participant has been an early member of the Dostour Party in Ottawa, despite calling himself a leftist. He recalls why he decided to join the organization when a friend asked him:

I was like, "Sure. I am interested." I told her from Day 1, "I'm a leftist. I'm not a liberal." Like in terms of – The party doesn't exactly meet my ideology, but at the same time, I told her, I totally understand that in the situation we're in right now, it's not really times of where we should be divided based on ideology. So that's why I would be more than happy to join. (Interview 5, p. 13)

This situation is specific to expatriate communities in general, including in Ottawa. Because of the Canadian environment in which they live, members of the Egyptian Canadian community cannot join any party or be involved with any group: they are limited in their choices by their Canadian environment. Left-wing and liberal parties in Egypt defend common ideas based on democracy, such as a civilian-run state, freedom of expression and association, as well as the separation and balance of powers. However, left-wing parties also propose elements that focus on workers' rights, including putting a stop to privatization and favouring the nationalization of Egypt's industries, setting minimum wages, and redistributing wealth.

Compared to the former, the latter resonate less in the Canadian environment and could attract less members within the community in Ottawa. By this, I do not want to suggest that the left-wing ideology is less democratic. Rather, I offer that the emergence of a liberal political group over a left-wing one in Ottawa can be explained in two ways. The first is the make-up of the Ottawa community as mostly university-educated and professionally-employed expatriates, which by no means reflects the Egyptian society. As such, workers' rights may be less on Egyptian Canadians' minds than freedom of expression or a civilian state.

The second factor is tied to how events unfolded in Egypt after 2011. Although poverty and unemployment were important issues—especially as the economy quickly faltered—it is the political wrestling matches that have grabbed for attention over the last

four years: powers are continuously disputed between the three government branches, protesters have often been met with violence by security forces, and the military's unwillingness to withdraw from governmental affairs. The prominence of the liberal discourse within revolutionaries in Ottawa thus reflects the transnational aspect of the Egyptian Canadians' politicization: it takes its cues from Egyptian politics, but translates it to the Canadian environment.

Democratic principles for the betterment of Egyptians remain the most central aspect of the Egyptian Canadian political discourse in Ottawa. However, as democracy has different meanings for different people, it has divided the community. Instead of taking a topical approach where I would describe each vision and its promoting organization, I will present a chronological narrative to understand the intricate ways as to how the political opportunity structures have ebbed and flowed since 2011, and how they contributed to the Ottawa community's politicization and current organization. I will show that each change in the opportunity structure left space open for only two political discourses at a time, and that, in a three-way relationship, this system always left one part of the community out.

Period I: January 2011 to June 2012

I described in the previous section how the January 25 events gave Egyptians a greater access to institutions. I also noted how some members of the Coptic Christian community in Canada had dissonant views of what was happening at the time, and how difficult it had become for them to express their political opinions. There were fears as to what the future would hold for Christians in Egypt. As one participant asserted, the religious minority had not been entirely protected by the Mubarak regime, but the possibility of a Muslim Brotherhood-led government brought grimmer prospects for Christian Egyptians,

who make roughly ten percent of Egypt's population. Rumours that the Muslim Brotherhood would turn Egypt into an Islamic state under which Christians would have no legal protection provided fodder for concern. However, the uprising's power, euphoria and momentum in the early weeks did not create the space necessary to discuss any positive aspect of Mubarak's regime.

Rather, it was two competing political discourses against the regime that flourished from January 2011 to the election of Mohamed Morsi as president in June 2012. Both discourses assumed that the country had entered a new order in which the Mubarak regime had at least suffered some losses—if not outright defeated—and following Mubarak's demise in February 2011, they both revelled in democratic principles as the force driving Egypt's future.

On one hand, revolutionaries hoped to correct Egypt's ills through their slogan "Bread, freedom, and social justice." This is the group most familiar to Canadians, as this is the discourse that was mostly represented in the media throughout the first year of the uprising. In Egypt, they are divided in two currents, "liberal" and "leftist," and it is they who were at the helm of the civil uprising in its infancy, with groups like the April 6 Movement. One young professional in Ottawa explained their political ideals as such, "You have the people that [...] believe in democracy, believe in human rights, believe in all these things. And they want a secular state, you know, but that is also not a military state, you know. So not a religious state and not a military state. Just something normal" (Interview 5, p. 26).

The revolutionaries did not have an organized presence in Ottawa during that period. There were a few bloggers who shared those views and who called Ottawa home, but there was no movement per say. This is not surprising, as even in Egypt, the revolutionary movement was overly fractured and represented by dozens of small new political parties that

forged and broke political alliances on a daily basis. What matters here is not necessarily why the discourse had no organized presence in Ottawa, but the effect of the discourse on the community. One participant moved to Ottawa in 2011, and one day he saw that a students' association was planning a demonstration at the Egyptian embassy to protest against the detention of Egyptian activist Alaa Abd El-Fattah. The participant said he went to the rally, and through talking with other participants, he made friendships based on political views they shared. This would have been less likely before 2011, as the community was not structured around politics.

Meanwhile, the competing political view was held by a group of people that I will describe as being "proponents of procedural democracy." Within the Ottawa community, they are identified as supporters of "political Islam", but I hesitate to describe them as such. Although many may have such political inclinations, the reality in Ottawa is a lot more nuanced. This group believes that fair and just elections make democracy. A parliament and a president are elected and they hold onto power for four-year terms. The conflation with political Islam happened due to this view being promoted by the Muslim Brotherhood and its political wing, the Freedom and Justice Party, in post-Mubarak Egyptian politics.

As an example of how this conflation may be misguided, I interviewed one participant who is not part of the Muslim Brotherhood but who supported Morsi after the 2013 military coup, to which I will come back later. During my interview with him, his opinions on the coup tended to be constructed within a procedural democracy frame: he commonly talked about fair and just elections, as well as the importance of the four-year presidency term. In Ottawa, he thus joined the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy, because he claimed that it was his only option but in Egypt, he would have been able to support his views and take political action strictly as a Morsi supporter—sans the Muslim

Brotherhood label. However, in Ottawa, such choices are not available. if one supports procedural democracy, there is only one group from which to choose: the supporters of Morsi, which many participants to this research believe are members of the Muslim Brotherhood.

