

**Protest Forms and University Governance:  
The Case of the American University in Cairo, 2008–2012  
Ola Galal and Yasmine M. Ahmed**

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**Introduction**

This research examines the forms of protest and university governance dynamics that emerged at the American University in Cairo (AUC) between the Fall semesters of 2008 and 2012 and against the backdrop of two major events: the university's move to a new campus in New Cairo in the fall of 2008 and the January 25 Revolution, 2011. We chose this temporal framework (2008–2011) and these two events because we found that they prompted debate and discussions among actors on campus as well as protests and strikes by various groups, and contributed to bringing about transformations in university governance. We are aware that these transformations reflect a historical continuity of the ways in which university administration and key actors—students, workers, faculty, and staff—have acted and reacted to local, national, and global challenges over the last decade. Yet, we contend that these two events are key turning points in AUC actors' involvement in university governance. Our argument is substantiated by field observations and by the narratives of our research participants. Our central argument is that change in the forms of protest and in university governance at AUC is an ongoing process that began with the institution's move to the new campus and was given a significant thrust by the onset of the Revolution. Both events pushed the AUC community to engage in conversations and debates about university governance and the repositioning of the university in the national landscape.

AUC's move to the isolated location in New Cairo triggered two kinds of reactions. The first concerned protests around what could be described as “local issues”—the immediate concerns of the AUC community such as food and transport costs, accommodation facilities, and the role of corporations on campus.<sup>1</sup> The second and less pronounced reaction concerned the potential impact of the move on the “nature” of AUC. Although some of our interviewees were satisfied with the move, others were worried that the university—many of whose students were politically active over the last decade—might be moving toward a corporate model.<sup>2</sup> Concerns voiced by some of our interviewees focus on three issues: the potential impact of the move on the physical and social alienation of students from the larger Egyptian society, the way in which faculty members are differentiated in

terms of labor conditions (i.e. job security and benefits), and the increasing reliance on outsourced workers with limited, if any, labor rights. On the other hand, the second event that frames our research provided a context through which concerns about the nature and future of AUC were raised again, this time in an extraordinary historical moment. Like other institutions in Egypt, the Revolution hit AUC in a number of ways: its members participated in nation-wide protests, waves of student and labor protests spread to the university, and some groups joined emerging coalitions and unions as AUC representatives.

In dealing with the forms of protests and the dynamics of university governance during the 2008–2012 period, we aim to contribute to an emerging body of literature on contentious politics in Egypt (see, for example, El-Mahdi and Korany 2012; Abdel Rahman 2014). Despite the current labeling of the Arab revolutions as “youth” revolutions (Sukarieh 2012) and the increased levels of student mobilization in Egypt’s public and private universities (ECESR 2013a), studies and discussions on contentious politics in the Arab region do not focus on universities as key field sites for examining youth politics in Egypt’s changing political, educational, and spatial landscapes.

This report begins with a description of our methodology with a focus on the implications of studying institutional dynamics during specific time periods. It then provides a brief overview of the development of AUC since its establishment in 1919. This section aims to contextualize and historicize this university’s case within Egypt’s educational landscape. The report then analyzes our major findings from the two phases of our fieldwork.

### **Framework and Methodology**

This research was conducted in two stages: the first, over a six-month period in the Spring and Summer semesters of 2010, focused on the move to the new campus and the second, in the Spring of 2012, examined post–Revolution changes at the university. Throughout this research we conducted a total of twenty-nine interviews with the different groups that make the AUC body—students, faculty, workers, and administrative staff—in addition to engaging in participant observation. During the first phase, we interviewed three administrators, nine faculty members, and eight students. In the second phase, research included participant observation of student protests and marches as well as workers’ strikes in the Spring semester of 2012; interviews were conducted with three students, two administration members, one member of the Independent Workers’ Union, and three faculty members. Interviews took place in English and Arabic; the choice of language was left to our interviewees.

Interestingly, most of our Arab respondents mixed Arabic and English. This reflects the quotidian bilingualism observable at AUC. Few of our interviewees preferred to remain anonymous; otherwise, real names are used in agreement with the respondents.

We chose a diverse sample of respondents from the different sectors of the university in order to gain an all-round understanding of the issues that triggered protest by certain actors and the outcome thereof. We tried as much as possible to interview the same actors during both phases in order to analyze whether and how their narratives have shifted within the temporal framework of this research. For example, Lisa Anderson was interviewed during both phases: in her capacity as AUC provost during the first, and as AUC president during the second phase. Similarly, the president of the Student Union was interviewed in both phases, although different individuals occupied that position in each phase. We rely mostly on narrative form, a useful method of collecting data about events that the researcher has not observed directly, but that are crucial to understanding the wider transformation processes.

In the analysis of our findings, we look at the impact of the two events—the move to the new campus and the January 25 Revolution—on practices of university governance as well as on the meanings that our research participants ascribe to the act of protest. The two phases of our fieldwork reveal the centrality of the “event” in informing the interviewees’ actions and shaping their narratives about their participation in bringing about transformations to university governance. Although the first phase of research was primarily concerned with aspects of governance, it considered the move a central theme in issues related to campus life, university autonomy, participation, critical education, and the commodification of knowledge. The reason for this relates not only to the relevance of the move to a discussion of AUC governance, but also the timing of the fieldwork. Narratives for the first research phase were collected at a crucial point in AUC’s history—two years after the move. One of us witnessed the repercussions of the yet-unsettled move that was accompanied by a large restructuring of AUC departments, programs, activities, on-campus services, and labor. In addition, the move coincided with the leave of AUC former president, David D. Arnold. This unique timing directed the course of data collection in ways that were not anticipated by us. In short, the “transition” shaped the ways in which members of the university community perceived and reflected on their experiences at AUC. In the second phase of the research, we focused from the outset on the forms of protest and the dynamics of university governance in the aftermath of the Revolution. Yet, we did not assume that the Revolution will be central to the narratives of our interlocutors. However, when we compared

notes, our findings pushed us to think about the forms and content of political mobilization that these two events prompted.

