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Understanding Land Value through Investigating Redevelopment of Informal Areas in Egypt

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Abstract

Urban redevelopment of informal areas within the context of autocratic regimes has prompted debates regarding their impact on fair distribution of land rights, decision-making rights, and the costs and benefits of redevelopment. The land and/or land-use conflict resulting from the actualization of these debates in urban practice are triggered by diverse understandings of land value where different meanings, roles, and concepts are assigned to the value of land. The aim of this research is to understand how land value is conceptualised and mobilised in urban practice, where the scope of research focuses on the context of urban redevelopment of informal areas in Egypt. The research uses the theoretical framing of both Critical Realism and Islamic Ontology to understand (1) causal powers of structures/agents in conceptualising and mobilising land value; (2) underlying value systems shaping communal perceptions of land rights; and (3) actions shaping conflict and development aspirations.

The methodology is framed around intensive case-study research to investigate how land value is conceptualised and mobilised in the redevelopment of informal areas in Egypt. The empirical domain is selected in the controversial redevelopment project of El-Warraq Island in Greater Cairo Region. Through spatial, documentary, and thematic qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews, the research identifies different components of land value from diverse perceptual positions; the multiple roles that land plays in economic, political, social, and environmental structures; and its mobilisation on the agent/individualistic level. The research operationalised different components of land value using a pluralistic pragmatic approach and operationalised different structures using a realist constructionism approach. The research concluded by synthesising structures shaping the contested dynamics of urban redevelopment in Egypt and the root causes of land-use conflict in the context of uneven power relations between informal inhabitants and authoritarian state; thus, contributing to the identification of appropriate rationales for land conflict resolution.

Key Words:

Land Value, Urban Redevelopment, Land Conflict, Structure/Agency, Informal Areas, Egypt

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List of Acronyms

AFEA: Armed Forces Engineering Authority

CAPMAS: Central Authority of Public Mobilisation and Statistics

EGP: Egyptian Pound

ESA: Egyptian Survey Authority

GCR: Greater Cairo Region

GOPP: General Organisation of Physical Planning

IDCS: Information and Decision Support Centre

ISDF: Informal Settlements Development Fund

MoHUUC: Ministry of Housing, Utilities, and Urban Development

MOT: Ministry of Transportation

MPED: Ministry of Planning and Economic Development

MURIS: Ministry of Urban Reform and Informal Settlements

NSPO: National Service Projects Organisation

NUCA: New Urban Communities Authority

PBUH: Peace Be Upon Him

SCAF: Supreme Council of the Armed Forces

UDF: Urban Development Fund

List of Arabic Terms

Shariaa: [trans. Law], usually refers to Islamic law dictated by the Divine.

Shariaa Kawnyea: [trans. Universal Law], refers to unchanging principles of human phenomenon from Islamic perspective like gravity in natural science, social structure in social science, or the existence of evil in theological science.

Maqased El-Shariaa: [trans. Objectives of Islamic law / Higher Ethical Objectives], refers to the wisdom behind commandments that are considered the principles Muslim scholars use to find rulings for new problems that did not exist at the time of prophet Muhammed (PBUH).

Fetra: [trans. Human Nature/Essential Instinct], usually refers to the Islamic principle that everyone is by nature good, and then their environment reshapes their moral values. It also refers to the essential instincts of all living creatures which are engraved in their existence by the Divine, leading them to seek love, respect, loyalty and protect themselves from hunger and threat.

Ard: [trans. Land, Earth, and Ground].

Ashewayea: [trans. Random, Haphazard, Spontaneous – pl. *Ashewayat*], usually refers to informal areas in Egyptian context or the Egyptians' unpredicted irregular behaviour in the urban environment.

Tarh Nahr: [trans. River Throw-out], refers to lands that appeared after the river's water level decreased.

El-Oulom El-Naqlia: [trans. transfer science], as in knowledge transferred from God.

El-Oulom El-A'qlia: [trans. rational science], as in knowledge based on interpretation of the mind.

Mulk/Melk: [trans. Ownership, Property, or Possession].

Metruk: [trans. Abandoned], refers to public-owned land that is used for public services (like roads) and it is perceived as a shared property or a collective ownership.

Waqf: [trans. Devoted or Halt], refers to endowed/trust land that was originally owned by a private owner (or state) who entrusted it as a charity (like a hospital or mosque) making it *Waqf Khairy* [trans. Charity Trust] or entrusted its revenues for a specific cause or specific group of people, like the inheritors or any other beneficiaries, making it *Waqf Ahly* [trans. Family/People Trust].

Mawat: [trans. Dead], refers to unused or undeveloped lands.

Ihyaa El-Mawat: [trans. Reviving the Dead], an Islamic concept refers to developing unused lands either by digging a well, cultivating it, building a house, or any other activity making it usable.

Mashaa: [trans Common], refers to lands which are not entitled to anyone.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: LAND VALUE, LAND CONFLICT, AND URBAN LAND (RE)DEVELOPMENT

Across the world, land conflict has been increasingly triggered by disputes around the distribution of land rights including land acquisition and land development. The conflicts are affected by socio-economic, political, and environmental structures which either provide an effective platform for conflict resolution or a provocative environment for violence and aggression (UN-Habitat, 2012; Boudreaux and Abrahams, 2022). These structures shape and govern the power dynamics between different groups with interest in land rights; however, those groups' understandings of the nature and value of those rights add further complexity to the dynamics of land conflict (Lake, 2023). Conceptualisations of land value (which influence the understanding of land rights) and mobilisations of these conceptions (manifested in formal and informal practices of land development) are key underlying processes shaping mechanisms of land conflict. Within metropolitan cities (considered the highest consumers of resources and the highest producers of capital (Cooper, Evans and Boyko, 2009; Davies, 2015)), the main governance challenge is managing the city's finite resources in terms of its sustainable production and equitable distribution, while generating strategies for conflict resolution between different beneficiaries/ stakeholders in a just manner (UN-Habitat, 2009). Since land is a key finite resource, urban redevelopment schemes have become a common strategy for addressing accumulated disputes by restructuring the land values through the reconfiguration of land uses and land rights.

In growing neoliberal economies, urban redevelopment aims at intensifying the existing land use values and/or replacing them with higher value uses, and then capturing those values, supposedly, for the benefit of the public good (Weber, 2002). However, urban redevelopment practices – especially in the Global South – raised concerns about these projects' public benefits, particularly around their ability to improve vulnerable groups' access to land rights, as many of these projects are primarily motivated by economic drivers (OHCHR, 2015; Weldeghebrael, 2020; Tawakkol, 2020). One of the concerns is whether these projects can capture land's highest value without forcing the poor out of the redeveloped zone, either directly by forced eviction or indirectly through gentrification (Harding and Blokland, 2014; Harvey, 2008). Another concern is the fair distribution of the costs and benefits of redevelopment projects across different stakeholders involved and whether these projects contribute to the "public good" (Adams and Watkins, 2014; Harding and Blokland, 2014; Weber, 2010). Furthermore, there are various concerns about the changes in power dynamics that result from any kind of urban transformation reshaping the relationship between different land uses, and accordingly different social activities, changing the roles of different social groups within the spatial context (Harvey, 2012). Conceptions about land value are once more central in these debates addressing the nature of the value to be captured, the fair distribution of costs and benefits in the process of capturing it, and the impact of its capture and redistribution on the community's power dynamics.

Land value as a concept has different layers of understanding, inherited from the paradoxical nature of the word *"value"* (Lake, 2023; Rokeach, 1973; De Monticelli, 2018; Bosselman, 1994). Conceptions about land value range on a spectrum from abstract meanings of value (intangible values) to measurable identifiable aspects of value (tangible values). The generation of these conceptions also spans across layers of creation and development from individualistic and personal domains – affected by agents' value systems and personal experiences – to a communal perception domain of collective recognition influenced by interacting structures (Elder-Vass, 2010). Finally, the mobilisation of land values (manifested in how people cherish, use, and/or protect these values) also ranges on a wide spectrum of practices that are influenced by people's own value systems, their responsiveness and reflexivity, and their power as agents – both individually and collectively – against the power of the influencing structures (Lake, 2023). However, the differences in conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value become more explicit in the context of land conflict – or land-use conflict – associated with a setting of uneven power relations (Elden, 2013). An example of such context is the setting of urban redevelopment projects in informal areas under autocratic regimes, as in the Egyptian case.

In autocratic Egypt, there is a political tendency towards a top-down approach to decision-making that usually overrules actual consideration for public participation (Dorman, 2013; GTZ, 2009; Handoussa, 2010). Informal areas are considered here as a transgression against the state, and accordingly their inhabitants are considered criminals who have lost, at least partially, their rights to self-determination when they defied their citizenship/

communal contract with the government (Sims, 2011; Khalifa, 2015). However, the state is committed to including vulnerable groups within its urban intervention policies and social security plans, especially when informality and poverty became an identifying phenomenon for the metropolitan urban environment (Khalifa, 2015; ElMouelhi, 2014; GOPP, 2014; GTZ, 2009). Thus, urban redevelopment projects for these areas manifest an uneven power relation between the inhabitants and the government, where this relationship is affected by layers of incompatible values, goals, and understandings of what is considered the public good and who has the right to determine it. When it comes to land-use planning in redevelopment projects of informal areas, the key concern is how to balance between profitable and non-profitable land uses.

This research unravels the different aspects and layers of understanding land value underlying conflicts around land rights in the context of urban redevelopment of informal areas. The research focuses on a setting of land-use conflict caused by a redevelopment project of an informal area – El-Warraq Island – situated in Greater Cairo Region (GCR), Egypt. El-Warraq Island redevelopment project has been a controversial topic within Egyptian public debates since 2017, after an incident of violent clashes between the island's inhabitants and police forces, leading to concerns about the feasibility and moral justification for the proposed redevelopment project (Euronews, 2022; Bassam, 2018; Tawakkol, 2020). The conflict between the inhabitants and the government is an ongoing problem characterised by contested negotiations and intermittent violent disputes (El-Mahdawi, 2021; Euronews, 2022; Mada-News, 2022; Sinbad, 2022). The context provides an appropriate setting of uneven power relations – between the informal community and the government – which manifest their different ideologies and perceptions of land value, and how it should be captured and distributed in an inclusive and fair manner that serves the "public good/interest".

The findings of this research are meant to contribute to bridging the gap between land value theories and practices of land value mobilisation, by investigating the structural mechanisms influencing land redevelopment dynamics in a contested conflict of uneven power relations. This contribution expands beyond the current scholarly focus on land-value taxation theories and practice and pursues comprehensive investigation for other components of land value shaping dynamics of redevelopment and conflict (Bosselman, 1994; Bartos and Wehr, 2002; Lake, 2023). The research findings are also meant to shed light on the dynamics between structures and agents in shaping the urban environment, by investigating the power mechanisms of their interaction and mapping the causal generative mechanisms of their relationships. This contributes to the practical understanding of the emergence behaviour of structures and agents (Elder-Vass, 2010) and the influence of structure/agent dynamics in shaping conventions about value (Elder-Vass, 2022) in the urban domain.

Finally, the research findings contribute to interdisciplinary research bringing together urban discussions about informality, displacement, and urban transformations (Harding and Blokland, 2014; Pantuliano *et al.*, 2012; Robinson, 2003; Banks, Lombard and Mitlin, 2020; Roy, 2005) with economic debates around land value capture and evaluation (Alterman, 2012; Andelson, 2001; Dye and England, 2010; Walters, 2013; Harvey, 1917; Balchin, Bull and Kieve, 1995); with political debates around power accumulation and practices of territoriality (Elden, 2013; Goodfellow, 2018; Harvey, 2012; Scott, 1998); with social debates around place identity, sense of belonging, and community resilience (Dixon and Durrheim, 2000; Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983; Ujang and Zakariya, 2015a; Yuval-Davis, 2006; Devine-Wright, 2009; Relph, 1976); and with environmental debates on land ethics, sustainability, and environmental justice (Callicott, 1989; Leopold, 1949; Agyeman, 2005; Anton and Lawrence, 2014; Basiago, 1998; Cheshmehzangi and Heat, 2012; Haughton, 1999).

This chapter discusses first the research problem with reflection to the prospected contribution to theory/practice gap, structure/agency debate, and the urban redevelopment/land conflict relationship. Afterwards, the second section demonstrates the research question, objectives, methodology, and finally the research structure.

1.1 Research Problem

Evaluating urban redevelopment practices and addressing land-use conflict debates require deeper understanding of different perceptions about land value and implications of their co-existence within the same empirical context. Values assigned to land are often narrowly understood and reductively mobilised in terms of its monetary worth. This narrow understanding limits consideration for the range of values influencing (re)development and conflict mechanisms. Meanwhile, values assigned to practices of urban (re)development shape their drivers, objectives, and approaches. Assessing the value of redevelopment projects becomes a function of understanding the grounds for intervention in the chosen locations, who has the right to decide that they require redevelopment, and what are the elements that need to be redeveloped. It is challenging to answer these questions without addressing the underlying questions of what the existing land values are for these chosen locations, who determined they are of value (what aspects of value are being included/excluded), and which values are deconstructed and reconstructed through the redevelopment process, and which are marginalised. On the other hand, addressing land-use conflict raises the question of how different components and uses of land are perceived by different groups, why they are measured and ranked differently, and why there is a disagreement in how to capture and distribute them. It is important to trace these questions to the theoretical grounding of these debates so as to have a better understanding of the observed problems in urban redevelopment practices.

Consequently, the research problem is divided into three parts. The first part addresses how the notion of land value is created on a conceptual level reflecting different ontologies and epistemologies that are concerned with the subject matter. As the conceptualisation process of ideas operates within both internal and external realms, through the agents and within the structure dynamics respectively (Elder-Vass, 2010), it is important to identify those internal psychological operations in understanding concepts and those external dialectic operations represented within the context of the surrounding structures. Thus, the second part addresses how structures influence understandings of land value and how their power relations (with each other and with the agents) influence the mobilisation of these understandings. Finally, the third part of the research problem addresses how different land value conceptualisations and mobilisations impact the quality of urban redevelopment practices, and the mechanisms of land-use conflict agitation and/or resolution. The three parts of the research problem are illustrated in the next subsections.

1.1.1 Understanding Land Value between Theory and Practice

Land value is understood differently across research domains which are not usually complementary or driven from coherent philosophical backgrounds. For instance, *positivists* seek to adopt value-free theories; where the reality of value is only based on its empirical worth driven from the agents' rational choice through means of *utilitarianism* (Smith, 1776; Harding and Blokland, 2014). As for robust *realists*, value is regarded as absolute and mind-independent (Oddie, 2005) where values are considered as desirable end-states of existence (Rokeach, 1973) making it objective and constructed through structures rather than through agents (Archer, 2013; Anderson, 1995; Callicott, 1989). Meanwhile, r*elativists* seek to understand value through the interpretation of experience where they believe that value is the meaning individuals give to actions and objects (Hochberg, 1965; Oddie, 2005; Lake, 2023). They challenge the concept of "true objective value" and claim that values are determined by the most common agreement developed through different subjective perspectives' interactions (Jeremy Nicholls, 2012), like agreed-upon social values or mediating prices for products. However, *hermeneutics* believe that there is an objective reality that could be achieved by eliminating all subjective biases and thus using the disparity of value meanings to unravel its true reality (Harding and Blokland, 2014). Evidently, various value theories have made their imprints on mapping the role/position of land value within the research domains that embody them, and their differences result from the paradoxical nature of the concept of value (Lake, 2023; Elder-Vass, 2022).

For instance, some scholars understand land value as based solely on its empirical worth and defined by models like price theory (Harvey, 1917) or location theory (Gabszewicz and Thisse, 1989; Alonso, 1964). Other scholars understand land value in terms of its role in the ecological system like in land ethics (Bosselman, 1994; Callicott,

1989; Leopold, 1949); attach its worth with the sense of self-worth, belonging, and identity associated with the meaning of place (Govers, 2013; Anton and Lawrence, 2014; UN-Habitat and GLTN, 2012); or link land value with power, land disputes, and concepts of territory and territoriality (Abdulai *et al.*, 2007; Elden, 2010). However, theories and practices focusing on the economic component of land have tended to dominate in many urban contexts as there is a more prevailing focus on the tangible attributes of land value – like land market values – than the intangible ones. Critical literature recognizes that urban practices which focus merely on land's monetary value cause severe social and environmental costs (Callicott, 1989; Aeron-Thomas *et al.*, 2004). The narrow focus on capturing the land market value in cities for example has increased gentrification and displacement of the most vulnerable groups increasing inequalities and segregation (Fernandes, 2006; Robinson, 2003; Smith, 1979).

Accordingly, researchers are increasingly intrigued to identify values beyond the market value of land (Arvidson *et al.*, 2013; Rauscher, Schober and Millner, 2012; Gargani, 2017). However, the investigation of intangible land values becomes problematic when there is a vague definition of these values (Evans, 2005; Greve, 2017; Murtagh, 1998). Most of the values identified in literature – other than market values – are weakly operationalised; thus, thus, it is challenging to adequately investigate these values in the empirical domains, causing a considerable research gap. Failure to identify other components of land value leads to their neglect in practice (like exclusion from the feasibility studies), which limits their inclusion in redevelopment negotiations and land-conflict resolution schemes. Thus, it is crucial to bridge this gap between theories and practices in the conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value, and to find adequate philosophical grounding that can incorporate different ideologies without falling into reductionism, epistemic fallacies, and/or incoherence.

Critical Realism offers an appropriate philosophical grounding that links value theories with practice (Harding and Blokland, 2014), as it introduces a conceptual framework that allows investigation of the underlying multi-causal mechanisms that produce social experiences and events, explaining the influence of abstract conceptions on empirical domains (Elder-Vass, 2010). The philosophy adopts a middle ground between *realism* and *relativism* through advocating ontological realism along with epistemological relativism (Archer *et al.*, 2013; Bhaskar, 2013) which avoids epistemic fallacy and naturalistic reductionism of value theories to monetary worth. It also provides a proper grounding for pragmatic (Lake, 2023) and pluralistic (Anderson, 1995) value theories which helps this research in incorporating different understandings of value within a coherent conceptual framework. To investigate conceptualisations and mobilisations of land value, critical realism enables understanding the different layers through which these processes occur – from the abstract to the empirical – and understanding how the causal power dynamics – empowered by different perspectives – between processes and actors tend to affect the overall understanding of land value, especially within a context of conflict.

However, *Critical Realism* on its own is not sufficient for understanding land value within the context of urban redevelopment of informal areas in Egypt, because of its Western origins[1]. Many Western philosophies are based on secular and/or atheistic grounding (El-Messiri, 2006; El-Messiri, 1994); thus, value formation and understanding are not approached with serious consideration for religious scriptures (Lumbard, 2022), their interpretations of value, and/or the adaptations/mobilisations of these interpretations within religious societies (Maslow, 1964). Without careful examination of the different aspects shaping the social realities of communities, the theories developed will be incomplete and mostly inadequate (Styres, 2018; Dang, 2021; Kenjio, 2020). To properly analyse processes of land value conceptualisation and mobilisation within the Egyptian context, there is a need to incorporate a religious ontological framing to understand the religious values and belief systems shaping the relationship between the people and the land. Since Egypt has a majority of Muslim population and many of

[1] In this context, *"Western Origins"* refers to philosophies developed in the Global North in the Age of Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries, and it doesn't refer to the Capitalist Camp in the US and Europe versus the Communist Camp in Russia and China.

its laws are driven from Islamic *shariaa* [law], Islamic Ontology is an appropriate complementary conceptual framing to understand land value from the perspective of the Egyptian community.

Islamic Ontology is a religious realist philosophy which centres its whole conceptualisation of reality – and value – on the existence of one and only God (Allah). Thus, for Muslim scholars the source of value, meaning, and purpose can only be found through the understanding of Islamic scriptures, aligning oneself with the will of the Creator, and submitting to His transcendent wisdom and knowledge (El-Messeri, 2012). *Islamic Ontology*, agrees with *Critical Realism*'s proposition of a *transcendental reality* which exists but is not fully comprehensible through the fallible intellect of human beings (Wilkinson, 2013). Since, *Islamic Ontology* is more focused on building communities than building cities, as encouraged by Islamic scriptures, there is a more focus in the Islamic body of knowledge on intangible values and meanings and high criticism towards reducing realities to materialistic and naturalistic ideologies (Oddie, 2005; El-Messeri, 2012). However, urban literature within Islamic philosophy has been stagnant for decades which makes it irreflective to current challenges (Sait and Lim, 2006), pushing policy makers and practitioners within Islamic communities to rely more on Western ideologies and theories in explaining and responding to these challenges. Adopting secular theories to resolve urban challenges within religious communities, risks neglecting crucial factors in the explanation and resolution of these challenges.

Accordingly, this research proposes a conceptual framework combining both *Critical Realism* and *Islamic Ontology* as theoretical groundings to understand land value within the chosen context. Through this conceptual framework, on the one hand, critical realism supports investigating different layers of conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value along a spectrum of abstract ideas and mobilised negotiated practices (Anderson, 1995; Bagley, Sawyerr and Abubaker, 2016; Bhaskar, 2013; Elder-Vass, 2010). On the other hand, *Islamic Ontology* allows this research to deduce appropriate explanations for those layers of conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value within the empirical context, the redevelopment of an informal area in GCR. This leads to the second part of the research problem related to understanding the power dynamics of structures and agents in shaping the theoretical and practical debates around urban redevelopment and land conflict.

1.1.2 Understanding Land Value between Structures and Agents

The construction/creation of value is one of the key debates relating to the structure/agency problem in shaping social phenomena. One camp argues that if "value" is a socially constructed concept, then agents/people have a role in attaching value to substance. While if "value" is considered an absolute reality, then structures are generated around it without the conscious notion or intentionality of agents (Hay, 2002; Cruickshank, 2002; Elder-Vass, 2010). If agents attach "value" to substance, in this case land, they do it through the lens of their own values, yet their own values are inherited from the social structures and belief systems they live within. However, there are agents that have enough power to change these structures either through leadership or privileged position within the society (Cruickshank, 2002; Hay, 2002; Elder-Vass, 2022). So from one side, globalisation and social media have connected the ideas and beliefs of agents more tightly which in return affected communities' collective consciousness of values (Poole, 2012). Yet from the other side, adopting these ideas and beliefs about value is a matter of human rationality which is a function of education, culture, and exposure to different ideas among other things. Thus, human rationality is affected by the cumulative work of agents which develop to create causal structures that have the power of influencing these rationalisation processes, but not in a deterministic way.

Within these debates, "*cause"* and "*power"* are two key concepts underlying the understanding of structures and agents and how they relate to values (Elder-Vass, 2010). The identification of *causal power* influences how structures and agents are conceptualised, the impact they have on one another, and the analytical priority of this impact (Healey and Barrett, 1990). Despite the various disagreements about structures and agents in literature, there is a common understanding that both structures and agents are realised by the manifestation of their *power* which is translated in their ability to *cause* change and/or stability. Understanding how land value as a concept is shaped and mobilised hence becomes a function of understanding how surrounding structures and agents interact

and how their relationships are shaped and mobilised. Structures surrounding land value could be categorised thematically depending on the nature of aspects that these structures are perceived to influence.

As Bosselman (1994) discussed the role of land within different conceptions of land ethics, he concluded four roles that have evolved through time by the act(s) of influential agents which shaped the collective human notion of land value. According to him, land had a role in enforcing social and political order, in reforming economic activities, in understanding environmental responsibility, and in accessing opportunities for improved welfare and quality of life through accumulating capital and assets (Bosselman, 1994). Thus, there are different roles that land could have within different structures and there are different meanings that it could hold for different agents (Lake, 2023). Scholars in different research domains usually focus on particular elements or components of land value within their study that serves their theory development or their explanation for the investigated empirical context.

For example, land value in urban political studies is conceptualised to be an instrumental value that provides access to power, control, and/or domination over strategic assets like resources, trade routes, and manpower (Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016). Thus, land conflict is driven by disputes over the distribution of land rights among different parties who aim to monopolise this access through practices of territoriality (Elden, 2010). Meanwhile, within urban economic studies, land value is identified with its role in accumulation of capital/wealth and access to means of production (Harvey, 1917; Porter, 2011; Von Wieser, 1928). Land value is perceived as a financial asset within this structure and has an instrumental role in formation of economic systems and market dynamics, as well as in wealth distribution and access to credit (Calderon, 2002). Land conflict and drivers for urban redevelopment become a function in capturing this value, maximising utility, and dispute over scarce resources (Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016) as land is perceived as a commodity in the real property market which has both use and exchange values and is controlled by unequal bargaining powers of supply and demand (Harvey, 1917; Harding and Blokland, 2014).

Within urban social studies, the focus becomes more on the role of land in providing access to human basic needs; from the lowest survival existential needs – like shelter, food, safety, …etc. – to the highest essential fulfilment needs – like identity, belonging, self-actualization, …etc. – (Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983; Robinson, 2003). Thus, the value of urban redevelopment is shaped more around enabling communities (Payne, 2022), and the understanding of land conflict is conceptualised through understanding the implicit intangible values of land beyond its monetary and tangible values (Elder-Vass, 2022). Meanwhile, urban environmental studies focus on the role of land in providing a safe, healthy, and sustainable environment for the people to live and flourish. Land value is conceptualised within this research domain by its essential and intrinsic qualities as irreplaceable assets that either need to be conserved/preserved (Leopold, 1949; Bosselman, 1994; Callicott, 1989) or need to be exploited to the maximum for human beings' welfare (Kopnina *et al.*, 2018). The drivers for land conflict and motivations for urban redevelopment come from the tendency to yield environmental justice and fair distribution of environmental costs and benefits resulting from the development process and redistribution of land rights (Haughton, 1999; Wolch, Byrne and Newell, 2014).

Within all these research domains, land has different roles in the structures discussed and accordingly its value is driven by different attributes, properties, and/or components of this value. The perception about the role and power of agents in mobilising these structures is also different across those research domains. For instance, in economic studies agents have rational choice if they can access accurate information about the market and they are acting freely to maximise their utility (Smith, 1776; Harvey, 1917), while in social and political studies the agents are highly influenced by power structures where their choice is affected by social constructions and valuation conventions (Elder-Vass, 2022; Elden, 2013), and this becomes more radical in studies advocating environmental determinism (Coombes and Barber, 2005; Sargentis *et al.*, 2022). The theoretical debates around the conceptualisation and mobilisation of the power of structures versus the power of agents in shaping realities are driven by a challenging attempt to theorise the abstract intangible power of structures and the empirical tangible power of agents under the same conceptual framing without falling into reductionism or empirical fallacy. The

research suggests using a conceptual framing to value theory which adopts a Pluralistic approach (to give equal merits to tangible and intangible causal powers) and a Pragmatic approach that focus on the influence/impact of those causal powers instead of arguing which of these powers has (or should have) a universal truth. This conceptual framing should also adopt Realist Constructionism (driven from Critical Realism) to stratify the difference between these two modes of power dynamics (that of structures and agents) as well as the different conceptualisations of land value. This analytical stratification helps in investigating the different possible causes of conflict created by the redevelopment project which is the third (and empirical) part of the research problem.

1.1.3 Urban Redevelopment in Contested Contexts

Urban redevelopment processes – from vision to implementation – are affected by different structures within city systems, and they affect the well-being of the existing community either directly or indirectly (Batty, 2007; World-Bank, 2009). Urban redevelopment usually aims to improve the efficiency and functionality of cities' systems by improving deteriorated urban environments (that affect the physical safety and well-being of the inhabitants and users of urban space), and providing inhabitants with job opportunities, needed services and markets, and adequate urban and social infrastructure to perform their daily activities (Adams and Watkins, 2014; Alpopi and Manole, 2013; Davies, 2015). It also aims at restoring order and fair distribution of land rights among different social groups, as well as creating competitive advantage for the region it is applied within (Harding and Blokland, 2014; Payne, 2022). Thus, urban redevelopment supposedly considers different aspects of urban sustainable development like economic, social, environmental, and political (Basiago, 1998) by means of redistributing economic and social activities and regenerating undervalued land through land-use replanning (UN-Habitat, 2009; UN-Habitat, 2007; Adams and Watkins, 2014; Harding and Blokland, 2014; Kauko, 2015; OHCHR, 2015). However, the value of urban redevelopment projects comes into question when these projects fail to balance between profitable and non-profitable land uses, and when they result in – or maintain – unfair redistribution of power across different stakeholders (Sims, 2015; Payne, 2022; Boudreaux and Abrahams, 2022; Robinson, 2003). Assigning priorities is key in the trajectory of urban redevelopment schemes, and this is when its processes are influenced by the wider governance agenda and the ideologies, discourses, and institutions shaping political, economic, social, and environmental structures.

Debates concerning land rights and accessibility in the redevelopment of urban informal areas bring philosophical discussions of land value into a more practical sphere. Egypt is a contested environment with layers of urban challenges – including informality – and a continuous competition between land-uses and land development schemes, both formal and informal. Egypt has been facing the challenges of informal settlements since the 1960s when the social housing delivery system collapsed in the years of the Arab-Israeli War (Arandel and El Batran, 1997), and most intervention policies have not succeeded in effectively solving informality's drawbacks. Different reports and statistics have diverse estimations of the actual number of informal settlers in Egypt; ranging between 40% to 75% of the urban population according to different sources (Tadamun, 2014). Informal housing is an active sector in the Egyptian local economy, as it has for decades provided a continuous supply of affordable housing units serving limited income citizens, more than what the government with all its resources could provide (Shawkat, 2014; GTZ, 2009; Arandel and El Batran, 1997). For example, informal housing between 2011 and 2014 provided and delivered almost 6.5 million housing units, three times what was planned by the government in the same period and 43 times what was actually provided (Shawkat, 2014). The informal economy also has a distinctive share in the local economy, represented in informal property markets and informal services provision outlets (Sims, 2011; ElMouelhi, 2014)

Greater Cairo Region (GCR) – as the metropolitan capital of Egypt – became the vibrant manifestation of haphazard urban development (Sims, 2011; Sims, 2015; Khalifa, 2011; UN-Habitat, 2003; GTZ, 2009). Despite adopting different urban intervention policies, agendas, and visions for redeveloping GCR since 1970s (Dorman, 2013; Khalifa, 2015; Elsisy *et al.*, 2019), the Egyptian government has failed to address informal urbanism properly or even restrain its growth within the capital (Dorman, 2013; Shawkat, 2014; Sims, 2011; GTZ, 2009).

As informal housing is currently the main supplier for low-income housing (Shawkat, 2014; Sims, 2011), the dominant typology of informal areas is the informal development of legally owned private land (around 80% of informal urbanism in Egypt) where landowners change the use of their land from agriculture to residential uses without complying to the formal planning standards (Khalifa, 2011). This typology is the most challenging for the government due to conflicts over land rights and obligations, as in the case of El-Warraq Island.

El-Warraq Island is the biggest of 144 Nile Islands extending across the Nile River, with an area of 6.7km² and a population of around 90,000 inhabitants. The Island holds a central location between the three governorates that form GCR (Cairo, Giza, and Qalyubia[1]) where it followed the Giza governorate jurisdiction as a part of El-Warraq district (Farag and El-Alfy, 2013). Despite being a peri-urban area, El-Warraq Island did not undergo the same rate of urbanisation as its neighbouring locations due to the poor accessibility of the island. In 1998, the island was declared a natural reserve by the Egyptian government's cabinet, a declaration that was opposed by its inhabitants because it denied them from issuing building permits and gave the government the right to expropriate the land for public use. After winning a lawsuit in 2002, the inhabitants regained their right to stay on the island, but they could not build on it legally or legalise the already built constructions (Bassam, 2018). In 2017, the government removed El-Warraq Island from the natural reserves map and transformed the jurisdiction of the island to the New Urban Communities Authority (NUCA).

That act was a part of the strategic plan for the development of GCR and the attempt to transform the island into a multi-use complex with residential compounds, business hubs, retails and commercial services, and touristic destinations. When the government attempted to demolish illegal buildings from the island and expropriate the lands, clashes occurred between inhabitants and police officers resulting in tens of casualties and one death among inhabitants. The inhabitants once more filed a lawsuit against the transfer of the jurisdiction of the island and the proposed redevelopment project. Meanwhile, the government announced their plan for initiating a 17 Billion EGP[2] redevelopment project giving the residents the option of either taking compensation or taking an alternative unit in a relatively distant location (Bassam, 2018). However, clashes between the inhabitants and the government continue to reoccur with increasing conflict about land valuation and land rights in the context of expropriation (Euronews, 2022).

El Warraq Island redevelopment project offers an appropriate case study for exploring how land value is contested and understood variously by different stakeholders. On one hand, inhabitants argue that this land is their inheritance, as it belonged to their ancestors, and it not only provides them with shelter but also food security – from the agricultural land they own – and accessibility to affordable markets and services in neighbouring agglomerations. On the other hand, the government advocates that these inhabitants are violating urban development regulations and have lost their right to capture the land value and should agree to reallocate and accept compensation. From a third perspective, investors and developers promote the island redevelopment as having high return on investments; 112 Billion EGP total revenues and 20 Billion EGP yearly earnings for 25 years (Bassam, 2018). They argue that this island has high investment potential and should be planned according to its highest and best land use value. Finally, environmental activists advocate against the urban development of the island, whether it is done by the inhabitants, the government, or the investors. They argue that the GCR does not have many public green spaces and developing this land would increase pollution and global warming. They also advocate that Egypt has already lost a lot of its agricultural lands (El-Hefnawi, 2005; Radwan et al., 2019) and the government should restrain further development on the island. Thus, different actors have different concerns and agendas for the land; they all argue from their own understanding of the land value and what it represents to them. The island plays an important role in each of these debates and investigating the power

[1] The urban agglomeration only of Giza and Qalyubia governorates are following the administrative sovereignty of GCR and not the governorates' agricultural zones.

[2] 1 GBP = 60.1 EGP (June 2024)

relations and process of land dispute would enhance understanding of how land value shapes cities, communities, and power dynamics, particularly in contested contexts.

In conclusion, the complexity in the relationship between land value, urban redevelopment, and land conflict comes from the reciprocal relationship between the three. On one hand, urban redevelopment projects that fail in the fair distribution of land rights across different groups could lead to an escalation of conflict between these groups. On the other hand, urban redevelopment projects could be proposed to resolve an existing contestation of land uses and restore the fair distribution and access to capturing land values and rights across different groups. Thus, land and land-use conflict could be the cause and/or the result of urban redevelopment schemes. Diverse land value conceptualisations and mobilisations could lead to the dispute between incompatible values adopted by different stakeholders – or incompatible understandings of land value – which reflects on the adopted goals and motivations of these stakeholders within the processes of urban redevelopment or land conflict resolutions. However, the conceptualisation and mobilisation processes are influenced by a wider spectrum of power dynamics between structures and agents that are not merely constrained with the urban field, and those power dynamics are also in a constant state of change and transformation resulting from the experiences and events created by the processes of urban redevelopment and land/land-use conflict. Thus, the conceptual framework is designed around understanding the reciprocal relationships between land value, land development, and land conflict, along with the underlying mechanisms of power dynamics between structures and agents.

2.1 Research Design

The research aim is to understand how land value is conceptualised and mobilised within urban practice. The discussed research problems suggest that there are underlying complexities shaping processes of land value conceptualisation and mobilisation. However, these intangible factors become more explicit in the context of conflict (Bartos and Wehr, 2002). Also, the structure/agency dynamics become more explicit in the context of uneven power relations (Elder-Vass, 2010). Accordingly, the research approaches investigating land value conceptualisation and mobilisation by examining these processes in a context of conflict and uneven power relations. The application domain is narrowed down to a single-case study that has been chosen in a controversial setting of an informal area's redevelopment project in GCR, Egypt. This case has been chosen to have a quasi-closed system of investigation for the different power dynamics with appropriate levels of depth and breadth allowing for a comprehensive understanding for the subject matter.

2.1.1 Research Question and Objectives

Thus, the main research question is "*how is land value conceptualised and mobilised in the context of urban redevelopment of informal areas in Egypt?*" where the empirical domain is situated in a post-colonial, Global South, autocratic state, i.e., Egypt. The following are the three research objectives driven by concluded research gaps and the main research question:

1. Define structures shaping processes of land value conceptualisation and mobilisation in the context of urban redevelopment of informal areas in Egypt.
2. Investigate plural conceptualisations of land value in El-Warraq Island and the interaction between them shaping conflict.
3. Identify attributes of intangible/incorporeal land values within El-Warraq Island underlying aspirations for urban redevelopment

The first objective addresses the research gap in understanding the structure/agency power in shaping land value in urban practice. While the second objective addresses the gap in understanding the plurality of land values debated in literature. Finally, the third objective addresses the gap in operationalising social/intangible land values in urban redevelopment. The three objectives link theories of land value, land conflict, and land development/ redevelopment under one conceptual framework.

2.1.2 Research Methodology

As illustrated earlier, the methodology adopts intensive case-study research (Creswell and Poth, 2016; Creswell and Clark, 2018) to investigate land value conceptualisation and mobilisation processes in urban practice. There is a definitive criterion for this case study to be appropriate for the scope of the research. First, the case study should be in a context of conflict between uneven power relations as these factors provoke intangible values of land to be explicitly discussed in negotiation and bargaining processes between different groups. Second, the redevelopment project's spatial boundaries need to be well-defined and researchable in terms of the time and resources available for the researcher. The third and final criterium is the need for the researcher to have some level of familiarity with the language, belief system(s), and culture of the investigated population in order to understand the nuances and implied meanings in the transcripts as well as the historical and cultural backgrounds of the issues raised and discussed related to the subject matter.

Accordingly, El-Warraq Island redevelopment project was chosen as an instrumental case study (Stake, 1995; Zucker, 2016) based on these three aspects as (1) it is a controversial redevelopment project that has created violent tension between the government and inhabitants where land valuation is the key problem, (2) it is an isolated island in the Nile River giving it the spatial boundaries needed for a closed system investigation, and (3) it is located in the GCR, the same birthplace and hometown of the researcher. Furthermore, the urban development history of El-Warraq Island made it central in the competition between different uses (agriculture and urban) and different values (economic for its prime location, social for its vulnerable community and unique identity, political for its strategic role in the National vision for development, and environmental for its previous recognition as a natural reserve). All of this crosscut with discussions around land rights that are influenced by the island's informal /illegal status and poor land management policies on local and national levels.

Data collection relied on official and non-official documents, contextual data, and qualitative data gathered from semi-structured interviews with the redevelopment project stakeholders (inhabitants, officials, and consultants) who were recruited through a snowballing technique. The first stage in data collection focused on designating and documenting official discourses and legal documents related to land management and valuation in Egypt and more specifically the redevelopment project of El-Warraq Island, like redevelopment plans and feasibility studies. The second stage in the data collection is conducted through a field visit to El-Warraq Island where the researcher took field observations and photo documentations for the site and its spatial boundaries. This stage was also instrumental in building rapport with the inhabitants of the island and the gatekeepers as well as finding proper venues for the semi-structured interviews. The final stage was collecting qualitative data through semi-structured interviews with the stakeholders involved in El-Warraq Island redevelopment project. The gatekeeper of the island's inhabitants was identified through a Facebook social group, while the gatekeeper of the officials and consultants was a former colleague of the researcher working in the UN-Habitat.

Data analysis adopted retroductive reasoning compatible with the chosen theoretical grounding, *Critical Realism*. Retroductive reasoning required inference from observed to unobserved mechanisms like inference from actual phenomena to structural causes (Bhaskar, 2017). Accordingly, the research chose to foresee unseen causal mechanisms of the conceptualisations and mobilisations of land value in designing the interviews analytical themes and then restructuring and re-coding those themes after data collection. The whole process is supported by the documents collected during and after the field visit and the context analysis. Qualitative research provides appropriate tools for in-depth analysis required to address the complexity and nuances of the subject matter; however, the multiplicity of variables affecting land value conceptualisation and mobilisation requires a bounded context for investigation (Creswell and Poth, 2016), where a case-study research becomes more appropriate.

2.1.3 Research Structure

This research is structured to funnel down the debates around land value from generic levels to more specific arguments. This chapter (Chapter 1) introduced the wider frame of the research addressing the research problems

– as in the research gaps – and their association with urban problems related to land conflict and development. The research is divided into investigation of land value on theoretical level (Chapter 2), investigation of land value on methodological and operationalisation level (Chapter 3), investigation of land value on a wider contextual level (Chapter 4), and investigation of land value on empirical levels (Chapters 5, 6, and 7). Finally, Chapter 8 concludes the findings and compiles the theories and practices discussed into one conceptual framework.

The theoretical investigation in Chapter 2 discusses the different approaches of value theory and how it influenced theorisation of land value across different research domains. It also reflects on conflict and development theories and illustrates how they are underlied by the dichotomies in understanding value and land value. Meanwhile, the methodological investigation in Chapter 3 aims to operationalise concepts related to the research domain (value, power, structures, and agents) as well as operationalise the used theories (pluralistic pragmatic value theory and realist constructionism) illustrating how they are used in the context of the research. The chapter expands on the research aim, scope, propositions, context, objectives, and operational sub-questions linking all these elements with the conceptual framework. Moreover, the chapter discusses the research methods for data collection and analysis, case-study selection, and strategies for mitigating risks and ethical considerations. The chapter explores research limitations regarding working in the time of COVID, in a conflict context, with an outsider positionality.

Meanwhile, the contextual investigation is divided into two scales, a macro scale investigating structures of land value within the Egyptian context and a micro scale investigating structures of land value within El-Warraq Island redevelopment project. The contextual investigation on the macro scale in Chapter 4 relies on reviewing and analysing relevant literature regarding the historical progression of the structures surrounding land value within the Egyptian context. The investigation starts from the establishment of the Modern Egyptian State at the time of Muhammed Ali until the current times, where the focus is on the geopolitical and socio-economic transformations that influenced the understanding of land value, rights, and roles in the changing dynamics between the ruling authority and the community. The contextual investigation on the micro scale in Chapters 5, 6, and 7 relies on primary collected data from semi-structured interviews conducted on the scale of El-Warraq Island.

The three chapters cover the structures of land's market, strategic, and social values respectively in the context of the case study. Chapter 5 explores disputes between the inhabitants and officials/consultants around the island's market value creation, criterion, and capture. Chapter 6 explores disputes around land rights in the context of nationalisation and autocratic centralised land governance where the strategic value of land is shaped by practices of territoriality creating urban environments for social integration/segregation and social inclusion/dissolution. The land social value is explored in Chapter 7, in terms of its relation to place identity, sense of belonging, and citizenship, and their impact on promoting/limiting community resilience. Finally, Chapter 8 synthesises the power of agents in shaping land value using the theory of "*Four Planes of Social Being*" and the Islamic modes of reasoning. This chapter also synthesises the interaction between the different structures discussed in Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 and how they influenced urban development/redevelopment practices and the creation of land/land-use conflict. The chapter concludes with the research contribution and suggests further research topics.

CHAPTER TWO

VALUE AND LAND VALUE IN THEORETICAL DEBATES

Across different urban research domains, land has always held central position in theoretical debates, whether within urban economics, urban politics, urban sociology, urban geography, urban religion, environmental studies, or urban planning among many others. However, each of these research domains deals with specific features of land and has different conceptualisation of their value depending on the lens and scope of their investigation. The different conceptualisations of land value are not restricted to academic debates, but also manifested in contestation around capturing the value of land, ranging from local feuds between different actors about land development schemes, to international wars between nations fighting for sovereignty over territories (Boudreaux and Abrahams, 2022; Lombard and Rakodi, 2016; UN, 2019; Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016). Understanding the value of land across those different theories is integral to theorising and addressing land conflict both on theoretical and practical levels. Despite the extensive research on land value across different research domains, there is a lack of understanding how different conceptualisations and mobilisations of land value within specific context affect one another, especially in the case of urban conflict.

