



منتدى البديل العربي للآراء

Youth Movements Post January 25th

Liberation thoughts in face of Mubarak's institutions

Arab Forum for Alternatives (A.F.A)

Address : 5 - Dokki, Giza, Egypt, Fourth Floor, Al-Mesaha St.

Website: www.afaegypt.org

Mail: info@afaegypt.org

Telefax: +202-37629937

Twitter: AFAalternatives

Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/AFAalternatives>



Youth Movements Post January 25th

Liberation thoughts in face of Mubarak's institutions

This paper is a result of a closed round table discussion; it expresses the personal opinion of its writers and does not necessarily express the opinion of the Arab Forum for Alternatives or Global Partners Governance

Youth movements, that became very active during the transitional period and till now, are among the most important manifestations of new ideas of aiming at changing the rules of the political game after the January 25th revolution. This paper aims at analyzing work and activities of these youth movements and nature of challenges they face pursuing changing the rules of the political game after the revolution and to what extent they can replace these rules with new ones.

First: New ideas and liberating the public space:

Part of the youth chose to engage in civic activities and social movements that are not necessarily political parties. Thus many of the Nubian, Coptic Youth started to defend their causes through working within youth movements that expresses their ideas.

For example, a group of activists interested in women rights launched "Bahya Masr" a movement to express women's demands, and as well " Community committees for protecting the revolution " that appeared after the outbreak of the revolution, when the youth volunteered to protect their districts as a response to the security chaos in the first weeks of the revolution, then it developed to a developmental and awareness organization. As well as those movements, some youth chose to initiate a campaign "Alive by name only" which defends the right to housing for residents of slums and cemeteries.

These movements did not just appear post the revolution, there were some beginnings before 2011, such as " Maspero Youth Union in 2010 "and " Youth for Nuba in 2006".

Second: New ideas in the face of old institutions:

Despite variety of these movements, we shall find that what unites them is their faith in citizenship, political and economic rights for the Egyptian citizen after the January 25th revolution, either it is concerning minorities' rights such as Copts and Nubians or Women rights or the right to housing, development or basic human rights. Yet these ideas are confronting rigid state institutions protected by a network of interests that took decades to be formed under the rule of Mubarak and his predecessors. Yet the resistance of these movements is not just by the state and its institutions but also certain parties that see in them a threat to their interests and powers even from the religious and ethnic groups that these movements belong to.

These movements depend on two strategies in their battle with state institutions to change the relation between state and society, the first is: changing from above and changing from below. The first strategy is based upon transforming ideas of the movements to the decision maker to be adopted, while the second strategy is working

on spreading these ideas in the society to be fully adopted that the decision maker cannot ignore them.

Beside their battle with old state institutions and their networks of interests, they face another set of challenges, First the legal-security challenge, second the challenge of finance, and third the challenge of organization.

Conclusion: the battle of Youth movements for institutionalizing their ideas is not easy under the resistance the networks of interests and they have no way to confront them except by:

- working with both strategies, changing from below and changing from above simultaneously.
- Networking, and working on mutual causes that allow more effectiveness and wide spread.

[This paper is available in Arabic](#)