In Ottawa, the procedural democracy view was not necessarily an issue from January 2011 to June 2012. As one participant stated, "there wasn't much really to protest against, at least in Canada" at the time (Interview 3, p. 3), especially since Mubarak's resignation had led Egyptians to believe that it had ushered a democratization process. This lack of mobilization reflects the decision-making processes community members made regarding the importance of voting at the lower-house, now-defunct upper-house, and presidential elections that happened during this period. For example, one participant who is now defending procedural democracy said that he did not cast a ballot at Egyptian elections for technical and ideological reasons, although it remains for him a source of concern. At the practical level, he has left the country long enough not to possess an Egyptian identification number, and his passport has long expired. Still, he could have gone to the embassy to get his papers in order, but he did not. "I wasn't interested, very early on, in voting. Because I have never – and still do not have the trust in the legitimacy of voting. I don't." (Interview 6, p. 10). In contrast, another participant put a lot of emphasis on the role of elections for him at the time. He started voting at elections only since 2011, because he believed that the system was no longer corrupt. When probed as to how he knew this for certain, he replied, "There was ensuring points that... Okay, now there's a judge in every place who can see the elections if they're going correctly, and stuff like that" (Interview 8, p. 11).

The Egyptian uprising brought clear changes to political opportunity structures. During the year following Mubarak's departure from politics, it opened a space for political

discussions to Egyptians and Egyptian Canadians. There were two democratic discourses happening: one that focused mostly on elections, and the other that focused on an all-inclusive approach for the achievement of human rights, taken loosely. However, a third group rejected the uprising, but as the rules had changed and they were no longer on the good side of history, their views were discredited to the point that they could not even voice them publicly.

Period II: June 2012 to July 2013

The second period spans the year Mohamed Morsi was president. Although it is clear that the January 25 events worked as a catalyst to open dialogue between the Egyptian government and the people, Morsi's presidency acts as another change to the political opportunity structure, as it gave the stage for public criticism to two dissenting groups, while another was relegated to the sidelines.

In Egypt, dissatisfaction with the government rose during that second period, as Morsi was unable to address economic problems and work with various branches of the government. From the Ottawa perspective, the arrival of Morsi as president allowed the revolutionaries to set up an organization to promote their vision of Egypt's future. It also gave a tribune to Coptic Christians to express their fears on the future of the Christian community in Egypt. Having reached their goal of fair and just elections, it is the proponents of "procedural democracy" who were left out of the political conversation, especially since the result of these elections brought more problems than solutions and general discontent among Egyptians.

Morsi's election as president was no doubt due in part to the Freedom and Justice Party's high level of organization, thanks to its roots in the Muslim Brotherhood. The

revolutionaries' ideas of freedom and social justice had clearly missed the mark during the elections, and some Egyptian Canadians believed that it was time to take matters more seriously. One participant described how branches of the Egyptian Dostour Party started to be established in Canadian cities, including Ottawa.

> Now, okay, you're abroad. So how can you really work with people over there [in Egypt]? It's a little bit hard. So maybe you need to organize something. I think this is how the whole thing started: you need to have organized something here that can talk to the bigger entity in Egypt and see how you could help. And I think the whole thing started probably in Toronto, not in Ottawa. There is a bigger group over there that started the thing. (Interview 5, p. 13)

According to this participant, it was really the disappointing performance of parties that proposed equality for all and defended human rights that prompted the creation of these political branches in Canada. In his view, the uprising had to lead to greater changes in politics and society. That had not happened during the months under the rule of the military council, and many did not believe that Morsi or the Freedom and Justice Party would be able to achieve those goals either.

In Ottawa, a small group of people under 40 started to gather under the banner of the Dostour in September 2012, and at its height, the branch enjoyed a core of about 12 members. I presented the kind of activities that they organized and how their goal was primarily to build a political base. According to one other member, they refrained from being at the forefront of organizing protests, so as not to alienate certain segments of the community, since they wanted to first create awareness for Egyptian politics, and then try to promote the Dostour's values. A participant who was not directly involved with the Dostour but was close to it offered that Egyptian organizations in Ottawa would make a particular effort at that time not to lead events in order to achieve a higher turnout. "The Dostour never really wanted to take the charge of organizing a particular protest, just because they were

mostly worried about how this might be seen. They might – they were very cautious of organizing any overtly political efforts" (Interview 7, p. 12). Conscious of this reality, the Dostour members would often prefer to promote events, such as rallies to denounce sexual harassment in Egypt (a rampant problem) and to support the Mohamed Mahmoud Street protests. This does not mean that they repeatedly remained in the background and, as described earlier, their heavy involvement in the Tamarod campaign is a case in point.

I should note here that, although I label this group as "Coptic Christian," not all Ottawa's Coptic Christian community members share the views expressed below. I have met Christians who are part of the Dostour and the revolutionary discourse. However, the Ottawa group I refer to "Coptic Christian" is made up, in my experience, exclusively of Coptic Christians, and their political views seem to be anchored more exclusively in the protection of Christian Egyptians' rights than those of all Egyptians. Also, while other groups view the Muslim Brotherhood as a political organization, "Coptic Christians" focus on its religious aspect, and they feel as if it is a religious opponent that could cause the disappearance of Christians in Egypt.

With that in mind, it seems that Coptic Christians in Ottawa were merely following the larger protest movements that were happening in Egypt. Although the Ottawa rallies were not specifically targeted at the protection of the Christian population, any event to protest against Morsi and the Freedom and Justice Party was appealing. Nonetheless, some

Coptic Christians frame these protests as important for Copts. For example, when Morsi passed a series of decrees that granted him more powers, revolutionaries protested because it was against the democratic principles of freedom and social justice. Conversely, one participant who defines herself as Coptic Christian talked about it in this way:

> When Morsi became president, we did some protests, especially when he set the rule in November—I think it was in November 2012—that he's the big boss and no one can object to my words, and things like this. We went out to protest that day. We didn't like this at all, and we, from the church, we went. It was so nice when we went out. We saw a lot of Muslim people who came out with us, so it was really nice, that we all united together from here. (Interview 9, p. 12)

What is important to notice here is how this participant speaks as "we, members of the church," and not "we, Egyptians." For her, Morsi's decrees were certainly against democracy, but not one in which all people are equal: it is a democracy that specifically protects the Christian minority against the Muslim majority. She even defines two types of people at the protest: "we, from the church" and "a lot of Muslim people." Another participant, who also identifies with an Ottawa church, described who was at that same rally in similar terms:

> I would say [it was] a pretty good cross-section of the Egyptian community at large. It wasn't just Coptic Christians. There were Muslim people. There were even non-Egyptians that were there. It was a good cross-section, and I think – I would say most of the protests that happened in Ottawa were like that. (Interview 7, p. 12)

Although he puts emphasis on the fact that all Egyptians were represented, it is how he defines each group. With other Coptic Christian participants who identify less with the church, the distinction between Christians and Muslims was rarely made, if any. Most would speak more about ideology divisions: pro-Morsi, pro-el-Sisi, and revolutionaries. The religious division was mostly made by people I label "Coptic Christian" in this research.