This chapter aims to explore core concepts in literature shaping the theoretical framing of land value. The first section focuses on the diverse ontological and epistemological understandings of the "value" concept. This section discusses first dichotomies in value theories resulting from clashing ontologies and then the implications of those dichotomies in theorising value in development and conflict theories. The discussion investigates the values which are proclaimed to be created, regenerated, captured, and/or (re)distributed by means of urban development and redevelopment processes, both in the formal and informal domains. The second section focuses on the different theories of "land value", firstly focusing on naturalistic and positivist approaches to conceptualising tangible aspects of value within economic studies, then discussing the conceptualisation of intangible aspects of value from the lens of "power" within political, social, and environmental studies. Finally, the third section in this chapter summarises the key gaps in literature and the conceptual approach for addressing them.

2.1 Value Theories in Urban Practice

One of the main differences between epistemologies with natural science and those within social science is the positionality of "*value*" in their arguments. Value-free theories developed within naturalistic approaches are argued to be incompatible with subjective value-laden explanations and interpretations of the social world, which are highly influenced by the judgemental rationality of researchers (Harding and Blokland, 2014; Hoddy, 2019). Unlike natural science, social science cannot be investigated in a controlled environment, not only because social phenomenon needs to be understood in its open system domain, but also because the researchers themselves are affected by changes in social world, the domain of their investigation, their rationalisations, and their approaches to study the social phenomenon which are not free of intended and/or unintended biases (Archer *et al.*, 2013; Cruickshank, 2002; Bhaskar, 2013). Accordingly, there are many approaches that were developed to address these issues in social science and their main debates revolve around two main themes. The first is about the reality of the social world – discussed on ontological levels - while the second is about how to study it objectively – discussed on epistemological levels (Harding and Blokland, 2014; Archer *et al.*, 2013; Bhaskar, 2013).

The aim of this section is to discuss the complexities between different understandings of "*value*" as a concept in order to map a coherent conceptual framework for investigating land value conceptualisations and mobilisations in urban practice without falling into reductionism or epistemic fallacy (Anderson, 1995; Lewis, 2000; Archer *et al.*, 2013; Bhaskar, 2013).

2.1.1 Value Theories and Underlying Dichotomies

Value theories aim to explain the reality of value and how it is created along with the evaluation processes and how they are mobilised (Anderson, 1995; Bagley, Sawyerr and Abubaker, 2016; Brown, 2007). Across literature, the concept of value is infused with a positive judgemental understanding, as value is usually perceived as something good (Oddie, 2005; Anderson, 1995; Rokeach, 1973; Maslow, 1959). The first step in understanding value is understanding debates around the reality of value. Primarily, there is a difference between human values

and what humans value (Anderson, 1995; Rokeach, 1973). On the one hand, human values are moral principles/ ideals that shape individual and collective notions of what is considered righteous or virtuous, where those abstract values become desirable end-states of existence, like justice, loyalty, etc. On the other hand, what humans value are the things – whether they are substances, actions, status, people, or morals – that are perceived of worth and are desirable to acquire/create, preserve/protect, and/or promote (Anderson, 1995; Bigger and Robertson, 2017; Oddie, 2005). Humans value things (or give them worth) through the lens of their human values (morals/ideals) (Poole, 2012; Lake, 2023; Rokeach, 1973). Ethics and moral philosophies are concerned with what can be considered as moral values and how to develop and understand principles of morality. Understanding how these philosophies historically progressed helps tracking how dichotomies evolved in value theories and how they are affected by relevant epistemological debates within social science.

Before the Western Enlightenment in the 17th century, Divine Command theory was the most adopted theory in explaining the source of morality, not just by philosophers but also by all who believed in the Divine and religious commandments. Through this lens, the source of value is the Divine who determines what is ethical/moral, who gives value to things, and who sets the hierarchy of these values (Quinn, 2013; Al-Attar, 2010). Despite being one of the oldest theories about value, it is still adopted in many religious communities, especially Islamic ones. This ethical philosophy was problematic for those who either did not believe in a "good" God or believed that our knowledge of God and His value system is fallible, incomplete, or subjected to interpretation bias (Westerman, 2014). In the 17th century, Descartes planted seeds for methodological scepticism establishing rationalism against empiricism. However, more secular philosophies in the Enlightenment period used this scepticism to refute and protest against the control of the Church, aiming to liberate scientific knowledge from the confinement of religious texts and religious values/value systems (Grayling, 2006; El-Messiri, 1994).

This transformation in understanding scientific knowledge – and the social world – brought multiple dichotomies in value theories (De Monticelli, 2018). The first set of dichotomies in value theories was introduced by David Hume in the 18th century through his "is/ought" problem, where he criticised grounding value (in terms of goodness and morality) on believing that what "is" is what "ought to be". In other words, he rejected grounding morality and normativity of values in the description of observed and experienced moral attitudes adopted and agreed upon by people (Harvey, 1969; Bhaskar, 2013). As a radical empiricist atheist, he argued that humans are not born as moral beings who have innate instincts driving them to righteousness (Westerman, 2014; Entrican and Denis, 2022). He argued that human values are based on what is perceived to be good by the collective, a mere constructed description for the social norms accepted in a specific time and space. Thus, the first set of dichotomies introduced to value theories was whether value is innate (has an independent worthiness for itself) or instrumental (has dependent worthiness on its function, role, or purpose for humans); whether it is essential (has an independent existence from human existence, perception, rationality, and experience) or constructed (has dependent existence on these elements); and whether the collective conceptualisation and mobilisation of value is considered mere description of common evaluative attitudes within society or reflection of underlying normative agreement by essential moral beings who are transcendentally connected with a higher transcendent being.

These debates evoked the second set of dichotomies in value theories, between values being absolute and objective – as in the case of Kantian and Divine ethics – or being relative and subjective as in case in utilitarian and Humean ethics (De Monticelli, 2018). Essentialists argue that values have absolute nature; an objective truth that can be found either by studying religious scriptures (religious realism) (Al-Attar, 2010; Chapra, 2008), collective experimental accumulative knowledge (empiricism and positivism) (De Monticelli, 2018; Porpora, 1989; Anderson, 1995), or rational thought devoid of emotions (rationalism and idealism) (Dewey, 1913; Oddie, 2005). Existentialists, on the other hand, argue that values are socially constructed and do not have essential or innate existence independent of human perception, knowledge, and experience. According to this argument, the acknowledgment of moral relativism is essential in developing value-laden theories, where the positionality, fallibility, and subjectivity make those theories less deterministic than the value-free theories adopted by most essentialists (Harding and Blokland, 2014; De Monticelli, 2018). However, both camps faced challenges in

developing value theories that are reflective of social phenomena without falling into reductionism, determinism, absurdity, and/or epistemic fallacies.

From one hand, in Middle Eastern and Islamic philosophies, essentialism and moral realism were grounded in the Divine. The absolute objective values were grounded in religious scriptures based on what conservative scholars called *el-oulom el-naqlia* [transfer science, as in knowledge transferred from God] which are different from *el-oulom el-a'qlia* [rational science]. The later one represents the rational operations for interpretation, adaptation, contextualization, and actualization of transferred knowledge (the doctrine) into practice, and which accordingly is perceived as possibly affected by subjective biases and fallibility, unlike *el-oulom el-naqlia* (Chapra, 2008; El-Messeri, 2012; Al-Attar, 2010). However, in Western philosophy, essentialists who believed in absolute value and moral realism were divided between ideologies of empiricism and positivism and ideologies of rationalism and idealism (Harding and Blokland, 2014; Harvey, 1969; Archer et al., 2013). The first group grounded values in accumulated knowledge about the physical world and mostly fell into epistemic fallacies of naturalistic reductionism (Bhaskar, 2013), while the second group had problems with grounding values in a universally appealing formula without falling into subjective biases (Lane, 1996; Bagley, Sawyerr and Abubaker, 2016). Both approaches incrementally rejected grounding values in religious scriptures, except for a few scholars attempting to revive this thinking in Western studies (Peterson, 2002; Rüpke, 2020).

The main epistemological problem in essentialism is the attempt to universalize moral ethics – and accordingly values and valuation – which is challenging without a centralised unified unbiased source for grounding values. As essentialist religious realists argue that this unbiased source of value is the Divine, they face the problem of possibly biased subjective and fallible interpretation of religious texts which would lead to false conceptualisation and mobilisation of the "absolute" value. On the other hand, secular realists are unable to properly ground this unbiased centre of morality – neither in empirical experience, in the physical world, nor in rational thought – without falling into epistemic fallacy or reductionism, which created a logical void in realist philosophies in Western literature. Accordingly, essentialists (seculars and religious) rely heavily on hermeneutics; attempting to unravel this objective reality about values by investigating the disparity of value meanings (Anderson, 1995; Lake, 2023) and then inductively argue a value theory identifying the subjective biases within interpretivists' methods by examining the collective understanding of value (Harding and Blokland, 2014). Although robust realists and idealists believe that this actually could ultimately lead to unravelling the objective truth about value (Oddie, 2005), many Islamic scholars and critical realists acknowledge epistemological relativism (the inability to unravel the absolute reality of value) while maintaining their belief in its existence and the ability to partially understand it (Archer et al., 2013; Bhaskar, 2013; Bagley, Sawyerr and Abubaker, 2016; Sayer, 2011).

For the other camp, existentialists and relativists had different sets of challenges in theorising value, as framing it as subjective and arbitrary made it difficult for their theories to be generalizable. Thus, those scholars had to be deterministic about other aspects of social phenomena in order to avoid falling into absurdity and uncertainty. For instance, utilitarian theories adopted mostly hedonistic approaches (Anderson, 1995), as in understanding values in terms of what brings pleasure and prevents pain to the greatest number of people, and they relied on the idea that a rational being is always capable of deciding what is best for oneself and community (Smith, 1776; Bagley, Sawyerr and Abubaker, 2016). These theories were criticised for egoistic, individualistic, and materialistically reductive ideologies (Harding and Blokland, 2014), as well as their alliance with rational choice theory, neglecting emotions in value making (Anderson, 1995; Bigger and Robertson, 2017). However, the biggest challenge in theorising values as constructed – rather than essential – is identifying how these values are constructed, and whether value construction/creation happens through the influence of structures as in phenomenological and structuralist approaches (De Monticelli, 2018; Giddens, 1984), the power of agents as in voluntarism and agency theories (Kalberg, 1980), or the interaction between both as in social morphogenesis theory (Archer, 2013) and theory of emergent structures (Elder-Vass, 2010).

The structure/agency dichotomy – the third set of dichotomies in value theories – is not restricted to social constructivist debates, but also found within realist ones. For realists, if values are brought to the collective notion

of this world, then it is either through the power of agents, who are perceived as moral agents at core, or through the power of structures which are perceived as universally deterministic (Archer, 2013; Elder-Vass, 2010; Hay, 2002). The first view argues that the agents' ideologies are grounded in their innate moral essence, and thus, they shape structures by their reflexivity and responsiveness to serve their inner morality and align their environment with their idealistic views (Archer, 2013). For instance, Kant attempted to defend the innate, essential, and normative nature of value through his theory of categorical imperatives by introducing universalizability and humanity principles to moral ethics (Entrican and Denis, 2022; Kant, 1797). However, the second view argues for a cosmic metaphysical reality that shapes the universal truth, and accordingly structures are generated around values without the conscious notion of agents or their active engagement (Giddens, 1984). Most Western philosophies, as argued earlier, have problems in grounding this latter view without tapping into creationist thought, but many Middle Eastern scholars ground their cosmic metaphysical reality that shape all structures in their religious doctrine (Wilkinson, 2013; El-Messeri, 2012).

Regarding relativist perspectives, values are seen as relative, and their truth lies in the interpretation of the agents who are adopting them. So, basically things are of value because those who adopt them think these values are real (a mind-dependent reality) and not because these values have an independent reality for themselves (Margenau, 1959; Maslow, 1959; Oddie, 2005). Value accordingly could be constructed by rational agents who either have utilitarian tendency as in Stuart Mill's utilitarianism (Mill and Bentham, 1987), a communal responsibility as in Hobbes's contractarianism (Cudd and Eftekhari, 2021), or practical wisdom as in virtue theory (Al-Attar, 2010). These theories do not argue that all agents have the same power in changing conventions about value, but only those agents who have the freedom, information, wisdom, and willpower to convey change to the governing structures, as discussed in Weberian voluntarism (Mayhew, 1980; Archer, 2009; Elder-Vass, 2022). Other scholars argue that structures have more influence on constructing values where agents' subconscious rationality is affected by the power of those structures, and accordingly they are rarely able to make an informed rational evaluation as they have bounded rationality. That gives advocates of Durkheim's functionalism and environmental determinism a macro-scale focus on relationships and causal power dynamics shaping the social phenomenon rather than a focus on the power of its singular subset parts, the agents (Harvey, 1969; Elder-Vass, 2010)

The three dichotomies discussed within value theories are more complex than a simple binary categorization. In other words, it cannot be argued that scholars who define value as innate, essential, absolute, objective, and normative belong to one camp and those who define value as instrumental, existential/constructed, relative, subjective, and descriptive belong to an opposite camp. As shown in the previous discussion of literature, scholars tend not to be purists in their hypothesis of value theories and mostly they use different modes of explanations where for example not all essentialists are structurally deterministic in their value theory hypothesis and not all relativists reject normativity of values (Elder-Vass, 2022). In fact, theories explaining value can be thought of as on a spectrum between those dichotomies. However, the common issue with most of these theories is that they seek a monistic universal value theory that standardises valuation and evaluation of things that are essentially different (Lake, 2023; Anderson, 1995). The three sets of dichotomies discussed above could be categorised into dichotomies concerned with (1) ontologies of value, (2) epistemologies of value, and (3) position from the structure/agency debate as illustrated in Figure 2.1. These dichotomies are overarched by the initial demarcation between the human moral values (ideals of righteousness) and the worthiness attributed to what humans do value.

From the previous discussion, constructing a value theory that acts as if people, things, morals, and experiences can be valued the same way is found to be problematic. Even within those categories there are different aspects of valuation that need to be considered. For instance, the way human beings value substances that maintain their existence (house as shelter) is different from their valuation of substances that maintain their identity (house as home). Also, the way human beings value their relatives (people as family) is different from how they value their idols (people as symbols). There is a qualitative difference between those sorts of values, beyond the quantitative difference (Anderson, 1995). Value theorists' different arguments could apply to one kind of value, in a specific setup/context/situation, but not to another. In some cases, values are absolute and in others they are relative, in

some they are essential and in others they are instrumental, and in some they are intrinsic (independent of human interference) and in other cases they are extrinsic (dependent on human interference). Theorising value needs to acknowledge this diversity and enable a conceptual framing that supports examination of the different kinds of value and the different ways/processes of valuation. A pluralistic pragmatic approach to understanding value seems to offer this potential.

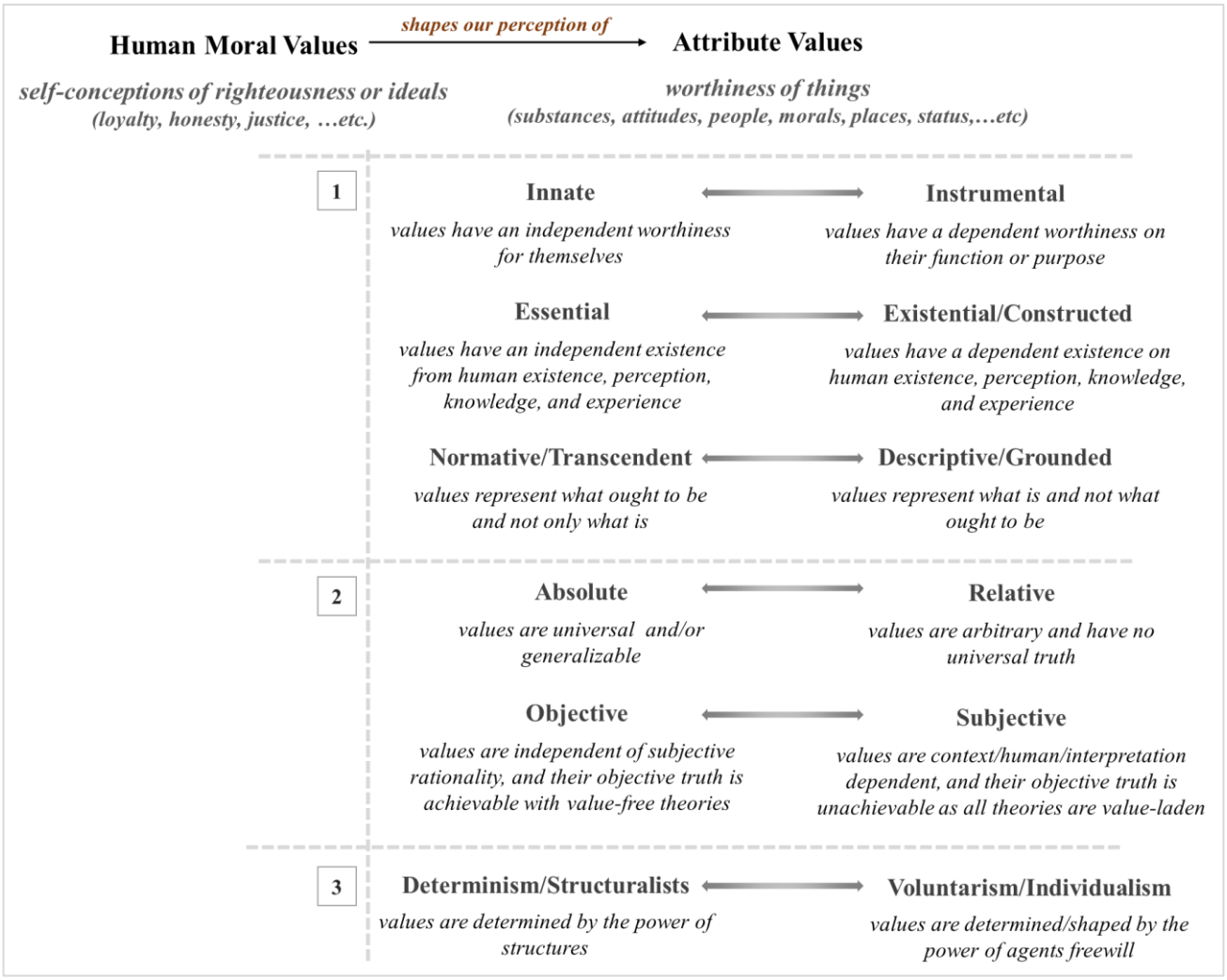

Fig. (2- 1) Theorising Value between Ontologies, Epistemologies, and Structure/Agency Dichotomies
Source: Designed by Author

On the one hand, a pluralistic value theory considers the multiple conceptualisations and mobilisations of value across different fields and from different ontologies, without dismissing one of those theories or reducing one to another. It deals with value as a system of different components where different scholars attempted to theorise through their personal experience and research domains while being influenced by their context, spatially and temporally (Daston, 2017; Shapin, 1982). A pluralistic value theory allows consolidating those different theorised components and understanding how they affect one another in theory and practice. On the other hand, a pragmatic value theory considers the aspects that make one understanding of value prevail over others in a specific context (Lake, 2023). Thus, it allows analysing attribute values – like the attribute values of land – as a concept generated by the dynamics between agents (valuing entity/entities), the objects of value (valued entity/entities), and the context of valuation (valuation environment) (Dewey, 1913; Dewey and Boydston, 2008). The next subsection addresses the conceptualisation of value – from a pluralistic pragmatic perspective – in urban theories and practice, with specific focus on urban development and urban conflict in order to understand the development of land value theories within these research domains.

2.1.2 Value in Urban Theories and Practice

As established in the previous subsection, a pluralist approach to value theory conceptualises value as a concept of different components theorised differently depending on the valuation object (whether it is a moral, substance, person, relationship, attitude, possession, experience, …etc). Furthermore, the pragmatic approach argues that some of the constituting theoretical components of the value concept prevail upon others – giving the concept its identifying character – depending on the objective(s) of valuation, subject/agent(s) making the valuation, and the structure/environment of valuation. If values or things of value are desirable end-states (as argued by essentialists) or instrumental in human welfare (as argued by existentialists), then they operate as motivations for human actions (Turner, 1987). Accordingly, within contested urban contexts, the drivers of both development and conflict could be tracked down to the underlying values that trigger them. In the case of development practices, values are reflected in the objectives of strategies, policies, and action plans (Adams and Watkins, 2014). A development strategy for example could have a social value like eliminating crime, reducing social exclusion, or promoting social sustainability. That means the value of the adopted strategy is associated with its intent to achieve those social objectives, and without those value rationalities and/or instrumental rationalities (Kalberg, 1980) those strategies do not have moral and/or feasible justification. In the case of conflict, values are reflected in the rights negotiated/disputed by different parties who justify their actions, and thus assign value to them, by their intentions to defend these rights (Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016).

Accordingly, there is a small subtle difference in conceptualising value between development theories and conflict theories. In most cases development is perceived as a planned/designed human activity (Weldeghebrael, 2020) while conflict is perceived – although not in all cases (Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016) – as an unplanned human phenomenon. Development practices aim to improve aspects perceived as valuable, and conflict in development arises from having different ideas about what should be perceived as valuable and how these values should be maintained, regenerated, amplified, promoted, and/or distributed. Thus, development theories are more pragmatic in their conceptualisation of value as they aim to manifest these values as achievable targets; while conflict theories focus more on the paradoxical and pluralistic nature of value on a more abstract level, i.e. the intangible components of value and underlying causal structures triggering conflict. Since urban practice includes all actions taken by different parties to create, change, and/or eradicate the urban environment (Harding and Blokland, 2014), there is reciprocal relationship between urban development and urban conflict, as the latter could be a consequence and/or a cause for the former, and vice versa. To understand this relationship, there is a need first to discuss how urban development is conceptualised and mobilised in urban practice, and then how urban conflict is theorised and associated with the same practices.

First, urban development could be categorised into formal and informal development. Formal urban development relates to practices involved in planning, executing, and monitoring urban growth (or land development in urban areas) to accommodate physical and socio-economic needs of populations within borders of a region/city by authorised institutions (Davies, 2015; Adams and Watkins, 2014; UN-Habitat, 2007). There are different scales for formal development which are supposedly integrative and coherent with socio-economic and political agendas of governing authority (Goodfellow, 2018; Harding and Blokland, 2014). Meanwhile, informal urban development is the planned and/or unplanned urban growth which adopts development processes not legally recognized or approved. These processes are executed by unauthorised parties – whether individuals or informal private developers – to fulfil the physical and socio-economic needs of (usually) a growing population who were not able to access the formal market provided by official authorities or private actors for different reasons like unaffordability, illegality of their residential status, unavailability of housing units, …etc (Roy, 2005; Khalifa, 2011; Acioly Jr, 2010). Thus, conceptually, formal development is visioned and planned on a bigger scale than informal development, because it links urban development with strategies of socio-economic development.

In practice, contestation dynamics and dispute over land between formal and informal development practices is one of the triggers of urban land and/or land-use conflict (Lombard and Rakodi, 2016). Conflict in urban practice

may be triggered by incompatible goals and values of different stakeholders regarding the development process, especially when these goals are mutually exclusive (Bartos and Wehr, 2002). The dispute in urban land conflict is mostly over who owns the bundle of land rights (ownership, development, inheritance, use, trade, …etc.) (Boudreaux and Abrahams, 2022; UN-Habitat, 2012) while in urban land-use conflict the disagreement is over which uses/activities should be developed (agriculture, commercial, residential, …etc.) (Mann and Jeanneaux, 2009; El-Hefnawi, 2005). Thus, conceptualisation of conflict in urban theories associates its generative mechanisms with scarcity of resources, where different parties negotiate and/or fight to have more, equal, or exclusive rights over strategic and finite resources, like land, water, and raw materials. However, many scholars argued that urban conflict is not completely reducible to (or determined by) scarcity of resources. There are many underlying factors where contested resources play crucial role in their dynamics but are not the sole drivers of conflict (Bartos and Wehr, 2002; Boudreaux and Abrahams, 2022; Lombard and Rakodi, 2016; UN-Habitat, 2012; Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016). The arguments discussed by different scholars could be categorised into three main themes based on rationality, tangibility, and intentionality of conflict production.

Within the first theme of rationality, scholars argued that conflict could be triggered by clashing rational objectives of two or more parties or by irrational hostility towards those who belong to different identity groups (Bartos and Wehr, 2002) as illustrated in Figure 2.2. The rationalisation process, according to Max Weber, could be instrumental or value-driven, where the first is shaped by achievable goals like acquiring more wealth, power, and/or prestige and the second is shaped by conforming identity and belonging to a set of moral values and/or belief systems (Kalberg, 1980). Likewise, irrational conflict behaviour could be a result of an underlying complex history between the disputing parties in which they use conflict instrumentally to express hostility and aggression towards each other or to reaffirm and legitimise their superior identity by devaluing the opposition's (Bartos and Wehr, 2002). From a pluralistic perspective of value, it could be argued that within urban practices land value has both instrumental and innate components as land conflict within societies is generated by both cognitive and affective triggers (Lombard and Rakodi, 2016; Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016; Van de Vliert, 1997). Reflecting on urban development practices, conflict between formal and informal development is probably triggered by the incompatible goals and values of these two processes.

On the one hand, formal urban development could have different objectives and process mobilisations depending on socio-economic political ideologies of the governing authority. For example, socialist orientation might mean that the government prioritises urban development strategies serving vulnerable groups like rent-control, inclusive housing policies, and subsidised housing (Shawkat, 2014; Brown and Kristiansen, 2009), while neo-liberals prioritise free market urban strategies that promote real-estate competition via tax-exemptions, free zones, and long-term usufruct contracts (Weber, 2002). Thus, the formal development practice is more shaped by what Habermas identified as industrial system values (Habermas, 1987) which emerge when the governing structures attempt to solve urban problems in an instrumental rational way (Bartos and Wehr, 2002). The rationalities behind urban development strategies determine development priorities (shaped by conceptualisations of value); actors involved and their power position (like private and public sectors); codes of practice; and success evaluation criteria. When there are incoherent ideologies shaping governing structures (like in the case of political pluralism or in poorly functioning governance systems), then there are potentially ineffective and/or inefficient formal urban practices resulting from clashing conflicting rationalities in analysing and solving urban problems like informal urbanism (Watson, 2003).

On the other hand, the rationalities behind the practices of informal urban development are incompatible with those of the formal one (Watson, 2003) and possibly vary depending on the development dynamics of the informal area and the nature of its community, even within the same region/city (Khalifa, 2011). Different typologies of informal areas have different rationalities in their development, where for example a historic deteriorated inner-city core that no longer aligns with the newly developed urban regulations develops differently than a peri-urban area resulting from informal urban encroachment over private legally owned agricultural lands (Elsisy, 2018). Furthermore, the rationalities behind perceptions of those different types of informal urbanism shape intervention

policies meant to improve their living conditions. If informal urban development is perceived as a criminal activity or rebellious antagonism challenging the vision of progress (Payne, 2022), then intervention policies would lean towards eradication and forced displacement (Khalifa, 2015; UN-Habitat, 2014); while if informal practices are perceived as *"heroic entrepreneurship"* (De Soto, 2000), then intervention policies would lean towards upgrading and participatory redevelopment (Roy, 2005; Khalifa, 2015).

	Rational	***Irrational and/or Emotional***
Instrumentally Driven	triggered by dispute over means to power, wealth, and prestige	triggered by underlying enmity resulting from historical oppressive or aggressive behaviour
Value (Identity) Driven	triggered by dispute over norms, values, and belief systems	triggered by underlying racism and bigotry towards the other

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Fig. (2- 2) Triggers of Conflict based on Rationality
Source: Designed by Author

Even when informal urbanism is perceived positively, there might be clashing rationalities between intervention policy makers (who adopt industrial system values) and informal inhabitants (who according to Habermas possibly adopt lifeworld or communal values) (Habermas, 1987; Bartos and Wehr, 2002) in how these areas should be redeveloped or upgraded. However, conflict in processes of redevelopment or upgrading informal areas could also have irrational/emotional triggers that are shaped by accumulation of exclusion, segregation, and aggressive policies towards informal inhabitants affecting their trust in policy makers (Payne, 2022). The second theme within conflict studies helps to understand this deeper layer of conflict as it focuses on differentiation between tangible and intangible causes of conflict, as well as between real and perceived/imagined conflict.

Studies focusing on the tangibility factor in conflict production discuss observable causal mechanisms manifested in the empirical domain and the instrumental values of disputed things – like land – as well as reflect upon latent underlying causal mechanisms associated with group psychology, interpersonal relations, power dynamics, and innate intangible values of disputed things (Jackson, 1993; Bartos and Wehr, 2002; Boudreaux and Abrahams, 2022). Accordingly, the focus here is on historical development of relationships between groups in dispute incubating layers of unresolved prejudices, bigotries, and antagonism, and could potentially be provoked by any tangible triggering event (Jackson, 1993; Van de Vliert, 1997). There is also a focus on the history of those conflicts' resolution and how they managed to eliminate or maintain injustices between different groups (UN, 2019). Thus, intangible value systems of different groups and their impact on perceptions of their rights, entitlements, and positionality could put them in a state of perceived conflict with those who have different values and ideologies, even with no tangible manifestation of this conflict (Jackson, 1993; Van de Vliert, 1997).

Reflecting on development theories, urbanisation for example is perceived as a reflection of modernity where adopting cities/urban lifestyle and activities, rather than rural or nomadic ones, is considered progressive in some contexts, compared to other lifestyles (Harding and Blokland, 2014; Harvey, 2012). This urban bias creates, in

some contexts, latent bigotry between urban and rural dwellers, where the latter in this narrative are considered as regressive and underdeveloped (Fox, 2014). This intangible cause of conflict might manifest in resistant behaviour from rural dwellers towards urban intervention projects in their "underdeveloped" living environment (Watson, 2003). Thus, the urban environment of different cities is shaped by dynamics of uneven power conflict between formal and informal urban practices (Batty, 2007; Denis and Séjourné, 2002), where usually states and governments support formal practices and use their power to undermine informality by outlawing vernacular or unofficial practices.

However, there are still mechanisms for conflict within those formal practices resulting from clashing ideologies influenced by historical, cultural, religious, economic, and political aspects such as colonial history and/or racial/sexual/religious discrimination feeding latent antagonism and escalating in some cases into violent disputes or civil wars (Hamadi, 2014). Thus, formal urbanism values processes imposing order to communities through restricted laws, defined spatial and socio-activities zones, and geometrical controlled patterns of urbanisation (Scott, 1998; Roy, 2005) while informal urbanism values processes establishing rights to the city through means of self-expression and self-determination by imposing cultural norms and traditions in the built environment as integral to overall urban identity (Harvey, 2012; d'Alençon *et al.*, 2018; Roy, 2005).

Finally, in the third theme of conflict studies, arguments focus on the intentionality of creating conflict, where in some cases conflict is triggered by intentional political production of scarcity, poverty, and exclusion, while in others it is triggered by unintentional institutional failures in urban governance and (re)allocation of resources (Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016). However, the intentionality factor in creating conflict is challenging to investigate as it is associated with the motivations and intentions of agents involved in the conflict issue, and it could be easily denied and/or explained in terms of ignorance, miscommunication, or incompetence rather than deliberate negligence, corruption, or bias (Van de Vliert, 1997). There is also the structure/agency debate that brings further complexity around the creation of conflict, and the role of powerful agents versus powerful structures in shaping these processes. However, many studies have succumbed to the realisation that conflict is probably triggered by the interaction of both deliberate and indeliberate actions reflecting agents' and structures' power respectively (Bartos and Wehr, 2002; Boudreaux and Abrahams, 2022; Jackson, 1993; UN, 2019; UN-Habitat, 2012; Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016). Nevertheless, land conflict explanations which are essentially structuralist or ecologically deterministic – especially in political ecology and legal anthropological fields – are more dominant than those considering agency in the production of conflict (Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016).

According to the previous discussions, urban land/land-use conflict could be perceived as both a cause and an effect of urban land development/redevelopment policies. From one hand, development practices incorporate corrective and preventive policies, where the former aim to rectify existing conflict and the later aim to avoid future ones (Elsisy *et al.*, 2019). Yet, development/redevelopment practices could trigger conflict by either accidently dismissing important aspects/agents from its overall vision or by deliberately favouring/disfavouring certain aspects/agents (and their values) above others (Preston, 1999). Urban redevelopment supposedly considers different aspects of urban sustainable development (like economic, social, environmental, political, …etc.) by means of redistribution of economic and social activities and regeneration of underused land values through land-use replanning (UN-Habitat, 2009; UN-Habitat, 2007; Adams and Watkins, 2014; Harding and Blokland, 2014; Kauko, 2015; OHCHR, 2015). However, urban redevelopment projects become causes for conflict when they fail to balance profitable and non-profitable land uses (like low-income housing and services) or result in (or maintain) unfair redistribution of power across different stakeholders, like undermining vulnerable groups in informal areas (Sims, 2015; Payne, 2022; Boudreaux and Abrahams, 2022; Robinson, 2003).

On the other hand, existing conflict could cause failure of development/redevelopment practices. As mentioned above, urban development/redevelopment processes are influenced by wider governance agendas and ideologies – that may clash in a specific political environment – where the role of the state changes between democratic and

authoritarian regimes (Khalil and Dill, 2018), and changes according to the political socio-economic agenda, whether socialism, capitalism, or neo-liberalism (Weber, 2002; Weber, 2010; De Soto, 2000; Amar, 2018; Mokhtar, 2017). Furthermore, the role of the private sector, public participation and civic engagement, elites, and academia changes dramatically based on the context and existing dynamics between those different stakeholders (Cooksey and Kikula, 2005). Also, the drivers and mobilisation of the value of redevelopment projects are driven by the social norms, cultures, and religious beliefs (if any) adopted by both top-level authority and bottom-level beneficiaries (Healey and Barrett, 1990; UN-Habitat, 2012). Finally, within urban redevelopment and upgrading practices, perception of informality impacts perception of the rights entitled to informal inhabitants (Payne, 2001; Brown and Kristiansen, 2009; Payne, 1997; Robinson, 2003; UN-Habitat, 2014; Sims, 2015). Consequently, if the ideologies within a specific context are conflicting between different stakeholders, it is more likely that urban development/redevelopment projects would cause conflict due to their adoption of incommensurate values.

The power dynamic between those different ideologies in urban development practices is a determining factor for which of them will shape development in a specific time and space. Thus, the strength of any of those ideologies is manifested by (1) domination of the narratives and discourses promoting them; (2) the authority, legitimacy, and efficiency of the institutions mobilising them; and finally, (3) the ability of those ideologies to cause observable change on ground rather than just being theoretical. In the evaluation of urban development practices for example, the value of tangible and observable impacts of development/redevelopment – like urban environment transformations – are usually prioritised over the intangible implicit outcomes like social and human development aspects (Arvidson *et al.*, 2013; Rauscher, Schober and Millner, 2012; Watson *et al.*, 2016). Accordingly, value capture strategies have been highly focusing on monetary and quantitatively measurable values, especially in discussions about reconfiguration of land uses within redevelopment projects. Critical literature recognises that practices which focus primarily on urban and land monetary values in development/redevelopment projects might have severe social and environmental costs (Fraser *et al.*, 2018; Hall and Millo, 2018; Mulgan *et al.*, 2011; Pasha, 2002; Watson *et al.*, 2016).

Within the urban field, there are attempts to quantify social and intangible values (Brown, 2013; Brown and Brabyn, 2012; Watson *et al.*, 2016), yet there are challenges explaining why social and intangible values are less considered in feasibility studies despite being acknowledged as equally important as other aspects in development/redevelopment schemes. First, social values are perceived as socially constructed, which makes them relative, arbitrary, subjective, changing, and contextual. They are more difficult to standardise and measure, as there is no common ground for quantifying social value because researchers, research institutions, public agencies, and private sectors have developed different methods to measure social impact (Arvidson *et al.*, 2013; Gargani, 2017; Maier *et al.*, 2015). These methods for operationalising social and intangible values may address these entities' specific interests, but it is difficult to scale them up as a general method for evaluating social value and impact in different fields (Bigger and Robertson, 2017). Secondly, to accurately investigate social values and impacts, extensive qualitative research and data sets are required, which consumes plenty of resources and time (Agyeman, 2005; Griggs *et al.*, 2013). By measures of opportunity cost, economic appraisals usually gain priority over social and political ones, which do not only require time and resources, but also accessibility to sensitive and intrusive information.

Urban development/redevelopment schemes (particularly in the global South) therefore often focus on economic and physical urban improvements (Roy, 2005), where regenerating and capturing land value usually neglects or undermines social impacts on existing communities like their sense of security or belonging (Anton and Lawrence, 2014; Fernandes, 2006; UN-Habitat and GLTN, 2012) or/and environmental impacts such as natural habitat preservation and ecological resilience (Callicott, 1989; Agyeman, 2005). Furthermore, formal urbanism appears to have more merits, and accordingly more value than informal one, because its impacts can be empirically discussed, observably manifested, and accurately quantified, measured, and documented. On the other hand, informal practices' values and impacts are undermined because they are more social or intangible (d'Alençon *et al.*, 2018; Roy, 2005), while the physical manifestation of these practices manifest many urban problems like

deteriorated and deprived built environments. It could be argued that the paradoxical nature of understanding value is manifested in urban practice through different understandings of the value of urbanisation – presented in formal and informal urban development – and the different understandings of the nature of urban conflict upon rational/affective and tangible/intangible values. Land has been central in many of these debates as land is the field and the cause of both development and conflict (Elden, 2013), and there is a conceptual relation between land value, land/land-use conflict, and land development/redevelopment practices, as illustrated in Figure 2.3. Different understandings of land value underlabours trajectories and visions of urban development/redevelopment as well as triggers and mobilisations of urban conflict will be explored in the next section.

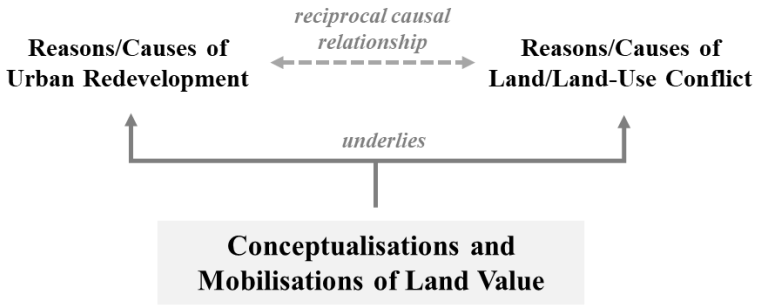

Fig. (2- 3) The Conceptual Relationship between Urban Land (Re)development, Urban Land/Land-use Conflict, and Land Value

Source: Designed by Author

2.2 Land Value Theories between Tangible and Intangible Values

In Bosselman's discussion of *land ethics* introduced by Aldo Leopold (Leopold, 1949), he investigated the role – or value – of land within different eras and regions across history, literature, and movements and associated land with concepts of *opportunity*, *reform*, *order*, and *responsibility* (Bosselman, 1994). In his theory, land firstly provides *opportunity* for investment and capital accumulation by giving access to natural resources, markets, labour, and a bargaining privilege in development projects within competing municipalities. As a durable place-bounded capital, land is perceived as a commodity in the real property market which has both use and exchange values, but is not controlled by equal bargaining powers of supply and demand because of its scarcity (Von Wieser, 1928; Harvey, 1917). Furthermore, land as the grounding for housing and livelihoods provides access to job opportunities, social cohesion, and community power; in other words, elements of a survival formula for lower income and most vulnerable groups (Abdulai *et al.*, 2007; UN-Habitat and GLTN, 2012). Thus, land value within socio-economic structures is shaped by its ability to give access to security – to some extent – from poverty and inequality (De Soto, 2000).

Secondly, land gives access to power in the political system by providing control over strategic natural resources and transport routes. It also provides control over public masses who can be mobilised by the intrinsic value of land – its historic or religious meaning – to defend a common goal (Abdulai *et al.*, 2007). On a national/local scale, domination over land provides the governing authority with access to *reform* and management of resources which facilitates its development agenda (Bosselman, 1994). Thirdly, access to land (and distribution of its rights) among the citizens allows the governing entities to create and/or maintain a specific social *order* (hierarchy) within the community shaping the social structures surrounding the distribution of power accumulation (Bosselman, 1994; King, 2012). Finally, in the environmental structures, land value is associated with access to natural resources needed for human survival and – accordingly – access to sustainable practices and environmentally *responsible* behaviour (Bosselman, 1994; Callicott, 1989). Furthermore, the surrounding environment – whether natural or built – influences human experience, psychology, and social sustainability which in return influence productivity, social cohesion, and mobilisation of communities (Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983). Accordingly, the four concepts associated with land value suggested by Bosselman

(*opportunity*, *reform*, *order*, and *responsibility*) are reflected in the role and value of land in different structures (*economic*, *political*, *social*, and *environmental*) respectively.

Reflecting on the dichotomies in value theories discussed in Section 2.1.1, it could be argued that lands have both essential and constructed attributes. The essential attributes are the land terrain, location, and embedded resources while the constructed attributes are its social worth, history, and personal meaning. Here, the dichotomy is between those who perceive land as a mere object – that can be used, misused, and reused – with no further meaning beyond its essential attributes and those who perceive the land beyond its instrumental value or existential meaning (Callicott, 1989). Accordingly, land has objective qualities understood in its innate and essential components, and subjective qualities understood in its instrumental and constructed components. According to the illustrated model in Figure 2.4, a given plot/area of land would have essential innate content represented in its aesthetic and/or religious components, and essential instrumental content like its topography, inherited climatic conditions, soil composition, or embedded natural resources (water, metals, oil, … etc.). It would also have constructed innate content represented in its culture and history; and constructed instrumental content like its role in giving access to shelter, security, belonging, power, status, and/or wealth.

	Innate (land valued for itself)	**Instrumental** (land valued for function/purpose)
Essential/Intrinsic (land value is independent on human existence/interference)	*aesthetics* *religion*	*natural resources* *soil quality* *topography* *climate*
Constructed/Extrinsic (land value is dependent on human existence/interference)	*history* *culture*	*shelter/security* *power/status* *credit/commodity/asset*

Fig. (2- 4) Different Components of Land Value
Source: Designed by Author

However, there are different conceptual categorizations for components of land value unlike the one illustrated below. For example, atheist social constructionists would argue that the religious component is constructed, relativists and existentialists would argue that the aesthetic component is subjective (as it relies on human perception and experience), and positivists would argue that the monetary component is objective as it depends on equilibrium price models. The previous figure, on the contrary, suggests that religious and aesthetics components are highly objective, and the monetary component of land value is highly subjective, aligning with theories in critical realism and Islamic ontology. Thus, there are different understandings of the categorical identification of each component within land value, and understanding land value conceptions is a matter of investigating a multi-layer reality of this concept. This section reviews the different discourses of land value by investigating a spectrum of tangible and intangible aspects of value in relation to land and the influence of different ideologies in theorising different components of land value. The first part of this section addresses the impact of different economic systems in theorising and modelling the monetary representation of land value, which have tended to dominate debates, while the second part addresses the impact of more implicit dynamics and structures on the importance of land value in shaping the power dynamics within communities as well as its role in political, social, and environmental structures.

2.2.1 Land Value in Economic Studies

From an economic perspective, land is a property and/or a financial asset that has played a role in the process of capital production throughout different economic systems (Harvey, 1917; Von Wieser, 1928). *Feudalism* for instance relied on the instrumental value of lands rooted in their ability to be cultivated for agricultural products, and later to be excavated for raw materials like limestone, minerals like iron and gold, and fossil fuels like coal (Bosselman, 1994). Thus, the value of land was based upon its natural properties that could be utilised for creating revenues by capital investment and mobilisation of labour work (Harvey, 1917). With the Industrial Revolution, the role of land in the economic system started to change according to the emerging needs for spaces to build factories, houses, and services. The proximity factor played an important role in reducing costs of production and transportation of raw materials, labour, and products. Thus, the land market value was gradually influenced by its location (relational position) to different economic activities, as represented in location and land-use theories (Fujita and Krugman, 1995), and the land rent/price was determined by its products, market prices, production and transfer costs, and the resulting bidding processes in land market(s) as represented in land rent theories (Alonso, 1964; Jäger, 2009). This shift introduced a new aspect of tangible land values where the competition over land was not only a function of its natural/essential properties, but also its constructed worth based on the created and developed economic activities surrounding it.