### **AUC: Now and Then**

Today, AUC articulates its mission in this way:

The American University in Cairo (AUC) is a premier English-language institution of higher learning. The University is committed to teaching and research of the highest caliber, and offers exceptional liberal arts and professional education in a cross-cultural environment. AUC builds a culture of leadership, lifelong learning, continuing education and service among its graduates, and is dedicated to making significant contributions to Egypt and the international community in diverse fields. Chartered and accredited in the United States and Egypt, it is an independent, not-for-profit, equal-opportunity institution. AUC upholds the principles of academic freedom and is dedicated to excellence. (AUC 2014, 5)

AUC currently provides programs for degree-seeking, non-degree-seeking as well as adult students in Egypt. It offers thirty-six undergraduate majors and forty-six postgraduate programs, including two recently introduced doctoral programs—one in applied sciences and one in engineering (AUC 2014, 7). In Fall 2013, the total number of degree-seeking students at AUC was 6,642, of whom 5,295 were undergraduates and 1,267 graduate students (7). Of the total figure, 54% are female and 46% are male students, with a large majority of Egyptian students (92%). It should be noted that this is an extremely small student population compared to major national universities in Egypt. For example, the number of students enrolled at Cairo University reached 267,844 in the academic year 2005/2006. Yet, among private universities, AUC has the sixth largest student body (CAPMAS 2009). The number of full-time faculty members at AUC is 505, of whom 51% are Egyptians, 30% are Americans and 19% belong to “other nationalities” (AUC 2014, 72).

Similarly to other educational institutions, AUC students and faculty are extremely diverse. For instance, AUC undergraduates concentrate in three majors: business administration, mechanical engineering, and political science (AUC 2014). Students can be divided into diverse and overlapping groups: by discipline (theatre, art, literature/social sciences, economics and business/sciences, and engineering), social class (“Gucci Corner” versus others, with LEAD<sup>3</sup> students at the very end of the lower social-class ladder), religion and religiosity (Christians/Muslims/non-religious), club and activity membership<sup>4</sup> (Model

Arab League, Model United Nations, Via, Help Club, Student Union), nationality (Egyptians or international students), high school educational type (national/international [IGCSE], American diploma, French *baccalauréat*, and German *Abitur*), high school name (Cairo American College, American International School, Modern English School). Students can be invested in more than one of these groups. For instance, observant Muslims often participate in community service clubs such as *'Ashanek ya Baladi*, *Ressala*, and/or Help Club conducting charitable activities with vulnerable groups (for example, with people who are disabled, elderly, needy, orphans, cancer patients, or illiterate). Similarly, AUC faculty members are strongly differentiated. For instance, there is a significant difference between tenured faculty who enjoy job security and part-timers who work in precarious labor conditions. Also, there is difference in the benefits that Egyptian and American professors receive. Such diversity provided interesting entry points for our study since it enabled us to observe how the experiences and narratives of individuals and self-identified groups within AUC are shaped by such factors.

The establishment of the American University in Cairo was linked to the activities of the Protestant missionaries in the Middle East in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (for an overview of missionary activities in Egypt, see Sharkey 2008), although its “missionary character was contested from the start” (Sharkey 2008, 152). It was founded in 1919 by Dr. Charles A. Watson, an active member of the United Presbyterian Church. After resigning from his post as the secretary of the church’s Foreign Mission Board in Philadelphia, Watson came to Egypt and established AUC with the aim to create an “English-language university based on high standards of conduct and scholarship, and to contribute to the intellectual growth, discipline, and character of the future leaders of Egypt and the region” (AUC, “History”). Yet, the relation between AUC and educational missionary activities was not straightforward. For instance, Watson stressed the independence of AUC from the Presbyterian Church, but himself participated in many ecumenical organizations (Sharkey 2008, 153). In his book *The American University in Cairo: 1919—1987* (1987), Lawrence Murphy argues that initially AUC was supposed to offer evangelical education, but because conversion from Islam to Christianity was extremely difficult, Watson focused on promoting a model of liberal education with Christian evangelical morals.

AUC opened its doors to students on October 5, 1920 as both a preparatory school and a university. Two class levels, similar to the last two years of an American high school, hosted 142 male students, the majority coming from ethnic and religious minority

communities. From its early years, due to high tuition fees and the language requirements, student enrollment at AUC was restricted to an elite minority, at a time when Egypt was mostly inhabited by a rural majority, many of whom had little access to high levels of education (Murphy 1987, 41). AUC's first faculty were permanent American professors, a group of mainly American short-term contract instructors similar to those working in missionary schools, and a group of Egyptian teachers from the Coptic Orthodox, Catholic, and Evangelical communities.

The first female student joined AUC in 1928. In the same year the first cohorts of students graduated with two Bachelor of Arts and one Bachelor of Sciences degrees. The 1950s witnessed a considerable expansion of AUC activities with the introduction of master's degrees in 1950, the establishment of the Social Research Center in 1953, the incorporation of the School of Oriental Studies into the Faculty of Arts and Sciences as the Center of Arabic Studies in 1956, and the setting up of the English Language Institute also in 1956. This was followed by the introduction of programs in sociology, anthropology, political science, in addition to course offerings in the natural sciences (AUC, "History"). It was not until the 1970s that professional programs in engineering, computer science, journalism and mass communication, and management were introduced to meet the needs of the nascent business market in Egypt and the Middle East. It is worth noting that during this period AUC students were in majority female, as male students attended highly regarded national universities studying medicine, engineering, economics, political science, and law.

With the student population increasing from a few hundreds until the 1970s to almost 3,000 in 1993, and with the expansion of programs, departments, and activities, the university administration had to be restructured to include six schools: Business, Humanities and Social Sciences, Global Affairs and Public Policy, Sciences and Engineering, Continuing Education, and Graduate School of Education, to cover AUC's twenty-six departments (AUC, "History").

The university operates within a protocol signed in 1975 between the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt and AUC's Board of Trustees, and approved by Presidential Decree no. 146 for the year 1976. Such protocol is based on a 1962 cultural relations agreement between the Egyptian and the US governments. AUC received accreditation from the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools in the United States and is incorporated by the State of Delaware. In Egypt, AUC is accredited by the "National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Education

(NAQAAE) at the institutional level, and the School of Sciences and Engineering at the school level” (AUC 2014, 7).

## **Analysis of Findings**

### ***Phase I: Protesting the Move***

In the fall of 2008, the AUC community witnessed an extraordinary event. Its campus moved from downtown Cairo, around Tahrir Square, to a \$400 million, 260-acre campus located in the fifth district, an emerging suburb of New Cairo.<sup>5</sup> As described on the AUC website, the objectives of the move were four-fold:

1. Eliminate overcrowding and institutional fragmentation inherent in AUC Tahrir Square, which divide the academic enterprise into multiple locations;
2. Provide modern classrooms, laboratories, lecture halls and other essential facilities to support current and future teaching methods, curricula and educational technologies;
3. Improve campus life for students, faculty and staff by creating a campus designed to foster interaction and create community;
4. Enhance AUC's contributions to Egypt and the region. (“Background”)