When it was made by other people, it was because I formulated a question that tried to seek if there were any religious divisions within the Ottawa community.

Many participants pointed out that Morsi and the Freedom and Justice Party may have deepened this religious divide by not attending to the needs and criticisms of the Christian community in Egypt. One participant, who is now an active member of a group that supports Morsi as president—as determined by procedural democracy—acknowledged that Morsi's record with Christian Egyptians was not stellar.

> I don't think they [the Muslim Brotherhood] have a concern about the Christians. But the Muslim Brotherhood has no – you know, they don't use the media very well, even when they were in power, just to send a message for the Christians [to say] that we are not against you, you are part of the country. Even though Morsi, sometimes, gave a few words in his speeches, it was not enough at all. (Interview 11, p. 26)

For the last Ottawa group I identified, the proponents of procedural democracy, Morsi's presidency became a time where the public space for voicing opinions was shut close. It makes sense: there had been elections that were deemed fair by many standards, and the military had given them legitimacy in allowing the winner to take office. However, as time passed and Morsi proved to be inefficient and increasingly authoritarian, opinions that would approve of him would be socially unpopular and difficult to justify. One participant described what was on people's mind regarding Egypt's democratization process so far:

> What did the revolution bring? It brought Morsi. What did – Or the Muslim Brotherhood. Morsi is nothing [...]

> What did the call for freedoms and democracy bring? This is what it brought. And don't forget: it's not just the Muslim Brotherhood. Not everyone's problem with this was the Muslim Brotherhood, but also there are people who just [wanted] stability. They don't care what kind of stability they get, but they just want stability. And also, the three years post-revolution were not stable. So people don't like that. I know that there's a lot of people who are against the Muslim Brotherhood. If the Muslim Brotherhood was able to get them the stability, they wouldn't mind them in power. (Interview 5, p. 25)

As such, even if the 2011 uprising had open the channels of communication with the government, and it allowed people to talk about politics without fears of reprisal, it is clear that, during this period, the proponents of procedural democracy were frowned upon, even in Ottawa. Only protesting against the government (either because of religious convictions or ideological stances) was a viable discourse. Support for the government was difficult to express publicly.

Period III: July-August 2013 to present

The third period is the current one, and it is characterized by the return of the Egyptian military playing a prominent role in the executive branch of the government, with former Field Marshal Abdel Fattah el-Sisi as president. Once again, the political environment has changed for each group, with the proponents of procedural democracy and the Coptic Christians now monopolizing the public discourse. In this third and current phase, it is the revolutionaries who are faced with the greatest difficulties at playing an active role.

Many participants to this research (from all political postures) agreed that the Rabaa Massacre in August 2013 was the event that brought the most significant changes to the political opportunity structure since the ousting of Mubarak in February 2011. The events that happened during the summer of 2013 in Egypt cannot be exposed at length here, but a brief summary will help for understanding this third phase.

Throughout Morsi's presidency, many among the Coptic Christians, the revolutionaries, and the general population felt he was unwilling to address their concerns. The Tamarod campaign, which culminated with a massive anti-government protest on June 30, 2013, was an example of this. On that date, the military gave Morsi an ultimatum: either he addressed Egyptians' demands or the army would get involved in the political process.

Morsi refused, and on July 3, the military deposed him. There was initial confusion as to what had happened: while many viewed this event as a military coup, others considered that the military had acted on behalf of Egyptians, even labelling July 3 as the Second Revolution.[14]

As soon as the military came to power, protests shifted, with Muslim Brotherhood supporters and proponents of procedural democracy taking over Egyptian squares. Al-Nahda and Rabaa squares in Cairo became the most prominent sites of anti-military protest at that time, and sit-ins were staged. Their message was clear: the military coup had trumped the democratic ideals of the 2011 uprising, the military had to go, and Morsi should be reinstated.

After days of protests, the military warned that they would break the sit-ins by force, if need be. The protesters remained defiant, and on August 14, the police raided the two squares and opened fire on the demonstrators. Human Rights Watch described the event as "one of the world's largest killings of demonstrators in a single day in recent history" (Human Rights Watch, 2014b). Exact numbers of victims vary, but Egyptian health officials revealed estimates to be at close to 600 killed and 4,000 injured (Kirkpatrick, 2013). In September 2013, a court banned the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and in December 2013, it was put on the Egyptian list of terrorist organizations.

In Ottawa, the summer 2013 events had a deep impact on the community. Many participants interviewed considered this, and specifically the Rabaa Massacre, as having created the deepest rift in the community, pitting the proponents of procedural democracy

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[14] At the beginning of this thesis, I discussed the reasons why I prefer to call this event a military coup. However, at the time of the interviews conducted with the Ottawa community, the incriminating audio recordings had yet to be leaked to the media, and its labelling was a matter of great debate among Egyptian Canadians. Many dubbed it the "Second Revolution," with January 25, 2011 being the "First Revolution."

against Coptic Christians. Meanwhile, the revolutionaries were trying to propose a neither-military-nor-Morsi stance, but as one participant concluded, "No one wanted to hear something in the middle at that point" (Interview 5, p. 23).

For the proponents of procedural democracy in Ottawa, the July 3 events are unacceptable. Some participants who fall under that group had mitigated opinions over Morsi's presidency: some recognized that he was not the best president, but others have pointed out that Egyptians' expectations were too high and unachievable to begin with.

> The problem with the Egyptian society, after June 25 [Morsi's election], as I said before, and I'm going to say it again, they wanted the government to turn Egypt into Switzerland in days. That won't happen. El-Sisi will not do it, cannot do it, has not done it. Morsi was unable to do it. Nobody will. It's a process [...] [The average Egyptian] wants everything being done now. It's not going to happen. (Interview 6, p. 6)

Opinions over Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood may vary, but what is clear for the proponents of procedural democracy is that July 3 was against democracy. Participants I interviewed repeated over and over that presidents and parliamentarians are elected for a certain period of time and if you are unhappy, elections will get rid of them. For them, Morsi should have been allowed to continue his term and be put to test four years later. However, the military's intervention interrupted the process, and there is little belief that this was done for Egyptians, as the military has claimed.