When the competition over land resources became driven by its location, owning land in specific areas within the growing system of *capitalism* became an asset for profit and wealth accumulation (Smith, 1776; Marx, 1867; Von Wieser, 1928; Alonso, 1960; Fujita and Krugman, 1995). Land rent theories have developed accordingly within classical and neo-classical economics to reconceptualise land market value and understand its mobilisation (Jäger, 2009). From the labour theory of value (Dooley, 2005) to the subjective theory of value (Thirlby, 1946; Jacques, 1980), rational utility maximisation became the dominant theory in understanding supply/demand market dynamics and price determination mechanisms, whether in terms of the land's absolute rent, monopoly rent, extensive and/or intensive differential rent (Jäger, 2009). Land market value was understood to be driven by economic revenues and yield profits, and thus it became equivalent to its equilibrium price, driven by the imbalanced bargaining powers of supply and demand within a fair real property market (Harvey, 1917; Von Wieser, 1928). These powers are imbalanced because land is a scarce resource that cannot be generated on demand and is supplied at a maximum charge (Harvey, 1917), where its bid-price accordingly created a hierarchy of values between different land uses. Some land uses became of higher value than others within the land market because there is either more demand for them (increasing their use value), and/or they offer higher yields (increasing their exchange value) which transforms the value of the land from being just a commodity to being an asset.

However, critiques of *feudalism* and *capitalism*, whether from *communist, socialist* or *neo-liberal* perspectives, brought new conceptualisations of land market value as it became not only the function of tangible aspects of price determination, but also intangible aspects of power accumulation, privilege, and market control strategies (Harvey, 1917; Von Wieser, 1928). A Marxist critique located the problem in private ownership of land – an important asset in the accumulation of wealth – and advocated that land resources should be communal properties. It also argued for the *command/planned economy* to regulate land markets and price systems by means of development regulations and zoning plans, and advocated that this would introduce fairer distribution of wealth and access to capital production (Marx, 1867). Meanwhile, a neo-liberal critique promoted the *market economy* limiting to certain extent the regulations controlling market dynamics which would arguably allow fair competition to drive economic growth and supply/demand powers to reach equilibrium state through the market's *"invisible hand"* (Smith, 1776). Both systems had their influence on land market values, whereby the first controlled prices making them irreflective of market dynamics (and thus less than the lands' actual value), and the second pushed utility maximisation triggering speculative market behaviour so that land prices became much higher than their actual value (Weber, 2002).

Accordingly, it could be argued that land markets are shaped by less tangible valuation conventions around land's potential value. These conventions are shaped by many narratives, discourses, and uncertain speculations on the trajectory of urban development within specific areas like market control strategies, governmental plans for land-use zoning, infrastructure provision schemes, and land holding and development taxation and/or exemption regulations (Elder-Vass, 2022; Anderson, 1995). For example, the residual land value is being shaped by landholders and/or developers lobbies who aim to influence strategies that increase the buyers willingness to pay and decrease taxes or development costs in order to increase their profits (Andelson, 2001; Dye and England, 2010). Despite market-centric trends of land valuation dominating economic and business research domains, there is a rising understanding that land market value is no longer merely conceptualised by the land's tangible aspects or objective properties but also by valuation structures and *asset complexes* (Elder-Vass, 2022) that shape market's valuation conventions and shape agents' belief systems around the value of these lands (Adams and Watkins, 2014; Anderson, 1995; Elder-Vass, 2022). Accordingly, creation of land value – and/or regenerating it – became possible through capital investments, shaping ideologies and discourses around value, influencing speculation narratives, and lobbying land development regulations (Elder-Vass, 2010; Elder-Vass, 2022).

Meanwhile, studies investigating land market value capture needed to conceptualise how this value is created, how it should be captured, by whom, how captured value should be calculated, and how it should be distributed. Within the feudal system, land markets were relatively stable, so land value creation is understood as a product of lands' essential qualities and labour work invested within. Thus, capturing land value became the sole right of landlords. There was no necessity for objective or universal calculation for this value because it was only going to affect the wealth accumulation of the landholder and not the collective welfare of society (Bosselman, 1994). Within the capitalist system, land prices started to rise with increasing demand for this scarce resource. The wealth accumulation captured by landholders became increasingly unjustified as it was perceived as an *unearned appendage* that did not require exertion or sacrifice (Mill, 1871). Land taxation systems were created to restore the imbalanced distribution of wealth between landholders and others, conceptualising value creation as a product of government interventions and policy regulations (Andelson, 2001; Bird and Slack, 2002; Dye and England, 2010; Vejchodská *et al.*, 2022; Walters, 2013). Accordingly, land value capture tools required a standard for value calculation that can be objective and universal, which prompted land-rent theories and positivists' naturalistic tendencies in discourses to restrict valuation of land to tangible measurable aspects (Alterman, 2012; Elder-Vass, 2022; Vejchodská *et al.*, 2022).

As communism criticised economic systems based on private properties (Marx, 1867) and with it the right of individuals to capture value rather than the whole community (Rousseau, 1755), socialists on the other hand had a lesser inclination to completely deprive land holders and developers of the benefits of land value capture. This approach relied instead on heavy taxation to capture value for the benefit of the public. Both communist and socialist systems understood the creation of value to be a product of society's collective effort and thus relied on the labour theory of value in calculating it, which reduced the value of land to the amount of labour work done to develop this land (Dooley, 2005; Thirlby, 1946). Capturing land value became the right of all people, and thus, the government became the responsible entity for capturing those values and redistributing them to the community. Also, taxation values within socialist economies were increased directly proportional to the increase in land value – rather than a fixed rate – which according to capitalists and neo-liberalists would discourage market competition and negatively affect overall economic growth (Klein, 2007; Smith, 1979). In autocratic regimes, land value capture tools were based on the amount of money that the government wanted to acquire for its national projects rather than the actual value of land created and objectively calculated, as in the case of Egypt in the 18th and 19th century (Cuno, 1993).

Within neoliberal approach, there is an understanding of the importance of social and power structures in shaping conventions of valuation (Elder-Vass, 2022; Lake, 2023; Adams and Watkins, 2014; Bigger and Robertson, 2017). Cities compete on global platforms to attract users, investors, and developers, using their competitive advantages in marketing their cities on a wider scale (Porter, 2011). These cities' branding and marketing trends are driven

by the ability of their governments to create land value and promote benefits for its capture to a wider audience, either by differentiation strategies (prompting distinctive properties for their land market) and/or cost strategies (promoting low or no taxation for development) (Govers, 2011; Kavaratzis, 2009; Kavaratzis, 2004). Thus, land value capture became a tool for attracting a wider audience, and the governments' role changed within these dynamics towards being brokers and/or facilitators who promote the land value rather than capturing and distributing it (DiGaetano and Strom, 2003). The current worldwide economic shift towards neoliberalism pushed urban development to pursue profit and utility maximisation by replacing non-profitable with profitable land uses and capturing land value by allocating prime lands to the highest and best uses (Weber, 2002). However, this created ripples of exclusion of the vulnerable groups from urban development/redevelopment schemes either directly through forced evictions and displacement, or indirectly through gentrification (Khalil and Dill, 2018). Thus, the creation of land value and its calculation are understood as the product of different structures – tangible and intangible – coexisting and interacting with one another, and capturing this value within the neo-liberal economy became dependent on who has the power to do so (Elder-Vass, 2022).

These consequent shifts in (1) understanding the aspects of land value (tangible and intangible), (2) how they are created, (3) how their values are calculated and captured, (4) by whom and for whom, have shaped core debates relating to land-use conflicts, especially in urban redevelopment projects. It has become crucial to understand the underlying causal power mechanisms and dynamics that shape the conceptualisations and mobilisations of land value, to understand how these value conventions that mobilise actions and practices are created. Problematically, intangible aspects of value creation still lack proper theorising that incorporate different structures influencing the process of conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value (Elder-Vass, 2022; Adams and Watkins, 2014; Bigger and Robertson, 2017; Watson *et al.*, 2016). There are four ways according to the previous literature that the value of land becomes a reality: (1) the value of land is a product of its natural properties; (2) it is a product of capital investments and labour work developed by specific agents and/or structures; (3) it is a product of capital investments and regulations developed by the state or government; or (4) it is a product of all these aspects interacting together shaping conventions about land valuation.

Theorising land value from merely an economic perspective proves to be quite simplistic and does not capture the degree of complexity that the concept beholds. The next subsection investigates the value of land as a product of its natural/essential properties (objective attributes) and constructed conventions (subjective attributes). The focus is on exploring the impact of power dynamics between different structures – other than the economic one explored earlier - in underlying processes of conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value within political, social, and environmental structures.

2.2.2 Land Value and Power Dynamics

Within studies of land conflict, it became evident that it is more than just a dispute over controlling natural resources or means of production. There are other privileges for having the power to control lands and their usage which could be associated with demonstrating authority/power domination (Elden, 2010), shaping/reshaping social order (Bosselman, 1994), and controlling/mobilising social behaviour (Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016). Thus, land acquisition gained a further aspect of value associated with the distribution of power and rights across social groups. However, the concept of *"power"* itself is a controversial one which added further complexity to understanding the theorisation and mobilisation of land values. It is important to understand which aspects of *"power"* different groups compete to capture, and through what means they capture it.

Power is a terminology that has an inherited notion of being something desirable (Elder-Vass, 2010; Scott, 2001). However, conceptualising it across social studies focuses more on its impacts on social phenomena, in terms of the capacity to cause change (Scott, 2001; Lawson, 2012). There are different types of power discussed in the literature as change could have various implications, expressions, and dynamics. In terms of change implications, power could be positive (or have desirable impacts as self-reliance, autonomy, resilience, and enablement), or

negative (like coercion, compulsion, exaction, and pressure) (Bhaskar, 2017). Furthermore, in terms of power expression, the power could be imagined, perceived, or exercised and it could be either implicit (where something unacknowledged has an impact) or explicit (Baldwin, 2013; Elder-Vass, 2010; Harding and Blokland, 2014). Finally in terms of the dynamics of change, power could be resulting from intelligent operations (like in case of agent power) or non-intelligent ones (like in case of structure powers) (Harding and Blokland, 2014). This power could also be an emergent property (like in adaptive systems), collective property (sum of singular powers) or a single property (Elder-Vass, 2010), and it could either have direct causal relation to the observed change or an indirect relation, but be an integral component of that change (Lawson, 2012).

Many studies of power have focused on understanding dynamics of acquiring and accumulating power, exercising it within a system of power relations, and its impact on other elements in the social structures (Elder-Vass, 2010; Baldwin, 2013; Harding and Blokland, 2014). According to those studies, power is something desirable for those who want to make a change whether for their own personal gains or for the greater good (Scott, 2001; Baldwin, 2013; Lawson, 2012). The value of having power – and having the ability and freedom to exercise it – is undeniably one of the strongest underlying causal mechanisms that mobilise power structures, dynamics, and relationships (Scott, 2001). If values are conceptualised as the triggers of actions and thoughts that cause change, power and power dynamics are the mechanisms of actualizing this change with all its different expressions and implications. Within land studies, the power acquired through controlling land territories has been discussed in relation with different aspects and could be categorised into three main domains.

The first domain is more dominant in political studies where it discusses power in relation with authority and sovereignty of state regimes and practices of territoriality within *political structures* (Elden, 2010; Elden, 2013; Brenner *et al.*, 2008). In the second domain power is discussed in relation with practices of social control and order, where specific *social structures* are created and maintained by establishing social hierarchies through means of social inclusion/exclusion and accessibility to land resources (Scott, 1998; King, 2012). Finally, the third domain is dominant in environmental social sciences where power is discussed in relation with corrective and persuasive causal impact of the natural and built environment on social behaviour (Harvey, 2012; Gibbons, 2020), as in the relation (and/or power dynamics) between human beings and their surrounding *environmental structures*. The value of land is conceptualised differently across those three domains where in each domain the value of land reflects the kind of power acquired by controlling this land.

The Domain of Political Structures

In the first domain of *political structures*, the political-strategic dynamics influence the realisation of land value, where acquisition of land is a testament for proving power, regardless of the innate value of this land. This heritage came with the military history of territoriality and the need to prove victory by claiming grounds in the battlefield. Even before international relations identifying current international borders, the definition of territories was identified by the ability to control and protect these territories (Elden, 2010). For example, boundaries of a specific society's territory – whether in land or sea – were defined by the shooting range of a cannon (Elden, 2013). However, the concept of domination over the lands – as well as the mobilisation of this domination - was transformed throughout history with the continuous redefinition of what we know now as the "State" (Brenner *et al.*, 2008). State power became the focus of many studies that investigated the influence of state sovereignty on the distribution of land rights across different social groups within its borders. Different regimes had different systems in the distribution of these rights/powers over lands, and accordingly different rules in resolving conflicts that arise within them. However, land rights distribution ideologies are integral in the power distribution ideology between the ruler(s) and ruled within the state territories (King, 2012; Harvey, 2012).

The spectrum of land rights distribution spreads between dominance of public/state sovereignty over land to superiority of private land ownerships. Monarchies (democratic and autocratic), empires, and dynasties are examples of governing systems that favoured the control of the state on land resources through public/state

ownership like in case of the British Empire (King, 2012; Scott, 1998) and Islamic Caliphates (Cuno, 1995; Akbar, 1992). The lands were either distributed to family members, nobles or rewarded to military generals who successfully acquired land from the enemies; yet, land acquisition was usually perceived to be the sole right of those ruling the territory (Elden, 2013). However, in many cases, the land value surpassed its economic or instrumental value to a more abstract notion of worth, where even domination over arid unusable topographies became desirable from imperial and colonial perspectives, for their strategic worth (King, 2012; Scott, 1998; Brenner *et al.*, 2008). Despite that this ideology is fading away in most current societies, it still has its remnants in post-colonial states (especially the ones who are governed by autocratic regimes, dictatorships, or military governments) where the notion of the strategic/political value of land across those regimes is heightened and has significant impacts on land ownership and development laws (Goodfellow, 2018; Keohane, 1989; King, 2012).

For instance, the land ownership status in Egypt is that all lands are considered state-owned lands by default and could only be sold through the governmental entities, unless someone could prove otherwise (El Araby, 2003; Sims, 2015). The state has the right to expropriate private ownership for what it assigns as public good (Dorman, 2013; Mokhtar, 2017). Also, there is a full control over the trajectory of land development schemes through zoning practices and urban strategic plans where no one has the right - for example - to develop their lands outside the control of the state, to sell it to a foreign investor, or to capture the benefits of whatever is found underground this land and considered a national resource like underground water, minerals, oil, artefacts, …etc (Dorman, 2013; Sims, 2015). Many of these land governance systems are associated with a controlled land market ideology, where the state aims to control all sources of production, capital, and labour to ensure welfare for the whole society (Khalil and Dill, 2018; Harvey, 1917). However, in colonial regimes and dictatorships, it could be argued that the objective is to control those things for the benefit of the few; thus, stripping power from the people by limiting their practices of land territoriality (King, 2012; Elden, 2013; Harvey, 2008; Scott, 1998).

On the other end of the spectrum, in capitalist and neo-liberal regimes, such as the United States, the private ownership of land is more dominant where landowners and associations have more power and lobbies to control the land laws (Stiglitz, 2010; Klein, 2007). Theorising the strategic value of land becomes more understood in the context of business strategies – rather than army strategies – where accumulation of power is highly correlated with the accumulation of wealth and capital. Thus, land strategic value within this context is not associated with discourses of nationalism, patriotism, or the overall state patriarchal control, but it is rather associated with ability to influence decision making, land speculation narratives, and eliminate restrictions on capital and wealth accumulation (Elder-Vass, 2022; El Araby, 2003; Mokhtar, 2017). From an investment perspective, the strategic value of land for those who control it is associated with their ability to bargain for higher market values and to shape valuation mechanisms, discourses, and narratives by shaping social/public conventions about these values (Elder-Vass, 2022; Alterman, 2012).

The Domain of Social Structures

That trickles down to the second domain, where the value of land is associated with controlling the *social structures* through controlling the social hierarchies and power status within a community by means of land distribution rights. Power within this domain is associated with the ability to create and maintain a specific social order by means of social inclusion/exclusion and accessibility to land rights (Bosselman, 1994; Harvey, 2012; Harvey, 2008). Thus, territoriality becomes a function of the power held to control means of inclusion and exclusion of different social groups from specific land, either physically by allowing or denying accessibility to the land/territory; or ideologically by identifying acceptable traditions, norms, and social behaviour representing the community's identity. Controlling land accordingly gains social value associated with the collective sense of identity and belonging to a place (Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983). The meaning of land to the people goes beyond its instrumental value to them, but it has an innate or essential value derived from the history linked to it, whether it is religious or cultural (UN-Habitat, 2012). Accessibility to land rights becomes integral in

practising territoriality – in both its physical and ideological forms – as it influences the ability to define and protect territories that shape the identity of the inhabiting community (Elden, 2013).

Furthermore, accessibility to land rights is a key factor in urban development/redevelopment schemes which promote social development and social sustainability (Adams and Watkins, 2014; Basiago, 1998; UN-Habitat, 2009). The distribution of power within this context reflects the distribution of land rights, where social hierarchies are created by the amount of power given (or taken) to exercise over the lands occupied. The more rights over land given for a specific group, the more they have access to self-determination and self-expression of their identities. Accordingly, land becomes central in individuals' livelihood, whether it provides them with access to shelter, income, and/or community, as much as it is central to their sense of worth, identity, and belonging. Across many literatures, it is argued that spatial inequality is socially – and/or politically – engineered rather being an unfortunate fate for the poor and deprived, as it is designed to maintain privilege for certain groups over others (Scott, 1998; Tadamun, 2015; Dorman, 2013; Sims, 2015). In other words, accessibility to land rights is kept in the hands of the few – mostly rulers or those in power – who want to ensure compliance and dependency of the rest of the community upon them. So, rulers aim to maintain needed, to maintain their power (Hamzawy, 2018).

Accordingly, the social value of land has both innate and instrumental components. On the one hand, the innate component is associated with the people's sense of community, identity, and belonging, and is conceptualised in terms of cultural, historical, and religious values. This is a highly contextual aspect of land value, which differs in depth and meaning from one society to another. For instance, one religious community could be highly protective of their religious sites over historical sites which do not associate with their religious belief like as in the case of the demolition of the Babri Masjid[1] in India that resulted in the 1992/1993 Bombay riots between Muslims and Hindus (Rakodi, 2013). Another community could be highly protective of their cultural traditions over their religious doctrines, as in the case of denying women's ownership of land in some male-dominated communities in rural Egypt (Khodary, 2018). On the other hand, the instrumental component is associated with people's livelihood and their access to basic survival needs like food, water, shelter, income, and community which provides them with access to education, relationships, and social support networks (Basiago, 1998; McKenzie, 2004). Unlike the innate component, the instrumental component of land social value is universal and not context-specific, because its conceptualisation is associated with basic human needs.

The Domain of Environmental Structures

Finally, the third domain that discusses the relationship between power and land value is the domain of environmental *structures* which is associated with controlling social behaviour. As discussed earlier, in the first domain the need for demonstration of power, domination, and/or sovereignty conceptualises the value of land as a desirable end-state of existence. In other words, acquiring land – any land – has a strategic value on its own. Meanwhile, in the second domain, the need for power to create and/or maintain specific social order/hierarchy conceptualises land value as means to empower/disempower different social groups through the distribution of land rights. From this perspective, the land acquired needs to have social value or significance for a community, whether incorporeal significance for their identity or corporal significance to their livelihood. Likewise, in the third domain, the need for power to mobilise communities conceptualises the value of land as being an inseparable, immovable, and irreplaceable element of the environment that influences social behaviour (Callicott, 1989; Lo, 2001). There are two main themes under the environmental domain: the first focuses on the natural environment and the role of land in ecological systems, and the second focuses on both natural and built environments in shaping human experience.

[1] Babri Masjid was demolished because it was believed by the Hindus that it was built over the land identified as the birthplace of Lord Ram, a religious Hindu figure. However, Muslims believed that this narrative is fictional history and accordingly they rejected demolishing the mosque (a place of worshipping Allah) for folklore (Rakodi, 2013)

Within the first theme, it is argued that the extensive use of land resources and poor practice in capturing the values of these resources with minimum costs have jeopardised non-renewable stock and disturbed the balance of ecological systems. Land ethics was introduced in 1930s by Aldo Leopold as a response to dealing with land as a mere commodity (Leopold, 1949), and this conceptualisation was carried on by Callicott adopting an ecocentric philosophy valuing land's essential character (Bosselman, 1994; Callicott, 1989). Thus, in this theme land is representative of natural environments that are needed for our own survival and the features of land are what provoke human beings' responsible or irresponsible actions towards it. For instance, regions which have massive areas of forests within their territories have responsibility to protect the natural habitat within these areas, and accordingly must develop policies, plans, and procedures for that purpose, unlike regions who do not have forests. Furthermore, those massive areas of forests could be a clean and sustainable source of energy, if reaped responsibly, which is another factor that needs to be considered by regions burdened with this responsibility.

Thus, on one hand, land is perceived to have an overarching power over human action (Leopold, 1949; Callicott, 1989) as it dictates in some form where people would settle, what they would consume as nutrition, and what economic activities they would develop according to what the land is offering them, which are topics commonly discussed in environmental deterministic theories (Coombes and Barber, 2005; Sargentis *et al.*, 2022). Furthermore, the land influences communities responsible behaviour by giving access to the environmentally sustainable, preservation, and conservation practices (Bosselman, 1994). The distribution of costs and benefits within ecological systems, among different elements of the system, is what determines the land value in this system (Basiago, 1998; Williams and Patterson, 1996; UN-Habitat, 2009). On the other hand, those who have authority over lands that are considered *"environmentally valuable"*, also have the power of action in controlling the trajectory of using, developing, or preserving those lands, which is a value in itself for emancipatory environmentalism (Williams and Patterson, 1996). Thus, the environmental value of land within this theme is shaped by both its impact on human behaviour and its role in environmental sustainability and welfare practices.

The second theme, which is commonly dominant in environmental psychology literature, focuses on both natural and built environments. The value of land comes from its instrumental worth in shaping human behaviour, through designing their experiences in the spaces they use – public and private (Næss, 2016; Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983). It also has a direct association with the power to shape the wellbeing of societies by improving their quality of life, and in return improving their collective productivity and social sustainability (Basiago, 1998; McKenzie, 2004). Quality of life indicators cover a wide spectrum for community development, ranging from physical attributes (providing a healthy, safe, and sustainable environment) to more social attributes as in providing spaces for freedom of expression, providing accessibility to decision-making related to designing and using those spaces, and providing an environment that promotes different social groups' sense of identity and belonging to the overall society (UN-Habitat, 2009; Adams and Watkins, 2014; Harding and Blokland, 2014; Davies, 2015). Thus, the environmental value of land within this theme is shaped by its power in planning better societies and more sustainable cities/environments.

Within all the previously discussed domains – *political*, *social*, and *environmental* – the structures shaping the tangible and intangible values of land are highly intertwined and influenced by the power dynamics between those structures and each other, and between those structures and the agents involved with them. Problematically, there is an abstract understanding of those power dynamics and structures within literature, and there is not an operationalised identification of what is meant by both (Elder-Vass, 2010). The intangible values shaped by the power dynamics of those structures are reflected in the tangible land market values (Elder-Vass, 2022), the conflict between different groups fighting for rights over land (Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016), and the development strategies designed to capture land values (Adams and Watkins, 2014). Thus, the conceptualisation and mobilisation processes of land value could not be understood without understanding the kind of structure/agency power dynamics that underlie those processes, as illustrated in Figure 2.5.

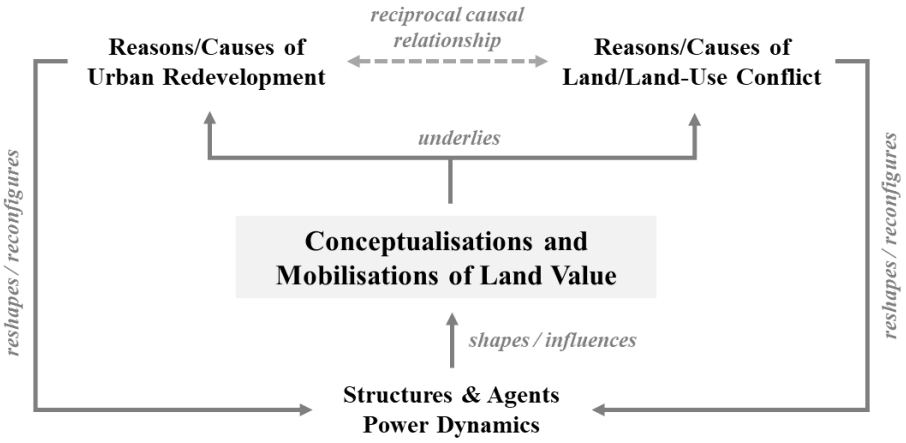

Fig. (2- 5) Conceptual Relation between Land (Re)development, Land/Land-Use Conflict, Land Value, and Structure/Agents Power Dynamics

Source: Designed by Author

2.3 Conclusion

The above review suggests that to bridge the gap between theoretical understandings of land value and practical mobilisations of it in urban practice, there are three main areas where research gaps must be addressed. The first gap is the monistic and reductionist approaches in value theories which extended to incomprehensive theorisation of land value. The second gap is the lack of studies operationalising intangible/incorporeal values of land while the third gap is the unclear identification of structures and their power dynamics in conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value. Taken together, those three research gaps suggest that investigation into how land value is conceptualised and mobilised in urban practice must account for the influence of the power dynamics of different structures and agents in a specific context.

Firstly, it was found that there is a need to address the diversity of different ontologies discussing values that are contested in theoretical arguments. This range of different ontologies were found to underlie observable urban conflicts triggered by incompatible values and goals within development practices. The polarising arguments around value as discussed led to emergence of monistic theories reducing essentially different objects of valuation (morals, substances, experiences, humans) into unfitting generalised conceptual frameworks. Thus, a pluralist pragmatic approach to theorising value is suggested, extending the work of (Lake, 2023) and (Anderson, 1995). The pluralistic component addresses existing contested ideologies of value while the pragmatic component addresses processes of value conceptualisation and mobilisation and their impact, without judging their rational.

Secondly, it was found that there is a need to have more studies that operationalise land social values, or more generally the intangible/incorporeal components of land value. The dominant focus on tangible land values – especially land market value – caused many issues in urban development practices like urban social segregation, gentrification, exclusion of the urban poor, and environmental pressures on natural resources. Accordingly, there is a need to integrate both tangible and intangible components of land value within a conceptual framework that acknowledges the impact of different components of land value on land/land-use conflict without reducing intangible values to tangible ones. Finally, it is found that there is a need to understand the power dynamics between structures and agents shaping convictions about land value. Since *structures* were found to be an abstract concept, this research aims at operationalising some of those structures and their power dynamics in conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value.

The next chapter introduces the conceptual framing of this research that addresses the three previously discussed research gaps, along with the research design and methodology. The chapter expands on how the conceptual

framework is designed to include *Pluralistic Pragmatic* value theory, *Critical Realism* and *Islamic Ontologies*, and *Realist Constructionism* to investigate land value conceptualisation and mobilisation. In support of this, the chapter also presents an operationalisation of the concepts of *value*, *power*, *structures*, and *agents* that are instrumental for the investigation of this research and compatible with the theories used and the context of investigation. The overall research design and methodology is then fully explained in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

To unravel complexities related to understanding land value, this research needed to address theoretical and empirical challenges in investigating the concept. From reviewing literature, three main gaps were identified in understanding land value which are: (1) weak understanding of the pluralism of values affecting urban practice by adopting monistic value theories, (2) insufficient operationalisation of land social and intangible values in urban practice, and (3) poor identification of structures shaping processes of land value conceptualisation and mobilisation, especially in contexts of redevelopment of informal areas. The aim of this research is to understand how land value is conceptualised and mobilised in urban practice. However, the scope of this research is focusing on contentious urban practices provoking conflict to be able to associate the theoretical debates of land value with the empirical manifestation represented in the disputes over land value. This chapter is divided into two sections to illustrate the conceptual framework and the research design including research methodology.

Building on the literature review in Chapter 2, the first section focuses on the conceptual framework and operationalisation of key working concepts in this framework (*value*, *power*, *structures*, and *agents*). This section argues for the importance of combining theories from *Critical Realism* and *Islamic Ontology* and discusses how they both address theoretical and practical challenges discussed in Chapter 2. It expands on how the research uses pluralistic pragmatic value theory to investigate land value conceptualisations and mobilisations, as well as explaining how research uses *Realist Constructionism* and Roy Bhaskar's *"Four Planes of Social Being"* theory in understanding the power of structures and agents in shaping those processes. While the second section starts with mapping research propositions, questions, objectives, and methodological stages linking the conceptual framework with literature gaps. Furthermore, it discusses using case-study research and expands on selection criteria of the case study as well as potentials/limitations of the adopted data collection and analysis tools. Finally, the second section discusses the research ethics and limitations along with the researcher's positionality exploring the research process relating to doing research in the time of COVID, in a context of violent conflict, in a politically sensitive project, and in relation to the researcher's gender and insider-outsider positionality.

3.1 Conceptual Framework and Operationalisation

Conceptualisations and mobilisations of land value are complex processes that are influenced by many intertwined factors, as illustrated in the literature. This research attempts to address this by designing a conceptual framework that is representative to the real mechanisms in urban practice while also being comprehensible and coherent. The first steps in developing this conceptual framework are identifying working definitions of the main abstract concepts, operationalising adopted theories, and justifying their value to the research. Since the main research aim is to understand how land value is conceptualised and mobilised within urban practice and it is found that the power dynamics of structures and agents play a crucial role in this understanding, the four key concepts that this research is concerned with are *value*, *power*, *structures*, and *agents*. The processes of *conceptualisation*, *mobilisation*, and *urban practice* are discussed in the context of those four concepts and the adopted theories to investigate them.

3.1.1 Pluralistic Pragmatic Theorisation of Land Value

Theorising *value* has been problematic and impractical because of monistic reductionist approaches adopted by value theorists (Lake, 2023; Anderson, 1995). The research attempts to address this issue by arguing three main propositions. The first proposition is that there is a difference between *Moral Values* and *Quality/Attribute Values*, and it is problematic to reduce one group to another because of the essential difference in their characteristics. *Moral Values* are those that need to be acquired/obtained for their transcendent properties informing moral behaviour. Thus, they represent triggers for what Weber identified as value rationality for thoughts and actions (Kalberg, 1980), like the value of being loyal, honest, or just. Meanwhile, *Quality/Attribute Values* are those that need to be acquired/obtained for their instrumental worthiness to improve the quality of life (like the value of power, prestige, and wealth) where those who own them utilise them for other means. Thus, they represent triggers for what Weber identified as instrumental rationality for thoughts and actions (Kalberg, 1980). The issue arises in theories when there is an inclination to reduce the first group of values to the second, or vice versa.

Moral Values are supposedly objective and absolute, but when theorised as instrumentally utilised by moral agents for other purposes (like getting social status, votes, or fame) they are stripped from their transcendental property and accordingly are reduced to the subjects who are using them, as in the case of Humean ethics (Entrican and Denis, 2022). This eventually leads to disregarding moral agents who are truly motivated by those moral values and not by their instrumental benefits (Kant, 1797). On the other hand, theorising *Quality Values* as mere means to obtain or promote moral values (like having the power to distribute justice) is also reductionist and dismissing moral agents who seek solely those values as an end-state of existence and not for a transcendental purpose (Rokeach, 1973). In other words, there are agents who seek power, prestige, and wealth for their own merit even if they are not going to utilise their instrumental quality to improve their status (Mill and Bentham, 1987). Accordingly, this leads to the research's second proposition as it argues that rationality underlying thoughts and actions could be triggered by a combination of *moral* and *quality/attribute* values which requires adopting a pluralistic pragmatic value theory.

In this research, value pluralism does not stand for moral pluralism or relativism that argues that all values/value systems are true or real (Mason, 2023). Instead, it suggests that these different values and value systems exist and have influence on urban practice, and accordingly cannot be ignored. The intent of this research is to track how these different values are created, what factors influence them, and how these values have impact on other factors. Thus, the research adopts a pragmatic approach that investigate the objective/motivation behind those created values, the nature of tangible and intangible elements creating those values, and the contextual factors influencing these processes, following John Dewey's theory of valuation (Dewey, 1913; Lake, 2023). In other words, values are being investigated from the perspectives of those who participate in creating them (agents); the context, mechanisms, and dynamics surrounding their creation processes (structures); and the power of both agents and structures in shaping observable social experience manifested in land valuation. For reasons of practicality, the study scope is narrowed down to allow for deeper investigation and analysis of conceptualisation and mobilisation of land values in urban practice, to provide an empirically well-defined context, and to associate the abstract concept(s) of value to tangible conflict dynamics.

Tangible land values fall into the category of *quality/attribute values*, as accessing land is instrumental in having an adequate quality of life. However, the processes of conceptualisation and mobilisation of those values are highly intertwined with *moral* values, like justice, and equity. Also, the distribution of land values and land rights, as well as the approaches to land conflict resolution, cannot be discussed without tapping into arguments about righteousness and morality. Moreover, there are intangible land values underlying communities' attachment to their homes/lands that could be perceived by the communities as either instrumental to their self-actualization and sense of identity; or independent from their existence, depending on adopted ideologies, beliefs, and/or value systems. For analytical purposes, this research investigates different components of land value – which are debated differently across literature – as separate categories of land value – following a pluralistic model for value theory, where this categorization is the research's third proposition.

The four components this research investigates are (1) economic/market values, (2) political/strategic values, (3) social values, and (4) environmental/ecological values of land. Land economic/market value is understood in terms of bargaining powers between supply and demand in a real free market (Harvey, 1917; Von Wieser, 1928), where economists reduce land value to its monetary worth and use positivistic price and location models. Meanwhile, land political/strategic value is understood in terms of control over territories providing access to power and prestige – or in other words decision-making and social status – that would allow those in control to mobilise resources for their vision and personal gains (Elden, 2013). Although this value has explicit tangible manifestation that could be investigated (as in sovereignty and domination over territories and practices of territoriality), the political/strategic value itself is intangible as it is associated with the concept of *power* which is not a concrete objective concept, as will be discussed later. Land social value – in contrast to land market value – is almost completely incorporeal and intangible, whereby implicit meanings of land are innate/essential in their conceptualisation (Lake, 2023). This is a highly subjective contextualised value (incorporating cultural, historical,

and religious values of land) while being associated with fulfilling basic social needs like sense of identity, belonging, and inclusion (Anton and Lawrence, 2014; Sayer, 2011; Brown, Reed and Raymond, 2020). Finally, land environmental/ecological value is understood in terms of sustainable practices – or the system value of land in a balanced system – including all natural and scarce resources essential for humans and living creatures' existence and are embodied in the land (Brown, 2013; Williams and Patterson, 1996).

Thus, the operational definition of the four categories of land value in this research are:

- *Land Economic/Market Value*: the value of land as a commodity and/or asset represented in its monetary worth in a real supply/demand market.
- *Land Political/Strategic Value*: the value of land as an access node to control and power through acts of territoriality over specific territory.
- *Land Social Value*: the value of land as a place/home which fulfils basic social needs of a specific community and is associated with their culture, history, and religion/belief system.
- *Land Environmental/Ecological Value*: the value of land as a scarce irreplaceable resource in a balanced sustainable environmental/ecological system.

The interest of this research is to investigate how these four categories of land value are conceptualised and mobilised through the power dynamics of the corresponding structures and agents. *Power* plays a crucial role in understanding those processes across the four categories of land value. For instance, the bargaining power of supply and demand is a determining factor for land market value (Porter, 2011), as well as the power of influential actors who drive conventions around valuation based on their interest (Elder-Vass, 2022). Land political/strategic value is also driven by a power quest for control and domination where acts of territoriality are manifestations of the acquisition of power and exclusive authority (Elden, 2013). Meanwhile, land social value is triggered by dynamics of entitlement, empowerment, and access to self-determination and self-expression, where social status and prestige are considered essential aspects in conceptualisation and mobilisation of this value (Elder-Vass, 2010). Finally, the survival struggle represented in dynamic mechanisms between the power of Man versus the power of Nature is what brings discussions of land ethics in the realm of understanding land environmental/ ecological value (Callicott, 1989; Lo, 2001). However, it is undeniable that the bargaining power of supply and demand in economic structures is conceptually different from the power struggle in political structures, empowerment in social structures, and power of Nature in environmental ones. There is accordingly a need to determine what this research means by *power*, and how it is operationalised for understanding land value.

3.1.2 Critical Realism and Islamic Ontology in Theorising Power

As discussed in Section 2.2.2, power is understood in social science as the capacity to cause change (Elder-Vass, 2010; Lawson, 2012; Scott, 2001) where power dynamics are considered the mechanisms of actualizing and/or mobilising this change. The two main powers this research is concerned with are the power of structures and the power of agents. This research argues that these two powers are conceptually different depending on the classification of power types discussed in Chapter 2. Power of structures is more implicit, indirect, emergent, and non-intelligent (Elder-Vass, 2010) while power of agents is more explicit and intelligent (Archer, 2013). The role that values play in structures mechanisms is utterly different from its role in cognitive and emotional operations conducted by intelligent agents. Whether those powers are imagined (falsely perceived) or real, they have an impact on shaping the realities of social phenomena. Thus, the investigation needs to incorporate both implicit and explicit dynamics of power as well as intangible and tangible values without reducing one of them to the other in order to properly address root causes of manifested conflict and underlying mechanisms of its dynamics. Thus, this research needed to adopt an ontology which integrates implicit intangible emergent dynamics with explicit tangible experienced phenomena.

Critical Realism becomes a proper candidate because it introduces the philosophy of *Transcendental Realism*, where there is an acknowledgment of an objective reality that goes beyond the cognitive notion of human beings, independent of their existence (Bhaskar, 2013). As Roy Bhaskar developed this theory to argue against *epistemic realism* of positivists, he advocated *ontological realism*, *epistemological relativism*, and *judgemental rationality* claiming a middle position between the arguments of realists and relativists in their understanding of the social world (Bhaskar, 2017). In other words, it could be argued that there are power dynamics and value conceptualisations that affect our realities regardless of our acknowledgment of them because our epistemology is highly bounded by limitations of our cognitive abilities and limited empirical observations. However, Bhaskar argued that there is still place for our judgemental rationality to be processed and validated within specific contexts of investigations, as long as acknowledgment of the existence of further and alternative explanations is associated with our findings (Bhaskar, 2017). Bhaskar stratified reality into three domains illustrated in Figure 3.1: *empirical domain* where experiences are manifesting; *actual domain* where observable and non-observable operations, processes, and events creating those experiences are conducting; and *real domain* where underlying mechanisms – like power dynamics and value conceptualisations – are interacting and shaping the other two domains.

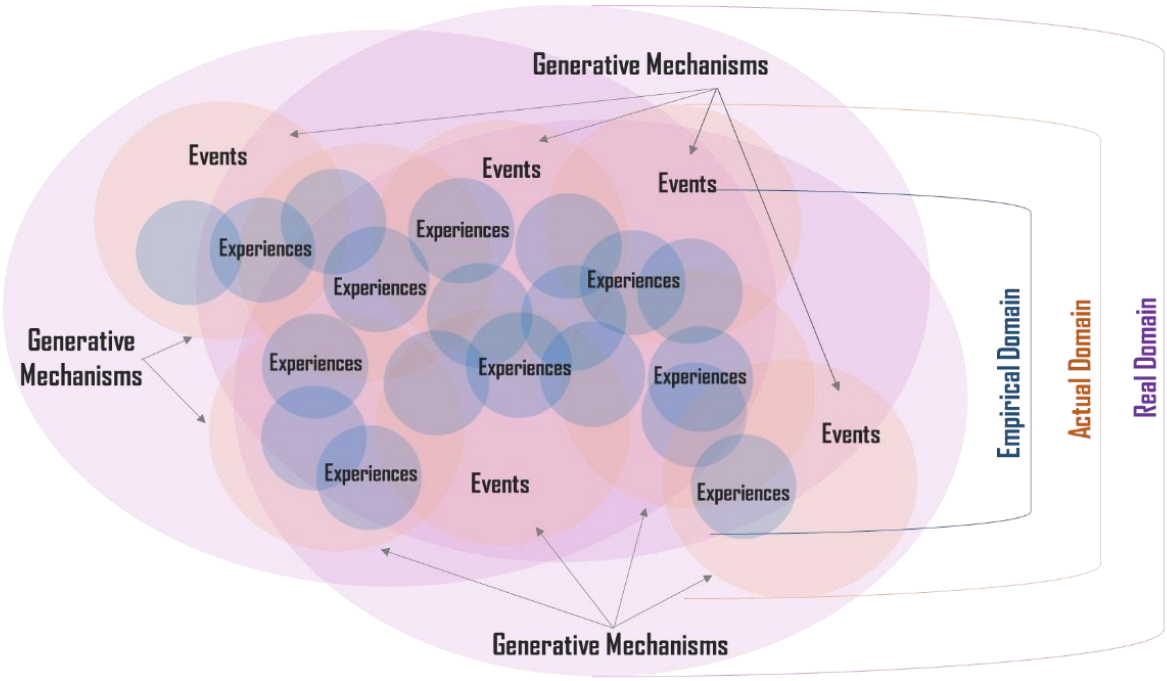

Fig. (3- 1) Transcendental Realism and Three Domains of Reality
Source: Designed by Author based on (Bhaskar, 2013)

Thus, the *real domain* includes generative mechanisms that are either manifested in the empirical domain or still interacting in the actual domain where they may manifest at any moment in the experienced phenomenon. In land value theories, it could be argued that land value conceptualisations are created mostly in the *real domain*, manifested through its mobilisation in the *actual domain*, and experienced in the *empirical domain*. In other words, land conflict experienced as violent disputes between different stakeholders is caused by underlying events mobilising value of this land, which in return is influenced by underlying mechanisms of power struggles and ideological disagreements over the value of this land and its origins. *Critical Realism* provides a suitable theoretical framework to understand root causes for experienced land conflict by investigating the generative mechanisms underlying processes of conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value in urban contexts.

The chosen context for this research – the empirical domain of conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value – is selected in the Egyptian setting for reasons justified later in this chapter. Problematically, *Critical Realism* (as a Western philosophy originated from secularism) is insufficient in explaining the religious understandings of value within a religious community like in the case of Egypt. Urban theories in Western philosophy usually lack

serious consideration for religious scriptures, their interpretations of value, and/or adaptations/mobilisations of these interpretations within religious societies in shaping urban phenomena. It is argued within most of these Western urban theories that religion is a social construct and accordingly does not have an innate independent existence/reality, in contrast to what is argued in religious philosophies, such as *Islamic Ontology*. This research argues that adopting secular theories – to address urban challenges within religious communities – risks neglecting crucial factors in explaining urban problems and in finding adequate solutions for contextual challenges. To properly analyse the processes of conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value within the Egyptian context, there is a need to incorporate a religious framing ontology, in order to understand the religious values and belief systems that shape the relationship between the people and the land.