At the time of the move, our observation as former AUC students who had witnessed its transformations over the last decade was that the emerging university policies and its relocation have gone hand in hand with the neoliberal restructuring that was taking place in Egypt, starting with the Open Door policies in the mid–1970s and intensifying since the early 1990s. Our focus was on the interplay between urban space, social class, and the neoliberal vocabularies embedded in the practices and governance policies of private universities in Egypt. We thought that such themes illustrated some of the complex ways in which the AUC campus, in its new location, was responding to the local, regional, and global educational market needs. At the same time, it was trying to maintain its commitment to its core values—“excellence, diversity, social responsibility, integrity and lifelong learning” (AUC, “Mission, Vision and Values”)—as well as its competitive advantage as one of the oldest American institutions in the region with a focus on the history, language, and politics of the Middle East.<sup>6</sup>

Our findings echo other studies on the corporatization of higher education in other contexts, like the United States. For example, one could discern Aronowitz’s (2008) comments on the crisis of education in the United States in the narratives of several AUC

faculty members and students as they spoke about the university relocation. In many writings, Aronowitz postulates that knowledge production became subject to market forces as a result of the bipolar world created by the Cold War. In the higher education system, this is reflected through: channeling funding to subfields that cater to emerging market forces, i.e. molecular biology; committing to capitalist hegemony under the label of the “public good”; turning down the recommendations put forward by lower governance bodies in decision-making processes; assigning low-paid adjuncts and graduate students to teach the bulk of introductory courses as a means to cut budgets (Aronowitz, n.d.). Our interviewees pointed to some clear signs of AUC transforming into a university that is not interested in keeping good faculty members, of an administration that does not involve faculty and students in a democratic decision-making processes, and of a campus with a visible corporate presence exemplified by, for instance, its “Pepsi Gate.”

Our interlocutors shared concerns about their everyday lives and socialization in the new location. Tensions broke out between students and administration over issues related to food choice on campus, accommodation, parking availability, and class schedules. Students were concerned with the huge increase in tuition fees and the monopoly over food and transportation. They organized a series of demonstrations, the most notable of which was the food strike during which the students called for the opening of a food court with less expensive food options. But students were not the only ones to protest. In the 2010 Fall semester, the AUC workers also went on strike, which was supported by the students and some faculty members and which laid the foundation for a thus far sustainable workers’ movement on campus.

Food emerged as a key example through which AUC students—both undergraduate and graduate—expressed their dissatisfaction with AUC policies and the concrete impact of the move on their everyday lives. Rising food prices and a large number of cases of food poisoning on campus also prompted students to express the view that the university is not concerned with their wellbeing. Rebecca Muntz, a sociology-anthropology student, went as far as to write her MA thesis on the topic of new food consumption patterns at AUC. The thesis, entitled *Constructing Desires and Consuming taste(s) among Egypt’s Elites: An Ethnographic Case Study of the American University in Cairo’s New Campus*, considers the case of AUC as “a novel configuration of neoliberal restructuring through which we can understand new trends in food consumption and new Egyptian understandings of cosmopolitanism” (2011, v). Using ethnographic methods, Muntz argues that the AUC

administration and the company providing food services on campus are imposing emerging food consumption habits and dietary practices on different groups within the university in a way that perpetuates social inequalities (v). Muntz tells the story of food on the new campus, which started with a five-year exclusive contract the university signed with Delicious Inc., an Egyptian company owned by AUC alumnus Hesham El-Sewedy, which essentially monopolized all food services in AUC's new location. The representatives of the student groups and unions whom we interviewed complained that in order to establish alternative outlets they need to get permission from Delicious Inc. and not from the university administration. The case of Kamal, a representative of the Graduate Student Association (GSA) who sits on the food committee and who has established a small fruit outlet in negotiation with Delicious Inc., is a telling example. When asked about GSA's relations with Delicious Inc., Kamal responded:

Antagonistic. . .which AUC has little or no say in and that is everything from the restaurants all the way down to bake sales. . . . My understanding is that if a department wanted to do a potluck. . .they would have to get permission to bring food on campus from Delicious Inc. Because all prepared food has to be approved by them [Delicious Inc.], otherwise when a department is doing something [an event] on campus, they are supposed to get it catered, and the catering prices are extremely high.

It is in this context that food controversy became a key topic of comparison between the New Cairo campus and the Tahrir campus. In the former location, food was monopolized and very expensive whereas the latter location was never short of affordable options, from chains to local delis and bistros.

Another issue of contestation has been transportation. In the absence of public transportation to the new AUC location, students, staff, and faculty members were left with two choices: to subscribe to the AUC bus service, which is monopolized by Family Bus Services Company or to use their private cars. In contrast, Tahrir campus was located few minutes away from the al-Sadat metro station and Tahrir bus station.

In addition, several students described the move as a rupture in the relations between the AUC and Egyptian society. They argued that the Tahrir campus provided one of the few reasons for upper-class students to visit downtown Cairo and to have a first-hand experience of what the research participants describes as the "real Egypt." In their view, AUC's location in the urban center of Cairo, which is known as *Wust al-Balad* (translated literally as the

center of the country), with its busy and neglected streets, small alleys, workshops, metro stations, coffee shops, and *ahwa baladi* (Egyptian-style coffee shops) has elements of what they perceive as the “real Egypt.” On the contrary, the move to the new location means that many students who live in New Cairo would not be going daily to downtown for their studies. In the respondents’ view, this would further alienation of an already alienated upper-class student body and would accentuate the class divide in Egypt’s capital in light of the new suburban development (for a journalistic take on this issue, see Abbot 2008).

Students living in New Cairo showed preference to the new AUC location. They felt secure to move freely around there. This vision was also gendered, given the high rates of reported sexual harassment on Cairene streets. Heba's account illustrates this point:

Walking in downtown streets, you know you are being watched by men, and probably get harassed if you walk alone. My mother always advised me to walk with friends throughout the old campus. However, with the move, even though we still have workers and they stare at us, we feel that we move around people “like us,” I come from Rehab [residential compound in new Cairo] with my driver, and my mother stopped telling me to “take care” every five minutes.

Beshoy Tarek Malaty and Hussein Mohamed (2009) provided another perspective in an entry they wrote for a class-based blog:

...the pollution became intense in this area [downtown] due to the very large number of vehicles. Also the fact that many of the government's headquarters are located in this area caused even further complications. . .With AUC leading by taking this huge step of moving out, not only did it serve the public in this crowded part of Cairo by decreasing the pressure on this area but it also leded [sic] other universities to do the same and encouraged many businesses to open in this new area and also investors were stimulated and started building huge resorts, houses and living areas.

Other critical narratives emerging during the first phase of research pointed to a pattern: those who were most vulnerable to this “change,” which intensified with the move, are the less-privileged members of AUC community, namely junior faculty on tenure-track, adjunct lecturers, grant-based faculty members, outsourced workers, staff, graduate working students, and LEAD students. As noted earlier, the move resulted in an exponential increase in food, transportation, and tuition fees. Hence, the new financial pressures associated with

the move reminded less-privileged individuals and groups of their positions within the educational landscape.