> It was really a big scam, and 1.5 years later now, it's obvious for everyone that it wasn't really to get a better ruler or a better democracy to Egypt. It was to demolish the democratic process in Egypt and get us back to square one, which is what we have today. (Interview 3, p. 10-11)

This attack on democracy by the Egyptian military has mobilized some members of the Ottawa community in new ways. Except from participating at one protest during the 2011 uprising and voting at Egyptian elections, one participant was not involved in Egyptian politics up until the summer of 2013, because "there wasn't much really to protest against, at

least in Canada" (Interview 3, p. 3). However, since Morsi was deposed, he is actively involved in a political group that was created in September 2013 by members of the Ottawa, Montreal, and Toronto communities, the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy (ECCD).

ECCD's message certainly resonates with many Egyptian Canadians, as the organization has chapters in all major Canadian cities, and even in smaller towns, such as Fort McMurray, Alta., and Sherbrooke, Que. What is more important is that this group would have certainly never been created had it not been for the July 3 events and the Rabaa Massacre, because they staunchly oppose el-Sisi's military regime. As such, it is clear these events modified the political opportunity structure for Egyptian Canadians, and proponents of procedural democracy were given the space to voice their concerns.

Meanwhile, Coptic Christians are still enjoying the political space they had when Morsi came to power. In Ottawa, many participated to the Tamarod campaign, and in the context of a perceived threat under Morsi's rule, July 3 was seen as a positive event. According to participants I interviewed, there has not been any particular political activity undertaken by this group since August 2013, because there was no need for it. As I mentioned earlier, many viewed politics in Egypt as Christian persecution at the hands of Muslim Egyptians. When he was going to previous protests, one participant had a clear message to tell Canadians.

> When we wrote posters [for protests] [...] I wanted people who were passing in the streets to read it and to know what's happening there [in Egypt], to know how we are oppressed there, and especially Christians, of course. And I wanted them to understand the effect of the Muslim Brotherhood [...] we wanted the people here to know this. (Interview 9, p. 15-16)

After July 3, this Christian persecution message no longer needed to be pressed on Canadians, and such campaigns faltered. Rather, a new discourse emerged from that

community, and it too reflected events happening in Egypt: outlawing the Muslim Brotherhood to break the organization. Soon after the Rabaa Massacre, Egypt faced a wave of internal political violence. In the weeks that followed, 25 Egyptian policemen were killed in a single attack in the Sinai; the minister of Interior was the target of a failed assassination attempt; gunmen attacked an army convoy near the Suez Canal, killing six military; and a suicide bomber left five people dead after an attack on the Southern Sinai security headquarters. The groups responsible for these attacks were not always clear, but the Egyptian military systematically blamed the Muslim Brotherhood, which was now banned under Egyptian law, conflating anti-military activities with terrorism.[15]

Unsurprisingly, some Coptic Christian participants approve of the military crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood and are not bothered by the constant trampling on civil liberties.

> We wanted someone who's very strict, at least for this period. Really strict. Maybe not economically – maybe not efficient in other things, but very strict in facing the terrorism that's happening. That's what we want now, I think so. But to improve the country, it won't be improved until terrorists are at least minimized, you know. I'm hoping that el-Sisi will do something against them, because it's just getting everywhere now in Egypt. (Interview 9, p. 14)

One participant described unsuccessful attempts to illegalize the Muslim Brotherhood in Canada that were conducted by Coptic Christians from the Toronto area. They forwarded a petition to the Canadian parliament demanding that it be put on the Canadian list of terrorist organization, and this petition also exhibits the transnational aspect of political activities that were undertaken by Coptic Christians in Ottawa: they used an event in Egypt and they transposed it to their Canadian environment.

> The particular thing about the petition is that it's a very specific method. Someone, I think, would have been advised by an MP or legal advisor. So my guess is somebody who had been in touch with government MPs told him,

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[15] Most Sinai attacks were claimed by or have been attributed by observers to Ansar Bait al-Maqdis, a militant group based in the Sinai and the Nile Valley with muddled links to both ISIS and al-Qaeda.

"This is really your main opportunity to bring this sort of request forward." So I'm not sure who it was that specifically brought it. All I know is that it was eventually going around. (Interview 7, p. 13)

Meanwhile, for the revolutionaries, the July 3 events have become a thorny issue, and in Ottawa, it meant the end of the Dostour Party's nascent chapter. Despite their initial success in attracting a larger number of people to their events, and their active involvement in the Tamarod campaign, the new political opportunity structure arising from the military coup shut the space for their political ideas. As they struggled to clarify their position in the aftermath of the military coup, the Dostour members in Ottawa started to experience frustration: the event had been so divisive that one could agree with the military, or be hostile towards Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Dostour leadership faced a difficult choice. As one participant explained, the goal of the Dostour chapter had always been to garner attention and recruit new members in their ranks. However, as the summer of 2013 went on, with increasing chaos in Egypt and their inability to present their opinion, the members of the chapter decided to put their activities on hiatus. Their decision was motivated more by their principles, as they were not willing to compromise their ideals to remain relevant with the Egyptian community in Ottawa.

No one wanted to hear something in the middle at that point. It was too divisive that – it was just that. So that was the choice number one: it's stay [faithful] to your principles, say what you really believe. You would lose everyone. Or the other part is to please the people: you were just going to lie to them, and say, "Yes, we're with you. We think what's happening is good, you, and it's very good." And we didn't want to do that as well. [Interview 5, p. 23]

As the political landscape had changed once again, there was no longer a public space to discuss the merits of a military or a civilian government. The military coup and the Rabaa Massacre had shifted the conversation away from who should run the country to a debate on

Egypt's political enemies. The Egyptian military had put the onus on the citizens to either side with them or be against them—and, in the process, become the supporter of a terrorist organization. This put the revolutionaries in Ottawa in a difficult position, and some Egyptian Canadians called them "Muslim Brotherhood apologists." In Egypt, the revolutionaries became the target of the state, while in Ottawa, the small group fell into silence.