Islamic Ontology is a realist philosophy grounding its arguments on the existence of one and only God (Allah). Thus, for Muslim scholars the source of value, meaning, purpose, and power could only be found through understanding Islamic scriptures and submitting to the transcendent wisdom and knowledge of the Creator (El-Messeri, 2012). Islamic Ontology agrees with Critical Realism's proposition of a *transcendental reality* that is incomprehensible in full through the fallible intellect of the human beings (Wilkinson, 2013). However, debates on contemporary urban phenomena within the field of Islamic philosophy are scarce and not reflective of current challenges (Sait and Lim, 2006). This has led policy makers and practitioners within Islamic communities to rely more on Western ideologies and theories in explaining and responding to these challenges (Rüpke, 2020). This research attempts to merge the two high-level philosophies – *Critical Realism* and *Islamic Ontology* – to contextualise Western urban theories and at the same time fill the gaps in the religious theoretical framing that became disconnected from urban social reality. This is the first attempt to merge these two philosophies within urban studies, although the two philosophies were previously merged in the fields of school education (Wilkinson, 2013; Wilkinson, 2014) and organisational learning (Tarip, 2020). In this research, C*ritical Realism* is used to investigate the causal powers of structures and agents in conceptualising and mobilising land value, while *Islamic ontology* is used to investigate underlying value and belief systems' impact on communities' perception of power, land value, and land rights as well as their impact on their responsiveness manifested in urban practice within the Egyptian context.

3.1.3 Realist Constructionism in Theorising Structures and Agents

At this point, there is a need to clarify how this research identifies *structures* and *agents*, and accordingly how it theorises their power dynamics in relation to land value conceptualisations and mobilisations. This research argues that *Structure* is an abstract concept which has been identified differently depending on the thematic category that it is associated with (like political, social, economic, organisational, ecological, technological, legal) to describe complicated generative adaptive systems which have causal powers (Archer, 2013; Elder-Vass, 2010; Hay, 2002; Healey and Barrett, 1990; Lewis, 2000). Thus, structures are believed to have adaptive behaviour – where they move towards a preferred state of equilibrium – and their dynamics are based upon systematic causal relations that are neither linear nor simple (Harvey, 1969). However, there are two main aspects that define how these structures are conceptualised in literature. The first aspect is whether those structures are real or constructed, where robust realists debate that existence of those structures is inevitable and researchers' role is limited to describing and explaining them (Giddens, 1984) while robust constructivists debate that those structures are human product and accordingly could be deconstructed, altered, and/or eliminated (Jervis, 2004). The second aspect is whether those structures have an overarching power over agency power controlling its dynamics as argued by structuralists, or whether reflexivity and responsiveness of agents, their relationships, and interactions with one another influence the dynamics of those structures (Archer, 2020).

To address those debates, this research adopts *Realist Constructionism* in conceptualising structures and their power in shaping realities. This approach acknowledges that structures are socially constructed by agents; however, their existence is inevitable and essential to dynamics of the universe. *Critical Realism* promotes this approach complimenting the theory of *transcendental realism*, where structures are perceived as "real" established

systems and not merely constructed. That means structures could not be deconstructed despite being essentially created through dynamics of social construction. In *transcendental realism*, the reason for the "real" essence of structures is that there are unobservable dynamics that goes into their creation – existing in the intransitive domain of ontology – that exist independent of human's experience and perception (Bhaskar, 2017). Critical realists could not accurately define these unobservable dynamics, unlike in Islamic ontology, where it is identified as *shariaa kawneya* [universal law] – a natural order necessity planned by the Divine. For instance, the hierarchical structures in social/economic status between community members are perceived as "real" structures in Critical Realism or as *shariaa kawnyea* in Islamic Ontology[1] where despite being a social construction, their existence is inevitable and could not be eliminated, only altered. In other words, radical political movements could attempt to eliminate hierarchical differences between members of societies; yet that would only create a different kind of hierarchy.

Generally, structures were associated with many aspects depending on the research field and the linked thematic category. In fields of psychology, sociology, and anthropology, structures were identified in terms of dominating ideologies shaping collective cognition of societies (as represented in value/belief systems) and manifested in their collective identity (Archer, 2013). While in Hermeneutics research, structures were identified in terms of formal and informal discourses and narratives shaping ideologies through language and scientific knowledge where they affect the collective understanding of concepts and social conditioning through linguistic and conversational interactions (Elder-Vass, 2011; Joseph and Roberts, 2004). In political, organisational, and legal studies, structures were conceptualised as institutions including formal and informal agreements (codes of conduct/practice) within specific context shaping the power hierarchy and dictating modes of behaviour (Porpora, 1989; Lewis, 2000). Furthermore, structures were also understood in terms of relationships and dynamics between different components in their systems (Elder-Vass, 2010) – as argued in many international relations and behavioural science studies – and accordingly the structures were identified by the law-like regularities shaped by those causal and power relationships (Porpora, 1989).

Accordingly, in this research, structures could be identified as an abstract concept combining ideologies, discourses, institutions, relationships, and dynamics in a complex adaptive – and usually – open system that shapes human experience. Structures are argued to have influence on how the world is perceived (through ideologies), expressed (in discourses and narratives), and organised (by formal/informal institutions and practices). Structures also have influence on the nature of relationships within them (like dependency, correlations, mutual exclusiveness, …etc.) and on the mechanisms of how these relationships operate (whether through power dynamics, feedback loops, causal forces, …etc.). However, any structure generates and degenerates by influence of its components in their development cycles, where time factor plays an important role in the reciprocal relation between structures and their components – including agents (Archer, 2020). For the four land value components identified earlier, there are four corresponding thematic structures operationalised for this research conceptual framework which are economic, political, social, and environmental structures. Table 3.1 illustrates how these four structures are identified within this research in reference to five structural components: ideologies, discourses, institutions, relationships, and dynamics.

[1] "*Do they distribute the mercy of your Lord? It is We who have apportioned among them their livelihood in the life of this world and have raised some of them above others in degrees [of rank] that they may make use of one another for service. But the mercy of your Lord is better than whatever they accumulate."* (Qur'an 32–43)

Table (3- 1) Operationalisation of Thematic Structures of Land Value
Source: Developed by Author

	Political Structures	**Economic Structures**	**Social Structures**	**Environmental Structures**
Ideologies	ideology/ philosophy of rulership and normative understanding of the distribution of power (autocratic, democratic, totalitarian, hybrid, …)	ideology / philosophy of national economics, the vision for economic development, and distribution of wealth (liberal economy, capitalism, socialism, communism, neo-liberalism, ..)	ideologies / beliefs that govern the collective value system of a society, shape their collective memory, ideals, and the distribution of rights (religion, history, culture, values, …)	ideology/ philosophy of the human-environment relationship (environmental determinism/possibilism, ecocentrism, biocentrism, anthropocentrism, industrocentrism, …)
Discourses/ Narratives	**City as a Territory** ▪ ***Formal Discourses*** (laws, regulations and procedures, national media and press conferences, agendas, visions, strategies, policies, academic work and formal publications, …) ▪ ***Informal Discourses*** (social media narratives, customary laws, word of mouth, perceptions of power, …)	**City as a Corporate** ▪ ***Formal Discourses*** (land valuation criteria, land cadaster, published market information, taxes, feasibility studies, development costs, …) ▪ ***Informal Discourses*** (speculative market, word of mouth, informal contracts, prices manipulation, bribes and underpayments, …)	**City as a Place/Home** ▪ ***Formal Discourses of religion history, and culture*** (religious scriptures, educational curriculums official historical narratives, arts, ...) ▪ ***Emergent and constructed informal discourses of values, norms, and traditions*** (religious speeches, interpretations, embodied norms/ traditions, folk stories, proverbs, ...)	**City as an Ecological System** • ***Formal Discourses*** (academic papers/ studies, official reports, natural reserve maps, environmental assessments, needs assessments, pre/post occupancy surveys, …) • ***Informal Discourses*** (campaigns, movements, social media complaints, independent assessment reports, …)
Institutions	▪ ***Formal Institutions*** (legal systems, governance models, law firms, political / governmental / official entities, parties, ...) ▪ ***Informal Institutions*** (informal systems, unregulated arrangements, illegal entities, status hierarchies, …)	• ***Formal Institutions*** (banks, financial institutions, survey authorities, registry deeds, evaluation committees, legal arbitrators, stock market, …) • ***Informal Institutions*** (unregistered brokers agencies, online markets, informal markets/transactions, …)	• ***Formal Institutions*** (NGOs, CBOs, owners' associations, …) • ***Informal Institutions*** (social media platforms, social networks, family/ community leaders' councils, …)	▪ ***Physical (Built-up) Environment*** (cities, villages, neighborhoods, urban spaces, buildings, roads, …) ▪ ***Natural Environment*** (ecological systems, weather systems, natural laws/ hazards, …)
Relationships (as dependency, correlations, associations, aggregations, inheritance, …)	the relative position/status of different stakeholders/agents from one another and from the structures, discourses, and/or institution they mobilize their ideologies through	the relationship between variables affecting the market supply and demand dynamics	the relations between the individual and the society and the relationships between different social groups within aspects of social status hierarchies and politics of identity and belonging.	the relationship between the individual/community and the surrounding built and natural environments
Dynamics / Mechanisms	processes and practices (formal and informal) governed by the power forces of the elements in the political structure	market dynamics and transaction mechanisms/processes	social dynamics of inclusion/integration and exclusion/segregation	the cause-and-effect dynamics of human interactions with the natural environment within an ecological system

The research focuses only on relevant aspects affecting and/or affected by conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value. For example, economic structures are shaped around land market dynamics like land demand/supply, costs of capital production, investments mobilisation, taxation policies, and speculation trends among others. It also includes relevant actors like banks, financial institutions, land cadastres, and land valuation agencies along with their power relations (their autonomy and/or interdependency on one another) in tailoring governing decisions/laws affecting land market dynamics. Likewise, political structures are investigated through understanding land tenure systems, ownership rights, legal/illegal transactions, land conflict dispute resolutions, and understanding power dynamics between different institutions, community groups, and influential actors who mobilise narratives and discourses around conventions of land valuation systems. Thus, the research analyses systematic relations of necessity and contingency between different components and actors within the research context to identify and map crosscutting structures influencing conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value.

The final concept to be identified in the conceptual framework is *agents* and their relationship with the other three concepts: *values*, *power*, and *structures*. Within this research, agents are considered as intelligent actors who are motivated by *values* and have the *power* to cause change through processes of reflexivity and responsiveness towards established *structures* surrounding them. The focus of this research is to understand how reflexivity and responsiveness processes are related to conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value. Within critical realism, these processes are explained with the "*Four Planes of Social Being*" theory, while the same processes are explained in Islamic ontology with the elucidation of two concepts: *fetra* [human nature] and *maqased el-shariaa* [objectives of Islamic law or higher ethical objectives]. In Critical Realism, human agency operates simultaneously on four planar dimensions as illustrated in Figure 3.2: inner-being rationality, intersubjectivity, human-environmental interactions (interactions with material world), and agency/structures mechanisms (Bhaskar, 2010). Thus, conceptualisation and mobilisation of concepts (like land value) are developed on individual level through four separate, but interacting, planes depending on: (1) value systems and reasoning ideologies embodied by the individual, (2) shared perceptions and collective reasoning/consciousness of values, (3) positionality of the individual from the material world incubating one's body, and (4) the individual rationalisation of the structures shaping one's reality.

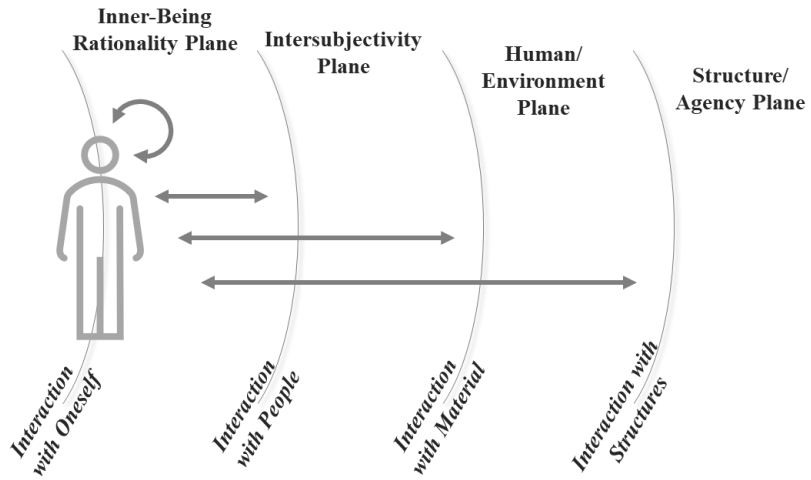

Fig. (3- 2) Agent Interaction with the Four Planes of Social Being
Source: Designed by Author based on (Bhaskar, 2010)

In Islamic Ontology, religious ideology shapes a distinctive portion in personal reasoning of individuals, where they usually rationalise their values, motives, practices, reasons, aspirations, and events surrounding them through the lens of religious reasoning (Chapra, 2008). Trigger or motivation for reasoning and action accordingly results from an inquiry about what is valuable in life and what is the value of oneself as an inseparable part of this life. Rationalisation and conceptualisation of values are argued to be greatly intersubjective (constructed from early

age by parenting) but are met by inner-being rationality entailed by innate human nature or *fetra* (Auda, 2022). Assigning values to the material world is also constructed as it emerges from the collective consciousness and accumulative knowledge that supposedly aligns with the higher ethical objectives or *maqased el-shariaa*. In Islam, *maqased el-shariaa* are considered the wisdom behind rulings/commandments or basically the rationalisation of actions that (if believed/practised) align Muslims with the will of the Creator (their moral compass) and are driven from the scriptures. Thus, land value conceptualisation and mobilisation within Islamic context is integral in oneself conceptualisation and his/her alliance with his/her innate human nature and higher ethical objectives. However, those two concepts are understood differently among Muslim scholars as they are reliant on their interpretation of Islamic scriptures and ruling, although there are general theories for the hierarchy of values and needs that this research investigates their compatibility with the findings of the case study in its pursuit in understanding land value.

3.2 Research Design

As elaborated in the introduction, this research aim is to ***"understand how land value is conceptualised and mobilised in urban practice"***. Thus, to answer the "how" question, the research is designed as intensive case-study research, where the case study is instrumental in providing a context of contested urban practice manifesting structures and agents power dynamics in conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value. The contested urban context is meant to make intangible/incorporeal values, the hierarchy of different values, and the structure/agency dynamics more explicit in a setting of compromise and bargaining (Elder-Vass, 2010; Peterson, 2002; Bartos and Wehr, 2002). The research aim is accordingly operationalised as "***investigating how land value is conceptualised and mobilised in a context of uneven power relations within a setting of urban conflict between different agents and structures"***. Urban redevelopment of informal areas within an authoritarian governing structure is an appropriate setup for this investigation as it provides the contested urban dynamics between actors and structures having uneven power relations. The empirical domain for the investigation is chosen in the understudied controversial urban redevelopment project of El-Warraq Island – an informal area located in Greater Cairo Region (GCR) in Egypt. This empirical domain represents the contested context of uneven power relations between officials, planners, developers, and informal inhabitants in the island.

Accordingly, the main research question is ***"how is land value conceptualised and mobilised in the context of urban redevelopment of informal areas in Egypt?"***. Three operational objectives are identified to address the research main question responding to defined research gaps in conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value discussed in Chapter 2. The first objective is to define the structures shaping processes of land value conceptualisation and mobilisation in the context of urban redevelopment of informal areas in Egypt. While the second objective is to investigate plural conceptualisations of land value in El-Warraq Island and the interaction between them shaping urban conflict. Finally, the third objective is to identify intangible/incorporeal land values attributes within El-Warraq Island underlying aspirations for its urban redevelopment. The three operational objectives are associated with the conceptual framing introduced in Chapter 2 mapping the relation between land values, conflict, development, and power dynamics of structures/agents as illustrated in Figure 3.3.

The first objective is approached through the lens of *realist constructionism* focusing on the historical development of surrounding geo-political and socio-economic structures shaping conceptualisations and mobilisations of land value within the Egyptian context by undergoing macro contextual analysis. This objective is discussed in Chapter 4 by investigating three operational sub-questions covering (1) ideologies for land value, (2) discourses and practices of land development and distribution of land rights, and (3) the interaction between formal and informal institutions shaping urban practice in Egypt. The second objective is approached through the *pluralistic pragmatic* lens focusing on the interaction of power dynamics and relationships between different conceptualisations, and how these mechanisms shape conflict. This objective is pursued by investigating theorisation of land value across studies of urban redevelopment and land conflict (explored in Chapter 2) as well as the contextual mobilisation of these ideologies within the Egyptian context (in Chapter 4), and El-Warraq Island

redevelopment project more specifically (in Chapters 5, 6, and 7). This objective is operationalised by two research sub-questions covering (1) structures power dynamics shaping different land value conceptualisations and mobilisations, and its surrounding contested environment (in Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7) and (2) agents power dynamics in shaping the same processes (explored in Chapter 8) through thematically analysing qualitative data collected from semi-structured interviews. Finally, the third objective is approached through *transcendental realism* lens (proposed by *Critical Realism* and *Islamic ontology*) by using retroductive reasoning – explained in the next subsection – in identifying intangible/incorporeal land values (1) mobilised by informal structures (influenced by the informal community of El-Warraq Island) and (2) mobilised by implicit reasoning for urban redevelopment deducted from analysing officials/experts' inconsistent narratives (explored in Chapters 7 and 8). Table 3.2 summarises the research operational objectives and corresponding sub-questions discussed above.

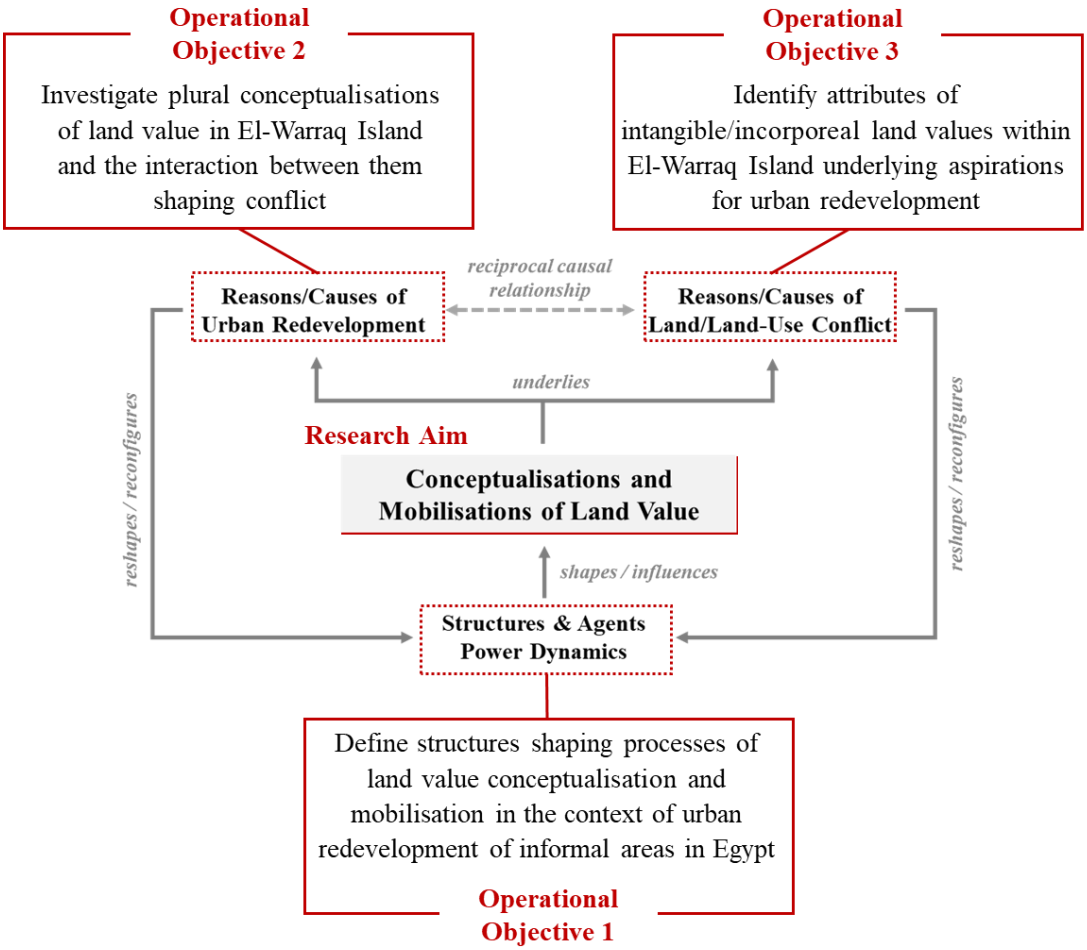

Fig. (3- 3) Research Operational Objectives in the Conceptual Framework
Source: Designed by Author

Table (3- 2) Research Operational Objectives and Corresponding Sub-Questions
Source: Developed by Author

Research Objectives	Research Sub-Questions
1. Define the structures shaping processes of land value conceptualisation and mobilisation in the context of urban redevelopment of informal areas in Egypt.	1.1 How did the role/meaning of land change historically with political and socio-economic transformations in Egypt? 1.2 What are the prevailing ideologies, discourses, narratives, and practices in determining land development policies and distribution of land rights in Egypt? 1.3 What are the power dynamics between different institutions shaping urban practice in Egypt?
2. Investigate plural conceptualisations of land value in El-Warraq Island and the interaction between them shaping urban conflict	2.1 How is the concept of land value understood and developed in different narratives and discourses (economic, political, social, and environmental) in El-Warraq Island? 2.2 How is the concept of land value understood and developed by different agents/ stakeholders having uneven power relations?
3. Identify intangible/incorporeal land values attributes within El-Warraq Island underlying aspirations for its urban redevelopment.	3.1 How is land value conceptualised and mobilised in informal communities? 3.2 What attributes of social/intangible land values were considered/dismissed in the redevelopment project of El-Warraq Island?

3.2.1 Case Study Research: Criteria, Potentials, and Challenges

Qualitative research provides appropriate tools for in-depth analysis required to address the complexity and nuances of the subject matter; however, the multiplicity of variables affecting conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value, as illustrated in literature, requires a bounded context for investigation (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Case study research is appropriate for focusing the scope of investigation and allowing an in-depth examination for processes and dynamics entailed by the main and operational research questions, as they are mostly *"how"* questions (Yin, 2009). The case study in this intensive research is instrumental (Stake, 1995) where the focus is on the processes and mechanisms of events shaping the phenomenon under inquiry rather than an intrinsic interest in the case itself (Zucker, 2016). Accordingly, there are three aspects considered for case-study selection criteria.

First, the case needed to provide a context of land value conflict and compromise between different stakeholders with uneven power relations, making underlying intangible values, their hierarchy, and their generative structures more explicit for observation and analysis. Urban redevelopment of informal areas provides this context where debates around the "*highest and best use"* of land versus balancing profitable and non-profitable land uses are usually present. Further, as discussed in Chapter 2, informal inhabitants are usually overpowered by governing authorities and/or private developers in processes of negotiating their rights during the redevelopment. Secondly, the case needed to be in a context that is familiar and accessible to the researcher (in terms of language, embodied belief systems, and culture) as interpretations for underlying meanings and connotations in statements/narratives are required to understand how land value is conceptualised by interviewed participants. The Greater Cairo Region (GCR) in Egypt (the birthplace and hometown of the researcher) provided this context where the researcher has

some degree of familiarity with nuances in the responses of participants; the historical and cultural backgrounds; and sources of required information needed for context analysis. Finally, the case needed to have definitive spatial/geographical boundaries to limit the affecting variables and allow for a comprehensive study for all relevant parameters affecting conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value within the available time and resources for this thesis. El-Warraq Island redevelopment project fits this criterion as it is an isolated island in the Nile River located in GCR, Egypt.

There are certain potentials and limitations that accompany doing research in the Egyptian context in general, and El-Warraq Island redevelopment project in particular. On one hand, selection of the case study in Egypt facilitated research work for the Egyptian researcher in terms of accessibility to information, appropriate identification of research risks, and familiarity with geographical context and language. Thus, the researcher did not have to plan for visa application, accommodation, and/or internal travelling saving more time to research work. Furthermore, the researcher did not need to hire an assistant researcher, interpreter, travel agent, or any kind of escort for safety reasons, saving more financial resources and time for participants' recruitment. On the other hand, under the current regime, Egyptian authorities have added many restrictions – for political reasons – on research work, especially when it comes to investigating government projects. Besides the poor documentation of government work, many of the written resources are not available on public domain. This required the researcher to visit the issuing entities for any needed documents and request them personally, which may or may not be approved. Furthermore, redevelopment projects in Egypt are not typical in their processes; thus, it is challenging to conduct comparative case study. Projects are dependent on typology of informality; history and location of informal areas; and the involved stakeholders among other aspects. Thus, the researcher chose to conduct a single case study rather than multiple cases that do not have comparable factors (Yin, 2009).

On a more focused scope, El-Warraq Island redevelopment project had several potentials besides being a spatially isolated location providing a bounded system/context for investigation. The first potential was the progression status of the redevelopment project as negotiations between inhabitants and government were occurring during data collection, allowing the researcher to discuss meanings and interpretations of land value from both perspectives while the contestation was feeding the participants' responses. Secondly, the controversial history of the redevelopment project provoked theoretical debates around the value of development/redevelopment and land rights – between formal and informal practices – and the triggers of land-use conflict between different uses (agricultural and urban) and different values (economic, political, social, and environmental). The initial investigation for the case study showed that El-Warraq Island held an economic value as a prime location, a political value as a National strategic location, a social value as the home for its vulnerable community for around two centuries, and an environmental value as a declared natural reserve for 19 years. Thus, the island is representative for the plurality of values in contestation within urban practices.

On the limitation side, El-Warraq Island redevelopment project information is not listed on the public domain for redevelopment projects. There was no official information about the project plan, feasibility study, planning consultancy office, or public and private entities/individuals involved in the project. The available information about the redevelopment project was found on newspapers, social media platforms (Facebook), and unreliable web pages providing contradictory and non-cited information. Moreover, only one academic thesis was found investigating the redevelopment project and it did not have all required information (Bassam, 2018). However, the scattered information found in these resources were used to explore narratives of conflict around the redevelopment project that escalated into violent disputes between the government officials (and police forces) and inhabitants where land valuation was the key problem. Also, the social media platforms on Facebook were used to contact the inhabitants of the island through their social groups which facilitated recruitment of gatekeepers (Zucker, 2016). The researcher accessed information about possible stakeholders from her previous contacts recruited during her earlier research work and was successful in finding relevant stakeholders through snowballing techniques.

3.2.2 Qualitative Research and Retroductive Reasoning

For case study research, extensive mixed methods in both data collection and analysis are usually the recommended methodologies (Creswell and Clark, 2018; Creswell and Poth, 2016; Stake, 1995). Thus, three scales of investigation were targeted: macro-scale focusing on Egyptian context, miso-scale focusing on GCR context, and micro-scale focusing on El-Warraq Island redevelopment context. Data collection and analysis accordingly was divided into three scales working simultaneously and feeding each other. The macro-scale investigation relied on literature, document, and contextual analysis for urban policies, laws, standards, and regulations in Egyptian context, while miso-scale investigation relied on quantitative data collected by means of an online survey distributed on urban academics and practitioners living in GCR. Meanwhile, the micro-scale investigation relied on collected data from redevelopment project documents (strategic plan and feasibility study), field visits, and conducted semi-structured interviews with project stakeholders. However, the findings of the miso-scale investigation (the analysis of the quantitative data) were found redundant to the findings of the contextual analysis on the macro-scale (the Egyptian context) and slightly generic compared with the findings of the micro-scale (El-Warraq Island context).

Thus, the findings of the quantitative data analysis were moved to Appendix I[1] and the research focused on the case study as a unit of analysis. The macro-scale investigation is discussed in Chapter 4 introducing land value mobilisations within the Egyptian context, while the micro-scale investigation is discussed in Chapters 5, 6, and 7 focusing on El-Warraq Island. In Chapter 8, both investigations are discussed/synthesised under one theoretical framework identifying possible generalizable findings. Data collection was divided into four consequent stages: official documents and discourses, quantitative data, contextual/field data, and qualitative data. For data analysis, the research initially adopted sequential explanatory mixed-method approach and retroductive reasoning compatible with the chosen theoretical grounding, *Critical Realism*. Sequential explanatory mixed method requires quantitative data collection and analysis to be conducted prior to qualitative data collection and analysis (Fetters, Curry and Creswell, 2013), while retroductive reasoning requires inference from observed to unobserved mechanisms like inference from actual phenomena to structural causes (Bhaskar, 2017). Accordingly, the research used the survey initial findings to predict possible implicit causal mechanisms of land value conflict in El-Warraq Island (following retroductive reasoning) prior to designing the semi-structured interviews. However, the findings of the qualitative analysis provided a more detailed and deeper understanding of those causal mechanisms than the ones provided by the quantitative analysis. The research chose an embedded analysis approach for the chosen case study rather than a holistic one (Creswell and Poth, 2016) as the analysis was only concerned with aspects regarding land value, development, and conflict, sidelining other fields of study in the redevelopment project.

- ***Official Documents and Discourses***

The first stage focused on designating, clustering, and documenting official discourses and legal documents related to land management and valuation in Egypt. The first source was an unpublished document named "Mapping the Legal Framework Governing Urban Development in Egypt" that was prepared by the UN-Habitat Egyptian office – Urban Policies, Governance and Legislation Program – in 2015 that had a documentation for all laws and regulations related to urban development in Egypt. The researcher acquired this document during her previous work with the office on the Land Readjustment program in 2018. The second source is the official online platforms that have organisational structures, codes of conduct, report releases, and official announcements for projects, plans, and policies. The data was collected from official websites of Cairo, Giza, and Qalyubia governorates; New Urban Communities Authority (NUCA); National Service Project Organisation (NSPO);

[1] Reader Note: All underlined words referring to appendices/sections in this thesis are automatically linked with their position in the thesis for convenience.

General Organisation of Physical Planning (GOPP); Information and Decision Support Centre (IDSC), Informal Settlements Development Fund (ISDF)[1], and Central Authority of Public Mobilisation, and Statistics (CAPMAS).

The third source for documented information is a private research platform run by independent urban planners, architects, and academics called TADAMUN. Other documents were tracked down from other sources on formal online media and the official newspaper that releases all laws, regulations, and executive orders called *Al-Waqa'i' al-Misriyya* [Egyptian Facts]. In Chapter 4, the date and arguments within those resources were analysed in comparison (1) to one another, (2) to conducted valid research work on land management and development in Egypt, and (3) to published information on official media platforms. Several inconsistencies were found due to the existence of asymmetrical information and data around land valuation, markets, economic strategies, and urban development projects – including El-Warraq Island – as it will be furtherly discussed in the next chapter.

- ***Quantitative Data Collection & Analysis (Survey)***

Initial data gathered from the first phase – along with literature review – provided sufficient information about dynamics of land development in GCR and presented some factors that could be affecting the conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value in Egypt. The second stage used this information to design an online survey to collect quantitative data focusing on how actors involved in urban practice in Egypt perceive the concept of land value, compare different components of land value, value/evaluate different land uses and different land management practices, and how they associate land value with other concepts like power, identity, belonging, …etc. From the initial results of the electronic survey, an updated translated version was designed specifically for the inhabitants of El-Warraq Island. This survey was shorter, had less open-ended questions, less academic terminologies (and some slang), and more contextually driven options for multiple choice questions. Since 53% of the island's population were illiterate (Sites, 2019), the researcher decided to physically disseminate and help participants in answering the written survey. This process was used to build rapport with the inhabitants of the island and recruit participants for the in-depth interview phase.

However, in early stages of data collection, the researcher realised that the inhabitants were more drawn in answering open-ended questions than closed-ended questions to express their opinions about the subject matter. After one month, only 16 questionnaires were filled as each one took between 1 to 4 hours to complete, depending on the level of details participants wanted to discuss while responding to survey questions. Accordingly, the researcher decided to move to the next stage of in-depth interviews and give the link to an online version of the written survey to those who preferred (and could) answer the questions online. This added another 5 participants which made the total number of field survey participants (21) which is not representative for El-Warraq Island population. The quantitative analysis from both the online and El-Warraq Island surveys were used only as insights for possible explanations for the quantitative data collected, so they will not be discussed in this research.

- ***Field Visits & Contextual Analysis***

The third stage in the data collection is conducted through 23 field visits to El-Warraq Island held in the span of four months between 19th June and 7th October 2021. The first visit was planned with the gatekeeper at the beginning of June and was postponed repeatedly due to his personal commitments. The gatekeeper was earlier identified and contacted through a Facebook social group for the inhabitants of the island on September 7th, 2020. He was the admin of the group and he responded to the message showing interest in helping the researcher in her work. For safety reasons, the researcher did not want to explore the island on her own due to the tense situation caused by the conflict between the inhabitants and the government, especially within an isolated island where she would be easily identified as an outsider, and accordingly a probable threat for the inhabitants. Earlier to the first visit to the island, the researcher drove around the borders of the island as shown in Figure 3.4 from the East and

[1] Now known as Urban Development Fund (UDF)

West banks of the Nile through the surrounding vehicle roads to identify the access points to the island through ferry boats (route A & B) as well as crossing over the island using both Rod El-Farag Axis (Tahya Masr Bridge) and Ring Road Axis Bridge to check the access status from the bridges (route C). Photographs for the island were taken from those routes along with some field notes on traffic status and access points surrounding the island.

Fig. (3- 4) Field Visit Vehicle Routes Circulating El-Warraq Island
Source: Designed by Author based on Google Earth Satellite Images

The island has six bays for ferries, all having police security check points, and they are hardly recognizable from the roads – there are no signage or landmarks visible from the vehicle roads that indicates there is an access bay in this location. The locations for the bays are identified in Figure 3.5, where there are five bays for the inhabitants/visitors of the island (3 only pedestrian access and 2 have pedestrian and vehicle access) and one bay restricted for the government officials, police forces, and project executives on the West bank. As the island is located between the three governorates of GCR, two of the ferry boats on the East bank connects the island with Shubra El- Kheima District in Qalyubia governorate, three connects the island with El-Warraq District in Giza governorate from the West, and one ferryboat connects the island from the North to El-Qanater El-Khayreya Centre (rural area on the fringe of GCR) – in Qalyubia governorate[1]. The island has no access from the Ring Axis Bridge, but it has a partially executed vehicle access/exit from Tahya Masr Bridge from Rod El-Farag Axis.

[1] Both Giza and Qalyubia governorates have rural areas that are not considered part of the metropolitan capital (the Greater Cairo Region (GCR)). El-Warraq Island was part of E-Warraq District where it followed the jurisdiction of the urban boundaries of Giza Governorate, making it part of GCR. This changed after the redevelopment project as will be explained later.

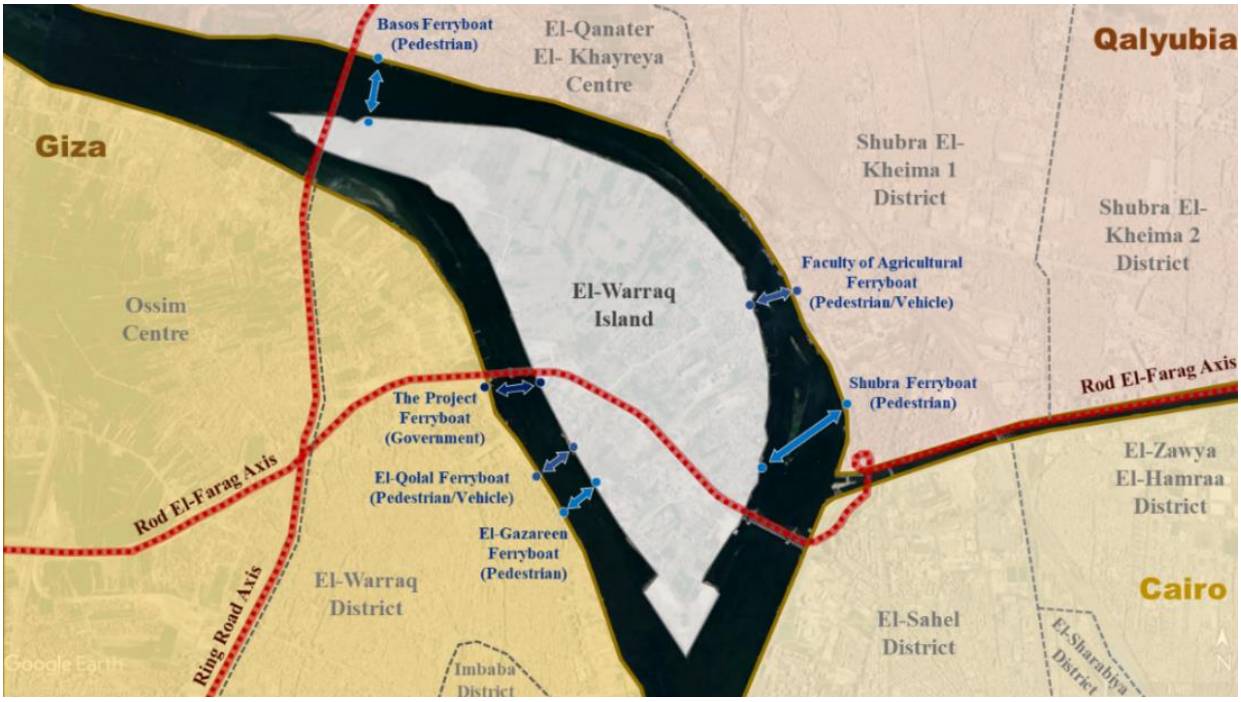

Fig. (3- 5) El-Warraq Ferryboats and Surrounding Districts
Source: Designed by Author based on Google Earth Satellite Images

Fig. (3- 6) Field Visit Paths and Venues in El-Warraq Island
Source: Designed by Author based on Google Earth Satellite Images

During the first visit to the island, the researcher entered the island from the Faculty of Agriculture Ferryboat by vehicle to the first interview venue – an open local cafeteria – using the identified car path in Figure 3.6 (Car Path 1). The researcher used her second set-up meeting with the Head of New El-Warraq Island in the authority office building to explore accessible remote/abandoned areas in the island and agricultural lands in the North (Car Path 2). The researcher used her initial introduction to some of the inhabitants of the island during her first visit and the same venue (the cafeteria) to recruit participants for the survey. This stage was instrumental in building rapport with the inhabitants of the island, exploring the built environment and activities through the walk routes, and finding proper venues for the semi-structured interviews as well as another gatekeeper because the first recruited gatekeeper was unable to deliver according to personal circumstances. There were several limitations that prevented conducting more field visits, covering some areas in the island, or extending the overall field work period in Egypt that will be furtherly discussed in Section 3.2.3. Figure 3.6 shows the researcher's driven/walked routes inside the island, the used access/exit points to/from the island, the locations of the venues where the semi-structured interviews were conducted, and the original Google Earth satellite image used for recording the visited locations in the island (on the bottom left corner). Further contextual analysis is provided in the following chapters.

- ***Qualitative Data Collection & Analysis (Semi-Structured Interviews)***

Lastly, qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews with stakeholders involved in El-Warraq Island redevelopment project. The researcher chose to work with semi-structured interviews as a complementary tool for the quantitative, contextual, and secondary documented data gathered in the previous stages. As there are definitive topics that the research is concerned with regarding the case study, it was required for the interviews to be relatively structured according to themes of investigation but at the same time have flexibility that allows for latent and emerging themes to be explored during the conversations with stakeholders (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Maxwell, 2021). There are three identified groups for this stage which are (1) the inhabitants of the island, (2) the consultancy agencies and architecture/urban offices involved in planning the project, and (3) the executives and officials involved in actualizing the project on ground. The researcher used snowballing techniques in identifying the participants of semi-structured interviews (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009) because there was no official documentation for the involved actors in the project. The interview guideline was designed based on the initial results from secondary data analysis, online/field surveys, unstructured conversations with gatekeepers along with some inhabitants, and field notes taken during initial field visits.

Two semi-structured interview guidelines were created: one for the island's inhabitants and one for the experts and officials where the designed timeframe was 45 minutes for each interview. Semi-structured interviews' themes are aimed to investigate structures shaping land formal and informal development, structures shaping land and land-use conflict, and underlying structures shaping conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value. Accordingly, the guideline for inhabitants' interviews had three main themes covering historical urban/socio-economic development of the island, aspects of land conflict throughout the redevelopment project along with community aspirations for upgrading, and land value/valuation conceptualisations within the community addressing tangible/intangible aspects. The guideline for experts' interviews had also three main themes covering rational of the redevelopment project along with its prospected impacts, rationalisation of land conflict in the light of stakeholders' power structures, and the role of land value in decision-making process reflecting on its conceptualisations and mobilisations from the perspectives of experts/officials. Table 3.3 illustrates the themes for both guidelines, their objectives, and their underlying topics discussed with recruited participants. The full versions of the guidelines are provided in Appendix II.

Table (3- 3) Semi-structured Interview Guideline Themes, Topics, and Objectives
Source: Developed by Author

Inhabitants Interview		Experts/Officials Interviews	
Theme 1: Historical Background of El-Warraq Urban and Socio-economic Development Process	**Topic 1:** History of Urban Development and Economic Structures	**Theme 1:** Rational and Impacts of El-Warraq Island Redevelopment	**Topic 1:** Redevelopment Project Objectives and the Role/ Power Structures of Stakeholders
Objective: Investigate working structures of informal development	**Topic 2:** Community Power and Social Structures	***Objective: Investigate the value of redevelopment of informal areas***	**Topic 2:** Informal Urbanism Causal Mechanisms in El-Warraq Island
Theme 2: The Redevelopment Process, Impact, Aspirations, and Land Conflict	**Topic 3:** The Redevelopment Project Narrative (Development of Land Conflict)	**Theme 2:** Rationalization of Land Conflict	**Topic 3:** Causes of Conflict and Stakeholders Role in Conflict Making/Resolution
Objective: Identify causes of conflict and prospected impacts of the redevelopment project on socio-economic structural dynamics within community	**Topic 4**: Impacts and Aspirations from Redevelopment	***Objective: Identify conceptualizations of land conflict in the context of the redevelopment project***	**Topic 4:** Land Status as a Bargaining Power and Conflict Dynamics
Theme 3: Land Value/Valuation Conceptualization	**Topic 5:** Economic/Tangible Land Values / Valuation	**Theme 3:** Land Value/Valuation Conceptualization	**Topic 5:** Economic/Tangible Land Values / Valuation
Objective: Investigate how land value is conceptualized and mobilized within the community	**Topic 6:** Social/Intangible Land Values / Valuation	***Objective: Investigate how land value is conceptualized and mobilized by experts /officials***	**Topic 6:** Social/Intangible Land Values / Valuation

Earlier conversations with inhabitants showed observable anxieties talking about the redevelopment project affiliating it with the state of conflict and violent disputes. Thus, the researcher decided to build up towards this topic by discussing what they know about the island's history. Meanwhile, discussing the rationale of the project with officials and experts was not expected to provoke tense reactions because – from earlier researcher's experience – officials and experts usually do not tend to affiliate their work with any raised conflicts maintaining positive narratives about their interventions. The researcher designed the guidelines starting with more concrete data about narratives and processes regarding the island and the redevelopment project, and then moved towards more abstract concepts regarding the meaning and role of land value from the perspective of inhabitants, experts, and officials. Participants' recruitment for semi-structured interviews of both inhabitants and experts/officials was conducted through snowballing technique and started simultaneously in September 2020.

For the inhabitants' interviews, the first gatekeeper was identified and recruited through a Facebook social group as explained earlier. Since the first gatekeeper could not deliver his promise, the researcher used her conversations with inhabitants to identify another potential gatekeeper that the inhabitants respected. Eventually, in August 2021, another gatekeeper was identified and recruited. She offered her NGO reception as a venue for conducting in-depth interviews with the inhabitants and helped the researcher in recruiting different participants. The researcher explained to the gatekeeper the need for diverse profiles of inhabitants and the gatekeeper accordingly suggested possible participants. Thus, stratified random sampling was conducted for the inhabitants' interviews where the agreed upon participants were contacted by the gatekeeper, gave their initial approval, and agreed to a meeting date. Some of those participants suggested and recruited others to participate in the research. Due to time

limitations and inability to properly plan those interviews because of conflict ramifications in the island, the researcher had a mix between individual and group interviews. From 49 interviews, only 11 of them were individual while the rest was either a group interview of 2 participants (4 interviews), of 3 participants (6 interviews), or of 4 participants (3 interviews). The demographics of the 49 interviewed inhabitants are represented in Figure 3.7.