Tenure policies were a major concern among non-tenured AUC professors. Our interviewees did not perceive the move as being consequential to tenure issues. Yet they thought that it signaled a clear direction for the type of investment AUC is interested in—not in brain power, but in material investments. On the other hand, AUC faculty members were aware of the privileged financial and social positions they enjoy through their affiliation with a well-regarded university, in the context of a deteriorating national higher education sector. AUC students and faculty members said that they were allowed more freedom of expression on campus than their peers at other academic institutions and that they could openly criticize government policies in student publications and organize protests on campus when their peers in state universities were always under the watchful eyes of State Security Intelligence. One senior faculty member stated that AUC is an “oasis” of academic freedom in Egypt.

As a private university on-the-move, AUC raises an important question, little discussed in the literature on Egyptian education and concerning the intersection between the development of suburbs, class reproduction, and higher education. The move was not only physical; it also had cultural, social and financial implications, all of which were reflected in the research participants’ narratives.

Research participants in the first phase were concerned about AUC’s future in the new location in the desert. Our interviews and on-campus observation after AUC’s move revealed that mobilization was organized around a new set of AUC-focused issues, and we also perceived a certain anxiety that AUC students would withdraw from participation in matters of nation-wide concern. For many, except the administration, the move represented the end of AUC’s visibility and of its engagement in the political public realm because of the university’s distant and isolated location, and becoming part of Egypt’s gated community. As one tenured professor, who preferred to remain anonymous, put it: “[D]esert kills politics.”

This proved misleading. As we will demonstrate in the following section, students organized again, maybe not in the name of AUC and not exclusively on campus, but by being part of a larger youth movement, which constituted a significant segment of the protestors during the January 25 Revolution. The campus issues around which students mobilized changed after the Revolution as national concerns superseded their local grievances.

### *AUC Joining the Revolution*

Egypt's road to reform has hit plenty of obstacles since the toppling of President Hosni Mubarak, but that has not stemmed a tide of grassroots action that continues to wash across the unlikeliest of places. The American University in Cairo (AUC) has long been considered a breeding-ground for Egypt's future political and business powerbrokers and its tuition fees—more than eight times the annual income of the average Egyptian—have ensured that its student body is more associated with designer labels than direct action. On Sunday however, that reputation began to crumble as mounting resentment over the university's management boiled over into a mass strike and sit-in that is now entering its fifth day. (Shenker 2011)

The toppling of President Hosni Mubarak brought about an avalanche of political mobilization in various public and private institutions, across sectors and by different actors all over Egypt. Although political mobilization is part of a process that had started a decade earlier, it increased tremendously in the scale of protesting in the aftermath of the January 25 Revolution (Abdel Rahman 2012, 2014). According to the annual reports of the Egyptian Centre for Economic and Social Rights (ECESR), Egypt witnessed 5,212 socioeconomic protests in 2013 and 3,817 in 2012. Each of these figures transcends the number of all protests in Egypt from 2000 to 2010 (ECESR 2012, 2013). The educational sector has had its share of political mobilization with increasing levels of engagement and protests in both private and public institutions. According to ECESR 2013 estimates, students ranked as the second active protest group in 2013. Some of the student protests were staged for political reasons. For instance, in al-Azhar University students stood against political interference in higher education and against the arrest and detention of student supporters of the Society of the Muslim Brothers after the ouster of Mohamed Morsi. Other protests aimed against such educational measures as entrance regulations, increased tuition fees, and high rents in residencies (see Ashraf 2013). The Egyptian student protest movement spread to private universities including the British University in Cairo, the German University in Cairo, Nile University, 6 October University, and Misr Science and Arts University. What happened at AUC?

The 2011 protests broke out during the winter break when the campus was closed. But given its location on the outskirts of the capital, the New Cairo campus was far away from

the epicenter of the protests in Tahrir Square. However, the old AUC campus, which overlooks the square, was involuntarily caught up in the whirlpool of demonstrations, sit-ins, and the ensuing violence. At times protesters took refuge in the university buildings and at other times government security forces broke into the building's rooftops from where they targeted the demonstrators. And even though campus life was now in the desert, isolated from vibrant downtown life, students were still able to participate in the mass protests on January 25 and 28—known as the Day of Rage and the Friday of Rage, respectively—and the two-week sit-in in Tahrir Square.

Students' and workers' protests that took place since the university moved to New Cairo became more significant with the onset of the Revolution, leading to the biggest strike in the history of the institution in September 2011. The students initiated it and workers joined in solidarity, while faculty members supported both groups and mediated between them and the administration. In February 2012, when the country was under the leadership of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, students and faculty organized a three-day strike in response to a nation-wide call by student unions in the aftermath of a football match during which more than seventy people were killed in what is now known as the Port Said Massacre. All in all, in the year and a half following January 25, protests on campus escalated and the role of the different groups involved in these protests expanded in response to issues related to the university location and to the wider national context.

On its part, the AUC administration underwent a moment of "soul-searching" in the immediate aftermath of Mubarak's ouster, reflecting on its role in the new academic landscape and trying to recast itself as an institution connected to the city core rather than being isolated in the desert. When AUC first moved out of downtown, it focused on building what it termed a "new history" in the new campus after tensions arose between those who wanted to remain in the old location and others who favored the move because of the bigger space that it offered. However, when the Revolution began, the AUC administration revisited its position vis-à-vis downtown and its spatial role during the eighteen days of the Revolution and beyond.

The university invited prominent scholars to present lectures on issues related to the Revolution and professors designed courses incorporating academic perspectives on this historic event; one such course was Samia Mehrez's *Translating the Revolution* taught at the Center for Translation Studies. AUC also launched a project called *University on the Square* to document the experience of the AUC community during the uprising. In the words of

Randa Kaldas, Associate Director of the Economic and Business History Research Center, the aim of the project was to “promote and preserve the history of the momentous events of early 2011 in Egypt through the eyes of the AUC community for future historians, activists, students and the general public.” And the AUC website describes the project in this way:

Our students, alumni, faculty and staff bring diverse perspectives and vibrant enthusiasm to Egypt’s political and social landscape. As AUCians play important roles in creating a new Egypt in the months to come, we hope to capture the events, discussions and experiences of the University community as they unfold. (“About the Project”)

Reem Saad, anthropologist and former head of AUC’s Middle East Studies Center at the time of our interview, spoke of that transition:

AUC was one of the institutions that were most affected by the Revolution in terms of soul searching and reflectivity due to its nature as one of the most important and most prestigious academic institutions and being the homeland of the offspring of the elite class, including many sons and daughters of former regime members. It was one of the key sites of regime reproduction... at the same time, many of the students and the professors were engaged in public affairs covering the full political spectrum, all the way from the Policies Committee [of the former ruling National Democratic Party] to the movements calling for change.