Egyptian Canadian: Neither Egyptian, nor Canadian

The previous section has shown the synergy between Egyptian politics and the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa. When Egyptians marched to their city squares to protest against Mubarak and his regime in January 2011, Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa gathered to the Egyptian embassy. They met new faces and came back often. Mohamed Morsi was later elected as president; a group of revolutionary-minded Canadian Egyptians organized events to teach Egyptian politics and to present the plans they had in mind for Egypt's future. A year later, the Egyptian military organized a coup against Morsi; another group of angry Egyptian Canadians started to devise plans for the return of democracy in Egypt.

While the many protests and political events in Egypt followed someone's leadership, the same cannot be said about Egyptian Canadians' political performances: as participants I interviewed described it to me, things were happening quite organically, on the impulse of a patriotic duty to "be Egyptian," without consultation. So far, I argued that members of the Ottawa community used this Egyptian identity to validate their political involvement and to be included in the Egyptian polity, but this movement was triggered by events happening in the homeland. At the outset, there were no elites stirring the community, and it took over a

year in Ottawa before the emergence of the first organized political group. Over time, competing discourses and projects surfaced, and the community is now divided in three groups: one supports the current military regime in its endeavour to erase any trace of terrorist activities in order to move Egypt forward; another would prefer to extend universal human rights to all Egyptians and to end military rule; while another one disapproves of the military coup, wants fair elections, and seeks the reinstatement of a previously-elected and now-ousted president.

I briefly talked about how the community's politicization and reorganization followed its own process: it is inspired by what is happening in Egypt, but it is made in Canada. Using Dufoix and Tarrow, I suggested that these events transform the political opportunity structure for the emigrant population in opening a public space for dissension, who, based on their assessment of the new environment, may partake in homeland politics. In this section, I would like to emphasize the autonomy of this process.

Up to about the summer of 2013, the Egyptian Canadian community had mostly behaved in reaction to events in Egypt: their identity's politicization led them to partake in political activities as members of the Egyptian polity, and according to the Egyptian public space for dissension. Things are different now for at least one group in Ottawa: as the military took over in Egypt, the public space was quickly shut for disaffected Egyptians. Following this logic and according to their previous behaviour, Egyptian Canadians' activities should have subdued as well. Yet, the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy continues to be involved in a network of Egyptian expatriates whose objective is to remove Egypt's current military regime from power.

Opposition to the military regime in Egypt is met with violent repression, in a situation not unlike the one before the uprising. Why, then, would Egyptian Canadians

remain political when they were not before 2011? How are the situations different? I propose that something in the Egyptian Canadian politicization process has shifted, and I argue that it is their sense of identity. They still want to be part of the Egyptian polity, but they recognize that they occupy a distinct geographical space than their Egyptian fellows, and that this space provides them with different possibilities. Being in Canada is nothing new, but it is how Egyptian Canadians conceive the consequences of their location that has changed. Their politicization is neither Egyptian, nor Canadian: it is Egyptian-Canadian.

The current activities of the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy (ECCD) are informative, as they use their feelings of being part of the Egyptian polity while taking advantage of being in Canada—as opposed to being bound by Egypt's climate of political repression—to attempt at affecting Egyptian politics. As proponents of procedural democracy, the group's members are strictly opposed to the military coup and the current regime of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, and their primary objective is to undermine it on the world stage.

Most of the participants I interviewed who are part of the ECCD in Ottawa characterize it as an umbrella organization for a series of smaller independent groups around the country who share a common goal, but there is a lack of relevant literature to confirm this. On recent ECCD press releases, the group describes itself as a "politically independent, non-affiliated pan Canadian [sic] organization with chapters in Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, Quebec City, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, Vancouver, and Kingston" (Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy, n. d.) From my interviews, I came to understand that delegated members of each chapter attend videoconference meetings on a regular basis to discuss funding and directions. The information goes back to chapters, who then decide

which course they prefer to follow. As such, the ECCD could be considered more as a union of chapters with a decentralized structure.

As I explained in previous sections, the group emerged in September 2013. After a Parliament Hill protest against political violence in Egypt, some Egyptian Canadians met to devise plans on the most efficient ways to keep putting pressure on the Egyptian government. The ECCD was born out of this desire to be involved in Egyptian politics despite attempts by the Egyptian military to crush dissent. One participant summarizes how he believes the ECCD can have an effect on Egypt:

> What we are trying to do, we are trying to communicate with politicians here in Canada, to change their position. So it's the political activities. It's media activities and it's legal activities. These are the three activities that we do. Political – engaging the political elite of the country, engaging the media, and launching legal cases against criminals. (Interview 6, p. 24)

In itself, the type of activities this participant describes does not reveal much. However, it is how he frames his discourse that shows the shift in consciousness. Prior to the ECCD, the receiving end of most political endeavours pursued by Egyptian Canadians had been the Egyptian state, Egyptians in Egypt, or Egyptian Canadians. The Dostour Party in Ottawa, for example, had organized food-and-movie nights to educate Egyptian Canadians on Egyptian politics. Here, this participant presents an agenda with a distinctive Canadian flavour. Of course the aim remains to defeat President el-Sisi's regime, but through the Canadian political system, with the help of the Canadian media, and utilizing the Canadian justice system. "Being Egyptian" for Egypt has transformed into "being Egyptian Canadian" for Egypt.

Scholars of diaspora have identified such modulations in identity perception, but with an emphasis on state-controlled structures. Kastoryano, for instance, explained that "states of origin participate in the definition or the creation of a diaspora, or the identification of its

citizens with a 'diasporic' identity, due to the emergence of a diasporic space recognized as a space for political action" (Kastoryano, 2010, p. 585). However, what the case of Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa demonstrates is that the process can also be governed by individuals. A space for political action emerged from the Egyptian uprising, to which the Ottawa community reacted first as Egyptians. As months progressed, different events brought changes to the political opportunity structure, and members of the community started to identify the characteristics of their space, which was different from that of Egyptians in Egypt. As such, they came to understand their role in Egyptian politics with an Egyptian Canadian mindset, one that could utilize their knowledge of the Egyptian and Canadian systems to affect homeland affairs. Their identity and politicization had slowly progressed towards self-empowerment and independence from Egyptians in Egypt.