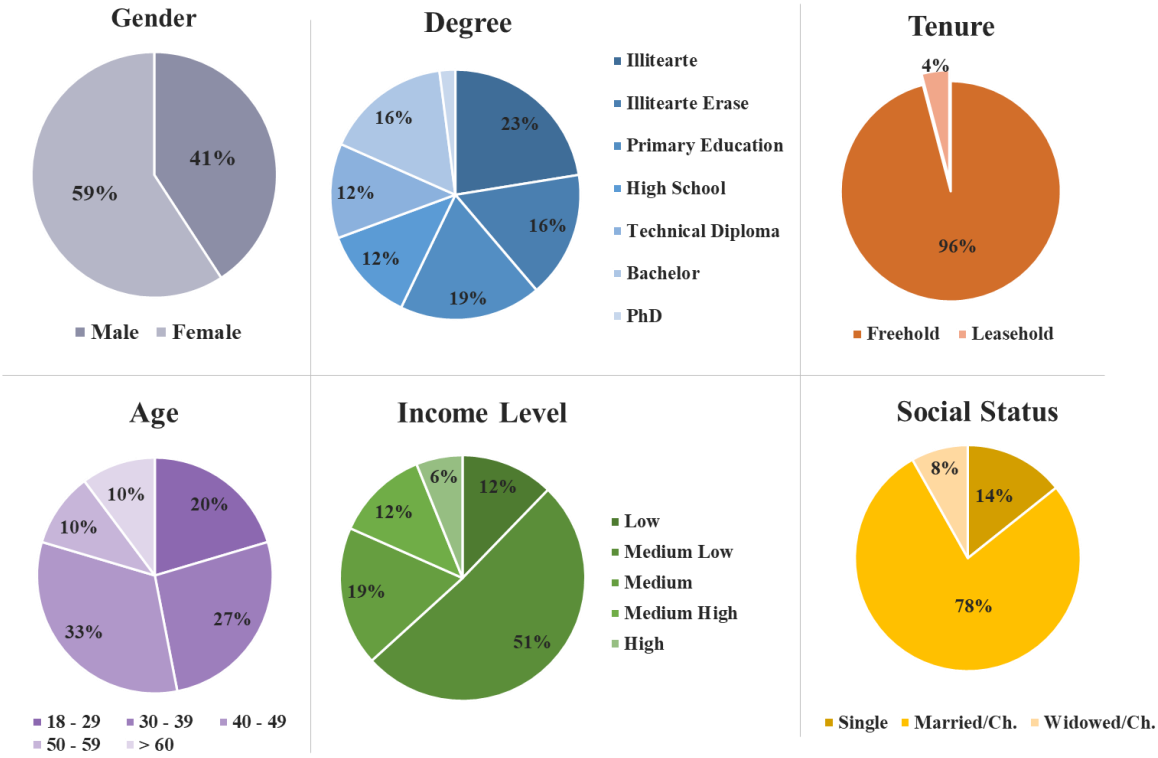

Fig. (3- 7) Inhabitants Semi-Structured Interviews Demographics Profile[1]
Source: Developed by Author based on Google Earth Satellite Images

One of the challenges of group interviews is that in some cases there is a dominant participant who overpowers the conversation and controls the narrative – whether because of their status, gender, or temperament. However, one of the potentials of group interviews in a contested context is that it provides a setting where root causes for conflict arises from arguing debatable topics (Gibbs, 2012) which is a needed setting for the subject matter. Accordingly, the researcher mitigated prospected attitudes when appeared allowing different participants to share their opinions – giving voice to the least participating ones – and at the same time allowing participants to have a contested conversation about what are the causes of conflict with the government and what are the attributes that identify land value from their perspective without much interference from the researcher side.

Meanwhile, the 10 semi-structured interviews with experts/officials were individual, yet half of them were done through Google Meet because of COVID restrictions, as will be discussed later. Convenience sampling was done for recruiting experts/officials – which is compatible with case study research (Yin, 2009) – after communicating with a former colleague of the researcher working in UN-Habitat local office in Cairo. The researcher had also other connections from her past research work and her current position working in Ain Shams University. Snowballing technique was used to identify, contact, and recruit relevant stakeholders, as represented in Figure 3.8. However, some of the participants refused to participate in the research – after initial agreement – due to topic

[1] Categorization of income levels is done through a matrix developed by the author and elaborated in Appendix II

sensitivity (from their perspective) as discovered later in the field work and other communication details provided to the researcher for other relevant stakeholders were not operating.

As the case study was only instrumental for the research (Creswell and Poth, 2016) and also due to time limitations and security risks in the field work, the researcher decided not to furtherly pursue those stakeholders. However, the qualitative analysis acknowledged absence of narratives from relevant stakeholders like participants from Military Survey Authority, project private consultancy office (Sites International), Survey Public Consultancy Office (Ain Shams University), Registry Authority, Local Authority, and private construction companies. Relevant documents to the redevelopment project were requested and acquired from experts/officials during their interviews. Because interviews with inhabitants and experts/officials were conducted simultaneously, the researcher was able to reflect and adapt interview questions according to acquired data from both sides. However, the researcher was cautious not to transfer information across her participants to protect vulnerable ones from further oppression and avoid escalation of conflict.

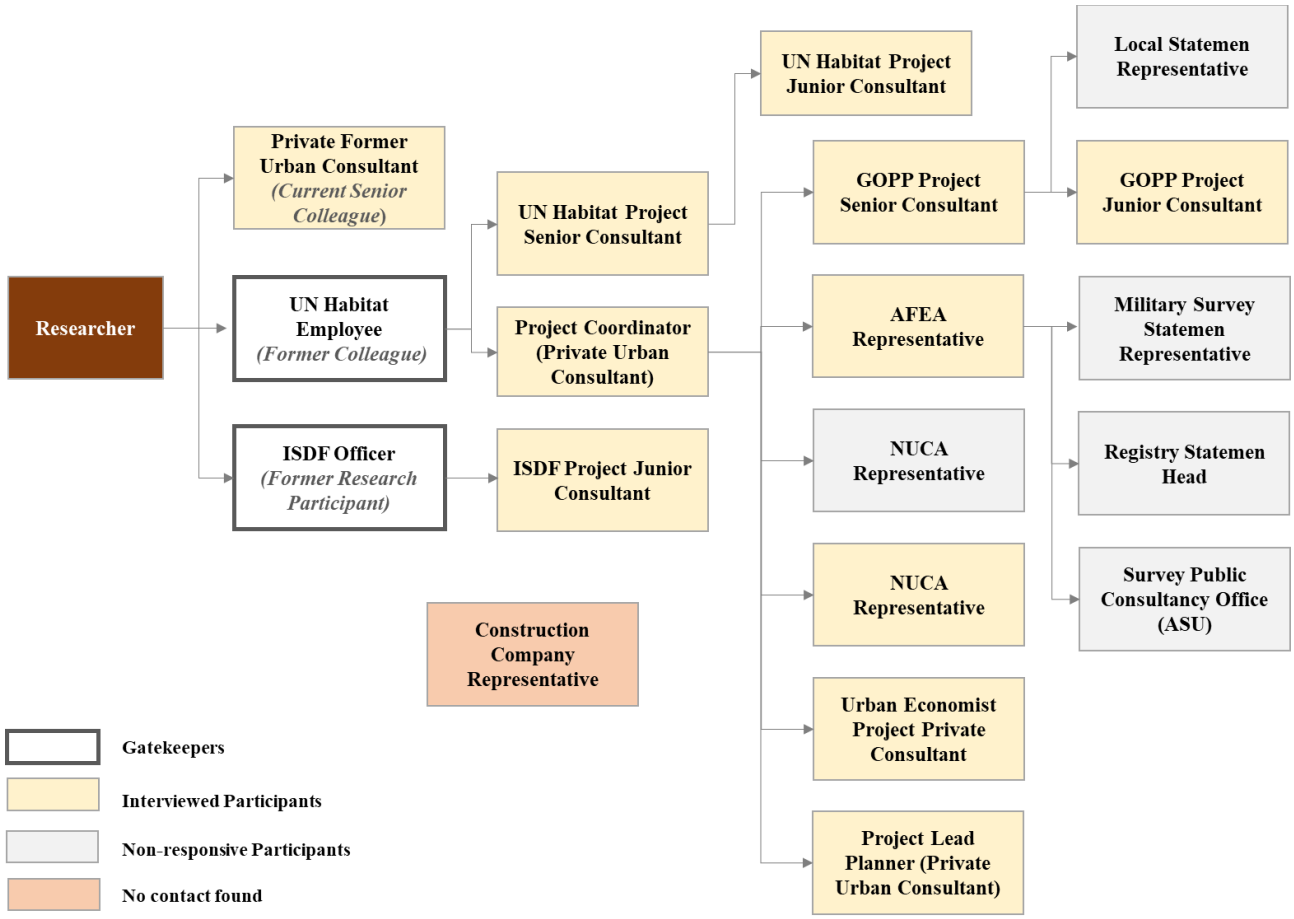

Fig. (3- 8) Snowballing Process for Experts/Officials Semi-Structured Interviews
Source: Developed by Author

Transcription of semi-structured interviews occurred after the full process of data collection saving time for collecting primary data in a limited timeframe. The researcher chose to translate the interviews while transcribing them – saving time for analysis – and adding reflective comments along the transcription and a final reflection for the full interview at the end of each one, which eventually guided the research initial findings. Verbatim transcriptions were followed for experts/officials' interviews as the researcher considers their statements as the official narrative for the redevelopment project. However, inhabitants' interviews were transcribed in a less verbatim way for two main reasons. First, the researcher censored all possible identifiable data to provide maximum security for her participants who shared personal information during the interview. Second, inhabitants' interviews were conducted in a slightly less formal language – slang Egyptian dialectic – where its translation

into comprehensible English language was challenging and time-consuming. However, inhabitants' quotes cited in the analytical chapters are transcribed as verbatim as possible because interpretations of underlying meanings in their narratives are crucial in understanding conceptualisations of land value from community's perspective.

Interpretive thematic data analysis was conducted for interviews to identify latent themes crosscutting the predefined categorical themes (economic, political, social, and environmental) which were deducted from literature review. The researcher chose to work with interpretative thematic data analysis as it allows exploring values and meanings beyond the semantics (Braun and Clarke, 2006) which would help in identifying the underlying causal structures of land value conceptualisation and mobilisation. From a realist constructionism perspective (entailed by critical realism), retroductive reasoning required having an analytical initial demarcation for some of possible sub-themes within the four categorical themes identified in the literature. Those sub-themes were determined from synthesising interviews' initial reflections, field visits observations, and secondary data (project documents, policy papers, and strategic plans). As there were not enough recognition for environmental structures in the initial findings of the semi-structured interviews, the researcher divided the analysis files into only three main themes (economic, political, and social) and recategorized any quotes regarding environmental structures as subset of one of those three themes (like socio-environmental structures, environmental economy structures, and environmental politics structures). The initial predefined themes are presented in Appendix II.

3.2.3 Ethics, Positionality, and Research Limitations

In the process of research design, some ethical considerations were identified and discussed with the researcher's supervisors, ethics committee, risk assessment officer, and data management plan reviewer under the authority of University of Sheffield. However, during the field work, some other ethical issues emerged, and further measures were taken by the researcher to abide with research ethics and mitigate emerging limitations. These decisions were made with the assistance of the supervisors and the program director at the time as the research team agreed that the number of changes occurred did not require another ethics application. This section covers the most important ethical considerations with their reflection on research limitations, research risks, and researcher's positionality. They are clustered in the following four topics:

1. Field Work Ethics in the Time of COVID
2. Data Collection in Zones of Violent Conflict
3. Mitigating Project Political Sensitivity
4. Gender and Interior/Exterior Researcher Positionality

First, the field work was supposed to start in December 2020, but there were delays in the researcher's security clearance – for unknown reasons – which was welcomed by the researcher due to her concern about going to the field in the pandemic. Eventually, field work started in June 2021 where COVID-19 restrictions were lowered in Egypt; however, the researcher was only given by the Egyptian authorities 4 months to finish her field work and go back to Sheffield. As there was still a risk of being infected, the researcher needed to take safety measures for her participants and herself. The researcher took several PCR tests, got vaccinated, and planned for her interviews with the officials/experts to be conducted online through Google Meet. However, there were limitations for committing fully with planned safety measures.

One limitation was that some of the officials refused to conduct online interviews due to their concern about online platforms' security. They wanted to have full control of the interview environment as they had suspicions about the researcher's intentions and usage of information, and wanted to control what was being recorded. Another limitation was the inability to conduct interviews with inhabitants online – because of poor internet access in the island – or to conduct phone interviews alternatively because many inhabitants either did not have cellular phones/landlines or feared that their phones were tapped by the government. Consequently, the researcher had to conduct face-to-face interviews while abiding by social distancing and face covering. The researcher also carried

extra facial masks and antiviral disinfecting products to distribute among her participants, requesting them to follow safeguarding behaviour. However, this also was problematic in the island because many inhabitants did not follow – and did not want to follow – safeguarding measures to protect themselves from the pandemic. This is probably due to lack of awareness and poor official monitoring for COVID countermeasures application in the premise of the island. As soon as inhabitants went into the ferryboat, they took off their facial masks and did not comply with social distancing procedures. One inhabitant reflected upon this saying that they consider the island and its people as their isolated home, where they can no longer fear being infected with the virus. Thus, there was no success in convincing the inhabitants to take safety measures during the interviews and the researcher had to choose between working in those circumstances or finding different alternatives for primary data collection.

The researcher chose to conduct the interviews within those conditions, keeping her safety measures intact, while minimising her field visits by favouring group interviews at the expense of individual ones. Also, the researcher minimised her field walks in condensed agglomerations. Problematically, those measures did not help the researcher to avoid infection as she suffered from COVID-19 symptoms in the middle of her fieldwork which caused delays in her field work. Working in the time of COVID was challenging and needed proper reflection from the researcher on her daily mental health and anxiety/depression levels so that her mental and physical status did not affect her judgemental rationality in the process of data collection or analysis. Keeping a reflective diary and continuous communication with family, friends, and colleagues were appropriate tools that helped mitigate the risks. However, the researcher was aware that her mental well-being affected her data collection phase, as in many times the researcher felt reluctant to go to the island or spend longer times in the field, minding the risks of being there. However, with the help of the research team, the researcher was able to accept those limitations in her field work and make the best out of the collected data.

Secondly, the conflict context that was required for investigating intangible/implicit meanings of land value carried some challenges as well in the field work. This ethics issue was flagged in the earlier research design phase which allowed the researcher to take precautions for avoiding any security troubles. The researcher applied for relevant security clearances, had full disclosure in information sheets and consent forms, and avoided commenting on any of the dispute news on social media so as not to be flagged as biased (having a position from the conflict) by any of her participants. However, the state of conflict raised sceptical attitudes from both the inhabitants and officials – as shown earlier – towards outsiders. Accordingly, none of the participants on both sides agreed to sign written consent, some of participants refused to have phone or online interviews, and few refused to have audio-recording for the interviews (2 officials and 5 inhabitants), thus the verbal audio-recorded consents were not taken in those latter cases. Also, some approached inhabitants felt suspicious and uncomfortable participating, fearing legal ramification or retribution from authorities, yet few of them got encouraged later by the involvement of other inhabitants. They wanted, however, to have individual interviews with no audio recording. Extra measures were taken in the field to address escalating state of conflict between different parties.

One measure was the researcher's cautious behaviour in representing herself (and her research) as impartial, distancing herself from both government practices and inhabitants' actions. A second measure was during the first visit to El-Warraq Island where the researcher accompanied the first gatekeeper who introduced her and her research to other inhabitants while familiarising her with the context/community and signposting possible risks. The third measure was taken later on when the researcher used to contact the second gatekeeper every time before visiting the island to make sure there was no uprising or violent disputes; thus, avoid being accidently involved in protests. As there was no public warning information before police raids, the researcher had to rely on the gatekeeper to give her firsthand information about any expected disputes. Furthermore, there were other measures carried out to mitigate the emotional distress of the vulnerable group (inhabitants) caused by the state of conflict. For example, when some inhabitants showed signs of emotional distress during the interview, the researcher stopped the interview, allowing them to either express their emotions freely without asking them further questions or walk away if they wanted. Also, many of the group interviews were allowed to have non-audio-recorded side conversations between participants where they provided support and condolence to one another. That

problematically increased the planned duration of some interviews which affected the number of interviews conducted per day, but this was needed for ethical consideration.

Thirdly, an unexpected challenge was identified during the fieldwork which was the political sensitivity of the redevelopment project due to the involvement of the Armed Forces Engineering Authority (AFEA) as a key stakeholder. There was no published information about their involvement; thus, this was not initially identified as one of the research's limitations/risks. This emerging challenge provoked the risk of misinterpretation of researcher's objectives where it would be perceived as direct criticism for the governing regime and a threat for national security by sharing information with a foreign country (UK). Accordingly, the researcher had to keep a low profile as long as possible to avoid conflict with security forces in the island who would suspect her security clearance or ask her to get a military one (which is not feasible). Within the Egyptian context, there were reported cases of misunderstandings between police forces and researchers in informal areas as researchers were misidentified as reporters or social media bloggers. The security forces usually suspect any data collection activities especially in areas of conflict where the military is involved. Another limitation was the accessibility to reliable documented information about the redevelopment project, especially regarding the negotiations with the inhabitants, as all this information was considered official secrets and required high clearance to be examined. However, the researcher was able to acquire partial documents from GOPP and UN-Habitat that were not considered a security threat.

Meanwhile, the researcher had to take some extra measures for the safety of herself and her participants. First, the researcher agreed initially with the experts/officials to use their names and affiliations in her research; however, throughout the analysis process of transcripts, the researcher found that some of the shared information and critical statements to the high authority practices could harm her participants if they went public. Accordingly, the researcher anonymized their names and positions within the institutions they represented. Second, interviews with participants from military backgrounds were postponed to the very end of the field work to avoid any ramifications of their meetings on the totality of the field work, which luckily did not happen. Third, the researcher avoided taking pictures of any location in the island that had police forces. That included the ferryboats entrances from the main roads, the alternative housing project in the island from inside, and under Tahya Masr Bridge. The researcher was in fact stopped while taking photos from above the bridge – overseeing the island – by the police forces even though she had security clearance and there was no signage forbidding photography. However, the police forces did not confiscate the taken photos or forbid using them in the research.

Finally, the last topic in research ethical considerations was the researcher's gender identity and her insider/outsider positionality from the project. On the one hand, being a female researcher within the field study context had some potentials and some limitations. On the positive side, there was an observable protective attitude towards the researcher from many participants (inhabitants, officials, and experts) which reduced suspicious and aggressive attitudes usually reported towards researchers working in contested contexts. This encouraged the participants to be more open in their conversations with the researcher (especially female participants) as her gender implied that she is not threatening or harmful (as females in Egyptian context are considered more vulnerable than their male counterparts (Wahdan, 2021)). For example, the second gatekeeper, who was also a female, wanted to protect the researcher from wandering alone around the island at night (even though she claimed the island safe for females) and advised the researcher not to work after dark – as recommended by other inhabitants as well – for more safety. The only time the researcher had to wait for one participant after dark, the gatekeeper insisted on walking her out of the island to make sure the researcher left safely. On the negative side, this brought limitations to data collection, where almost all interviews were conducted in daytime, which means many of male inhabitants were not available to participate. The researcher planned to go on weekends to overcome this challenge, but inhabitants usually used this timing to protest against the government practices which made this plan inapplicable.

On the other hand, the researcher had a middle insider/outsider positionality to her field context. The researcher shared a common language, culture, and religion with her participants. She also shared the academic background – being an architect/urban planning consultant – with the experts of the project, making her familiar with terminologies used, practices usually followed, and legal framework for those practices. However, the researcher is an urban dweller; thus, does not share the same lifestyle and societal values of the rural ones (like the island's inhabitants). The isolation of the island maintained the rural character of the people despite being in the middle of urban Cairo. This caused some judgemental attitude from some of the inhabitants towards the researcher because she was a single middle-aged female working on her own in an unfamiliar context and talking with complete strangers which is quite controversial in a male-dominated community. However, there were no acts of explicit harassment that made the researcher uncomfortable to the level of fearing her safety. On the contrary, the inhabitants' sense of having an outsider searching for values in their lives, made them keener to signpost differences between rural and urban life, showing supremacy of their ways in living.

In conclusion, working in the pandemic along with restrictions of working in conflict context mitigating the political sensitivity of the redevelopment project had caused time and accessibility limitations to certain extent. It had also made the researcher consider embargoing her thesis for a year if the conflict is still violent and ongoing at the time of the publication (which is not the case right now). For further protection of the participants, the researcher decided not to use official/experts names (even though they gave their consent for it) and removed all personal identifiers (and narratives) of inhabitants from all written and audio recordings. On another note, being a female researcher helped avoiding clashes with inhabitants and/or officials as their protective attitude (and in some cases condescending behaviour like mansplaining and patriarchal ones) made them perceive the researcher as a vulnerable actor which needed to be educated about the value of things, the evilness of the other side, and possible misinterpretations of the situation.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter's aim was to describe and justify the research conceptual framework, operationalisation of used concepts, research design including methods for data collection and analysis, and define research ethical considerations and limitations. The first section explored how pluralist pragmatic value theory, realist constructionism, critical realism, and Islamic ontology have influenced operationalisation of value, power, structures, and agents in the context of investigation. It showed how the research stratified analytically land value into four components (market, strategic, social, and environmental) and the corresponding structures into four thematic ones (economic, political, social, and environmental). The structures were also operationalised through elements within them (ideologies, discourses/narratives, institutions, relationships, and dynamics/mechanisms) showing how each element could be identified within the thematic categorization of those structures. The second section explored how intensive case-study research was the justifiable research approach for investigating how land value is conceptualised and mobilised in urban practice. The research operationalised the aim by focusing the scope of the investigation on how land value is conceptualised and mobilised in a context of uneven power relations within a setting of urban conflict between different agents and structures. Then, the research question, influenced by the empirical domain of study, was framed around how land value is conceptualised and mobilised in urban redevelopment in informal areas in Egypt (the setting of urban conflict). The rest of the section identified the research operational questions, sub-questions, case-study selection criteria, data collection and analysis methods, and research ethical considerations and limitations shaped by the context of investigation. The next chapter investigates the macro-scale context of the redevelopment of El-Warraq Island, focusing on structures of land value conceptualisation and mobilisation by investigating the historical progression of those structures in the Egyptian setting.

CHAPTER FOUR

LAND IN EGYPTIAN CONTEXT

Since Ancient Egyptian Civilisation, Egyptian lands always held a geopolitical importance because of its pivotal location between Africa, Asia, and Europe besides having competitive advantage embedded in its land's diverse resources and potentials. Egypt was occupied accordingly by consecutive rulers who conjured their different ideologies to the Egyptian context. In some cases, the Egyptian community embraced many of these ideologies within their own discourses, culture, history, and language. Yet, land value conceptualisation and mobilisation among the Egyptian community varied depending on how far the rulers were able to promote and/or impose their ideologies to be embraced by the community. Egypt experienced multiple governance ideological transformations which affected the relationship between the land, the people, and the state, as well as the understanding of the land's meaning, role, and value to the people and state.

During the time of the Ancient Egyptians dynasties, the rulers were perceived as Gods, and accordingly, their control over the land was primarily exclusive over what was considered as a sacred territory. This legacy was adopted by the rulers who conquered the Egyptian lands later, where they took over the title of *Pharoh* and assigned themselves as Gods like in the case of the Persians in the 4th and 5th centuries BC and Alexander the Great followed by the Ptolemaic rulers in the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st centuries BC (Manning, 2003). However, when the Romans took over Egypt in 30 BC, their interaction with the Egyptian population was not as tolerant and inclusive of their culture and traditions as their predecessors. The Roman rulers were aggressive in imposing their laws and ideologies on the ruled territories. For the Romans, Egyptian lands did not hold any scared or religious meaning but were rather perceived as an economic advantage (for raising and saving crops) and as a strategic territory (for military campaigns). Most of the land in Egypt was considered in state ownership whereby private ownership was limited to the Romans and Greeks (Johnson, 1952).

The Romans discriminated against the Egyptians and denied them from many of their civil rights, and that prejudice increased after many of the Egyptians embraced the teachings of Jesus Christ (PBUH) (Donadoni, 1981). Even when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman empire in the 2nd century CE, Christian Egyptians were persecuted for following a different church. The desert lands of Egypt became the sanctuary for the fleeing Copts and Jews, and accordingly their hidden shelters became later locations/lands of great religious value to the Egyptians. When the Muslims conquered the Egyptian lands in 641 CE, they ensured the freedom of religious practice for the non-Muslim Egyptian community and restored many of their civil rights. This made the Egyptians welcome the new leaders and embrace slowly the Islamic religion which took centuries (up until the 10th century) to become the dominant religion of the country (Frantz-Murphy, 1999).

Since the 7th Century, Egypt had been a part of the Islamic State - Islamic Caliphate (*Khilāfah*) – where the successive rulers of Egyptian province always sought to establish their own dynasties on Egyptian lands – due to its geopolitical value – while maintaining allegiance with the overarching Caliphate, whatever it was at the time (Marsot, 1984)[1]. The Arabs did not have an established civilisation of their own before embracing the Islamic religion as they were sporadic tribes living on pastoral lands who did not have the skills or means of governing a society (Lapidus, 1996). However, they started slowly filtering the practised laws and management regulations in the conquered territories from the lens of Islamic teachings, which resulted in diverse practices of governance across the lands of the Islamic state. Egypt hence was governed by Muslim leaders coming from different cultural backgrounds in their ideologies and understandings of the political practice upon the people, and it experienced different variations of Islamic ideologies in understanding and mobilising land value (Frantz-Murphy, 1999). Modern Egypt however is highly influenced by the latest era of the Islamic civilisation – the Ottoman Caliphate

[1] The Islamic Caliphate was originally a democratic system where Caliphates were chosen and approved by the people. But only 30 years after the death of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH), the Islamic Caliphate became more like dynasties where families ruled the Islamic territories and inherited the rulership. These families fought among each other, where each one fought to overrule the predecessor one, and undermine his position and his governing ideology. The most famous Caliphates are the Umayyads, Abbasids, and Ottomans (Dabashi, 2017; Lapidus 1975).

– which infused many of the Turkish, French, and British ideologies with the Islamic teachings and the Egyptian traditions creating layers of complexity in understanding and mobilising land value within the Egyptian context.

Currently, Egypt is a Middle Eastern and North-African country inhabited by around 102 million people with a Muslim majority (CAPMAS, 2022). The inhabited agglomerations are mostly concentrated in around 6% of the surface area of the whole country where densities are higher around the Nile River - Delta and Nile Valley - as most of the cities and villages were developed on both sides of the riverbanks (Soliman, 2014). Since Egypt is an arid country, the Nile River is the main source of fresh water which provokes an ongoing competition of different land uses around it, especially between urban and rural land uses (Radwan *et al.*, 2019; Barthes, 2014; Salem, 2015). It could be argued that there are two key historical milestones that influenced this competition dynamics in our modern era. The first milestone is the transformation from Islamic ideology of land governance and valuation to "*Modern State*" ideology during Muhammed Ali Pasha rulership in the 19th century. The second milestone is the transformation from a unitary parliamentary constitutional monarchy to a republic state ruled by ex-military officers in 1952. Those major political transformations affected structures (ideologies, discourses, institutions, relationships, dynamics, and practices) of urban development in Egypt as latter regimes did not always completely eradicate former regimes' structures but incrementally layered further structures upon them.

This chapter aims to investigate the transformations in the conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value within the Egyptian context to understand the evolution and development of the structures that surrounded the case of land conflict in El-Warraq Island redevelopment project. The investigation accordingly tracks how different economic, political, social, and environmental structures on national level (Egypt) shaped the current contested urban environment in the Greater Cairo Region (GCR) by shaping the dynamics of land development and land conflict in a context of uneven power relations. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the transformation in land tenure systems during the dynasty of Muhammed Ali starting in 1805. It explores how the wide spectrum of land accessibility rights granted by the Islamic ideology was limited by the principles of "*Modern State"* adopted to control means of production whether by the Ottoman rulers or the British occupiers. This transformation in power dynamics is tracked further in the second section which focuses on inconsistent land development policies that were adopted by consecutive regimes of ex-military officers starting from 1952. This era experienced radical transformation between socialist, capitalist, and neoliberal policies affecting the efficiency of land governance and creating a context of land conflict between different actors. The chapter explores how practices of authoritarian state control shaped structures of urban practice, and it concludes in the third section with contextualizing the four thematic structures identified in Chapter 3; the political, economic, social, and environmental structures.

4.1 From Islamic State to Modern State: Seizing Control from the People

In the 19th century, Muhammed Ali Pasha – an Albanian military commander – was assigned by the Ottoman Caliphate to rule Egypt in 1805 after the French withdrew their forces from Egyptian territory following the failure of their military campaign in 1801 (Dodwell, 2011). Muhammed Ali was fascinated by the European model of governance at the time and started to incrementally transform the political structures in Egypt from an Islamic ideology of governance towards the Modern National State ideology of governance that was promoted in Europe after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 (Farr, 2005; Choueiri, 2013). As many of the changes he established influenced the governance systems in Egypt till date, Muhammed Ali is considered the founder of the Modern Egyptian State (Dodwell, 2011). The key ideological transformations that he made was introducing *Nationalism*, *Centralization*, and *Autocracy* to the Egyptian context with the aim to build – and control – a strong state (Marsot, 1984). These concepts reshaped the relationship between the people and the state as power and autonomy were gradually reallocated from the community to the ruling entity (Akbar, 1992).

As an ambitious imperialist ruler, Muhammed Ali made major transformations in managerial and legal systems that influenced many aspects including agriculture, industry, trade, education, religion, and military (Marsot,

1984). The major transformations aimed at gradually separating the Egyptian territory from the Othman's Caliphate, by nationalising all the assets of the Egyptian lands as well as reorganising the relationship between the people and the state. This did not only influence the socio-economic dynamics within the Egyptian context, but also the urban transformations and land development dynamics, especially within the agricultural lands (Abbas and El-Desouky, 1997). Land was one of the main national assets that Muhammed Ali focused on controlling (Cuno, 1993). The understanding of land within Islamic ideology was changing throughout the Islamic ruling periood; however, some key ideas from the fundamental Islamic ideology sustained. Fundamentally, according to Islam the land belongs only to God and human beings only have a temporary ownership/entitlement over this land linked to their ability to generate benefit from it to themselves and/or to others (Akbar, 1992). Five main types of land tenure were acknowledged accordingly in the Islamic system before Muhammed Ali (Akbar, 1992; Sait and Lim, 2006), which are:

1. ***Mulk/Melk Land***, privately-owned land acquired through direct purchase or inheritance,
2. ***Miri Land***, state-owned land or more precisely the land owned by *Bayet El-Mal* [House of Money/State Treasury] where the state is responsible for using/managing it while having the right to offer it in the private land market or transform it into public ownership or endowment,
3. ***Metruk Land***, public-owned land that is used for public services (like roads) and it is perceived as a shared property or a collective ownership,
4. ***Waqf* Land**, endowed/trust land that was originally owned by a private owner (or state) who entrusted it as a charity (like a hospital or mosque) making it *Waqf Khairy* [Charity Trust] or entrusted its revenues for a specific cause or specific group of people, like the inheritors or any other beneficiaries, making it *Waqf Ahly* [Family/People Trust], and
5. ***Mawat/Mashaa Land,*** wasted/unused/dead land that was not entitled to anyone and could be transformed into private ownership if it was reclaimed/developed by someone – an individual, collective, or the state - without the need to pay for it.

The spectrum of land tenure types was meant to assure a balanced accessibility to land for everyone promoting fair distribution of land resources among different groups in the society (Akbar, 1992). For example, the accessibility to land ownership was not restricted to those who could afford it, as anyone who could develop a *Mawat*/*Mashaa* land – either with agriculture, construction, or even digging a well – automatically gain ownership/entitlement of this land in return of their effort to revive it, a concept that is known in Islam as *Ihyaa El-Mawaat* [Reviving the Dead] (Sait and Lim, 2006). Also, the ruler also had the right to distribute ownership of *Miri* lands among those he believed would reclaim or utilise land resources in favour of the public good. He also had the authority to distribute it with either leasehold contracts or usufruct contracts (called *Iltizam* contracts) to lower/higher income groups who would then be obligated to pay either rental value or taxes on their usufruct rights, in addition to land's *Zakat* if it reached the quorum value[1] (Akbar, 1992). Furthermore, the ruler had authority to transform *Miri* lands (which were mostly agricultural and pastoral lands) into *Waqf* lands, so future generations could not sell the asset, but only its benefits. *Waqf* lands could also be offered with rental (with limited contract duration) or usufruct contracts called *Hekr* (with unlimited contract duration), as long as it followed the original owner's will for the land charity use and/or benefits distribution (Sait and Lim, 2006; Akbar, 1992; Cuno, 1993). Different tenure systems and variant alternatives for land acquisition reduced the probability of exclusion

[1] Zakat is an Islamic ritual where the rich pay an annual amount from their accumulated wealth to the poor. The quorum value for money is for the individual accumulated wealth to exceed what is equivalent to 85 grams of gold or 595 grams of silver, and the Zakat value is 2.5%. For the land, there is no Zakat if it is used as a shelter but there is if it is used as an agricultural land and the quorum value is around 65 Kilograms of the agricultural product (as its dependent on the type of product) and the Zakat value is 10% if is irrigated with rainwater and 5% if it is irrigated with other means. The money collected from Zakat were put in "the House of Money" and redistributed among the poor (Mergaliyev et al., 2021; Naqvi, 2016).

from land market and eased access to shelter, having no authoritarian restrictions on private land development, where people developed their own customary rules in building their places according to their needs (Akbar, 1992).

However, the practices of rulers – even before Muhammed Ali – attempted to disturb this balance of land accessibility by seizing more control over land resources either to accumulate necessary funds to cover their territory's expenses or to accumulate power over the governed population. For example, the understanding that the *Miri* land is actually God's land (as in it is only entitled for the ruler to manage in accordance with Islamic law (*Shariaa*) and not considered as his own property) started to blur through the ages (Cuno, 1993). Rulers attempted to increase what they considered their property (*Miri* lands) at the expense of *Waqf*, *Melk*, and *Mawat* lands. The mainstream practice earlier was that possession was enough evident for ownership, and the owner did not require a title deed to prove ownership status, while the burden of proof laid on the rulers if they aimed to seize control over the land (Akbar, 1992; AlJabarti, 1880). This thought changed through time by creation of cadastre systems and surveys, where people were required to have entitlements connected with the official registry system in order to prove their ownership status (Cuno, 1993). Those consecutive updates were not only aiming at creating a stronger base for collecting land taxes, but also a means to confiscate and reclassify different types of land tenures as state-owned lands *(Miri)*. However, the main targeted land tenure with these updated land surveys were *Waqf* lands as they were exempted from taxes. The governors always perceived *Waqf* as frozen assets that needed to be circulated within the land market, especially as *Waqf* represented around 2/5 of all lands in the early 16th century (Cuno, 1993).

Muhammed Ali had similar ambitions to his predecessors regarding increasing his control over land management in Egypt while expanding his territory through his military campaigns. Although his imperialist ambitions were stopped by pressures from the Ottoman Caliphate and the British Crown, he established his own dynasty on Egyptian lands where his family members continued to rule over Egypt – even during the British colonisation (from 1882 to 1919) and during the transformation into unitary parliamentary constitutional monarchy in 1922 under British protectorate – until the independence declaration in 1952 (Dodwell, 2011). Muhammed Ali attempted agriculture capitalism by monopolizing agriculture land market and production through different legislations that provided him with exclusive control over the trajectory of agricultural development. He invested in improving irrigation systems and agriculture production/harvesting technologies while engaging with the international crop stock market (Jakes, 2020). However, he increased taxes over different land tenure systems to fund those investments and used forced labour to execute those improvements (like digging canals) which increased the urban poor vulnerability, especially those working in agriculture lands (Cuno, 1993).

For instance, Muhammed Ali introduced a new approach to control *Waqf* lands, where he confiscated the management rights for these lands – instead of the lands themselves as what was done by his predecessors – bringing them under the state authority through the newly established General Authority of Endowments in 1835 (Cuno, 1985). This authority had – and still has – exclusive responsibility for managing *Waqf* lands and approving any transactions/contractual agreement for a surface area of around 600,000 Feddans[1] of mostly agricultural *Waqf* lands at the time (Mostafa, 2017; Tawfiq, 1998). After that, Muhammed Ali assigned taxes on *Waqf* lands (which were supposedly tax free for being non-profit lands reinvesting their revenues in charity cause) and attempted to cancel Family Trust lands wanting to rent/sell them in the market for highest bidders or capture their revenues for national funds (Marsot, 1984). Problematically, the inability of the state to effectively manage all captured lands in consecutive years led to redistribution of these lands' management rights once more on non-official actors. The family members of Muhammed Ali held around 24% of these lands as private ownership and the rest was distributed among his admirals, head officers, palace workers, and close friends (Cuno, 1993). Furthermore, when

[1] Feddan = 4200 m² = approximately 1.04 Acre

peasants deserted their agricultural lands to escape paying rising taxes, they were forced back to work as corvee farmers in the forfeited lands but under new landlords (Mostafa, 2017).

Meanwhile, some of Muhammed Ali legislations were the cornerstone for individual land property rights in Egypt, especially those related to *Mawat* land. As illustrated earlier, the people had the right to own these lands only if they were reviving it by agricultural or other development activities. In 1838, Muhammed Ali issued a law for these lands to be inherited by possessors' children and grandchildren, and only in the case of that there were no inheritors, the land would be transformed to a state *Waqf* land. Moreover, in 1842 he gave them the rights to sell, pawn, or give away the land while in 1847 he gave them the right to rent and to protect their land from trespassers (Mostafa, 2017). However, in the 1847 law, he kept the right of the state to expropriate the land for public good – building bridges or digging canals – without compensation for the person holding the land (Cuno, 1993). It could be argued that these legislations were meant to add more lands into the land tax base – by affirming property rights and accordingly property obligations – and increase state's revenues from land holdings. Meanwhile, Muhammed Ali succeeded in nationalising many Egyptian assets and achieved centralised singular autonomy over most aspects of the economy.

Muhammed Ali's strategies initially succeeded in improving the overall economic revenues from agriculture where there was an improvement in the quality of agricultural products, especially cotton and wheat (Marsot, 1984). He also improved the industrial and trade revenues by focusing on specific products and mobilising all state assets towards increasing the competitive quality of these products in the global market while sending scientific expeditions to European countries for knowledge exchange (Dodwell, 2011; Hunter, 1998). He was keen on organising – and nationalising – education, where he replaced traditional Islamic schools (which were community-driven) by state public schools which focused on translating technologies and science from the fields of warfare, sociology, and medicine. He also established the first Egyptian army – with forced enlistment to males – and the first armed police forces for internal security while simultaneously disarming civilian Egyptians by banning the right to own personal weapons (Dodwell, 2011; Marsot, 1984). Accordingly, Muhammed Ali became the sole inventor, owner, teacher, farmer, engineer, trader, and defender of Egypt (Dodwell, 2011). However, his strategies made the Egyptians' welfare completely dependent on the ruler's strength and wisdom, while Egyptian society became less involved in influencing the aspects that controlled their lives. The cheap and forced labour were used in many of his national projects (industries, constructions, agriculture, and even expansion military campaigns) which increased the vulnerability of many of the Egyptian population at the time (Marsot, 1984). Despite that some scholars praise Muhammed Ali as the founder of Modern Egyptian State, others criticised his practices debating that he created strong Egypt with weak Egyptians (Fahmy, 1997; Abdo, 1902; Milner, 1907).

The sons of Muhammed Ali did not just inherit this legacy, but they also inherited huge sums of debt accumulated in his later years caused by consecutive failed military campaigns attempting to expand his territory at the expense of the Ottoman's empire. In 1844, the debt reached 80 million francs and this debt changed the relationship between the next rulers and the British Crown, where the British government started having more control over the trajectory of agrarian economy – to make it work in favour of the growing industries in Britain like textile – and having more influence on land management laws as in Ottoman Land Law in 1858 (Jakes, 2020). However, unlike Muhammed Ali, his sons had different expenses other than investing in agriculture, industry, education, and military. Their spendings focused more on building new neighbourhoods within the major cities – like Cairo and Alexandria – as well as increasing their properties from palaces and resorts across Egyptian lands (Hunter, 1998; Jakes, 2020). Thus, during the following years, more of the state investments reallocated from rural areas towards urban areas while control over agricultural lands started to be monopolised by rural notables (Egyptians and foreigners) who gained privileges for being close to the ruling family and used it to acquire more lands through their connections with the palace (Cuno, 1993).

The Islamic ideology in governance started to tone down in favour of secular and mixed laws that tried to exploit the best in both camps for the benefit of the rulers and their powerful allies (Akbar, 1992), especially after the

British occupation in 1882. Building regulations followed colonial laws (Sharp, 2022) and more neighbourhoods were built in European style – like Khedival Cairo (1865), Heliopolis (1905), and Garden City (1906) – for higher income groups and foreigners and were introduced to pipe networks for water and sewage in 1865 (Ismael, 2022) and to electricity grid in 1893 through French private companies. Haussmannization[1] (Marcus, 2001) earliest adaptation in Egypt was done by Ismael Pasha to develop Khedival Cairo and many newly developed neighbourhoods had distinctive urban morphology (radial, circular, …etc.) as shown in Figure 4.1 that was designed by European planners.

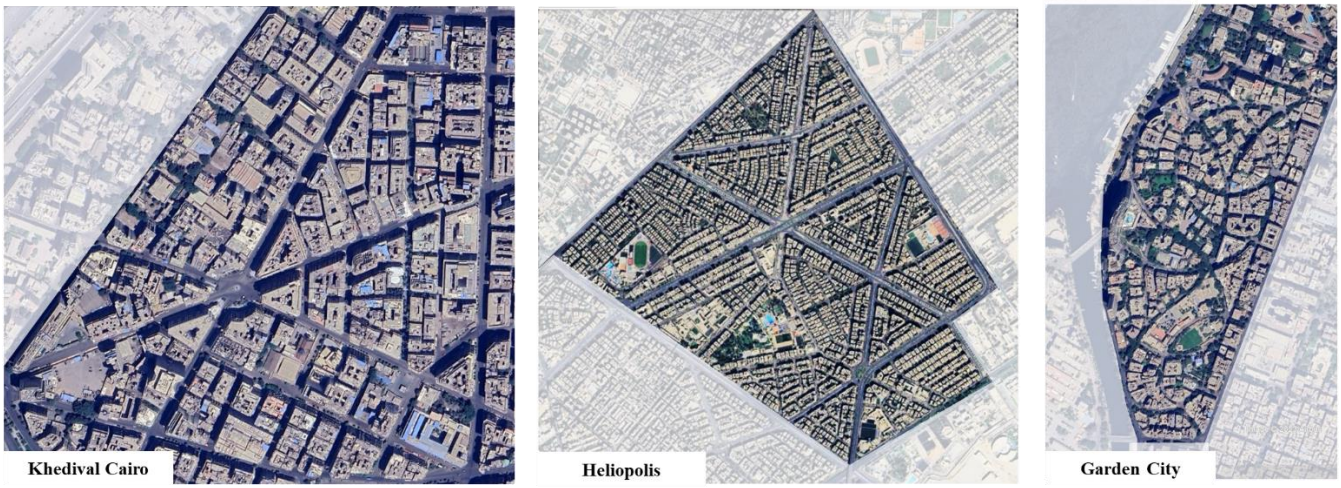

Fig. (4- 1) Urban Morphology of Cairo's Districts built under Muhammed Ali's Sons Rulership
Source: Google Earth Satellite Images, January 2024

The focus of national investments in urban cities encouraged many to abandon their agricultural lands – and unjust coercive working conditions under rural notables – and settled in older neighbourhoods in cities to work in the service sector for the newly established higher-income neighbourhoods (Afify, 2000). However, the increase of migration to older neglected neighbourhoods increased their deterioration. Since serviced housing with water, sewerage, and electricity only existed in newly developed neighbourhoods – and those services were commodified by private companies – the social classes demarcation started to manifest spatially, especially in Cairo and Alexandria (Ismael, 2022). After WWI, housing prices started escalating exponentially in Egypt because of global migration of people escaping the war in Europe (Shawkat and Ismael, 2022), while at the same time the agrarian economy took a strong hit, reducing values of agricultural lands (Jakes, 2020).