AUC also faced a battle to change the names of its buildings associated with members of the old regime. For example, students and alumni raised concerns about the Suzanne Mubarak Conference Hall, named after former president Mubarak’s wife. President Lisa Anderson announced the decision to remove the name of the hall in an e-mail to the AUC community on April 16, 2011: “As of April 17th, the University will suspend the use of the name of the Suzanne Mubarak Conference Hall. It will be known as Waleed Building P071.”<sup>7</sup>

After the Revolution, the roles of the different actors on the AUC campus shifted and new actors emerged and engaged in efforts to shape administrative decisions, echoing nationwide calls for increased democratization in various institutions. The AUC community began mobilizing around new issues and following novel forms of organizing in the year and a half since the start of the Revolution, prompting in this way changes in university governance. The AUC administration, on its part, engaged with the different actors on campus, negotiated with them over their demands and as a result drafted new policies or altered existing ones. It

must, however, be reiterated that such changes came not as a result of a rupture caused by the Revolution, but were rather part of a longer process that had started a few years earlier. The Revolution gave momentum to the crystallization of new forms of protest and governance—that is, the onset of the Revolution and the ensuing transitional period created opportunities, spaces, and a general atmosphere conducive to the blossoming of forms of protest that helped bring about changes in university governance. This is how Dr. Hanan Sabea, professor of anthropology, Ombuds officer at the university for a year, and a regular participant in the protests on campus, explained what was happening:

[What we are witnessing after January 25 are] attempts that create spaces for a different kind of governance model to be presented. In practice, these attempts are met with magnificent challenges. . . Was there change in governance? Yes for sure. Does this mean we have shared governance in the way people imagine it? No. But we have. . . some actors who were able to create certain spaces through which they could make certain claims and demands that we hope will eventually lead to a different kind of understanding. . . [It's not about before and] after the Revolution. . . there were things happening that were precedents to the Revolution and after which they took on their own dynamics. . . Since the move to the new campus, a small group of students started to take interest in matters related to how this institution functions and what their role [in it] is, so it started with the move and the problems [resulting from the move] and the strikes, and the talk on the role of the security on campus and the freedom of expression.

Similarly to what happened on national level after the Revolution—"the people" became visible in opposition and as separate from the Egyptian "government"—"students" and "university workers" gained prominence vis-à-vis the AUC "administration," and a new understanding of what constitutes the university body and governance started to take shape.

A large number of students participated in campus protests and strikes, forming cross-sector alliances with AUC workers and faculty members as well as pan-university connections with student groups. The AUC community mobilized around issues that were linked more closely to the national context than to the immediate concerns of everyday life on campus, and such mobilization was orchestrated in unison with other such efforts on a nation-wide scale. "There was also convergence between the student movement and the wider movement in the country," as Dr. Rabab El-Mahdi, AUC political science professor and regular participant in protests on campus, put it.

Moreover, the AUC administration moved closer to a shared model of governance by involving the different stakeholders at the university in decision making and ceding some of its administrative powers. Student representatives were authorized to sit in on all administrative meetings and an Ombuds office was established to act as an independent referee in cases of complaints. AUC workers also made gains solidifying their presence on campus by formally setting up their first independent union. Meanwhile, some security restrictions were relaxed as the grip of the now-defunct and much-feared State Security Investigations (which was replaced by the National Security) loosened.

These are the observable and concrete changes that took place after January 25. However, it would be naive to attribute these changes solely to the Revolution as the circumstances that led to them are far more complex and, as mentioned above, the causes for such changes, are rooted in previous historical events. The following section analyzes the changes in forms of protest and university governance by looking at three of the four groups of actors: students, workers, and university administration. We will not look at faculty because we do not view them as constituting a claimant group and their role, mainly expressed in their participation as individuals rather than as a group, was to support students and workers in their protests and mediate between them and the administration. As Hanan Sabea commented: “Faculty are almost absent. They are just individuals. But can we talk about faculty who have a stance and a role [in governance]? [They are] completely absent.”

### *AUC in the Square*

AUC students played a dual role in the Revolution in the sense that they took part in activities on campus as well as in other locations, including Tahrir Square. During the eighteen days of the Revolution, some AUC students participated individually or in small groups of friends and at times joined with AUC faculty, staff, and workers. As Ahmed Alaa Fayed, president of the Student Union in the 2011/2012 academic year, said during our interview, a corner in the Square became known as the “AUC corner” where AUC community members discussed current events. Alaa Fayed also explained that during the clashes between protesters and the security forces that took place in November 2011 in what became known as the Mohamed Mahmoud Events, a banner that read “AUC students are in solidarity with you” was visible.

Taking part in the nation’s protest sites prompted many of the participants to bring their experience from Tahrir to AUC, to continue to be active on campus, and to engage in political and social change groups in their wider communities. Although there is no statistical

information available, President Lisa Anderson believes that there are anecdotal indications that students, even only as part of university-based clubs, have become much more involved with wider social issues than they had been before the Revolution. El-Mahdi also observed an increase in protest activities as well as in the number of students engaged in those activities on campus in the aftermath of the Revolution.

Students found new ways of structuring their efforts. The Leftist Student Movement (LSM), for instance, was formed in September 2011 by a group of Egyptian and Arab students who met during various strikes on campus over the years preceding the Revolution, particularly during the workers' strike in fall 2010. The group's aims include protecting the rights of students to practice politics on campus, raising awareness among students about their rights to a better education, and supporting the Workers' Independent Union. As one student pointed out, the LSM organized marches and sit-ins on campus to raise awareness about university workers' demands and work conditions, and supported their efforts for self-organization.

As discussed above, students rose up in support for national causes forming networks not only with other groups on campus, such as those of workers, faculty, and staff, but also with organizations and individual activists off-campus. One of the demands of the Fall 2011 strike, for example, was transparency of the university budget and greater student representation at administration meetings. Ahmed Alaa Fayed explained the change that took place:

We [AUC students] were active before the Revolution. . .and as the Revolution continues, people [students] are also continuing to be active. . .AUC had enough awareness before the Revolution, but now it has improved. . .This [Revolution] has increased our awareness a bit. . .we have friends who got wounded during the Revolution so these things not only affect Egypt, but affect us in person so that made a difference as well.