This autonomy is also shown by the little importance ECCD members give to a dialogue with their interlocutors in Egypt. They do not expect the Egyptian government to engage with them, as opposed to previous activities undertaken by the community. Their message concerns Egypt, but it is aimed at foreign governments and international bodies, and they believe that their constant denunciations will act like a thorn in Egypt's side. As one participant put it,

> We aspire to freedom, so we have to do something. You feel that you are doing something [...] Maybe one day, this minor work may lead to something. At least, I do believe if the embassy in Ottawa, if they send a message that there [are] demonstrations against el-Sisi, I think this also gives a right message to them [the military regime]. And it is one of the things – like you're shaking something to fall down. I do believe that every movement, it is a minor force to shake this coup, and I'm sure one day, maybe after 10 years, maybe five years, maybe after one week, this coup will not continue. (Interview 11, p. 21-22)

Autonomy in the politicization process is also present in the ECCD's choice of partners, which consist solely of like-minded Egyptian groups around the world. In December 2013, a few months after its own creation, the ECCD signed the founding declaration of Switzerland-based "Egyptians Worldwide for Democracy and Justice." It has both an active Facebook page and Twitter account (as of May 2015), but it does not share much documentation, except for letters discussing the el-Sisi regime and addressed to a series of interlocutors, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the World Health Organization, and the Swedish minister of foreign affairs.

The ECCD is also a member of the Egyptian Revolutionary Council (ERC), formed in 2014 in Istanbul. According to an August 8, 2014, posted by the ECCD on its Facebook page, two of its board members attended the meeting that led to the ERC's creation. In April 2015, according to IkhwanWeb.com, the Muslim Brotherhood's official English website, one of these two board members was elected general secretary of the ERC for a two-year term (IkhwanWeb, 2015).

On its webpage, the ERC presents itself as "an organization that has brought together Egyptian citizens and movements abroad, irrespective of their political or ideological affiliations," (Egyptian Revolutionary Council, n.d.) who oppose the July 2013 military takeover and who work for the return of a civilian government. In April 2015, an ERC delegation, along with members of the Muslim Brotherhood, visited a series of Southeast Asian countries "to discuss the situation in Egypt and the regional challenges in the context of a military regime that has usurped power" (ibid.). Also, on April 30, 2015, it organized a

demonstration in Trafalgar Square in London to denounce Mohamed Morsi's guilty verdict.[16]

These partnerships result from a new self-perception among Egyptian Canadians—or at least, part of the community. Previously, they would have tried to engage directly with other organizations in Egypt, like the Dostour branch did, but as political dissent is no longer tolerated in Egypt, such partners may be more difficult to find and, even if they exist, the scope of their activities might be greatly limited by the Egyptian government. However, there is more to this argument than the power of Egyptian structures: some members of the community believe that it is possible to be involved through other channels that are available from Canada.

Branching out to other Egyptian groups across the world is a new development, and according to one of its members, it was a deliberate choice made by the ECCD. He explained that the relevance of their affiliation with the ERC in Turkey lies in their long-term objective to bring Egypt's leaders to face justice for their role in the Rabaa Massacre. "If we find out that the best place to launch a legal proceeding is, for example, England, we have no existence in England. Through ERC, we can find who's in England. Then meet the lawyers" (Interview 6, p. 26). Planning such an action from Egypt would be a much more daunting and conceivably perilous undertaking, but far less so from Canada.

However, working within the Canadian system for changing Egyptian politics is not without its challenges. I noted earlier that members of the ECCD are enthusiastic about presenting its position to Canadians, and some have met with parliamentarians and organized public forums to create awareness for their cause on Parliament Hill. These efforts, according

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[16] On that date, Morsi was convicted of conspiring with Iran, Hamas, and Hezbollah for the Muslim Brotherhood to seize power in Egypt. He has been in jail since the 2013 military coup.

to participants to this research, have been met with little success so far, and they concede that engaging the Canadian government on this topic is a difficult task. It is possible to view this problem as one of lack of unity within the community, as competing political views and goals are vying for attention. The ECCD cannot, at the moment, pretend to speak on behalf of a majority of Canadian Egyptians. For instance, the petitions presented by Coptic Christians to the Canadian government go against the ECCD's efforts to present Morsi as Egypt's legitimate president.

I would argue that this is a perverse effect of the Egyptian Canadian politicization process that may need further investigation than the scope of this research allows. I have presented Egyptian Canadians' politicization as a process managed by individuals, without elite intervention. So far, it allowed them to engage in homeland politics on their own terms, and the emergence of competing ideologies contributed to a movement of self-reflexivity during which community members realize their particular position within the Egyptian polity, or what Kastoryano calls the "diasporic identity." The creation of the ECCD as an opposition group at a time when the Egyptian space for political dissent became naught serves as an example.

However healthy these political disagreements may be for the community, they may become a stumbling block when engaging with Canadian parliamentarians, the media, the public, or even the justice system. While speaking of the management of diaspora identity, Saint-Blancat proposes that they must be able to construct "a subjective, self-reflexive memory, which brings together the members of the diaspora over time" (Saint-Blancat, 2002, p. 140). Who controls this process? Scholars of transnationalism would argue that identity-related processes are managed by individuals, but there is a lack of empirical research on its application to homeland politics. On the other hand, scholars of diasporas tend to give

prominence to the role played by elites in mobilizing the community for homeland-related issues, but in the case of Egyptian Canadians, the process has so far been led by individuals, without elite intervention. Is there a point where elite influence becomes necessary? Can individuals keep managing their own identity?

Castells remarks that "who constructs collective identity, and for what, largely determines the symbolic content of this identity, and its meaning for those identifying with it or placing themselves outside of it" (Castells, 1997, p. 7). The ECCD utilizes the human rights discourse to that effect: death sentences, torture, and political repression are preponderant in their denunciations of the military regime's ills. Such rhetorical choices could help with bringing together all Egyptian Canadians for what Saint-Blancat names the diaspora's "virtual extraterritoriality", i.e. "a symbolic 'somewhere else' that enables the universal to be combined with the particular" (Saint-Blancat, 2002, p. 140).

I have presented the three political discourses that vied for presence in Ottawa since 2011, with only two out of three prevailing for each of the uprising's major periods. As the Egyptian military proceeded with a coup in 2013, one discourse—that of procedural democracy—has generated the creation of a political organization that is markedly different from previous efforts within the Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa. This group, the ECCD, is looking at Egyptian politics from the Egyptian-Canadian perspective: it wants to change the homeland, but with Canadian tools. This reflects a new consciousness within the community, as it recognizes that it is not bound by the political opportunity structures present in the homeland.

However, political cleavages that resulted from the uprising (mainly with Coptic Christians and revolutionaries) are still present and act as a double-edged sword. While they have contributed to the community's realization of the specific space they occupy within the

Egyptian polity, it is weakening the ECCD's capacity and effectiveness at engaging with Canadian institutions.