Thus, during the dynasty of Muhammed Ali and his sons there was a gradual transformation from an Islamic ideology of decentralised mode of governance – ensuring accessibility and enablement of all social classes to land and its imbedded sources – towards an autocratic centralised mode of governance – influenced by practices of imperialism and colonisation. The discourse of economic colonialism – as argued by (Jakes, 2020) – that came with the incremental involvement of European actors in governance affairs brought a materialistic ideology in conceptualising land value, in contrast to the previously dominant Islamic culture. Materializing land value was not authentic in Egyptian Islamic culture which believed that land is not a commodity to be captured and sold, but a gift from God to be used and shared for the public good. Furthermore, the participation of the community in decision making – especially lower income groups – was deliberately restrained by Muhammed Ali and his sons,

[1] Haussmannization refers to Georges-Eugène Haussmann's renovation of Paris commissioned by French Emperor Napoleon III between 1853 and 1870. It included the demolition of mediaeval neighbourhoods that were deemed overcrowded and unhealthy by officials at the time; the building of wide avenues; new parks and squares; the annexation of the suburbs surrounding Paris; and the construction of new sewers, fountains, and aqueducts. It has historically been associated with a series of piercements (literally, piercings) that opened up the cramped mediaeval city to a streamlined, rational network of wide boulevards (Marcus, 2001).

where means of production were capitalised by the ruling regime, and later – when they became in debt – by colonial and foreign companies. Although social, political, and environmental values of lands were not articulated in discourses during this time, their mobilisation within the Egyptian community were furtherly undermined by the growing mobilisation of economic values in the newly established feudal system that increased the income gaps between the farmers from one side and the royal family and rural notables from the other side (Cuno, 1993).

4.2 From Socialism to Neoliberalism: Land Policies of Confusion

Muhammed Ali's dynasty ended in 1952 by the Free Officers movement, a collective of army officers who organised a coup to overthrow King Farouk and replace the monarchy system with a republic state. The main aim of the Free Officers' Revolutionary Command Council was to reverse the ramifications of feudalism and redistribute wealth and power accumulated in the hands of the few, dismantling existing socio-economic hierarchies of Egyptian society at the time. Muhammed Naguib, the head of the council and the first assigned president of the republic, wanted the council's rulership to be temporary until conducting public elections. However, his associates argued that Egyptian society is not equipped for public democracy and/or self-governance due to deliberate exclusion of the non-elite community members from politics during the monarchy, and thus the lack of their capacity and knowledge to govern especially under destabilised political environment (Hamzawy, 2018). The council agreed it was the military's moral obligation to take the responsibility of governance and Naguib was removed accordingly from the council in 1956 and put under house arrest for disapproval. The Free Officers chose Gamal Abd El-Nasser from among them as an alternative president and since then Egypt has been governed by rulers who abandoned their military rank for the civilian position of presidency – except for a brief period in 2012 following the Arab Spring (Abdel-Malek, 1964; Mansfield, 1973). However, each of these presidents had a different governance ideology despite coming from the same military background.

The governance ideologies in Egypt since 1952 could be divided into three main episodes, where in each of them a different set of discourses and practices were adopted affecting the socio-economic, political, and environmental structures in Egypt. The first episode is when Nasser adopted *Socialism* – or some form of it – building his strategies on nationalising assets and industries; redistributing wealth to restructure social strata; and directly subsidising and providing – almost exclusively – all basic social services, like education, health, and housing (Abdel-Kader, 2002). These practices lasted until the death of Nasser in 1970, as the new president Anwar El-Sadat was more aligned towards *Liberalism*. His period represented the second episode for ideological transformations where he adopted the Open-Door Policy. The national agenda was moving towards *Capitalism* by removing restraints on investments (especially foreign ones), opening doors for imports, reducing government expenses on social services and subsidies, and privatising industries and services (Amin, 2001). When President Mubarak took charge in 1981 after the Sadat's assassination by Islamic militants, he wanted to balance between encouraging investments and competition on one hand and protecting the urban poor by delivering affordable social services and subsidising oil prices and basic goods on the other hand (Shawkat, 2014). However, attempting to balance between extremes of socialism and capitalism led to further confusion in governance practices evoking corruption, negligence, and incompetence (GTZ, 2009).

Mubarak's era ended by a public revolution in 2011 where he had to step down in response for the massive demonstrations against his regime in public squares. The Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) took charge of the constitutional transformation and governance matters until Muhammed Morsi was elected in 2012 as the first civilian Egyptian president who did not come from a military background (Hamzawy, 2018). However, Morsi – who came with a contemporary Islamic ideology as representative of the Muslim Brotherhood party – was overthrown shortly after his inauguration by a military coup in 2013 led by the General of Defence Abd El-Fatah El-Sisi who became president till date (Hamzawy, 2018). This started the final episode of governance ideological transformation where El-Sisi adopted neoliberal authoritarianism in reshaping political, socio-economic, and environmental structures in Egypt (Tawakkol, 2020). The current episode is characterised by intense financialization, privatisation, and commodification of almost all services, products, and assets (Shawkat and

Ismael, 2022). Those radical shifts between one governance ideology to another within short periods had caused instability in real-estate market dynamics, urban strategies, and housing delivery systems where laws and policies are in constant state of change. To understand how these transformations have complicated land development in Egypt provoking structures of conflict, this section investigates the impact of each of these governance ideologies on urban structures and land development.

4.2.1 The Episode of Nasserism (1956-1970)

Nasser's ideology of political governance did not quite fit into the usual practices of *Socialism* or *Communalism*, leading scholars to distinguish it from both, calling it *Nasserism* (Abdel-Malek, 1964; Mansfield, 1973; Salem, 2019). *Nasserism* ideology was a combination between *Arab Nationalism* and *Arab Socialist Political Ideology*, where it included concepts of *Socialism*, *Republicanism*, *Nationalism*, *Anti-Imperialism*, *Pan-Arabism*, and *Neutralism* (international non-alignment) (Abdel-Malek, 1964; Salem, 2019). However, there were inconsistencies between the announced and promoted agendas – like those stated in the National Charter in 1962 (Wahdan, 2013) – and what was actualized in practice (Abdel-Malek, 1964). Nasser followed Muhammed Ali's legacy in gradually nationalising all state assets including total or partial acquisition of private sector industries (like steel, fabrics, food production, media production, housing, …etc.), financial institutions, private companies (like the International Company of the Suez Canal Marine), and even private projects and properties – like expropriating around 178,000 Feddans from the royal family without compensation (Abdel-Malek, 1964; Mansfield, 1973). Those confiscated industries, companies, projects, and properties became state ownership that Nasser assigned military and ex-military officers to run/manage them – instead of their original owners – and permanent public labours to work in them, as part of his social security agenda (Amin, 2012). This allowed the state to control all means of production – land, labour, and capital – along with absolute autocratic control over development practices.

The diverse land tenure systems that existed in the time of monarchy were reduced to two main categories: state-owned lands (which included the previous *Miri*, *Waqf*, *Metruk*, and *Mashaa* lands) and private lands. The state gained rights over different types of tenure systems by means of nationalisation laws where it limited the accessibility to lands without state's mediation. For example, the Ministry of Endowments that was responsible for managing *Waqf* lands for the interest of its designated beneficiaries cancelled the *Waqf Ahly* [Family Trust] system by law no. 180/1952 and then later confiscated *Waqf Ahly* lands by means of agricultural reform laws (Tawfiq, 1998). These laws were meant to limit the size of individual property from agricultural lands – to 200 Feddans in law no. 178/1952 and later to 100 Feddans in law no.127/1961 – to end feudalism and redistribute the property of rural notables to small farmers giving 5 Feddans to each family (Richards, 1980; Arandel and El Batran, 1997), yet these laws were extended to *Waqf Ahly* lands as well. Evidently, this redistribution of lands to the rural poor only included 12% to 15% of the agricultural lands and the rest of confiscated lands were added to state's *Waqf* (Tawfiq, 1998) making it in practice like state-owned land. Another example was gradually denying accessibility to *Mawat* lands - which was affirmed earlier by Article 847/1949[1] that stated the right of adverse possession after 15 years (Bechor, 2001) – by means of laws no. 124/1958 and 100/1964. These laws (by amending Article 847) limited areas that civilians are allowed to reclaim and acquire through adverse possession, and then completely abolished the right to develop lands without state's authority (Ziadeh, 1977).

The radical changes in land distribution rights had implications on dynamics of land development and valuation. For example, the division and redistribution of lands to small farmers caused incremental fragmentation of these lands – with every generation subdividing the lands on their heirs – decreasing agricultural lands' productivity and profitability (Richards, 1980). Furthermore, the lands confiscated as state's *Waqf* by the Ministry of Endowments were poorly managed as there were no incentives for government officials running them associated

[1] Egyptian civil law/code issued in 1949 and aimed to merge Napoleonic Codes used in mixed courts for foreigners in Egypt and Islamic *shariaa* used in *ahly* [public] courts for Egyptians during the monarchy (Bechor, 2001)

with their productivity and many of these lands had – and still have – complicated legal status (Tawfiq, 1998). Nasser established the High Dam in 1960 to reduce risks of flooding and drought along with establishing agricultural association units that supported small farmers with loans for purchasing fertilisers and soil nutrition to support agrarian development (El-Hefnawi, 2005). However, with the increasing housing problem, landowners started building private residences for their families on their agricultural lands. With the decrease of floods regenerating the soil, and accordingly increasing its fertility, transforming those lands into residential uses or selling their soil after degradation for brick manufacture became more profitable than farming them (Richards, 1980). The state attempted to confine illegal urban encroachments over agricultural lands by means of law no. 53/1966 which made this act a criminal offence to be handled by military law; however, this law has not been firmly applied in all cases (Salem, 2015; Sims, 2003).

On urban level, Nasser poured investments towards many residential and heavy industrial projects, building new neighbourhoods for government officials, military officers, and industrial workers nearby the newly established industrial zones across the country (Abdel-Malek, 1964). Since Nasser controlled the prices of land and building materials, he was able to provide many affordable housing units by developing grid shaped neighbourhoods with minimum costs and limited design variations like the residential district of Nasr City and workers district of Helwan as shown in Figure 4.2 (Soliman, 1996). However, the national agenda for urban development was not quite articulated at that time, as there were many changes in the scope and objectives of responsible entities, especially in the years of Arab-Israel War (1967 to 1973). For instance, when the Ministry of Housing was established in 1961, it included local administration within its scope. Then, Housing was separated a year later, and continued to be a standalone ministry for three years until it was merged with the Ministry of Tourism in 1966 for one year. In 1967, the Ministry of Housing was separated from the Ministry of Tourism and was merged to the Ministry of Transportation, Petroleum & Mineral Wealth for one year before it separated again from it in 1968 (Elsisy, 2018). Throughout this period, there was no centralised national plan for housing nor urban development, but fragmented projects reacting to emerging needs defined by the top authority.

Before the war, the real estate and housing markets were strongly controlled by the state. First there was an obligation that at least 67% for new privately developed housing should be offered as rental units, while rent control laws aimed at the protection of the most vulnerable at the expense of the owners. It started with reducing rental payments by 15% according to law no. 199/1952, and then by 20% (law no. 55/1958), until it finally reached a reduction of 35% of its original value (law no. 7/1965). Owners were prohibited to increase the rental value from this reduced value by laws no. 46/1962 and 52/1969, which froze the rental market (Hassan, 2011). However, when the Arab Israeli War broke out in 1967, the state was no longer capable of providing affordable housing as all funds went into military funding. As many private developers were reluctant to participating in real-estate market due to previous socialist measures, encroachments over privately owned agricultural lands and trespassing over state-owned lands increased gradually by displaced communities from the war zone in the canal cities and by lower-income groups who were unable to find alternative shelter in the time of war.

Moreover, the state did not have the capacity or will at the time to confront the population and address illegal practices in the years of war; thus, it ignored and/or sometimes consolidated with informal development. For example, Manshiyat Nasser (one of the largest informal districts in Cairo) started in this era by immigrant workers who came from villages around Cairo to work in the nearby limestone quarries and built some temporary shelters in the surrounding desert areas, where they did not have any titles. When the work in the quarries ended, Nasser prohibited the government from eradicating illegal encroachments in this area per the people's request who in return named the area after him (Arandel and El Batran, 1997). On the industrial level, nationalized industries and companies started gradually losing their efficiency due to poor investments during war time, lack of market competition, weak performance evaluation, poor investments in research and development, and poor development incentives for the permanent employees on all managerial levels (Salem, 2019).

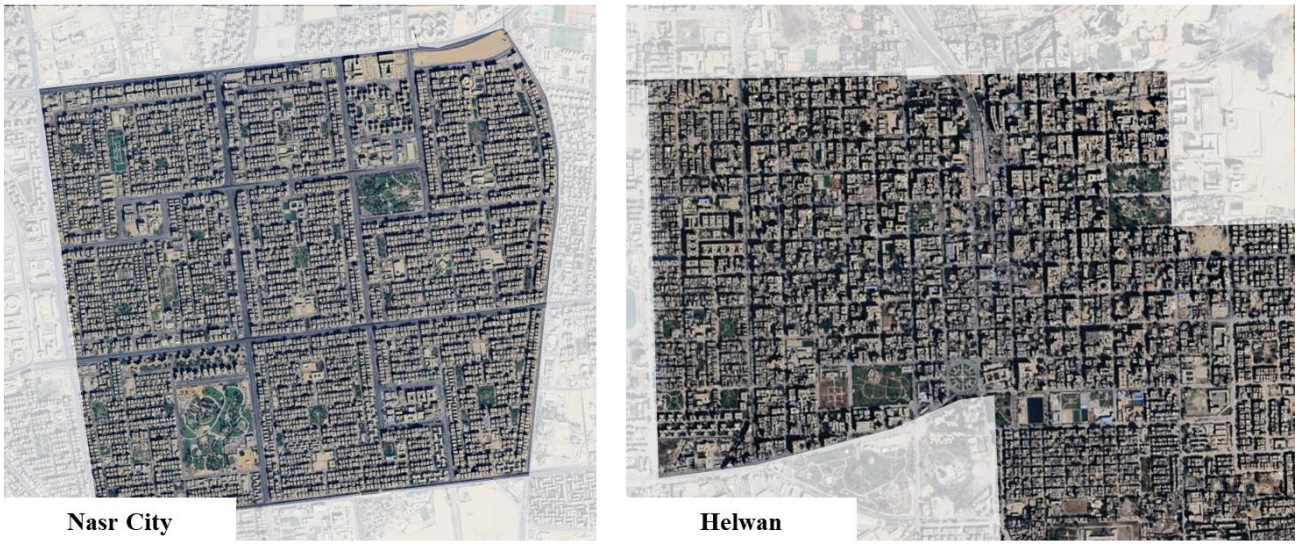

Fig. (4- 2) Urban Morphology of Cairo's Districts built during Nasserism
Source: Google Earth Satellite Images, January 2024

Thus, market values of agricultural and industrial land uses started decreasing, while those of residential and commercial land uses became stagnant through the heavy control of the state in the time of peace, and increased tremendously (both in formal and informal sector) in the time of war (Shawkat, 2014). Meanwhile, land value started gaining a strategic/political dimension that came with promoted *Nationalism* along with having the first Egyptian ruler governing Egypt in millenniums. This also evoked the social value of land coming with the Egyptians sense of identity and belonging due to consecutive wars targeted the Egyptian lands (like the Trio Aggression in 1956, Arab-Israeli War in 1967, and the following Attrition Warfare between Egypt and Israel) that continued after Nasser's death. Throughout the six years that Israel had occupied Sinai and Gaza (which was under the Egyptian authority since 1949), Egyptians attributed deeper attachment to Egyptian lands, and this was mobilised by the state to pass on some oppressive practices, get away with governance failures, and gain support even in the time of defeat (Mansfield, 1973). However, there were underlying structures of discontent with the state's policy that found its way for manifestation after the death of Nasser in 1970.

4.2.2 Open-Door Policy and Episode of Capitalism (1970-2011)

After Egypt won the war in 1973, El-Sadat started making structural changes transforming Egypt into a more liberal regime. He signed a peace agreement – the Camp David Accords – with Israel under US supervision which returned Sinai, but not Gaza, under Egyptian authority and brought Egypt under the *"West"* capitalist camp rather than the socialist camp it was under during Nasser's regime. However, this agreement was considered treason by many within the Egyptian community – as well as many Arab leaders – who believed in Nasser's Arab Nationalism project. El-Sadat accordingly gave more political and economic freedom than his predecessor to gain public support and disempower socialist movements by empowering other parties, like the Islamic parties that were highly oppressed during the time of Nasser. Thus, he allowed for a multiparty political system, returned the Parliament that was suspended by Nasser, gave more autonomy to appointed local authorities, and initiated elected local councils as monitoring entities on practices of local authorities (Khalil and Dill, 2018). On the economic side, the October Working Paper agreement in 1974 declared principles of the Open-Door Policy which included opening doors for foreign trade/investments (which was restricted at the time of Nasser), limiting nationalisation practices, and giving incentives, tax exemptions, and facilitations to the private sector involving it more in service provision to reduce the burden on national budget that was struggling after the war (Wahdan, 2013).

On the urban side, the main strategy for urban development was invading the desert by building new cities (residential, industrial, and agriculture) outside existing dense urban agglomerations to provide better living conditions for Egyptians outside the deteriorated urban cities. Accordingly, the New Urban Communities

Authority (NUCA) was established in 1979 along with the announcement of starting the construction for three new cities (Sims, 2015). El-Sadat aimed at capitalising on existing political mobilisation; thus, he named some of first generation new cities after political events tagging them with a sense of national identity like 6th October and10th Ramadan Cities (the first day of 1973 war in Georgian and Arabic calendars respectively), 15th May City (the date of Corrective Revolution when he got rid of the old guard of Nasser), and El-Sadat City (that was meant to be the new administrative capital). However, those cities – except for 15th May – struggled in attracting population and investments as they had many problems like lack of affordable adequate social services and local markets; poor accessibility to public transportation; poor accessibility to job opportunities (aside from industrial cities), and poor infrastructure quality (Sims, 2015). Furthermore, the state withdrew gradually from providing low-income housing, while empowering cooperatives and the private sector to fill that gap (Hassan, 2011; Shawkat, 2014). It supported housing cooperatives through loans and facilitation in land acquisition, and supported private sector through subsidising building materials, reducing and/or exempting taxes, and – in some cases – selling lands for prices much lower than their market value to "trusted" private developers (Hassan, 2011).

However, the state was unable to control the market dynamics at this point and the urban poor were consistently excluded from these new development projects. The sharp transformation from socialism and nationalisation practices to capitalism and privatisation practices had drastic impacts on the income gap, where poverty and inequality increased along with levels of corruption. This happened because the local market – regarding industries, service delivery, and products – was not competent at the time to compete with the invading imported international brands leading to an imbalance between exports and imports destabilising the currency value (Amin, 2012). Further, the fast invasion of the desert – that required extending infrastructure – with no proper calculations for the outcome burdened the country with increasing external and internal debts (Sims, 2015). Inflation rates increased and many Egyptians found better opportunities working in the Arab Gulf countries especially after the increasing oil prices (Sharp, 2022). However, the influx of transferred money from Egyptians working abroad benefited more the financial mobilisation in the informal sector (Sharp, 2022; El Araby, 2003), especially with increased corruption and bribery in local authorities who overlooked illegal urban practices. Informal growth rate in areas like GCR was maximum compared to other periods (Arandel and El Batran, 1997). Also, further neglect for providing services to the rural areas increased internal migration towards major cities where they targeted informal areas that had more affordable units and variant alternatives in spaces and provision systems, unlike the new cities (Sims, 2011).

The state reaction towards informal urbanism at the time was inconsistent, where it moved between complete eradication (like in Torgoman area), negligence, and regularisation (by changing cities urban boundaries to include illegal transformations of agricultural lands in peri-urban areas) (Elsisy et al., 2019; Khalifa, 2011). With the increasing levels of corruption, land prices in both formal and informal markets started increasing based on investment speculative measures where the residual value of land became irreflective of the land demand or the ability to pay in the major cities. When Mubarak came to office, he called for the National Urban Policy Study that was conducted by USAID, along with some local consultants (USAID, 1981). This study investigated opportunities and challenges of urban development, evaluated implemented urban strategies, and recommended an action plan for limiting the growth of informal areas (Sims, 2015; Shawkat, 2014). However, the state decided not to abide by those recommendations and continued with the same practices like building new cities that consumed more resources, and extending highways in rural areas that provoked encroachments on agricultural lands due to speculations of being transformed into urban zones (Dorman, 2013). Egypt lost 35% of its arable land since the 1950s due to these transformations in peri-urban areas, and it is still losing between 10 to 30 thousand feddan/year (GOPP, 2014). Meanwhile, the land cost increased from 8% of total construction costs in the 1950s to almost 100% in the 1990s (Arandel and El Batran, 1997). The action plan of the National Urban Policy was revisited 10 years after systemic failure in solving the urban problems as well as socio-economic challenges (Shawkat, 2014; Amin, 2001; Amin, 2012).

The systemic failure in Mubarak time was caused by oscillation between different strategies (Khalil and Dill, 2018) reacting to emerging problems/incidents rather than applying strategic long-term plans. Mubarak initially attempted to continue with liberal policies taking a *Keynesian* economic approach rather than a *Friedman* one (Amin, 2014; Amin, 2004). However, the oriented economic policy Mubarak was aiming for was challenged by the strict program of Structural Adjustment and Economic Reform that was developed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank as mandatory measures for loaning Egypt in 1991 (GTZ, 2009; Bromley and Bush, 1994). However, continuous changes in institutional structure and laws affected the stability of policies and their performance even with the same actors in power. For instance, reconstruction (of damaged cities after war) and land reclamation – which had a separate ministry in 1978 – became part of the Ministry of Housing in 1980, separated again in 1984, and reunited once more in 1986. Finally, in 1987 the scope of reconstruction fulfilled its purpose and land reclamation became part of the Ministry of Agriculture, while the Ministry of Urban Communities (established in 1993) was added to the Ministry of Housing in 1996 (Elsisy, 2018). These institutional transformations were not clearly justified at the times were Egypt had political stability and could pursue a sustainable agenda for development.

It could be argued that transformations in strategies and policies during the time of Mubarak was either related with election periods or with publicly aggravating events that required active response from authorities. For instance, the actualization for the National Urban Policy Study was conducted after a series of events that pushed authorities towards revisiting the recommendations in this study. The first of these events was the wave of radicalization in the 1990s that came with the return of Egyptian Islamic militants recruited by Jihadis and fought in Afghanistan against Russia in the 1980s (Hughes, 2008). Those returned militants started building terrorist cells against what they perceived as the non-Islamic practices of the state, and reached the level of declaring the independence of one district from the state – Imbaba – which had mostly developed informally (Sharp, 2022). The second event was the return of Egyptians from Gulf countries during the Gulf War in 1991 after losing their businesses and jobs, where many started investing their savings in informal land markets which were more accessible for them than the formal ones monopolised by elite businessmen (Arandel and El Batran, 1997). A third simultaneous event was the catastrophic consequence of the 1992 earthquake, when many of newly built housing (mostly in formal areas) collapsed killing 561 people, injuring many, and making survivors homeless (Sharp, 2022). This last event was a major scandal for well-known construction companies and involved corrupt officials. Those events collectively caused social unrests; thus, authorities found it necessary to initiate the National Program for Urban Upgrading to absorb public anger, infiltrate growing terrorism within informal areas, and control illegal sprawl over lands (Elsisy *et al.*, 2019).

On one hand, the National Urban Upgrading Fund was established in 1994 aiming for a two-phase programme under General Organisation of Physical Planning (GOPP) authority. The first phase – Informal Settlements Upgrading Programme (ISDP) – was concerned with providing infrastructure and services for deprived informal areas, while the second – Informal Settlements Belting Programme – developed detailed physical plans for areas of possible extensions around informal settlements and peri-urban zones to belt/surround informal horizontal extensions by formal agglomerations (Khalifa, 2015). However, once more authorities decided to react to the unfortunate incident of Dweiqa Rockslide that killed around 80 people living in a slum area underneath by suspending both programmes and establishing a new entity called the Informal Settlements Development Fund (ISDF) with different priorities and strategies. The new strategy was classifying informal areas across Egypt into unplanned and unsafe areas in which the latter is also classified into four categories/grades according to their risk factor on their inhabitants' wellbeing (Khalifa, 2011). ISDF – working directly under the cabinet – gave priority to unsafe areas where it helped funding and giving technical support to local authorities to develop projects for in-situ resettling, rehabilitating, renovating, and/or removing risks from defined areas. However, the strategies held by the government to prevent formulation of new informal areas were unsuccessful because of the increasing housing problem (Elsisy, 2018; Sims, 2011).

On the other hand, the state preventive policy for restraining informal growth was by providing housing alternatives for low-income groups through systemized programmes – where their announcements were always associated with the presidential electoral periods in 1999, 2005, and 2011. The programs had different names (Shelter for All Programme, Mubarak National Housing Project, and Social Housing Programme respectively) – with different numbers for targeted population or produced housing units; however, the schemes within these programmes were almost similar. Most of these programmes did not have proper studies for the targeted population, needs assessment, and/or projects' funding (Shawkat, 2014). Thus, many of these programs failed to achieve the announced targets of housing units or reach the target groups of these programmes as either the application conditions, the proposed locations, or the delivery systems were not matching the targeted population criteria. Accordingly, many of these projects ended up with real-estate contractors, speculative brokers, or higher-income groups who could afford living in remote locations or paying the high-priced instalments (Shawkat, 2014). The state also tried to support different housing delivery systems like increasing incentives and facilitation for cooperative housing, facilitating housing loans by establishing Housing and Development Bank, and adjusting rent control laws (Hassan, 2011). Problematically, most of these practices were supporting higher middle-income groups, while lower-income groups still could not find better alternatives than informal areas.

Thus, despite having systemized national programmes for urban development, the state failed in controlling informal urbanism or delivering affordable housing. Moreover, the land incrementally became a secure asset in an increasingly destabilised economy. Thus, the market value of land became more dominant than its other values, especially with increasing poverty, inequality, inaccessibility to the housing market, and rapid devaluation of currency. Building became riskier with the changing laws and more costly and time-consuming with the increasing bureaucracy (Sejourne, 2012). Thus, many investors, developers, cooperatives, and individuals froze many of the serviced lands to sell them later for higher prices (El Araby, 2003). While many of the less serviced land offered by the government to lower- and medium-income groups through its subsidised housing programmes – like site and services – eventually ended in the hands of real estate informal contractors. The contractors bought these lands illegally from those who could not afford building costs and many of these lands were also frozen speculating their increase in price (Soliman, 2012). Finally, some of the non-serviced lands that were offered to elite private developers were offered as higher-income and luxuries gated communities, while many of these lands were not developed according to their development contracts with the government that was either indifferent, corrupt, or incompetent in monitoring these lands (Khalil and Dill, 2018). Thus, the capitalism ideology was absorbed by the community (Amin, 2001), where land gradually started to lose its political, social, and environmental values in favour of capturing the highest market value, whether in formal or informal land markets.

4.2.3 The Episode of Neoliberal Authoritarianism (2014 – Present)

In January 2011, Egyptians revolted against the autocratic regime and its discriminatory policies that favoured elites at the expense of the common public while policing those who objected. Egypt was under "*emergency status*", since the assassination of El-Sadat, which gave police forces an unleashed power over civilians. Although the policing state in the time of Mubarak was more tamed than in the time of Nasser, there was still many reported cases for practices of oppression, torture, illegal arrests, and indefinite detention with no court orders for activists, reporters, and opponents specifically from Islamic parties (Hamzawy, 2018). Thus, the public went into peaceful demonstrations requesting the restructure of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and investigating governmental corruption, especially regarding privatisation of public assets. At this time, 80% of state-owned enterprises were privatised through increasing their corporate taxes, pushing them towards bankruptcy, and then selling them cheap to elite businessmen. The elite businessmen's involvement in politics had increased with increasing their representation in parliament (25% in 2005 in comparison to only 1.3% in 1995) and their representation in the government, where many of them were appointed as ministers as in the last cabinet before the revolution (Khalil and Dill, 2018). The "*technocratic government*" that was pushed by the state (along with Mubarak's elder son as a future president) alarmed both the public and the military from the continuity of economic domination of the businessmen class over state's assets (Sharp, 2022).

As the authorities reacted violently towards the protests, the people raised their demands for the regime to completely step down and called for early democratic free elections. The military authorities then sided with the public and Mubarak stepped down after 18 days of demonstrations, public strikes, and clashes with police forces that resulted in 846 deaths (Hamzawy, 2018). The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) took charge of the political mobilisation, facilitating constitutional amendments and new elections for parliament, senate, and presidency. However, after the Muslim Brotherhood party reached power in 2012, the community was divided between opponents sceptic of their governance ideology – especially being portrayed as radical Islamists since Nasser – and supporters witnessed their continuous care for lower-income groups by providing services, charity, and political opposition in parliament against corruption and injustice even under obstacles created by the former regime (El Assal, 2019; Mansour, 2015). That split escalated into two sets of protests, one calling for an early election and another rejecting it. SCAF once more stepped in supporting regime opponents by another coup where they arrested the president, all members of Muslim Brotherhood party, and many of their supporters. Police and military forces broke down the demonstrations that occupied public squares for a month after the coup by force, killing between 600 to 2600 civilians according to different records (Hamzawy, 2018). The shock wave continued with many clashes between the armed forces, civilians, and radical Islamists provoking a stronger policing state to emerge. Accordingly, emergency status was reinstated, anti-protest law was passed, Muslim Brotherhood was identified as a terrorist group, and many of the public channels for political or social participation were suspended like the public local councils, CBOs and NGOs (El Assal, 2019).

In 2014, Abd El-Fatah Elsisy – the former minister of defence and the head of the military coup – was elected president after many political parties boycotted the elections condemning the coup. From this point forward, governance became highly centralised and autocratic as not only power was accumulated by military institutions, but also capital (Tawakkol, 2020). The growing parallel military economy was already running "off the books" at the time of Mubarak as their budget was – and still – considered a matter of national security. Accordingly, their budget and economic activities are not reviewed/audited by any civilian authority, their salaries and business are exempted from taxes and tariffs, and they have unlimited access to land – according to law no. 143/1981 – and unlimited access to labour (conscripts) (Khalil and Dill, 2018). Thus, the neoliberal policies benefited most the military institutions that had the power and capacity to eliminate competition in all fields they wanted to monopolise (Hamzawy, 2018). After the completion of the Suez Canal Corridor Expansion project in 2015, Egypt signed a $3 billion development policy-financing loan from the world bank, and another $12 billion 3-years loan with the IMF to support long-term structural adjustments. This expansion project was planned before El-Sisi; however, he ordered the executives to go against the feasibility study and finish the project in one year instead of three (Khalil and Dill, 2018). These national megaprojects became dominant in the Egyptian strategy as a means to prove legitimacy and capability of delivering tangible achievements in an exceptional timeframe. However, centralised decision-making, negligence of civilian experts advisory, and lack of proper feasibility studies in the rush of actualizing these projects made them the biggest consumer of the national budget rather than the biggest supporter (Khalil and Dill, 2018).

The governance ideology of the current regime is more in the terrain of neoliberal authoritarianism – instead of authoritarian neoliberalism like in the United States – as neoliberal policies became tools for the state (represented in military institutions) to accumulate capital and power, rather than the other way around when authoritarian policies are tools for neoliberal agendas (Tawakkol, 2020). The state relied on heavy loaning to fund its mega projects which made the interest payment increase from 20% of total expenditure in 2010/2011 to 30% in 2016/2017, while interest repayments increased 70% during the same period. However, new tax reforms in 2015 sliced taxes on higher-income earners from 30% to 22.5% while a 14% Value Added Tax (VAT) on previously exempted and low-tax-rate food products was decided, increasing food prices by 40% (Khalil and Dill, 2018). The income gap increased by cutting off energy, water, and basic food subsidies and liberating Egyptian currency exchange rate (where it lost half its value twice, in 2016 and 2022) following the loaning conditions of IMF and World Bank (Tawakkol, 2020). Despite that the average income increased between 2008 and 2016 by 5.4%

annually, housing prices had an average increase of 19.6% annually during the same period[1] (10Touba, 2016) which made 67% of urban households unable to afford to finance the cheapest available housing unit in the formal market (CAHF, 2016).

On the urban level, the informal urbanism already constituted 76% of urban areas in 2013[2] (Tawakkol, 2020); however, the state was bent on eliminating this problem with mega national projects aimed at complete eradication of informal areas and displacing informal inhabitants to alternative housing in the outskirts of the new cities (Sharp, 2022; Tawakkol, 2020; Khalil and Dill, 2018). Along with the continuation of the social housing programs, the state constructed 23,000 housing units in 2016 as alternative housing for slum dwellers whom the government records estimated to be equal 850,000 people at this time (SIS, 2017), a much less estimate than the number of slum dwellers in other records (Elsisy, 2018). The regime was successful in building these units in short periods of time using the assistance of the Armed Forces Engineering Authority (AFEA), National Service Project Organisation, and the Armed Forces National Lands Project Agency[3] preparing for the next phase of informal inhabitants' displacement. With no consistent definition for informal areas in Egyptian discourse (Elsisy, 2018; Sharp, 2022; Sims, 2011), the state directed its efforts in evacuating either areas of potential political security threats – like areas hosted protestors in times of unrest – or areas in prime locations (Tawakkol, 2020). The officially registered real-estate properties in Egypt have not exceeded 9% of all real-estate properties because of high registration costs, long bureaucratic procedures, and asymmetrical documentation across different entities (Sejourne, 2012). This means that almost every property – building or land – has some form or degree of illegality that the state can utilise to mobilise its agenda and expropriate with unfair compensations (Elsisy, 2018). This can be observed in the current regime's practices which capitalised on the former regimes' tolerance – and sometimes involvement – in acts of corruption related to land development.

One example is the presidential decree no. 75/2016 establishing the National Committee for Reclaiming State-Owned Lands, which was responsible for identifying state-owned lands which either were sold cheap to individuals/companies/developers who did not comply with the developing regulations or were trespassed by illegal settlers. The committee then either confiscated, collected these lands' market value, or collected reconciliation fees from their possessors. There was no clear criteria for which action to be taken with every specific case and how the reconciliation fees were calculated (Elsisy, 2018). Peculiarly, all transactions and developments occurring on state-owned lands were already monitored by the National Centre for Planning State Land Use (established by presidential decree no. 53/2001) which worked directly under the authority of the cabinet, which raises questions of why officials involved have not been investigated and prosecuted along with punishing the beneficiaries. Another example is passing the Construction Violations Reconciliation Law (no. 17/2019) that required from all informally built construction (around 76% of urban areas) to apply for reconciliation with the state through paying penalty fees, which varied between 119 EGP/m² to 1,250 EGP/m², in the matter of 6 months from the announcement of the law (Shawkat, 2022). Again, this variation in the penalty value did not have specific criteria estimation, and the state was collecting this fee from unplanned areas (with lesser penalty values) along with planned ones which had construction violations (Magdy, Gabr and Assem, 2022). Problematically, it was not clear whether the reconciliation with building violations in unplanned areas would be a state's acknowledgement of them as formal ones or it was just a means to eradicate some of these areas and/or collect funds for other national projects.

[1] Not adjusted to inflation

[2] There is a problem in Egyptian records for estimating the actual percentage of informal areas due to asymmetrical definitions of what is considered informal and the methodology of calculations. This number however is the most common within Egyptian discourses. For further details about this problem refer to (Sharp, 2022) & (Elsisy, 2018)

[3] All these institutions/agencies follow the authority of the Ministry of Defence

The strategies and policies of the current state are consistent with its urban agenda to eliminate slums, control the urban environment, and create a stronger tax base from properties. However, the vagueness in application provokes scepticism, and accordingly lack of cooperation from the community questioning the real beneficiaries from these practices. For example, after the deadline determined by the reconciliation law passed, the state found that less than 10% have applied for reconciliation and accordingly they executed forced evictions to show their seriousness and intolerance with informal practices. However, this provoked violent protests against the government actions that made the government retract and give more time for people to apply for reconciliation – changing the deadline four times in a row – while reducing the penalty fees to between 30% to 70% in some urban areas and to 50 EGP/m² in rural areas (Shawkat, 2022).

A similar process happened with the amendments of the Real-Estate Registration law in 2020, which was more concerned with individual household properties, but in this case the state had to suspend the law indefinitely for review. Furthermore, the state banned construction in Cairo, Giza, and Alexandria between March and September 2020, even for those who had already been issued a building permit. Exempted from this law were non-residential projects, government projects, and any construction in the new cities, one of which is the New Administrative Capital (Shawkat, 2022). This project is another national mega project that the government announced in 2016, and is still under development, where the main partners in it are NUCA (49% shares) and the military's National Service Projects Organisation and Armed Forces National Lands Projects Agency (51% shares) (Khalil and Dill, 2018). This means that the state was able to control the building materials market in the time of pandemic – which was rising exponentially – by limiting their use to their projects at the expense of the private sector which had great losses due to this ban that whoever violated faced military persecution (Shawkat, 2022).

Another example was the redevelopment project of Maspero Triangle[1], where the state announced an international competition in 2014 for redevelopment proposals under the newly established Ministry of Urban Redevelopment and Informal Settlements (MURIS). This was a participatory redevelopment project where inhabitants were involved in evaluating submitted proposals. However, after announcing the winners of the competition (that brought international praise, funds, and loans), the state merged MURIS to the Ministry of Housing in 2016, forced inhabitants out the area with unfair compensations in 2017, and developed it in 2018 as a higher income mixed-use zone unlike any of the competition's submitted proposals (Madd, 2015; Shakran, 2016; Tawakkol, 2020; Wahba, 2020). Moreover, the whole strategy of ISDF for in-situ development and avoiding displacement (following the 2014 constitution) was transformed after the fund became part of the Ministry of Housing in 2016 towards reallocation strategies. These examples of practices decreased public trust in state's intentions as there is usually lack of transparency and/or explanatory narratives for how and why decisions regarding urban practice are being conducted in this manner. The dominating communal perception is that both Ministries of Defence and Housing are becoming key speculators, developers, and beneficiaries from urban redevelopment projects in Egypt through robust practices of neoliberal authoritarianism (Tawakkol, 2020; Sharp, 2022; Khalil and Dill, 2018).

However, the strong wave of commodification and financialization (prioritising the land market value above other values) provoked an opposing wave that promoted other values of land. For example, ceding the Egyptian sovereignty of Tiran and Sanafir islands to Saudi Arabia in 2017 provoked protests and public rejection across the country arguing that the strategic value of these islands should not have been bargained for a fiscal outcome (Kebaish, 2018). Also, the national urban transformation project – manifested mainly in developing the roads network – has replaced many public and green spaces as well as historical cemeteries and archaeological sites. This provoked the environmental activists and scholars against the government practices that are not only affecting the percentage of green areas per capita (Aly and Dimitrijevic, 2022; ElSaied *et al.*, 2021), but also the increased loss of agricultural lands (Salem, 2015). It also provoked social activists, historians, archaeologists, and architects who advocated against deforming place identity and losing valuable historical sites and buildings in the process

[1] An informally developed area in downtown Cairo

of "*civilised modernization*" that the state is promoting (ECESR, 2023; Ezzeldin, 2023). The intense displacement of both formal and informal inhabitants within the urban core of major cities – especially GCR – have also raised questions about the social value of these redevelopment projects and its impact on social welfare of the Egyptian community (Khalil and Dill, 2018; Shawkat and Ismael, 2022) along with the social value of the land itself for the people (Bassam, 2018). The contestation of these different conceptualisations and mobilisations of land value provoked by the intensification of financialization practices in the urban environment set the context for an uprising conflict between those values.

4.3 Critical Analysis for Land Value Mobilisation Transformation

The waves of transformations that Egypt experienced throughout its modern history have created contested structures around land value mobilisation. There is accordingly a need to synthesise and contextualise some of the main features of the political, economic, social, and environmental structures within the Egyptian context. The findings of the online survey (Appendix I) are used to give insights on how these structures affected land valuation, land development, and land conflict in Egypt from the perspective of urban practitioners working in GCR.

4.3.1 Political Structures

On the level of political structures, the ideology of nationalism played a great role since the time of Muhammed Ali in understanding the strategic value of land which led to an incremental rise of Military authoritarianism. However, the concept of nationalism itself changed through the decades where the sense of national identity became more associated with belonging to the head of authority – and his supporting party and ideologies – rather than belonging to the land, the culture, the history, the religion, or the community. Furthermore, on the level of discourses, the radical changes and attempting to balance between polarising ideologies without clear long-term strategy led to existence of many contradicting laws and regulations, overcomplication of legal procedures, and lack of asymmetrical information available for scholars and policy makers to investigate urban problems or develop solutions for them (GTZ, 2009). The Egyptian context created a challenging environment for understanding the orientation of the country's agenda for urban development or creating a collective notion for its targets and strategies. The continuous alterations in building and property laws for instance led to legal illiteracy as these alterations mystified land development and property rights by different actors leading to multiple subjective interpretations of the law evoking corruption and malpractice (Elsisy, 2018).

Problematically, this lack of clarity of formal discourses and laws about the trajectory of development and means of its execution lead to several loopholes in political structures allowing informal discourses and institutions to have a stronger impact on urban practice in Egypt. Furthermore, costs of formal land registry and transactions are not affordable for everyone, which encourages informal practices either by avoiding the formal process (Sejourne, 2012) or finding backdoors through bribery and favouritism. There is also a continuous power struggle between different formal institutions on land assets which is orchestrated by the political ideology of the governing regime. For example, in the time of Muhammed Ali the power over land was in the hands of his admirals, family, and the rural notables, while in the time of Nasser it was the military members and both ministries of endowments and agriculture. At the time of El-Sadat, due to decentralisation practices, the power struggle over land became monopolised by local government authorities while in the time of Mubarak it became in the hands of parliament members and elite businessmen officials. Finally, when El-Sisi came the land became once more in the hands of the Ministry of Defence who exploited its status to overpower other formal institutions (like ministries of agriculture, endowments, transportation, environment, and housing) and exploited expropriation law against elite businessmen, corrupt local authority officials, parliament members, and even legitimate private owners to have maximum control over land development.