The biggest strike in AUC's history took place in 2011 when a group of students campaigned for a university-wide cancellation of classes, but were met with resistance, leading to professors holding their lectures outside in the plaza, while university workers organized one-hour sit-ins in the same place as negotiations took off, according to Sabea who described the events as follows:

The president asked us to go to meet her in Bassily [Auditorium] to negotiate. . . students refused to go there. We told her "If you want to talk to us, come here. This is

our Tahrir and this is our public, no one will go there. Whoever wants us should come to us.” She did not turn up and the situation escalated. . . [The next day], the students started entering the administration building to occupy it and it was one of the most powerful moments. Two by two were going up the stairs holding hands. The workers were the last ones to go in. We let them stand on the second floor and security guards were surrounding them in case something happens to anyone, security and workers were more vulnerable so we didn’t want them to be in the front. . . [It was finally agreed] to meet her [Lisa Anderson, a few days later] on Thursday. . . the students arranged the chairs in the plaza and they placed the tables at the entrance that leads to the admin building for Lisa to sit there and we chose representatives from each sector . . . and in the middle of the talks, Lisa left, and there was a commotion (*harag we marag*) and the day ended with the bringing down of the flag and then we gave it back to her. . . on Thursday night, there was a standstill. . . [Meanwhile, the workers had finally reached an agreement over their demands but they] insisted on striking and not stopping until the students got what they wanted. Really, [there was] an amazing synergy, and I believe that this phase was the most important phase for the understanding of how a movement is formed, a movement that goes beyond your personal interests (*ihitimamaat*) to something bigger.

This episode ended with the administration signing separate agreements with the students and the workers. The way the students put forth their demands and negotiated with the administration reflected the revolutionary fervor that had gripped the country at the time. Students had presented sixteen demands concerning a variety of issues, from budget allocation to student representation. Alaa Fayed said that between 80 and 85 percent of students’ requests were granted. More importantly, the process of negotiations was in itself “revolutionary,” according to Reem Saad. Reflecting on the Fall 2011 strike, she said:

The demands of the students were interesting. It wasn’t so much a matter of national demands, but the demands definitely revealed public awareness, citizenship maturity and engagement. . . They had demanded energy conservation, budget transparency, and student representation in all administrative meetings, i.e. wider representation. . . all these demands represent the core of the [January 25th] Revolution, i.e. the demand that we [the students] will inspect everything and we will leave nothing only to experts. . . and the way the demands were discussed and presented I would say was revolutionary. . . similar to rights groups. . . and new protest movements.

The strike also showed the convergence of students' and workers' efforts and the echo of national demands within the university. "This was one of the strongest periods we lived. It was the peak," Sabea said and argued that there was a change in the concepts of the space, the public, and the structure encompassing the different groups on campus. She explained that the idea of occupying the plaza did not originate in 2011 or with the Revolution:

It had a precedent. The change that happened was in people's imagination—this represents something else that I achieved outside, on the level of the country. Even the discourse of the students back then. . . was that we ousted Mubarak, would we not be able to oust Lisa?

The Revolution held an absolutely [new meaning] for the students and what they could do: that we could really change and the corruption that's in the country is also present at the university. [They held the belief that], "We will overcome corruption, we will clean the situation." That's why the talk was that corruption should stop, "We have to know where the budget is spent and treating workers like that is not acceptable. We are Egypt of the Revolution and we can change," [they believed].

Part of this far-ranging change was the AUC students' response to nation-wide events such as the Port Said football match during which more than seventy people were killed, including an AUC student, Omar Mohsen. In his memory large posters of Mohsen, who was also a member of the Ahly football club Ultras, hung from poles and on campus walls. Students organized a memorial during which they screened footage showing violations committed by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, which was blamed for allowing the bloodshed at the sport event to happen. The screening, part of the Kazeboun campaign, was intercepted by chants of "Down, down with military rule" by angry and sometimes tearful students.

Furthermore, AUC students expanded their circle of activities beyond campus, forming links with student groups at private and state universities, organizing joint events, and supporting them in their struggles. A group of mainly LSM members from the AUC joined a sit-in outside the German University in Cairo (GUC) after two students were expelled and three others banned from attending classes. Other AUC students held up a black flag that read "The American University in Cairo supports the free people," referring to the GUC student protesters. GUC students were penalized after they defied the administration's orders that a protest commemorating the late Karim Khouzam, who was killed during a football match on February 1, should be silent, and chanted slogans against the then-ruling Supreme Council of the Armed Forces on February 18 (see Shukrallah 2012). As Essam, an

AUC student pointed out, the LSM had also agreed with student groups at Cairo University and other institutions to hold simultaneous protests on the Egyptian National Day, February 21. Some AUC groups joined a nation-wide call for a three-day strike in the run-up to February 11, also to commemorate the victims of the Port Said match. Rabab El-Mahdi described this shift in solidarity:

AUC has a special feature (*tabi'a khasa*), that it was isolated and for the elite. So it was a very important turning point for them to join in and coordinate with students of other universities... Even when they mobilize around something linked to AUC, this has to come in tandem with something wider in the country. It is the idea of ripple effect. So now they started to choose the timing for when to move... they do this in synchrony with other movements.

In a further step to consolidate pan-university connections, AUC's Student Union helped reestablish the Egyptian Student Union (ESU) disbanded in the 1970s by President Anwar Sadat. In 2006, attempts at reestablishing the union failed after State Security threatened students from state universities not to participate in such efforts. In August 2011, AUC hosted a four-day meeting that brought together representatives of student unions from universities across Egypt during which they all agreed to revive the ESU. The founding members met with the higher education minister and a member of the then-ruling Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, both of whom approved the formation of the ESU and the students were given an office for headquarters. Alaa Fayed said that as a start, the ESU discussed the general framework of the union, including the question of student rights.

Thus, AUC students and their counterparts nation-wide could hope for increased visibility and similarly to other groups, such as the salaried government workers, wanted their voices to be heard across Egypt. AUC students have built on their efforts to revive the student movement, establishing networks with workers, faculty, staff, and with organizations beyond their campus. Even though it is too early to assess the long-term effects of such moves, one can argue that the January 25 Revolution expanded the opportunities for politicization of AUC students and their interaction with society beyond campus gates, even if only on a small scale and temporarily.

### ***Workers***

The workers at AUC, whether salaried or seasonal employees working as security personnel, in housekeeping, or at the Desert Development Center, have also emerged as visible and influential actors within the governance matrix of the university. Frustrated by the lack of clear systems for the filing of complaints, remuneration, or promotions, the workers had already staged a few minor strikes and a major one before the Revolution. In October 2010, hundreds of workers gathered in front of the Administration building on campus to put forth several demands, including an increase of the minimum wage to 1,200 Egyptian pounds, a 200-pound meal allowance, and a two-day weekend. Hundreds of students and a couple of professors joined in solidarity with the striking workers. The workers broke off the four-day strike after the administration promised that their demands would be presented to the Board of Trustees in March 2011. When the administration failed to meet all their demands, the workers called for another strike in September 2011.