Conclusion

The case of Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa since 2011 is significant to understand the political mobilization of immigrant communities for the homeland. This topic, which falls under the purview of both transnationalism and diaspora scholarship, has received little attention from either. Transnationalism's theoretical underpinnings—as first established by, among others, Glick Schiller et al. (1992)—permit to conceive of immigrant populations performing political activities oriented towards the homeland, but the majority of studies have preferred to focus on socio-cultural and economical endeavours, such as the impact of remittances and the cross-cultural exchanges between the homeland and the host state. Possible exceptions include Martínez-Saldaña (2010), who looked at how Mexican communities across the United States—notably in the Los Angeles and Chicago areas—showed common front to lobby the Mexican government for their inclusion in the political franchise. However, once they reached their goal, the mobilization seems to have abated.

By definition, the literature on diaspora explicitly aims it attention on these types of activities, but with one caveat: it does not consider how ostensibly non-political immigrant groups become involved in homeland politics. There is a general assumption that diasporas are timeless: neither do they not rise, nor do they not fall. Again, there are exceptions to this, notably Carter (2005) and Skrbiš (2007), both of whom have presented how Croatian expatriates have participated to the Croatian War in the early 1990s. However, neither satisfactorily presented the processes involved in mobilizing people, other than considering the beginning of the war as having set the diaspora's politics in motion, and elites exploiting current events.

The experience of Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa shows that it is possible to become a group with political objectives directed towards the homeland. Prior to the uprising,

Egyptian politics were under their radar. Egyptian Canadians had political opinions, but those were not shared publicly, and most importantly, there was no movement or organization to promote these ideas. However, as images and news from Tahrir Square hijacked television screens around the world, Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa gathered at the Egyptian embassy. Since then, they have attended more rallies, public discussions were organized, and political organizations were created. One of them is still active in Ottawa, and it has created partnerships with other Egyptian political groups around the world with the goal of shaming Egypt's current military regime.

This research has demonstrated that, up to this point, the politicization process of Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa has been the synergy between individuals' desires to be included in the Egyptian polity and their reaction to regular changes to the political opportunity structure, which were caused by the uprising unfolding in Egypt. Contrary to what the literature on diaspora may suggest, this process has been managed by the members of the community individually, and not by its elites, or the Canadian or Egyptian governments.

At any time since 2011 were Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa able to make political choices after assessing their surrounding environment. Some decided to be engaged very early on, based on past experiences, but what is relevant is the role that the uprising played as a game-changer in the political opportunity structure. These same Egyptian Canadians had not taken a public stand against the Egyptian government prior to this, and nothing in the Canadian political environment suggests that it acted as a catalyst. In fact, their careful reading of the situation in Egypt allowed them to feel more at ease to voice their anger and concerns. The Egyptian government had lost the control and could no longer vigorously contain mass protests.

The beginning of the uprising may have been the trigger for a social movement that would lead to Egyptian Canadians' politicization, but it could not have happened without their sense of "being Egyptian." The Egyptian identity was reflected in Egyptian Canadians' political performances, especially in the choice of activities and locations where they held their events. They gathered at the Egyptian embassy to protest against the government or to show other Egyptians that they, too, cared and were affected by the events, or they organized public discussions to engage the rest of the Ottawa community with Egyptian politics and promote certain ideologies already present in Egypt. They wanted to show Egyptians in Egypt that they, too, were members of the Egyptian polity.

As the political situation in the homeland took many twists and turns, the Ottawa community reorganized and differing ideologies emerged. Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa held different opinions about how to best conduct politics in Egypt, and discourses dominated others at different times. The presence of these discourses shows how identity among immigrant communities is not one, but many. To this day, the community remains divided.

While Coptic Christians do not seem to promote their ideas outside their community and the revolutionary ideology has taken a backseat after the 2013 military coup, supporters of procedural democracy are currently the most active group. For some Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa, the military coup triggered feelings of being cheated off the uprising: after Mohamed Morsi was elected, there was a sense that Egypt had reached a democratization milestone that would be hard to overturn. One year later, however, Morsi was ousted in a military coup. As the witch hunt against Morsi's supporters intensified, Egyptian Canadians rallied on Parliament Hill. They created a group, the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy, whose goal is to take advantage of Canada's political, justice, and media

systems to affect change in Egyptian politics. This is a new development that shows how the Ottawa community has become autonomous from Egyptian society in its political projects.

At the theoretical level, this case study suggests that there is an advantage for the diaspora scholarship to learn from that of transnationalism, both of which are ontologically separated. In particular, it would benefit from looking at where individuals fit within the group. Previous research focuses on how elites exploit certain nationalistic or patriotic feelings within the community, or their capacity at conducting business with the media and host governments. My research did not show evidence of such elite's role in the mobilization of Egyptian Canadians. It was, in fact, quite the opposite, as many participants told me that it was a much disorganized movement, particularly in its infancy: people would gather at the Egyptian embassy without telling each other, with their Egyptian identity as the sole source of their motivation. The movement also happened with little resources, financial or otherwise. Participants who would later take on leadership roles explained that their most-prized possession was their mailing list, which was boosted by each new event that was organized.

This research also has another implication in understanding how immigrants' politicization can be triggered by changes to the political opportunity structure in the homeland. Research by McAdam et al. (1996) suggested that social movements were affected by changes to the structures in the country where they had a presence, but the experience of Egyptian Canadians shows that this factor seems irrelevant. Rather, it is the identification with the polity that matters, as the Egyptian uprising played the largest role in their politicization. Not only did it act as a trigger to their initial mobilization, but it regularly brought new elements to which they had to adapt. However, further research on the changes within other other Egyptian communities around the world since 2011 would be beneficial to

clarify the role of space in the politicization process of immigrants. The sole example of Egyptian Canadians in Ottawa cannot establish a trend, but only serves as guidance.

There is one last point on which this case study sheds new light, and it is the political diversity within immigrant communities. The literature on diaspora tends to present such groups as monolithic, while they are, in fact, impregnated with disagreements and opposing views. The Egyptian Canadian community in Ottawa was faced with three dominant discourses since 2011, and people responded to them differently and according to their political identities. This has ambiguous consequences for their politicization: I noted how it created the necessary conditions to empower them as Egyptian Canadians outside of the Egyptian space for political dissension, but I also remarked on the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy's difficulties arising from representation issues when dealing with the Canadian government. Saint-Blancat suggested that diasporas need to construct a "subjective, self-reflexive memory" and "elaborate a collective identity that transcends" various elements of diversity within the group (Saint-Blancat, 2002, p. 140), but it is unclear who would manage these two processes.