4.3.2 Economic Structures

On the level of economic structures, this research argues that the capitalistic ideology was dominant throughout the modern history of Egypt where land became an asset for accumulating wealth and power since the time of Muhammed Ali. Land was acquired and assetized by the palace in the time of Muhammed Ali, by the British in the time of occupation, by rural notables in the time of feudal monarchy, by the state represented in the Free Officers in the time of Nasser, by corrupt local officials in the time of El-Sadat, by elite businessmen in the time of Mubarak, and by military institutions in the time of El-Sisi. Thus, even in times of socialist practices, there was not a full commitment to the distribution of lands among the least fortunate but a restructure for the power and wealth distribution hierarchy. Also, in the extreme environment of neoliberal policies adopted in the current time, the land market is still controlled by the few and it is not totally reflective of free market dynamics. Thus, the current ideology of *Neoliberal Authoritarianism* in Egypt is only a shade of *Capitalism* and not a real reflection of neoliberal principles where urban governance is predominately following a *Clientelistic* model (DiGaetano and Strom, 2003) limiting power and authority in the hands of the trusted few (Elsisy, 2018). As shown in Figure 4.3, the public investment share in total investments have been increasing incrementally since the current regime to took charge (MPED, 2021) which implies a strong undermining of the private sector role in the economic structures, an obvious deviation from neoliberal agendas (IMF, December, 2022).

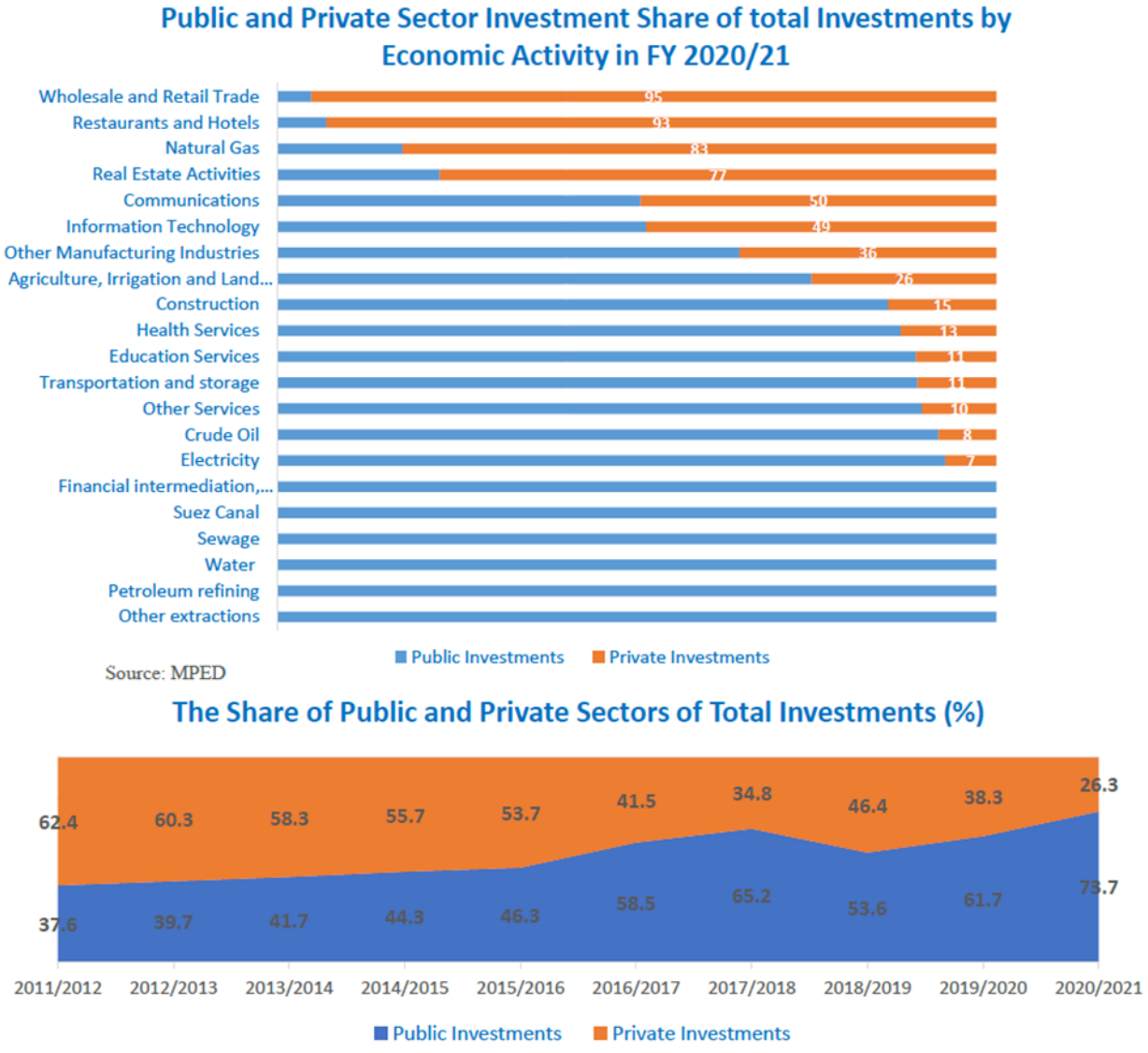

Fig. (4- 3) Public and Private Sector Investment Share FY 2020/21
Source: (MPED, 2021)

However, this controlled market environment by the government does not lend itself to increase the market efficiency, especially when it comes to land. The Egyptian Real-Estate Evaluation Code (no. 39/2015) does not specify which aspects of valuation should be included, the weighting system for the aspects included, nor the legitimate source of information that the evaluator should use for gathering market information needed for the evaluation process. The code only specifies that the evaluators should use a combination of the three property evaluation methods – cost, income, and sales – and to disclose in their evaluation the aspects included, and the sources used. Accordingly, evaluation of land market value – and aspects of valuation – are arbitrary in a market that is mostly controlled by informal discourses and narratives, creating a context of conflict between different subjective interpretations of value. The survey findings appear to show that informal discourses and narratives regarding land valuation (like word of mouth, reputation, and local brokers estimates) have more influence on evaluators estimations for land prices within GCR than formal discourses (like registry and transaction records). Also, it showed that land prices in GCR are presumably more affected by socially constructed aspects being associated with zoning policies – that shape the context surrounding these lands and allowed uses – rather than by technical aspects like the quality of these lands or the needed investments for their development.

It could be argued that the power of economic structures had the strongest influence on understanding land value, since the incremental adoption of materialistic conceptualisation and mobilisation due to colonial doctrine (Jakes, 2020). However, absorbing these ideologies and practices by the Egyptian community was not consistent throughout history. For example, the community was more welcoming of El-Sadat's open-door policy because of the diverse opportunities and the wide spectrum of products and services delivery that was highly limited in the time of Nasser. Even the rich had to buy low quality products provided by the national companies, stick to a limited portion because of equal distribution measures, and experience the same bureaucratic processes for accessing social services. Also, investors and developers had limited means to increase their competitiveness, revenues, or diversify their value propositions because of standardised measures and unified building and development codes throughout the Egyptian territories. This is a possible justification of why the Egyptian community was more accepting to neoliberal policies in the time of El-Sadat as they found diverse opportunities to increase their income and improve their living conditions by increasing their consumption of luxurious goods and services (Amin, 2001; Amin, 2004).

However, currently, the community is more reluctant to materialistic approaches and commodification practices as they have already experienced the downfall of the lack of social security measures. The increase of the income gap, inequality, exclusion, and commodification of services have made Egypt a state of welfare for only those who can afford it. There was a dominating perception among the participants of the conducted survey (Appendix I) that there is not an equitable access to affordable land for all social classes. There is also an overarching perception that money do buy everything and could change and/or bend laws (Shawkat and Ismael, 2022), as long as those who own it support the regime politically and financially by donating to Tahya Misr Fund[1] (Adly, 2014; Abul-Magd, Akça and Marshall, 2020). This explains the evolving counter mobilisation of land value by the community, practitioners, scholars, and activists against radical waves of commodification and Haussmannization on the expense of social and environmental values of land.

4.3.3 Social Structures

On the social structures level, there were also waves of attachment and detachment from Islamic ideologies and traditional cultural norms orchestrated by the political and economic movements of the governing regimes.

[1] Tahya Misr Fund (translates to Long Live Egypt Fund) was established by El-Sisi in 2014 (laws no. 139/2014 and 84/2015) for collecting donations to support the Egyptian economy and is monitored by the president himself. The top supporters of the fund are the Armed Forces, elite businessmen/developers, and national banks as well as the obligatory income cuts that are deducted from public workers. In April 2021, the parliament passed a law exempting the fund from all current and future taxes and tariffs (Abul-Magd, Akça and Marshall, 2020)

However, the rural and indigenous population living in rural, pastoral, and nomadic lands were more resistant to these changes than their counterparts living in urban areas. The Egyptian community had not only been westernised in the era of colonisation – in terms of culture, traditions, and social norms – but also it had been affected by different schools of Islamic ideologies (like Sufis, Salafis, Wahabis, …etc.). The earliest measures that mixed Islamic Arabic culture with European one – in terms of conceptualisation and mobilisation of lands – was the separation of the court system for land and property rights during British Colonisation; public courts for Egyptian working with Islamic *Shariaa* and mixed courts for non-Egyptians working with Napoleonic Code. This later transformed into a merged Civil Code in 1949 where it became the cornerstone for civil rights in Egypt until recent times (Bechor, 2001). Meanwhile, customary rules agreed upon by the local community in villages or nomadic tribes were applied by community leaders and family heads who rarely went to courts to resolve their conflicts (Cuno, 1993).

In the Nasser era, the socialist agenda of seizing property from the rich to distribute to the poor was against Islamic teachings that protect private property. Islamists were also against many of the oppressive measures adopted by the regime at the time which made the latter attempt to disempower Islamic narratives and discourses to limit their impact on social mobilisation by banning Islamists publications and imprisoning their party leaders (Bagley, 1956; Warburg, 1982). The gear shifted in the time of El-Sadat who wanted to empower Islamic parties against communists and socialists who rejected his liberal agenda. However, Islamists joined forces with Arabic Nationalists (the old guard of Nasser) in protesting against the Egyptian treaty with Israel. Islamists valued the holy land of Jerusalem; thus, unlike nationalists, the religious value of land preceded its strategic and/or political value. Accordingly, the acts of El-Sadat were not seen as a treason to the country by Islamists but as a treason to Islam. Accordingly, when El-Sadat reinstated his predecessor's oppressive practices towards his oppression, he got assassinated by radical Islamists. That put Islamic mobilisation under the radar in the time of Mubarak who limited their political practice but allowed their socio-economic practices to a certain degree, until the radicalization era in the beginning of 1990s (Warburg, 1982).

Despite the infiltration of Islamic teachings into the Egyptian community, the traditional and customary norms prevailed in rural areas with regards to understanding land value and its distribution rights. Many families continued to believe that land ownership was a sole right for the male members in the family and prohibited females from their legitimate right in land inheritance (Khodary, 2018). Land ownership brought pride and social status to these families, and it was considered a dishonour to sell one's land. When female members were not denied from inheriting lands by their families, some of them were not allowed to marry from outside the family to keep the land in the family's legacy prevailing endogamy marriage practices in rural areas (Sait and Lim, 2006). Thus, the social value of the land in those areas shaped the social structures and power relations. Access to land was more difficult in urban areas, making the social value of land more dependent on accessibility to social security (granted by a collectivist community) rather than social status.

4.3.4 Environmental Structures

Finally, environmental structures are shaped by the geographical nature of Egyptian territories which concentrate its agglomerations around the Nile River (the main source of fresh water in arid country) leading to the current state of contestation between different land uses. Invasion of the desert was a predominant aspiration for consecutive leaders seeing the potentials in the vast vacant lands (Sims, 2015); however, the difference was in their strategies and priorities of investments. Muhammed Ali saw the potential in agrarian economy – consistent with his times – leading him to direct investments towards extending canals and improving irrigation systems to expand the size of agricultural lands. While Nasser was more inclined towards industrial economy where he focused more on building industrial cities in the desert and supported that by building the High Dam to provide needed electricity. El-Sadat and Mubarak on the other hand saw the potential in real estate by allocating high-end residential compounds and business districts in the desert. Mubarak was also invested in transforming the Northern and Eastern coastlines into touristic resorts and luxurious vacation destinations. Finally, El-Sisi saw the

potential of the desert in reallocating lower-income classes to discharge the inner city to develop high-end CBDs in prime locations viewing the Nile front. He also saw the potential in the desert for reallocating the centre of governance (in the New Administrative Capital), a dream that was pursued by his predecessors and never fulfilled as in Nasser's Nasser City, El-Sadat's Sadat City, and Mubarak's New Cairo. However, in the pursuit of different priorities for strategies, the ecological aspects have served as a means to an end and not for their own merits.

It could be deduced from analysing different governmental policy papers that the objective of seeking environmental-friendly practices was triggered by the need to attract tourism and investments more than to provide citizens with better quality of life. Thus, the global promotion of developing GCR as "Green City" could have been a strategically chosen brand for city's image and not necessarily connected with environmental/ecological concerns. For example, under the "*environmental friendliness*" aspect in the Cairo 2050 Vision document, there is a clear statement that pollution is a growing concern because it affects "*economic performance and ability to attract experts and institutions from all over the world*" (GOPP, 2012, p. 59). Furthermore, the Nile islands developing as natural reserves is listed under the priority projects for the tourism sector while simultaneously stating under the environmental sustainability pillar that "*GC will have to maximise the benefit of its location overlooking the Nile River*" through urban development projects on the riverbanks (GOPP, 2012, p. 70). There is also a concern for spatial environmental justice as the dominating strategy for improving the percentage of green areas per capita is "developing a number of large green spaces instead of focusing on establishing scattered green spaces all over the GC" (GOPP, 2012, p. 71). This argument could be also tracked in governmental urban practices on the regional level, and how it uses environmental objectives to mobilise political and economic agendas.

For example, the authorities promoted that widening the vehicle roads and building more connecting bridges are meant to reduce traffic which increases air pollution (GOPP, 2012; GOPP, 2014; SIS, 2017). However, to do that they cut off green areas, removed public spaces and pedestrian sidewalks as shown in Figure 4.4 and 4.5. These practices would lead to increasing the greenhouse gas effect (Aly and Dimitrijevic, 2022) – by increasing the asphalt footprint on the expense of the green footprint – as well as increasing the dependency on vehicles rather than walking or cycling that became challenging in the streets of GCR (ElMoghazi, 2019). Another example is that when green areas are planned and implemented in the new cities' development, like in the case of the New Administrative Capitals and luxurious compounds – they are usually not accompanied by an integrated plan for reducing water consumption required for irrigation or energy consumption of building – green buildings – in the hot desert (Sims, 2015). Furthermore, the architectural styles promoted in the strategic plans are concrete high-rise buildings with wide openings and glass facades, something that would require energy consuming active cooling systems and is not compatible with the Egyptian weather. Accordingly, it could be argued that *Industrocentrism* is the overarching ideology of environmental structures within the Egyptian context where utilization of resources for benefits of capitalistic economy (Kopnina *et al.*, 2018; Shoreman-Ouimet and Kopnina, 2015) is perceived as the main agenda for urban development. The discourses for environmental development are associated with attracting funding, global recognition, and investments. Thus, mobilisation of land environmental value and trajectory of built-environment development became resultant of power interaction between political, social, and economic structures, in which the latter have the most prevailing impact.

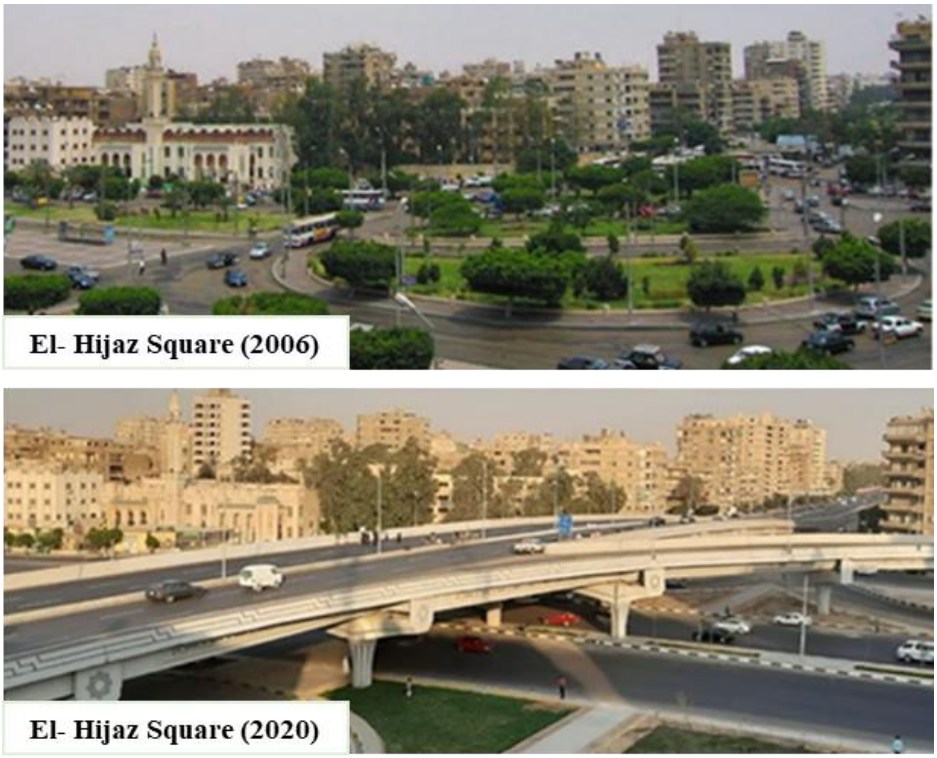

Fig. (4- 4) El-Higaz Square, Heliopolis
Source: Photos by Essam Arafa in (Aly and Dimitrijevic, 2022)

Fig. (4- 5) Widening Roads on Expense of Green Spaces
Source: Google Earth Satellite Images, December 2022

In conclusion, the historical progression of urban development in Egypt created layers of overlapping structures that shaped the current contested environment within the metropolitan centre of the Greater Cairo Region (GCR). GCR has been growing incrementally in size (due to horizontal urban expansion) and population (due to internal migration) because of the concentration of investments and public spending in the region (Arandel and El Batran, 1997; Afify, 2000; Shawkat and Hendawy, 2017; Wahdan, 2013). Developing new cities in close proximity to the borders of GCR and extending regional road networks to improve connectivity had led to the merge of all peripheral agglomerations and peri-urban areas to the spatial mass of the capital (Dorman, 2013). This did not only increase the housing problem and informal urbanism in the region, but also complicated the social structures by merging rural and urban communities with their different cultural and ideological backgrounds. Furthermore, the strict unified laws for urban development that do not fit diverse needs of this community provoked communal practices to take lead in urban development where corruption, oppression, and inequality practices of the governing regime are used as justification for non-compliance by negatively protesting communities. To unravel the complexity of understanding land value within the Egyptian context, there is a need to contextualise operationalisation of structures impacting land value conceptualisation and mobilisation that are illustrated in Table 3.1 presented in Chapter 3. Accordingly, Table 4.1 summarises the previous contextual analysis into the operationalisation table.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter investigated the historical progression of different structures in Egypt shaping the urban practice (including land rights, governance, and development strategies) and underlying understandings of land value mobilising this practice. The chapter illustrated how political structures had the highest influence on urban practice in Egypt manifested in the distribution of land rights between the rulers and the ruled and the distribution of power between different actors by means of *Nationalism* and *Military Authoritarianism*. It also showed how a centralised decision-making process accumulated land and power in the hands of the authority creating a hierarchical structure of uneven power relations. The investigation illustrated further how these political structures influenced economic structures where the state pursued controlling means of production leading to the current state of *Neoliberal Authoritarianism*. However, it is argued that apparent practices of neoliberal economy are mobilised by capitalist ideologies, and the controlled land market is benefiting military capitalism. The chapter also explained how inefficient land governance made informal discourses of market value more dominant than formal evaluations, and informal development of land practices more dominant than formal practices in the Egyptian context. Finally, the findings of this chapter demonstrated how social and environmental land values have been undermined by economic and political ones, where materialistic and industrocentric approaches to land value led to increasing rates of urban segregation, spatial exclusion, and environmental injustice. Being the metropolitan capital, GCR absorbed intensely those structures where its built environment became the spatial manifestation of their contested dynamics. El-Warraq Island redevelopment exemplifies the ongoing contestation between different land values and different mobilising structures. This case study is explored in three parts: Chapter 5 discusses the land market value of the island, Chapter 6 discusses its land strategic value, and Chapter 7 discusses its land social value. The dynamics between the three components of value with the land environmental value as well as the dynamics between structures and agents in shaping the composite value of the island are discussed in Chapter 8.

Table (4- 1) Contextualised Structures for Egyptian Context
Source: Developed by Author

	Political Structures	Economic Structures	Social Structures	Environmental Structures
Ideologies	ideology/ philosophy or rulership and normative understanding of the distribution of power ***Military Authoritarianism & Nationalism***	ideology / philosophy of national economics & the vision of economic development ***Neo-liberal Authoritarianism (Military Capitalism)***	ideologies / beliefs that govern the collective value system of a society and shape their collective memory ***Islamic Ideologies & Arabic / Middle-Eastern Culture***	ideology/ philosophy of the human-environment relationship ***Industrocentrism***
Discourses/ Narratives	▪ ***Formal Discourses*** (Constitution, Presidential Decrees, Unified Build Law (119/2008), Egyptian Civil Code, Expropriation Law (10/1990), Registry Law (186/2020), …etc.) ▪ ***Informal Discourses*** (social media narratives, customary laws, word of mouth, perceptions of power, …etc.)	▪ ***Formal Discourses*** (Egyptian Code for Property Valuation (39/2015), registered transaction documents, evaluators reports,…etc.) ▪ ***Informal Discourses*** (speculative market, word of mouth, prices manipulation, bribes and underpayments, …)	▪ ***Formal Discourses*** (Quran, Hadith, Islamic literature, Azhar education/ teachings, historic records, …etc.) ▪ ***Informal Discourses*** (Islamic interpretations, religious speeches, norms, traditions, folk stories, proverbs, heritage, …etc.)	▪ ***Formal Discourses*** (Egypt Vision 2030, Cairo Vision 2050, Egyptian SDGS, governmental environmental assessment reports, …etc.) ▪ ***Informal Discourses*** (campaigns, movements, social media complaints, expropriation plaints, independent assessment reports, …etc.)
Systems/ Institutions/ Actors	▪ ***Formal Institutions*** (Presidency, Cabinet, Ministries, GOPP, NUCA, Local Authorities, Governorates, Directorates, EAAF, ISDF, …etc.) ▪ ***Informal Institutions*** (elite families, community leaders, informal lobbies, …etc.)	▪ ***Formal Institutions*** (Egyptian Survey Authority, legal arbitrators, Registry of Deeds Agency, formal market …etc.) ▪ ***Informal Institutions*** (brokers, online market, informal market)	▪ ***Formal Institutions*** (El-Azhar, Ifta House, NGOs, CBOs, …etc.) ▪ ***Informal Institutions/Actors*** (Imams, family heads, community leaders, bloggers, celebrities, social media, …etc.)	▪ ***Constructed Environmental Systems:*** *Physical (Built-up) Environment* (High Dam, New Cities, National Roads Network, …etc.) ▪ ***Essential Ecological Systems*** *Natural Environment* (Nile River, desert lands, arid weather, productive soli, coastlines,…etc.)
Relationships	***Centralized Authority*** ***Hierarchical Structure*** ***Uneven Power Relationships***	***Semi-controlled Market Economy*** ***Clientelistic Mode of Governance***	***Societal Collectivism*** ***Hierarchical Structures*** ***Social Inequality & Discrimination***	***Spatial Exclusion*** ***Environmental Injustice***

CHAPTER FIVE

LAND MARKET VALUE CREATION, CRITERIA, AND CAPTURE IN THE QUEST OF REDEVELOPMENT

Land has played a key role in the Egyptian state's bundle of policies as it was usually considered a key national asset for consecutive regimes. The historic progression of the tools and strategies mobilised to utilise this asset were highly influenced by conflating ideologies adopted by policy makers which layered throughout the history of Egypt and pushed the land market to be heavily relying on informal discourses rather than formal ones. Thus, one of the drivers of conflict in understanding and mobilising land value is the diverse perceptions and conceptualisations of the land valuation process among different stakeholders who are influenced by various parameters from the surrounding economic (among other) structures. This chapter aims to investigate the ideological differences in conceptualisation and mobilisation of the land market value based on three themes driven from the analysis of the case study of El-Warraq Island redevelopment project. Those three themes are (1) understanding value creation, (2) understanding value criteria (evaluation), and (3) understanding value capture.

Based on thematic and narrative analyses of semi-structured interviews with the inhabitants of the island, the officials, and the experts involved in its redevelopment project, this chapter investigates the structural mechanisms creating the state of conflict regarding land market value in the context of El-Warraq Island redevelopment project. This chapter is divided into three sections, where the first section discusses factors/drivers of land value creation promoting El-Warraq Island as a prime location for both the inhabitants and the government. The second section discusses both valuation criteria – or the lack of it – and value capture. It investigates how different actors rationalise and mobilise value criteria using their power status to influence evaluation practices. It also discusses how conceptions of evaluation are intertwined with calculations of redevelopment costs/benefits, long-term impacts, and aspirations for value capture while keeping balance between profitable and non-profitable land uses. Finally, the third section concludes the key parameters influencing the conceptualisation and mobilisation of El-Warraq Island's market value within the wider economic structures underlying these processes.

5.1 Generation of Land Value: Drivers of Market Value Creation

As discussed in Chapter 2, there are two main approaches in understanding the creation of land value. The first assumes that value is essential in land – in other words, it is an inherited value that our actions are meant to capture/regenerate rather than create from scratch (Callicott, 1989). Within this understanding, the key drivers of land market value are the land's resources and/or locational advantages. The second understanding claims that land is one of the three pillars of the means of production (Harvey, 2017); yet, it does not have any value unless both capital and labour are invested (Harvey, 1917; Balchin, Bull and Kieve, 1995). According to this view, the creation of value is possible through creating speculative dynamics based on the prospects of future development and value gains rather than the present land value factors/qualities, even if the land does not have any spatial distinctiveness or competitiveness that make it valuable. These two different understandings differ in their accounts of who and/or what creates the market value of the land, and accordingly who bears the costs of value creation, if any. The conflict manifests in the empirical domain where essentialists argue that no one has an exclusive right to capture this value, while existentialists argue the exclusive right to capture this value is for those who constructed it.

El-Warraq Island falls into the centre of this debate where there is a conflict between inhabitants and official actors regarding the basis for land valuation, the distribution of land (re)development gains, and whether inhabitants should profit from the increase in land market values after redevelopment. This section investigates both essential and existential tangible elements of the land market value of El-Warraq Island in three stages. Firstly, spatial analysis is presented of the island's locational advantages and possible development potentials; secondly, two essential aspects of the island's market value are discussed, namely soil quality and aesthetic distinctiveness; and thirdly, existential/constructed aspects caused by mechanisms and dynamics of urban development are discussed.

5.1.1 Spatial Analysis of Locational Advantage and Development Potential

El-Warraq Island is one of 144 islands[1] located along the Nile River in Egypt and one of 14 islands within GCR (Kamel, 2022). The surface area of the island is around 1516 Feddans[2], where its length is around 4.5 km and its width is around 1.75 km, making it the biggest Nile Island in Egypt (Sites, 2019). However, this surface area is reported variously by different entities between 1285 and 1864 Feddans (Afify, 2022; Abo-Elfetouh, 2017; Cube, 2015). This variation is probably caused by incremental receding of water level after establishing the High Dam, and by inhabitants' backfilling of the riverbanks with rocks and sand to create more land for residential purposes. The island is centrally located between the three governorates that define GCR, which are Cairo, Giza, and Qalyubia, as shown in Figure 5.1. However, the island's urbanisation rate was slower than surrounding areas as shown in Figure 5.2.

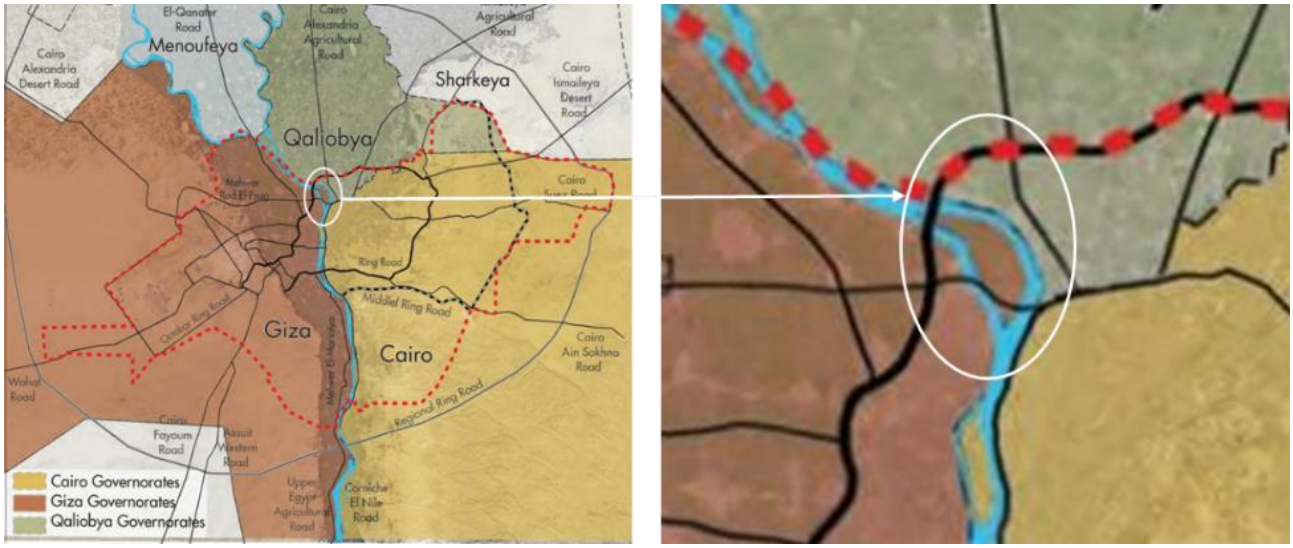

Fig. (5- 1) El-Warraq Island Location
Source: (GOPP, 2012)

Fig. (5- 2) El-Warraq District's Urban Development (2004 to 2013)
Source: Google Earth Satellite Images

[1] There is a contradiction in this "acknowledged" number of islands between different entities based on how they identify them (Kamel, 2022).

[2] Feddan = 1.04 Acre = 4200 m²

Before the redevelopment project, El-Warraq district – which included El-Warraq Island – had an approximate density of 17,000 inhabitants/km² where El-Warraq Island's population density was 14,000[1] inhabitants/km² (Sites, 2019). However, the island is surrounded by some of the most densely inhabited districts in GCR as shown in Figure 5.3, where Shubra district in the East of the island has a population density of approximately 44,000 inhabitants/km², El-Sahel district in the South-East is approximately 57,500 inhabitants/km², and Imbaba district in the South-West is approximately 69,500 inhabitants/km² (Alary *et al.*, 2016). Although the island is only connected to the rest of the region by ferries as shown in Figure 3.5 in Chapter 3, its location has good accessibility to different services and activities.

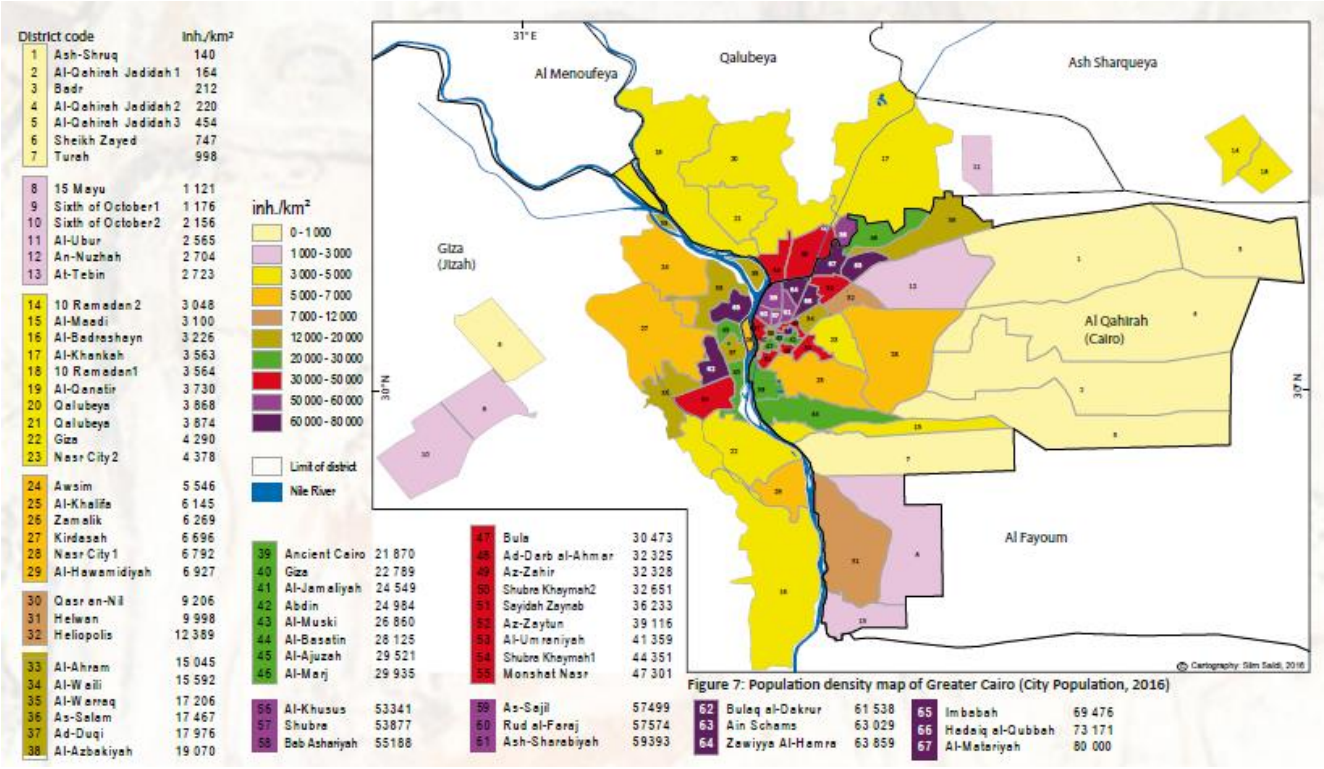

Figure 7: Population density map of Greater Cairo (City Population, 2016)

Fig. (5- 3) Population Densities of GCR Districts
Source: (Alary et al., 2016)

As illustrated in Figure 5.4, across the East bank bays, there is an educational complex with elementary schools, religious education institutions, and both agriculture and engineering faculties from Ain Shams and Benha universities respectively. There are also health and emergency facilities, an open market, and other mixed uses areas including commercial, services, and residential buildings within a walking distance of one km from the riverbank. Furthermore, the main facilities for distribution of electricity, water, and sewage networks as well as many industrial facilities are located within the surrounding areas that were once considered the border of the GCR urban agglomeration. El-Warraq Island is crossed by the overbridges of two main highways – but with no direct road access from them to the island – while the ferryboats' bays are linked with Nile Cornish main vehicle roads from the East and West.

From its East bank, the island is near to public transportation access points including multiple regional bus interchanges, underground stations, and the final stop of the regional train line, all within approximately one kilometre distance. It also has access to El-Sahel district that includes healthcare facilities with various specialisms targeting different income levels and mixed-use buildings for higher income groups. The West side of the island is connected to El-Warraq and Imbaba districts which are mostly low to medium-income residential areas with

[1] Based on surface area of 6.3 km² and population of 90,000 inhabitants.

also some mixed-use activities on the ground floors. There is also access from this side to the northern arc of the Ring Road Axis which circles the metropolitan region and connects it with surrounding regions. Finally, the North and the North-East fringes of the island are near to the agricultural zones of Qalyubia and Giza districts respectively, where there are illegal encroachments over agricultural lands waiting to be included within the urban boundaries of the governorates as nearby peri-urban areas.

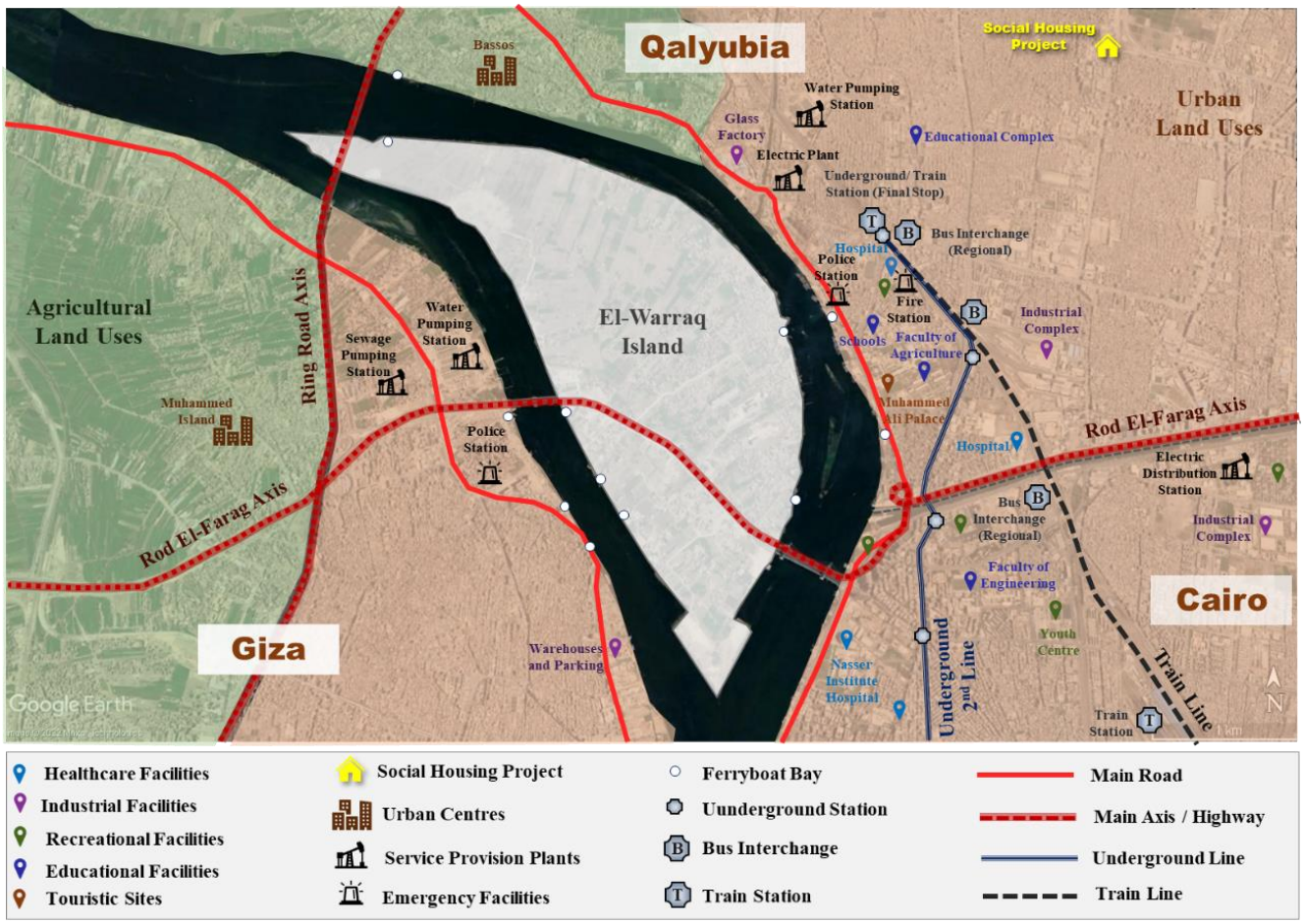

Fig. (5- 4) Land Uses, Activities, and Transition Networks Surrounding El-Warraq Island
Source: Author's Elaboration based on Google Earth Satellite Images

Accordingly, El-Warraq Island is surrounded by a spectrum of socio-economic mixed-use residential areas giving its inhabitants access to various services, job opportunities, and transit nodes. The island is also surrounded by the attractive waterfront of the Nile River from all sides as shown in Figure 5.5; however, unlike surrounding areas, it has mostly maintained its rural development identity because of its relative isolation as shown in Fig. 5.6. All those aspects give El-Warraq Island a uniqueness and distinctiveness for its location from different perspectives, which made it the centre of debate regarding assessing which of these aspects hold a greater value that needs to be cherished, exploited, and/or captured and who have the right to determine this hierarchical categorization of values and benefit from the distinctiveness of the island's location.

Fig. (5- 5) The Waterfront of El-Warraq Island taken from the Island
Source: Taken by Author (August 2021)

Fig. (5- 6) Rural Lifestyle in El-Warraq Island
Source: Taken by Author (August 2021)

5.1.2 Essential/Inherent Values of El-Warraq Island

From the previous spatial analysis, it could be argued that El-Warraq Island's locational distinctiveness promoted its competitive advantage for both its use and exchange values. However, there are some features that differentiate the island's value proposition from other prime locations with similar potentials for development. This subsection

focuses on two main features highlighted in the interviews which could be identified as essential aspects of land market value: soil quality and aesthetic distinctiveness.

Soil Quality/ Productivity

The island has high agricultural productivity resulting from being an island in the middle of the Nile with one of the most fertile soils in Egypt (Sites, 2019). This made the island attractive for farmers from other places who sold their lands and resettled in the island where minimum effort was required to make its land profitable as explained by the following inhabitants' statements.

> *"This island is the biggest Nile Island in all of Egypt, and it had the highest production of potatoes on the governorate level … great amount, great quality and it was exported abroad."*
>
> (C-00/P1, June 2021)

> "*For the farmers who were looking for a source of income, this land was the most productive agricultural land in all over the World, not just Egypt. It is because its land is consistent of the pure Nile silt. So, they would come because the agriculture here is good, the productivity rate is high, and the quality of crops is great as well.*"
>
> (I-08, October 2021)

The officials and experts agreed with this assessment as according to the urban economist and the ISDF representative, this factor was considered in the evaluation criteria of the island's agricultural lands. However, the feasibility study of the project showed that there was no intention to capitalise on this specific feature as the redevelopment plan aimed to eradicate all agricultural land uses in the island for the sake of urban uses. From the government's perspective, there are higher and better land uses for the island, which are mostly urban land uses. The UN-Habitat junior consultant claimed in his following statement that it was not economic to sustain agricultural lands in this location. Furthermore, the former private urban consultant – who developed the initial redevelopment project plans – agreed, adding that agricultural lands could be compensated for elsewhere as shown in his quote in Appendix II. However, neither of them addressed how these unique fertile lands would be compensated in a country suffering from water crisis (El-Nashar and Elyamany, 2018) and escalating energy and economic crises (Bush, 2019). In addition, former attempts at reclamation projects did not achieve their targets (Nour, 2019; Sims, 2015). Food prices and importation dependency in Egypt are consistently increasing due to the continuous loss of productive agricultural lands through both formal and informal urbanisation (MPED, 2021; CAPMAS, 2022).

> *"There are two national projects being made now, the one million Feddan project, and the New Delta project. All these are projects for land reclamation. And be aware also, to be realistic with disregard to emotion, the agricultural land in all ways is being eaten by the urban growth, especially the agricultural land that is confined by urbanism. So, it is better that instead of the area developing as an informal area, that you plan it before it becomes an informal area."*
>
> (JCUN, June 2021)

Understanding the soil quality as an essential non- replicable property of the agricultural land market value in El-Warraq Island was completely dismissed by the officials and experts interviewed, except for the urban economist who believed that the redevelopment project should have capitalised on this unique inherited quality of the land and included agricultural land uses in the redevelopment plan. The other officials and experts believed that this property could be recreated/replicated elsewhere. Their position was further rationalised by their belief in the

inevitability of losing these agricultural lands to urban uses due to market dynamics. Thus, for those experts/ officials, it is more effective to capture the benefit of this transformation in land uses and control its trajectory to formal development rather than losing it to informal one as explained by the above statement. Problematically, this rationalisation suggests that the government is incapable of restraining informal encroachments on agricultural lands. Furthermore, staying ahead of informal encroachment through the formal urbanisation of agricultural lands sends a powerful message to the public that these land uses are not valuable, contradicting formal discourses of the state and encouraging further informal encroachments in other agricultural areas.