This time, the strike was run jointly with students as well as the group of the lowest-paid workers—those from the Desert Development Center who joined in for the first time. The demands and the negotiations reached an unprecedented peak after and perhaps due to the Revolution. Walid Shebl, a member of the Board of the Independent Workers' Union, explained how the decision to go on strike in September 2011 was made:

September 2011 came and the promises were not fulfilled at all so I sent Mr. Brian [MacDougall] outlining our demands and pointing out that these were our demands since 2010, which we are demanding but getting no answer about. He replied to us, suggesting that we hold a meeting to sit down and discuss the matter. We have been going in and out of meetings for exactly one year, but still have not reached anything. At the end, I do not represent only myself, but my colleagues as well. So I told them that Mr. Brian wants to hold meetings again, and they replied that they've had enough of meetings and that if there were a real will to find a solution, that should have happened last year. We decided to go on strike in September.

. . .The difference between 2010 [strike] and 2011 [strike] is the presence of students. [In 2010], they were there only in solidarity with us, however in September 2011, they had demands, they were part of the strike, so it was a joint strike between the students and the workers.

Shebl believed that September 2011 marked the start of a “real workers’ movement” compared to previous rather ad hoc gatherings. He reflected on this by saying:

[In September, we saw]. . .the emergence of a growing workers' movement. The first unforeseen (*foga'ey*) appearance in October was without any preparation, just like January 25, it wasn't revolution. No, it was a loud shout and then it escalated to calling for the ouster of Mubarak, which was not one of the demands of the first day of January 25th [Revolution]. They [the demands] were "Bread, Freedom, Social Justice" and then they changed into "Leave." The same thing [happened here]. . . October 2010, it wasn't a workers' movement. It was something small. . .then bit by bit, we had a real workers' movement.

Therefore, September 2011 marked the first time in AUC history that workers, students, faculty, and staff stood united over a number of demands presented to the administration. Ahmed Alaa Fayed recalled the September 2011 strike:

The idea was that everyone united against the administration, so it was a very effective and very powerful strike. . .It was one of the most powerful strikes in the history of the university. The DDC [Desert Development Center] workers, security, students were all standing together. Plus, the number of students was big like we've never seen before on the new campus.

One of the most important outcomes of this strike was the formation of the Independent Workers' Union (the idea was born during the previous year's strike), which continues to operate parallel to another, older union. The Independent Union, however, was able to secure an office in the main administration building, Shebl said.

Therefore, the coming together of the workers, students, faculty, and staff laid the foundations for qualitatively and quantitatively different protest forms at AUC after the January 25 Revolution. For the first time, the AUC administration was faced by this many groups making demands, some even chanting slogans against President Lisa Anderson.

### ***The Administration***

After January 25, several administrative changes took effect at AUC. They resulted from the administration's commitment to a continuous review of its policies as well as from various actors' struggles for change in university governance. The most notable changes that emerged during our research are the following: allowing student representatives to attend all administrative meetings, drafting the Freedom of Expression Charter, appointing the Ombudsperson, and the loosening of some security restrictions. The administration attempted

to respond to the demands of the AUC community in light of the political developments after the Revolution that highlighted the need for increased democratization.

Students were allowed to sit in on the budget committee, among other administrative committees, and have access to the detailed item-per-item document. Furthermore, Sabea noted that the Student Union is now in charge of allocating student activity funds instead of the Office of Student Development, which has a supervisory and advisory role. This is how El-Mahdi described the change in the administration's stances:

[The change was clear in that] the administration's readiness to make compromises has become much bigger than before. . .and also the speed by which they take action . . .their readiness to get the different stakeholders involved in the process of governance. . .We started to propose the formation of task forces at the time of the workers' strike, to include members of faculty, workers, and students, and to talk about work problems and workers' issues as being not isolated from AUC at large. . . This started before the Revolution but the Revolution opened up the space for this to be solidified and to be a given. Now, it's a pattern, whenever there is problem, first thing is to form a task force, have representatives with different stakeholders. . .Also the level of communications, the administration of the university is now very keen to issue statements all the time. . .in contrast to the complete lack of transparency before the Revolution. . .anything that they think might be controversial or affect the governance of the institution, they try to make it as transparent as possible.

She also pointed that the administration responded much more quickly to the call for a strike in 2012 than it had to the demands of the Fall 2011 strike. Sabea agreed that there was a change in tactics on the part of the administration and she added: "There is an acceptance that we are in a completely different stage and we have to deal with it in a way that is different from before. . .rhetorically sometimes, we hear from the administration that we want to try a very different model. I want to see this being activated and this is not always clear."

In our interview, Lisa Anderson expressed her view in the aftermath of the Revolution:

AUC was always relatively open and was always relatively accommodating of the interests of faculty and students in political issues. But it was operating in an authoritarian environment, clearly. And after the lid was lifted, if you will, the opportunity that the university confronted was really how to create a much more organized and conducive venue for students and faculty, for that matter, and staff to

be politically involved in both university operations, if you will, and civically and politically beyond the university.

The AUC drafted the Freedom of Expression Charter, according to which students are no longer required to obtain security clearance for guest lecturers, especially politicians from the opposition, but only have to notify the university and ensure that the guests are well-protected. Previously, the Office of Student Development had to approve all invitations to speakers on campus. According to Anderson:

. . .before, the list of people that the students wanted to invite was vetted and people were taken off because they were viewed as too controversial. And that was a device by which the university essentially protected the students and protected the university from coming under too much scrutiny from a government that didn't want certain people to be able to speak. . .Now we don't even look at the list, there is no list. . .We don't have anything to do with who's invited onto campus now. So in that sense, the atmosphere is quite dramatically different...

Under the Charter's protection, AUC community members have the right to distribute printed material, seek signatures for petitions, and make speeches on campus without prior approval. They are also allowed to organize protests and demonstrations after notifying the administration. According to the Charter:

Freedom of expression must be at once fiercely guarded and genuinely embraced. This freedom should not be misunderstood to allow slander, libel and incitement of hate or threatening or abusive expression. The exercise of the freedom of expression and the assumption of the related responsibilities do not depend in any way on the message or sponsorship of the act or event, nor is it necessary that any such activities be sponsored by a university-recognized entity. The right of freedom of expression is also extended to student publications of AUC. Defending that right is a fundamental obligation of the university. Controversy cannot be permitted to abridge the freedoms of speech, thought, expression or assembly. They are not matters of convenience, but of necessity. (AUC, "Freedom of Expression Policy")

In addition, Sabea assumed responsibilities as the Ombudsperson for a year starting January 1, 2012. In a message to the AUC community on December 1, 2011, Lisa Anderson explained the role of the Ombudsperson:

The University ombuds is responsible for neutral and impartial dispute resolution, providing confidential and informal assistance to constituents of the University

community, including students, staff, faculty and administrators. Serving as a designated neutral, the ombuds is not an advocate for any individual or for the University as a whole but, rather, for fairness, while recognizing prevailing structures of power and inequality. The ombuds acts as a source of information and referral, aids in answering an individual's questions, and assists in the resolution of concerns and disputes. In considering any given instance, the rights of all parties that might be involved are taken into account. This office supplements, but does not replace, the University's existing resources for conflict resolution, including the Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Office, the Senate Grievance Committee, the Labor Rights Oversight Committee, etc.