As the present case shows, identity since 2011 was managed at the individual level, and the literature on transnationalism would certainly consider that elites need not be involved for this process to happen. Therefore, at what stage do elites intervene in an immigrant community's politicization? Current research attributes many powers to diaspora elites, but further research would be required to understand what their contribution really is.

Appendix: Egyptian People and Events

Alaa Abd El-Fattah Egyptian blogger, software developer and political activist. He has been arrested and imprisoned numerous times since 2006, notably for his position on the independence of Egypt's judiciary. He was arrested on charges of inciting violence during the Maspero demonstrations in 2011, then again in 2013 for organizing a protest in front of the Egyptian Parliament. In February 2015, he was sentenced under anti-protest legislation to five years in prison for this last charge.

April 6 Movement A group of Egyptian youth activists established in 2008 to support strikers in El-Mahalla El-Kubra, an important industrial city in the Nile Delta. They kept up with pressure on Hosni Mubarak's regime throughout the years and their actions are seen as the precursor of the 2011 Egyptian uprising. April 6 refers to the day of the Mahalla El-Kubra strike.

Dostour Party Political party founded by Mohamed ElBaradei in 2012 to promote the January 25 uprising principles and objectives of human rights and social equality. It had ramifications throughout the world, including in Ottawa. In 2013, it supported the Tamarod movement, and following the military coup, ElBaradei was appointed as Egypt's interim vice-president. He resigned following the Rabaa Massacre, and later resigned from the party. Arabic for "constitution."

Egyptian Military Coup (also known as the July 3 Events or the Second Revolution). The day after the June 30 mass protests and amid violent actions taken against Muslim Brotherhood sites, the Egyptian military stepped in and urged President Mohamed Morsi to resolve the political crisis with opponent groups within 48 hours. On July 2, Morsi appeared on television remained defiant and vowed not to resign. On July 3, Field Marshal Abdel Fattah el-Sisi announced that the military had heard Egyptians and that it would be resolving the current crisis on their behalf, prompting many Egyptians to call it a Second Revolution, in reference to January 25, 2011. Morsi was put under house arrest.

Egyptian Revolution (2011) (see January 25 Uprising).

Freedom and Justice Party The Muslim Brotherhood's political arm. Under legislation introduced after Hosni Mubarak left office, new political parties could not be formed on the basis of religion or class, and as such, the Freedom and Justice Party was nominally independent from the Muslim Brotherhood. However, its leaders and political base remained firmly part of this group. It was banned and dissolved in 2014.

January 25 Uprising (also known as the Egyptian Revolution, the January 25 Revolution or the First Revolution). Series of mass protests in Egypt between January 25 and February 11, 2011, which culminated with Hosni Mubarak's resignation. The uprising is part of a larger contestation movement throughout the Arab world, colloquially known as the Arab Spring. It followed the Tunisian (or Jasmine) Revolution.

July 3 Events (see Egyptian Military Coup).

June 30 Mass Protests A series of protests and counter-protests throughout Egypt and abroad on June 30, 2013. After one year as president, Mohamed Morsi remained a divisive figure among Egyptians. Fuelled by the Tamarod movement's activities, protests were staged to ask for Morsi to leave office and call for new elections. At the same time, Muslim Brotherhood and Morsi supporters organized "counter-protests" to defend Morsi's record and policies. June 30 set the stage for a military coup on July 3, 2013.

Khaled Al-Qazzaz Former aide to President Mohamed Morsi. Upon the military coup on July 3, 2013, Al-Qazzaz was imprisoned for his affiliation with the president. He is legally a Canadian resident and an Egyptian citizen. His Canadian-born and Canada-based wife has lobbied the Canadian government to help release him. He spent 18 months in jail before being released in January 2015. He is currently prevented from travelling outside Egypt. Egyptian Canadians have staged events to raise his profile in the Canadian media.

Maspero Demonstrations A demonstration that turned deadly on October 9, 2011. Coptic Christians gathered at the Maspero Building in Cairo to protest the demolition of a church in Upper Egypt. Military police guarding the building attacked the protesters with live ammunition and armoured vehicles, killing over two dozens and injuring over 200.

Mohamed Fahmy Al-Jazeera journalist who was arrested in Cairo in December 2013 along with colleagues Peter Greste and Baher Mohamed on allegations of falsifying news and ties to the banned Muslim Brotherhood. He was a dual Egyptian-Canadian citizen at the time of his arrest, which was condemned by international bodies and foreign governments alike. During his 14-month imprisonment, he revoked his Egyptian citizenship. He has since been released on bail and was put under an Egyptian travel ban. Egyptian Canadians have staged events to decry his imprisonment and his two trials.

Mohamed Mahmoud Street Protests Five-day-long violent riots that pitted revolutionaries against police forces on Mohamed Mahmoud Street in Cairo in November 2011. The street branches off Tahrir Square and leads to the Ministry of Interior.

Rabaa Massacre After the military coup, Morsi and Muslim Brotherhood supporters staged sit-ins across Egypt, the most prominent sites being Cairo's Rabaa and al-Nahda squares. On August 14, 2013, the Egyptian military raided the two camps and used violence to disperse protesters. Clashes ensued and the Egyptian Health Ministry reported close to 500 civilians killed, while Human Rights Watch estimated the death toll at over 1,400.

Second Revolution (see Egyptian Military Coup).

Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) Military body set in place to govern Egypt following Hosni Mubarak's resignation on February 11, 2011. It is made up of between 20 and 25 high-ranking Egyptian military officers and is held only in times of war or internal emergency. Between Mubarak's and Mohamed Morsi's presidencies, the SCAF leader (and de facto Egyptian president) was Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi.

Tamarod Grassroots movement opposing President Mohamed Morsi's rule. Emerging in April 2013, it called for the president to leave office and call for new elections, notably through petitions, for which it collected, by its own estimates, up to 22 million signatures in Egypt and abroad. This led to mass protests in Egypt on June 30, 2013, and it set the stage for a military coup three days later. New evidence released to international media in late 2014 suggests that the Egyptian military provided funding to Tamarod's activities to foment popular resentment and antagonism towards President Morsi in order to legitimize a planned military coup. Arabic for "rebel."

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