The ombuds is independent of existing administrative structures and reports directly to the president. While maintaining confidentiality of communications, the ombuds prepares an annual report to the University community. Based on anonymous aggregate data, this report discusses trends in the reporting of grievances and concerns, identifies patterns or problem areas in University policies and practices, and recommends revisions and improvements. (AUC, 2011)

Sabea told *News @AUC* online publication that the main objective of the office is “to create a just, humane, and open University that respects and recognizes the rights, contributions, and efforts of everyone involved,” and that it “can contribute a lot to redressing and reworking many of the ‘problem areas’ that people confront on a daily basis at AUC” (AUC, “Newly Appointed”). Later, after she left the position at the Ombuds Office, Sabea said in an interview that in one year the office received 200 cases from individual and group claimants, most of them workers and staff members. The number of student claimants was much lower because they have several other channels to file a grievance, such as the Student Union, according to Sabea. “A huge number of people walked into [the Ombuds Office] with a desire to seek redress to problems that happened not only recently but also long time ago,” she said.

Thus, largely shaped by, but not exclusively due to the Revolution, the university undertook various steps in response to the changing political environment in Egypt. These steps were influenced by the emergence of various groups on campus, such as those of students and workers whose own expectations have seemingly shifted following the Revolution. The university administration did acknowledge its wish to reshape some aspects of governance in response to the Revolution, but still prided itself on already being open and flexible in following with its American model of education.

## **Conclusion**

This research study attempted to map some observable and immediate shifts in university governance and forms of protest at AUC in the year and a half following the start of the January 25 Revolution. It takes the event of the Revolution as its vantage point and harks back to a comparable moment in the history of the university, namely the move to the new campus in 2008. This research documented and analyzed the narratives of members from the AUC community about this turning point in the history of their institution. The analysis examined the role and actions of three groups of actors—students, workers, and administration staff—and their engagement with each other and their use of various means to effect changes in university governance. For example, students and workers staged a joint strike and presented the administration with specific demands. The administration, on its part, drafted regulations such as the Freedom of Expression Procedures and made decisions that responded to some of the needs of the AUC community in the post–Revolution period.

Furthermore, in the second phase, partnerships between student groups at AUC and other universities, such as the German University in Cairo, became possible because of the Revolution. Still, some changes were not a direct result of the Revolution. The appointment of the Ombudsperson, for example, had already been discussed for some time prior to the uprisings, yet the onset of this major historical event provided the Ombuds office with new significance. Hence, unlike the expectations of many informants in the first research phase, the second phase illustrate that it was premature to predict that AUC will become “apolitical” and isolated. Based on fieldwork observations and in-depth interviews, we have showed that change in the forms of protest and in university governance at AUC is an ongoing process that took different shapes in the aftermath of the institution’s move to the new campus and after the Revolution.

This research recognizes the difficulty of studying student forms of protest due to the fact that students remain in the university for an average period of four years. Students may or may not maintain links with their university, as we saw in the case of the AUC strike of Fall 2011 when alumni joined the students currently enrolled. This is compared to other forms of protest such as those of factory workers whose position in the factory is theoretically permanent or at least they stay in the factory longer than a student in an academic institution. This, in turn, makes it more difficult for student protests to turn into a sustainable movement than for workers to organize a continuous labor movement.

While this research is by no means comprehensive given the short period it covers, it nevertheless has the advantage of immediacy in tracking changes in university policy and documenting narratives of the AUC community when the memory of the event in question, whether the move to the new campus or the Revolution, was fresh in the actors' minds. In-depth analysis is beyond the scope of this research, which merely serves to provide a foundation necessary for any future exhaustive study of these events. As the political situation unfolds in the years to come, research could build on this project by probing, for example, how the event of the Revolution will be preserved in the collective memory of the AUC community.

After our fieldwork, Egypt witnessed major political events. Mohamed Morsi was forced to resign after popular uprisings on June 30, 2013. Field Marshall Abdel Fatah el-Sisi took presidential office in May 2014. The post-Morsi period is characterized by the crackdown of freedom of expression and police brutality. Two AUC students, Abd el-Rahman el-Boghdady and Abdullah Ibrahim Ghandour, were sentenced to five years in jail and asked to pay massive fines for violating a protest law that curbs freedom of expression. As a result, students staged a protest on campus to discuss the issue of student imprisonment (see Lynch 2014). Future research is needed to address protest movements at AUC in a political and social context that is, once again, unfavorable to youth activism.

## Notes

1. In this report, we refer to the "AUC community" in the same way that research participants employ it. Reference is made to individuals—faculty members, staff, students, workers—who commute to AUC on a daily or weekly basis for work and/or educational purposes in addition to those who live in the campus residence. We pay particular attention to the occupational, religious, class, and disciplinary differences among individuals who belong to these groups.

2. For instance, AUC students led anti-American protests at AUC and in Tahrir Square during the 2003 Iraq war. Throughout the history of the university, students have engaged in protests, especially when the campus was located in downtown Cairo. For example, the AUC Student Union and other student groups and individuals took to the streets in support of the Second Palestinian Intifada, and in 2003 they took part in the protests against the US invasion of Iraq, defying security forces and heading to the nearby Tahrir Square to join other protesters there.

3. LEAD students are undergraduates fully funded by USAID's Leadership for Education and Development scholarship program, and who usually come from a less-privileged social class than AUC students whose families provide financial support for their studies.

4. AUC has student clubs, groups, and organizations. Twenty-five to thirty-five student-run clubs register annually in AUC's Office of Student Development; membership is open to all. Clubs include: academic clubs, community service clubs, cultural clubs as well as geographically and culturally based clubs. For more information, see AUC's website at: <http://www.aucegypt.edu/studentlife/involve/org/Pages/home.aspx> (accessed Jan. 15, 2015).

5. New Cairo is situated more than 30 km from central Cairo and has the capacity to become the home for a projected population of 2.5 million people.

6. AUC is known for offering a highly competitive Arab language program at the Center for Arabic Study Abroad.

7. The full text of the letter is available on the AUC website at: <http://www.aucegypt.edu/students/Pages/April16.aspx> (accessed September 14, 2014).

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