The inhabitants of the island had a different perception as they believed these agricultural lands are irreplaceable, even if they were compensated with other agricultural lands which would not be as valuable as this one from their perspective. Some of the inhabitants interviewed argued that the agricultural lands could be bargained for housing purposes, but not for investment ones. This could be one explanation of why, unlike the agricultural lands surrounding the island, there has been a slower rate of urbanisation in El-Warraq Island, as the land was only urbanised based on housing needs, not for the sake of accumulating profit in the real-estate market like in other peri-urban areas. Although the slow rate of urbanisation is caused by other factors that will be discussed later in this section, that does not refute inhabitants acknowledging soil quality as an essential value in their island that could not be replicated elsewhere exemplified by their following quotes.

> *"The one who works in the land is the one who knows its value. The one who grows crops and knows how it costs, is the one who can put a value or a price for it, because he knows how he turns it into a source of income."*
>
> (B-03/P1, August 2021)

> *"They are bringing rubbles and construction wastes and throwing them in these lands to make them look like they are waste lands, not agricultural lands. These lands were very fertile and produced the best crops. The best clay that produced potatoes, tomatoes, wheat, with the best quality that you can't find anywhere else."*
>
> (B-02/P2, August 2021)

Accordingly, the first ideological dispute in understanding the market value of El-Warraq Island is associated with acknowledging the value of its soil quality and the potential of capitalising on this value for agricultural purposes. This would be one of the triggers of conflict between different stakeholders in terms of dealing with some qualities as irreplaceable, so it needs to be protected at any cost or replaceable/replicable, so it can be bargained for higher benefits. It also influences the decision-making ideologies and motivations within urban practice which clash between capturing long-term versus short-term benefits or planning for a wider scale purpose (like considering national food security) and localised scale purposes for redevelopment.

Aesthetic Attractiveness

The second essential property of El-Warraq Island is its unique aesthetic appeal as it is surrounded by the Nile River waterfront on all sides. Real-estate properties overviewing the Nile always held high market values for the aesthetic view compared to nearby locations. High-rise towers competing to view the waterfront is a common feature in GCR as shown in Figure 5.7 where the government supports – and capitalises – on this aesthetic value by increasing the number of floors allowed in the waterfront line. The consecutive redevelopment proposals for El-Warraq Island show that high-rise towers are also distinctive features in the vision for the island as shown in Figure 5.8. Furthermore, these proposals show the attempt to increase the waterfront area by creating lakes inside the island. Although these proposals will not be executed, they illustrate inclination towards profit maximisation from the essential value of the Nile waterfront as explained by the project's former consultant in his next quote.

"The concept for Cairo is to invest in the Cairo jewels for the benefit of the people. We have jewels. One of them is the Nile. The Nile River that is going through Cairo is a jewel, that we should preserve it, polish it, use it, invest it, and the money coming from it, we make with it transportation, hospitals, schools, roads, services, … so the people live a quality of life better than they have." (PCCC, July 2021)

El-Warraq Island's inhabitants acknowledged this distinctive quality of their island, and accordingly, negotiated their right to profit from it either by selling their lands for the highest market price or by resettling on the island after the redevelopment, guaranteeing their access to this aesthetic quality as they always had. Meanwhile, the government officials acknowledged this aesthetic quality as a luxurious one, which by implication is not affordable – or should not be accessible – for everyone, as illustrated in the GOPP consultant's statement below.

"For them [the island's inhabitants], they are somehow living a luxurious style, like it is natural to go sit in a cafeteria on the Nile, clear their heads from any trouble. But would it be the same if they went to another place, like a new city, would they have the same luxury?! No, they won't!"

(JCGO, July 2021)

Fig. (5- 7) Nile River Front in GCR
Source: Author's Elaboration based on Google Earth Maps and Photos by (Aqarmap, 2023)

This is consistent with current national strategy for the Nile promenade's redevelopment, where its aesthetic qualities are being commodified (Farag and El-Alfy, 2013; Kamel, 2022). The strategy developed by officials and experts for land market valuation in the island proves this inconsistency between the acknowledgment of the inherent value of the aesthetic quality of the island and the lack of acknowledgment of the inhabitants' inherited right to capture this value. For example, when the government evaluated the island's lands purchasing price –

according to the project urban economist – it followed a mass appraisal approach (Kauko and d'Amato, 2009), where all the lands in the island were evaluated as agricultural land uses with the same market price regardless of their locational position from the Nile, soil quality, or development status. However, in the government's evaluation of the selling price for the same lands in their feasibility study report, they categorised different zones (calling them special zones) according to their locational position from the waterfront, as shown in Figure 5.9. The redevelopment project phases show that the North and South tips of the island have the highest value, followed by the perimeter line of the island, while the middle has the alternative housing zone which implies it would be the lowest value zone.

Fig. (5- 8) Redevelopment Proposals for El-Warraq Island
Source: (Cube, 2015; Sites, 2019; Afify, 2022)

Accordingly, the second ideological issue in understanding the island's market value is the dispute on whether essential qualities of land are the sole rights for those who have possession of it (the people), the general authority who regulates its management (the state or local authority), or if it is a communal right meaning that all should have access to its benefits regardless of their title position, authority, or socio-economic status. When it comes to access to aesthetically beautiful locations, the argument is more driven by the ideological debate if this is considered as a basic need that the government should secure for all its people, or it is considered a luxurious aspiration that the government should commodify to benefit from its scarcity like in the case of the Nile promenade. Another side of the debate is extended to whether the government/authority has a responsibility to preserve this essential value from over-exploitation that could ruin its aesthetic distinctiveness (by over densification for example) or has a responsibility to maximise the utilization of these locations to improve its economic revenues. Those arguments are triggers for dispute over the mobilisation of essential qualities of land and they are rooted in the motivations and objectives of urban intervention policies.

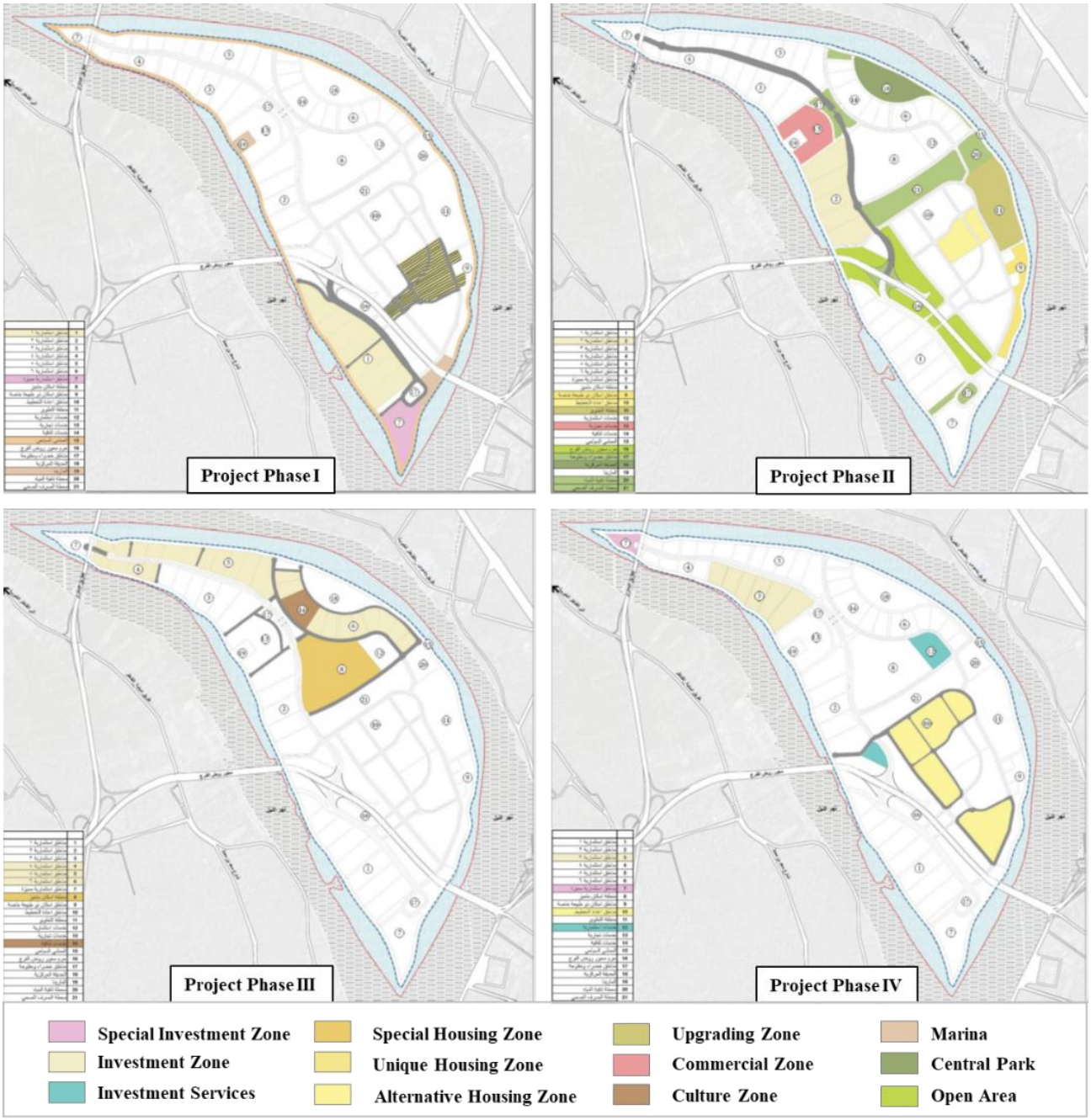

Fig. (5- 9) El-Warraq Island Redevelopment Project Phases

Source: (Sites, 2019)

5.1.3 The Acquired/Constructed Values of El-Warraq Island

El-Warraq Island's value was affected by the highly dynamic urban transformations occurring within the Egyptian metropolitan capital of GCR. The island's natural essential qualities were not the only attributes influencing its market value, but also several constructed qualities shaped by urban and socio-economic dynamics surrounding it. This section discusses three main dynamics which historically influenced the process of land market value creation/formation within El-Warraq Island: labour force mobility, urban development, and speculation dynamics.

The first dynamic started in the early 1970s when red-brick construction was booming, and its main raw material was the clay/silt from agricultural lands. According to the inhabitants, the island had a couple of red-brick factories attracting workers from different places in Egypt. The island provided the perfect competitive location as it had raw materials for the red-brick industry, proximity to construction sites in downtown Cairo, and a cheap habitable

environment for the workers to settle with their families. The red-brick industry became the main source of income for many of the island's new settlers as exemplified by a female elder inhabitant's statement.

> *"The people used to work in the brick workshops here in the island … we used to transfer the clay to these workshops, and they used to make bricks. The whole island was working on that."*
>
> (C-04/P1, October 2021)

Even though other Nile islands in GCR had the same potential for attracting the red-brick industry, the island was already populated with housing and commerce making it more attractive than less populated islands. Even when the red-brick factories using agricultural soil were closed and criminalised by Law no. 116/1983 (Article 50) to protect agricultural lands from erosion, most brick workers did not leave as they were already settled with their families and had adapted to the island's lifestyle. According to the inhabitants, the island provided a cheap alternative for those who wanted to settle in the capital because it was isolated and lacked basic services. The urban development that surrounded the island in the beginning of 1990s encouraged more lower-income groups to buy lands from the island's inhabitants and settle there.

Therefore, the second dynamic which shaped the island's market value was related to the megaprojects driving urban transformations in the surrounding area. One mega project was the establishment of the second underground line (Shubra/ El-Munieb) in 1996 (El-Nahhas, 2013) which connected the East and West of GCR across the Nile River and had its endline station (Shubra) located one kilometre away from the island's ferryboat. Since two of the main regional bus stations and the endline train station were also located around 2 kilometres away as shown in Figure 5.4 in Section 5.1.1, the nearby area in the Shubra district became a transition node. This generated a variance and increase in economic activities, population, and rents. Another mega project was the establishment of the Northern arc of the Ring Road that crossed over the tip of El-Warraq Island from the North as shown in Figure 5.4, connecting rural areas North and West the island with the national roads network (Dorman, 2013). That increased the informal urbanisation of Imbaba and El-Warraq districts west of the island; yet again, the island sustained its competitiveness for lower-income groups, especially rural migrants. These dynamics were explained by the urban economist expert discussing the drivers of value formation within El-Warraq Island in his next quote.

> *"What is important is that this northern arc [of the Ring Road] made a clear huge exposure, urban pressures on the island … the older generation that used to work in the industrial zones … discovered that the island is the new destination … They only needed to cross the river, a distance that doesn't exceed 3 kilometres, and they will be having the same apartment-buildings … the island became a destination attraction … for ashwayea [informal] housing that received the discharge of population, from both the Eastern … and Western side … so they will be close to their families … So, this driving force – regardless of the State orientation – transformed the area … And the island started to have formation of value, but as a slum area."*
>
> (UEPC, August 2021)

Since El-Warraq Island, as well as the nearby districts, was considered at the fringe of the urban agglomeration of GCR, it was close to industrial areas (built in the 1950s and 1960s) and to agricultural areas of the nearby rural governorates. This made the region an optimum location for those who worked in low-paid jobs in factories and farms. The formal and informal sprawl of the urban agglomeration of the capital towards this fringe increased land values surrounding the island tremendously. However, the island's market values stayed much lower than the surrounding areas for three possible causes.

The first cause is that El-Warraq district was only added to the urban boundaries of El-Giza governorate by law 1179/2010, which means that before 2010 it was an agricultural zoning area where construction was prohibited

by law no. 53/1966 (Salem, 2015). Secondly, El-Warraq Island itself was considered as a natural reserve for 19 years (from 1998 to 2017) by Prime Minister Decree no. 1969/1998 who banned the construction of any building on the island – and on another 17 Nile islands – without his direct permission (Bassam, 2018). Although the government did not take serious actions to restrain informal construction on the island, the construction rate was slower than surrounding areas because the island's living conditions were considerably poor. Thus, the third possible cause for the island's low market value was its slow introduction to the basic services like electricity, water, gas, and sewage disposal networks. According to the inhabitants, electricity was introduced in the 1970s, while freshwater pipes were introduced in the 1990s. However, the gas piping and sewage disposal systems have not yet been introduced to the island making the living conditions there worse than the surrounding areas. Even the agricultural underdeveloped zones surrounding the island had these services as their inhabitants informally extended existing networks to their lands. However, the water surrounding the island made this practice more challenging for the island's inhabitants without the government's involvement.

The inhabitants collaborated with insider and outsider donors to provide themselves with water purification stations – as the public water plants were pumping unclean water due to the lack of regular maintenance – as well as alternative systems for sewage disposal and garbage collection. Inhabitants dug cesspits and hired private sewage pumping trucks to discharge these cesspits on a regular basis. They also hired private garbage collecting trucks for routine garbage disposal. Problematically, these private trucks ended up disposing collected sewage and garbage in the Nile River or – more recently – either in the vacant agricultural lands that have been bought by the government and or under the newly established bridge as shown in Figure 5.10. One of the middle-aged male inhabitants explain his discontent with this practice in his following statement.

> *"We call the disposal trucks and pay for it ourselves. But unfortunately, they throw it wrongly, they throw it in the Nile, but we don't have any other place. There is nothing else we could do. The garbage also unfortunately is thrown on the shore. The government sometimes comes and cleans it but not regularly."*
>
> (I-02, September 2021)

Fig. (5- 10) Sewage and Garbage Disposal in El-Warraq Island
Source: Taken by Author (August 2021)

The island also lacked proper roads where the main routes in the island are not paved or treated making it challenging for the average user and almost impossible for a senior citizen or handicapped person to use. Within small alleys between the residential buildings shown in Figure 5.11 – approximately between 1.5 to 2 metres wide – pedestrians and small commuting vehicles like tuk-tuks and motorcycles struggle to use the same space. While in wider alleys (between 2 to 4 metres wide) the bigger cars and trucks endanger the lives of walking pedestrians who obviously do not have sidewalks. Furthermore, the ferry boats are not the safest transportation means, being poorly built and maintained. Thus, accessing emergency services outside the island was challenging for the inhabitants of the island as – before the redevelopment project – there were no police, firefighting, or ambulance services within its boundaries increasing the risk even for the wealthy inhabitants as explained by one of the male inhabitants in his following statement.

> *"We don't have firefighting nor ambulances or first aid services. We have requested them repeatedly, and they say that the roads aren't paved, and they are narrow, so they can't provide us with the services. For a very long time, the service on the island isn't just poor, it is almost null. I mean unless it is self-effort services like charities or something, but governmental services are very difficult to get on the island."*
>
> (I-10, October 2021)

Fig. (5- 11) Alleys in El-Warraq Island
Source: Taken by Author (July 2021)

Besides the infrastructural challenges, the island had limited social services for its population's needs. There were only three elementary schools (where secondary education is only provided for male students), one healthcare

unit, one social service office, and one post office for an approximate population of 90,000 inhabitants. Also, the agricultural association office (that included one veterinary clinic for the cattle) served around 1000 Feddans of agricultural lands in the island. The community of the island collaborated to provide themselves with other social services like nurseries, youth centres, and worship venues (for both Muslims and Christians) as well as various CBOs serving the most vulnerable within the community. These compiled factors are possible causes for reducing the market value of the island in comparison to the surrounding locations across the Nile River. However, the island still had competitive latent potentials spotted by private developers and government businessmen elites in the early 2000s – the episode of Mubarak's elites explained in Chapter 4 – leading them to start lobbying to displace the inhabitants from the island.

This started the third dynamic which – to a certain extent – unleashed the latent market value of El-Warraq Island. The Nile islands became a highly attractive location for developers and investors, who were already speculating on lands and real estate in the new cities surrounding GCR. According to media reports, Ahmed Salama – Natural Protection Sector Head in the Ministry of Environment – claimed that assigning the Nile islands as a national reserve was a political tool used by the prime minister at the time to protect communities from displacement (El-Maraghy, 2017; Zaky, 2017). When the Cabinet changed a year after announcing Nile Islands as natural reserves, some protection decrees were withdrawn gradually. The government started in 2000 calling El-Warraq Island's inhabitants as trespassers whose lack of ownership title deeds (which was not an accurate claim) made the island a public property. However, another decree was issued by the prime minister – 848/2001 – prohibiting the evacuation of any residential building in El-Warraq and El-Dahb Islands specifically, which created a unique situation allowing the inhabitants to register their lands and properties (or update their existing ownership contracts) in the Registry of Deeds (Soliman, 2018). When the Registry of Deeds refused to execute the decree, for unknown reasons, the inhabitants of the island filed a lawsuit in the administrative court and won the verdict in 2002 which allowed them to register their titles and transaction contracts. However, they still could not obtain building permits because the island was still considered as a natural reserve.

According to some interviewed inhabitants, this conflict and lawsuit opened their eyes to the possibility of being included in an investment project, encouraging more people to speculatively buy lands in the island to accumulate more profit when they are finally developed. Moreover, landowners within the island raised their prices relatively exploiting speculative assumptions as one middle-aged male inhabitant explained.

> *"When the inhabitants won the case in 2002, they started to have ambitions they never had before, they started dreaming and asking for better services from the government and higher prices for their lands since the court's decision was in their favour, the court legitimised their right to the land like never before."*
>
> (I-01, August 2021)

This speculative dynamic increased with the announcement of the GCR Strategic Development Plan in 2010 (Cairo 2050), promoting the first proposal of El-Warraq Island redevelopment project (Tawakkol, 2020). The announced project was proposed by Cube Consultants in partnership with GOPP and presented a luxurious development scheme, yet still included the "island village"; the alternative housing for the island's inhabitants as shown in Figure 5.12 (Cube, 2015). However, this redevelopment project was never realised as the 2011's public revolution suspended its progress, at least for a while. However, according to the inhabitants, land market value speculation on the island increased further after the government announced construction of Tahya Masr Bridge in 2015 as a core phase in Rod El-Farag National Axis project (Abd El Gawad, Al-Hagla and Nassar, 2019). This bridge passes directly over El-Warraq Island which made inhabitants expect that they were finally getting access to the rest of the region; an expectation that was confirmed by the government officials who negotiated for their land to build the bridge. According to inhabitants and officials, there was no resistance from inhabitants to sell

their lands cheaply at the time as they believed it was for the public good, and they were still able to buy cheap land in other locations in the island and build it as an alternative for their demolished properties.

Fig. (5- 12) El-Warraq Island Redevelopment Project First Proposal
Source: (Cube, 2015)

However, by the time the final redevelopment plan for the island was announced in 2017, the government had stopped all land transactions there, becoming the sole entity allowed to buy lands from inhabitants, and preventing any further construction. The market value of lands in the island was fixed accordingly on the purchasing price determined by the government (1428 EGP/m²)[1], a value lower than land prices on the island at the time and much less than the speculated value after the redevelopment, as illustrated in the inhabitants' statements below.

> *"The government's view in the evaluation, that we are barbarous people who don't deserve to be valued this much. But the government knows that one m² in El-Warraq Island exceeds 70 or 80 thousand. Despite that they take it from the people in return for 1500, because they believe that "these people don't deserve it".*
>
> (B-02/P1, August 2021)

> *"They are valuing the land, any land, for 1428 pound/m², since 2017, for four years the price has not changed … even though everything is becoming more expensive, outside in peri-urban areas the price reaches 4,000 per m², how is this fair?!"*
>
> (C-00/P1, June 2021)

> *"The prices now could have reached 2500 or 3000 per m²… five years ago, the price was around 2000 pound per m², and now we are being robbed with 1400!"*
>
> (I-10, October 2021)

[1] 1428 EGP/m² = approximately 23.37 GBP/m² (June 2024)

Accordingly, El-Warraq Island's market value was influenced by different dynamics which either increased, decreased, or fixed transaction prices as discussed in this sub-section. The first was the urban mobility dynamics of low-paid labour force settling in the island and creating a market for low-income housing there, which slightly increased demand – and land prices. The second was urban development dynamics manifested in the uneven development between El-Warraq Island and its surroundings where the urban transformations around the island increased land prices in nearby districts and the poor urban conditions on the island confined this escalation there. Finally, the third was speculation dynamics unleashing the latent market value of the island, but it was promptly constrained by banning free market transactions and controlling the purchasing value. The conflict between the inhabitants and the government regarding the creation of the island's market value relates to who is responsible for it – in terms of who bore the costs of its creation – and thus who has the right to capture this value.

The officials and experts interviewed argued that the government is responsible for the constructed market value of the island because of all their investments in urban transformations surrounding the island. Furthermore, they claim that the inhabitants' created an environment inside the island – the informal poor environment – that restrained the island from reaching its fullest potential as stated by the NUCA representative.

> *"We have spent so much money on this project and have gained nothing yet! We haven't sold a single plot. How could we and these people still exist on the island? How can we convince a developer or an investor to come and buy in this place?"*
>
> (FMNU, October 2021)

However, the inhabitants claim responsibility for this value creation as they are the ones who have populated the island – despite its poor condition – and without their collaborative effort to create a livelihood in the island, it would have ended up like other Nile Islands, unpopulated and uninhabitable. Inhabitants believe that they have paid the costs for creating the island's market value and accordingly should be the first to capture its benefits. Also, they argue that by being the most vulnerable group within the Egyptian community, the government should prioritise their rights while distributing the benefits of redevelopment for the "public good". The next section expands more on this conflict focusing on aspects of land market value criterion for evaluation and capture.

5.2 Land Market Value between Evaluation and Capture

Within the real-estate market, there are three main ways of property valuation aiming to evaluate the fair market price of the property: (1) *cost approach* calculating costs of holding, maintaining, and developing/redeveloping the property, (2) *income approach* calculating income revenues that could be collected from using and/or renting the property, and (3) *comparable sales approach* which calculates average market price of similar properties in the market (Harvey, 1917; Millington, 2013). The Egyptian Criteria for Real-Estate Evaluation Code (no. 39/2015) dictates that evaluators should combine those three approaches in their evaluation for fairness. However, as explained in Chapter 4, Egypt does not have an efficient real market for lands or properties as there is no equitable public access to market information (GTZ, 2009). The same property could receive different valuations from impartial valuers and those who benefit from this evaluation – buyers and sellers – have their biased motives to increase their gains at the expense of their counterparts. Supply and demand market dynamics supposedly bring these variations into balance, yet this is only possible in an efficient market (Harvey, 1917). Thus, the evaluation of the market value of land in Egypt is intertwined with the ambitions of capturing its benefits. This section investigates the mobilisation of the entangled processes of setting criteria for evaluating land market value and of capturing it within the conflict context in El-Warraq Island. The first subsection focuses on land evaluation's efficiency, transparency, and fairness while the second focuses on conceptualising mechanisms of land value capture and fair distribution of the redevelopment project costs and benefits.

5.2.1 Determining Land Evaluation Criteria

As argued by different scholars, the evaluation of real property is complicated due to the influence of subjective judgement on the process (Millington, 2013). Property evaluations are highly arbitrary – particularly in the case of a non-efficient market – as they are influenced by market speculation and the power play between different actors in determining transaction values (Elder-Vass, 2022). In El-Warraq Island, the government claims they are attempting a consented purchase approach – and not expropriation – to acquire the land. However, when they evaluated the land, they used a *mass appraisal* method where they set a fixed price for all plots of land in the island as explained by the urban economists next quote.

> *"The evaluation is according to the purpose of evaluation. If the purpose of evaluation is selling, then I need to put the price of distinction. If the purpose of evaluation is compensation, it is different … we make a unification, with one value, with a method called mass appraisal, so you can reach a fair market value. For also, none of them (the inhabitants) would say "why did I take 5 million and the other took 6?" it reduces the conflict. And be aware that you are under a huge pressure, so it must be a unified policy, a unified number … There is nothing called a location distinction in this type of appraisal in the whole World!"*
>
> (UEPC, August 2021)

Mass appraisal is supposedly used in calculating expropriation compensation values in Egypt rather than in calculating consented purchase values; however, the government claimed that the prices offered were higher than what the inhabitants would have got if the government enacted the expropriation law in the island. From the experts/officials' interviews, three justifications for using mass appraisal in this project could be deducted. The first justification was to reduce conflict between inhabitants and accordingly speed up the purchasing phase, as explained by the above statement and supported by the current project's urban consultant. The second justification was to manage the allocated budget for the compensation plan, while the third justification was to navigate the challenges of accurate evaluation within the Egyptian context – that lack access to accurate market information – as implied by the Engineering Authority representative's following statement.

> *"We are trying to solve these problems, and it is not the matter of how much we value the land, what matters is to find an achievable solution, one that the government could execute and afford as well as the inhabitants … The valuation in Egypt is problematic … the thing is that we don't have a stable standard for land or property valuation. The main criterion is the average value in the market, this is the most important factor that affects the compensation value, and it should be, because whoever takes financial compensation needs to find an appropriate alternative. Problematically, everyone works with preliminary contracts, and as you know, you can put any number or value in these contracts, and it is far from being accurate, not like the formal registry … But you must know that we don't have a unified pricing for lands or property in Egypt … In the same building, you would find apartments with different values, the broker set a price, the buyer set a price, and the seller set another price, everyone according to his own criteria that is very difficult to generalise or predict. We also don't have an information bank to the prices of properties and land in Egypt. Even agricultural lands differ from one place to another tremendously in their value, and sometimes even in the same area."*
>
> (PMEA, October 2021)

Problematically, combined (and/or confused) practices between expropriation with fair compensation and consented purchase with fair market prices contributed to conflict in the project. The inhabitants are inclined to value their property in terms of market dynamics while the officials and experts are inclined to value those same

properties in terms of the redevelopment project expenses for evacuating the land. Thus, there is a dichotomy in understanding the evaluation process, between how to calculate the fair market price in an inefficient market and how to calculate adequate compensation for displacing the inhabitants. This dichotomy is however intertwined in the responses of both groups creating a complex state of conflict and confusion between their positions.

Fair Market Price Evaluation

Regarding the fair market price, there are several problems detected from analysing the semi-structured interviews with the stakeholders of the redevelopment project. The first problem was the lack of transparency in governmental practice regarding the evaluation process. For example, the Engineering Authority representative explained that they based their evaluation of the island market value upon an investigatory survey among the nearby areas based on the 39/2015 code. However, this survey was not documented in the project's report or feasibility study, and accordingly there is no way to know exactly how this survey was conducted and the methodology of evaluation. Another example was the inconsistency between the assigned purchasing price in the redevelopment project's feasibility study and what is being paid to the inhabitants currently. In the report issued in 2019, 1 Feddan[1] agricultural land was supposed to be worth 7 million pounds (approximately 1666 EGP/m²), while the price for built-up land was supposed to be 3000 EGP/m² (Sites, 2019). It is questionable how these numbers were later reduced and unified to 1428 EGP/m² for all the lands, especially that some of the experts – like the inhabitants – believed that the land valuation varied, as shown in GOPP following quotes and supported by and UN-Habitat representative quote in Appendix II.

> *"This ashwayea [random/informal] area here in the very dense area will definitely take more value, because they are on the Nile River directly … a lot of things affect the valuation, the very basis is its location, and whether it is an agricultural land uses or built-up land uses, and the surface areas, and the current price of m² in this area."*
>
> (SCGO, July 2021)

The second problem in calculating the fair market price was in the data used for the evaluation process. The Engineering Authority representative stated that the *comparable sales* method in property appraisals held by the government is the dominating approach, unlike what is dictated by the Egyptian Evaluation Code (39/2015) that he claimed they used. The urban economist expert explained in his next quote taking the average price of the agricultural lands in nearby areas, and then multiplied it by 1.4 to take in account the island's high productivity:

> *"We took all these lands [agricultural lands in nearby areas] in consideration to reach the value. The lands in the islands are much more fertile and have a better quality. So, this value was multiplied by 1.4. So, the distinction factor is caused by the degree of soil enrichment with the nutrition elements and the higher productivity of one Feddan, like for example if one Feddan usually produces 3 Tons of tomatoes, if it is well cultivated in the island, it will produce 5 Tons."*
>
> (UEPC, August 2021)

However, the inhabitants opposed choosing those agricultural lands as values comparable to evaluate the lands in the island. The inhabitants wanted their built-up lands to be valued in comparison to urban lands, as they had already invested in transforming the land uses. Therefore, they wanted a separate evaluation for the agricultural and built-up land in the island as shown in one of the inhabitants' arguments below:

[1] 1 Feddan = 1.04 Acre = 4200 m²

"Even if they want the agricultural lands to be valued as agricultural lands, at least have a different price for the lands that have houses on them, something like the prices outside, even less if you want, instead of 20 thousand make it 15 or 10 for example. But it is not reasonable to treat all the lands with agricultural value … Any agricultural land that enters the urban boundaries and is linked with a road to the urban agglomeration, its price increases a lot, if it used to be worth 50 pounds, it increased to 10 or even 20 thousand pounds … But here, the bridge was constructed, buildings were built, and the prices didn't change accordingly."

(I-08, October 2021)

Thus, the comparable for the inhabitants was agricultural lands within urban boundaries – meaning they perceived the estimated valuation as very low as expressed by the next inhabitant's (I-08) statement– while the comparable for the government was agricultural lands outside the urban boundaries – meaning they perceived the estimated value as very high as expressed by the project current urban consultant (PCSI) in the latter statement. Accordingly, most inhabitants sold their agricultural lands to the government in the beginning of the purchase process as they believed they were getting a fair market price, but the problem for them was the evaluation of the informally urban developed lands.

"If you tried to compare the prices, what is 1428 pounds/m²? If you crossed over the island from the West side, you would find the m² with 20,000 or 30,000, and if crossed over from the East side, you would find it with 30,000 and 40,000 pounds. They say it is the difference in the service provision! It is their duty to provide us with the services … If they had, its price would have been different. And even if you left it as it is, there were areas in the island that were sold from 1500 to 1800 pound/m², before floating the Egyptian pound in 2016[1]. So, the prices would have been much higher than this if we sell now … he is taking our lands and making investment out of it!"

(I-08, October 2021)

"The compensations were higher than the actual values in the market … I don't know what the other projects value for compensation but the compensations here, in the island, I can't remember the numbers exactly, but I remember that at the time, they didn't get the value of agricultural lands … of course the numbers were very high."

(PCSI, June 2021)

Since there is no adequate access to information about the land market in Egypt, it became difficult for the inhabitants to estimate the fair price for their lands. Inhabitants interviewed estimated the market value of their lands between 4000 EGP/m² and 80,000 EGP/m² as illustrated in their statements across this chapter. Thus, negotiating fair price with the inhabitants would have been challenging for the government if the latter did not have accurate criterion for the evaluation that is transparent and logical for the inhabitants. The inhabitants within the island had their own criterion for land valuation when they were allowed to sell/buy land before the redevelopment project. Agricultural lands in the island were valued according to their productivity and connectivity/proximity to irrigation systems; however, they were rarely sold to be used for agriculture activities. Meanwhile, urban lands – agricultural lands that the inhabitants either subdivided to be functional only for urban

[1] Currency Liberation decree in 2016 that decreased the value of EGP to half its original value before liberating it. There are two other currency liberation decrees that occurred in 2022 and 2024 (after the interviews were conducted), which devalued the EGP once more. Thus, the Egyptian Pound value decreased by almost 82% of its value (CAPMAS, 2024) at the initiation of the project but the market values of purchasing lands in the island were not altered accordingly (Afify, 2022).

uses or lands near other built-up areas – were valued according to their connectivity to local roads inside the island, their legal status, and their soil bearability for construction according to inhabitants' statements below.

> *"What really controlled where to build your house was the price of it, based on the infrastructure installation, not necessarily how close to the ferry boat. … So, it was natural for someone who had invested in his land, to install a water pipe at his own expense or install an electric column … and put them in his land, so he could raise its price."*
>
> (C-00/P1, June 2021)

> *"It depended on how many houses are around you. For example, if you picked a land in a deserted zone, you could pay 50,000/Kirat, the next land in the same area would be sold for 70,000, the third would be for 90,000, etc. So, the nearer to the residential area, the higher the price. It is near the services. But the places on the shore were much cheaper because they are state-owned lands. Not all of them, the ones from the east side, tarh nahr*[1]*. But the ones from the west side are private lands".*
>
> (B-02/P1, August 2021)

> *"My mother bought a piece of land around 15 years ago, she bought a 90-m² land on the shore bank for 25,000 pounds, and she built it for my brother. The prices of the lands on the streets used to be higher with about 30 or 50 pounds/m² than those inside, because you could open shops in them. Other than that, there were very small differences between the lands."*
>
> (B-03/P1, August 2021)

Thus, people who could not afford to buy *"urban"* lands would rather buy agricultural lands further away from the island services with no access to proper roads, water pipes, or electricity lines. They would also have to bear the costs of soil treatment if required to make it suitable for construction. The other option was to buy the land from informal occupiers who trespassed state-owned lands near the shores of the Nile River. They would get access to all available services, but they would not have security of tenure. Accordingly, the lands were sold cheaper in these areas than the formally owned registered ones in the rest of the island. Accordingly, the prices of the lands nearby the river were not always the highest because of their legal status. The interviewed inhabitants stated that the difference between the land prices in the island were not big, but it still made a difference for the lower income groups who generally preferred to pay in instalments as they did not have a stable income.

From the previous discussion, it could be deduced that the enclosed environment of the island had its own dynamics of supply and demand that worked within a transparent land market, and thus the criteria for land evaluation was determined and known by most of the people in the island. However, when the island entered the wider real-estate market of GCR, the evaluation criteria became vaguer and there was no clear standard for how the land is valued and the comparable values that determine the average fair market price. Being the only entity that is currently allowed to buy from the inhabitants, the government practice entails that the values estimated for the lands are compensation values and not market values, as there is barely any market dynamics that played a role in determining this value.

[1] Tarh Nahr means lands that appeared after the river's water level decreased as a result from building the High Dam or other reasons. These lands are considered by default private state-owned lands according to law no. 192/1958.

- ***Adequate Compensation Evaluation***

Regarding fair and/or adequate compensation value, the Engineering Authority representative explained that the inhabitants should either get a financial compensation that would allow them to find an adequate alternative, or the government should provide them with one instead. However, the conflict between the inhabitants and the government was on what is considered as an *"adequate"* or *"fair"* alternative. At the beginning of the project, the government offered two other alternatives besides financial compensation. The first was alternative housing units in El-Obour, 6th October, or El-Asmart with no added expenses and alternative agricultural lands for those who wanted to resettle in rural-like areas in El-Sadat. The inhabitants in the latter option would have been able to buy more agricultural land than they had in the island – as the land El-Warraq Island is more valuable – and they would have the privilege of legally building their own house on a portion of these lands. The second option was to apply for an alternative housing unit inside the island, shown in Figure 5.13, but with the condition that they must relocate outside the island during the execution of the project and then return after the redevelopment. Although some inhabitants left the island in exchange for these two alternatives, many argued they were not adequate nor fair.

Fig. (5- 13) Alternative Housing Project inside El-Warraq Island
Source: Taken by Author (August 2021)

For the first alternative, the locations were the main concern for the inhabitants as these units were situated in the peripheral newly developed cities on the fringes of GCR. According to the inhabitants' next quotes, these locations lacked proper accessibility to affordable public transport and affordable social infrastructures like schools, hospitals, and markets. They were also located in low-density areas that did not provide inhabitants with a competitive location to start any business or find a temporary job.

> *"At the beginning, they offered us to go to Asmart, and then El-Obour, and October. Right now, they are offering us to go to Imbaba Airport, but when the people went there, they found the apartments were very small."*
>
> (B-02/P1, August 2021)

"Hadayek El-Ahram in October City also was much worse than here. The people who went there are currently looking forward to leaving. The apartments are so small, and the area doesn't have any services. It is not a good place to live in. You must have a car, so you can get your basic needs there or for the children to go to their schools."

(B-02/P3, August 2021)

As shown in Figure 5.14, the locations are relatively far from the condensed urban agglomeration within GCR; however, the rest of the inhabitants' claims about these areas are argumentative. Most of their claims are true for El-Sadat City which is functioning poorly on all the aspects they mentioned; but both 6th October City and El-Obour City have a wide variety of affordable social services and they are properly connected to the rest of GCR (Sims, 2015). Evidentially, El-Warraq Island's location functions better than both these cities, but in terms of fair alternative they do not fall way behind. The inhabitants were also offered alternative units in Imbaba Airport newly developed projects which is only 5 kilometres away from the island, but the inhabitants claim that the units offered are much smaller than their original units. The inhabitants were more inclined to accept the second alternative as per their statements and the ISDF representative's supporting quote in Appendix II.

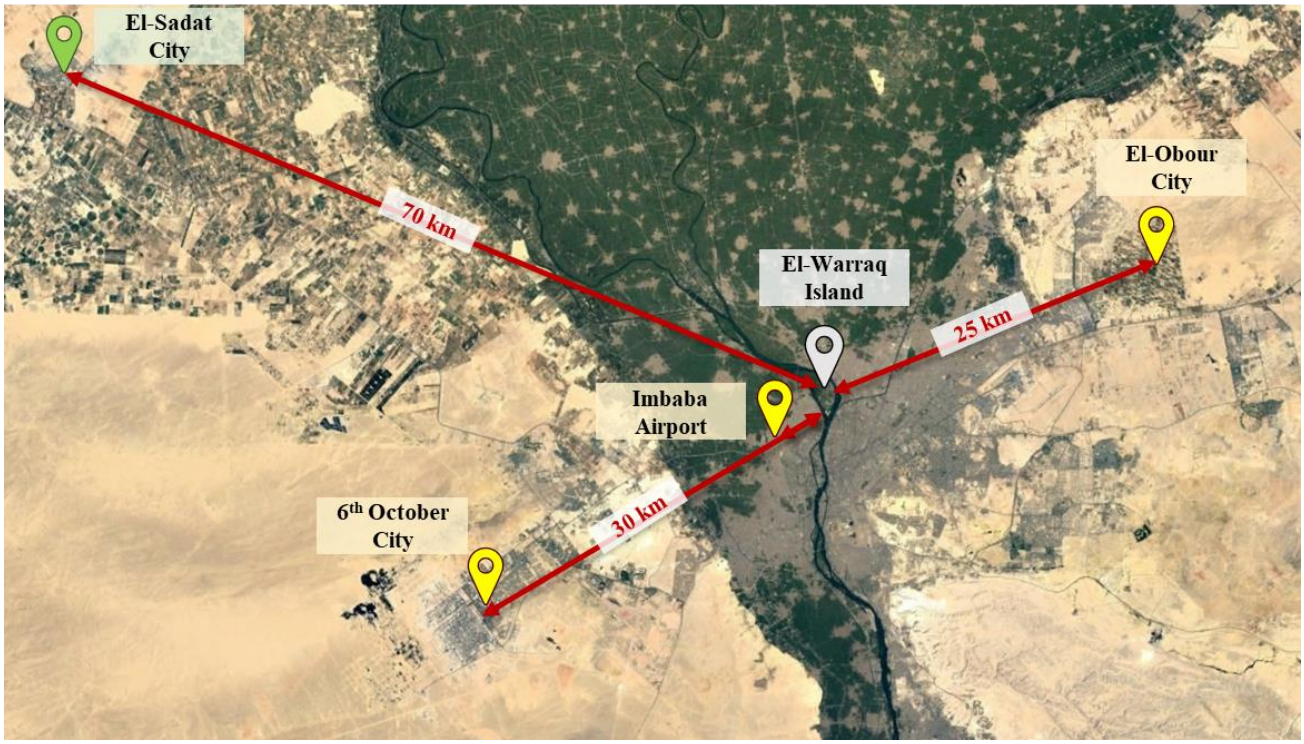

Fig. (5- 14) Alternative Housing/Lands Locations
Source: Elaborated by Author based on Google Satellite Images

However, the inhabitants became sceptical of the government's lack of transparency about this alternative. The inhabitants did not want to leave the island on the promise of the government that they would have the right to come back, as they witnessed a similar scenario in Maspero Triangle that did not work well for the inhabitants (Wahba, 2020). The government even offered to pay rent compensation for the time the inhabitants would spend outside the island, but the reluctance of the government to announce the final price of alternative apartments or to allow welling inhabitants to have a binding contract ensuring their future right in reallocating in one of these alternative apartments in the island convinced the inhabitants that the alternative housing inside the island is not being built for them, as illustrated in their following statements.

"The people went there and saw the apartments, and they are really good. Some of them are small and some are big. But it is not for us. They said those who want to reserve an apartment should apply in Imbaba Airport, not here. I tried to apply, and they said we haven't been given the order to accept applications yet."

(B-02/P3, August 2021)

"Until this moment, when the officials come out in the media, they say that they are building an alternative housing for inhabitants of the island. But if they really are building these for us, why when someone sells their house and asks them to give him some sort of an application or form to maintain his right in this housing project, they tell him that this project isn't for you, and there is no such a thing?!"

(A-01/P1, August 2021)

Currently, the financial compensation – or buying price - is the only option available for the inhabitants who are being pressured to sell with different techniques as will be discussed in the next chapter. Inhabitants agreed the price is not a fair compensation as it would not allow them to have an adequate housing alternative outside the island. Although, inhabitants get three separate valuations – for land, building, and habitation expenses – the total sum of these values is lower than the average price of housing units outside the island. According to the inhabitants, the government pays 1428 EGP/m² for the land, an average of 2500 EGP/m² for the building, and 16,000 EGP/room for the habitation compensation (also known as the social and/or housing compensation). This final one is paid for those who occupy the unit (regardless of being renters or owners) as a support for their moving expenses. In practice, the buildings valuations could vary according to the condition of the house as expressed in the following inhabitants' statements:

"For the buildings, the compensation is also calculated by m², it ranges from 300 to 1000 pounds per m², depending on the house. They have their engineering authority make a full inspection on the house, building material, foundation, the number of steel bars in columns, everything."

(C-00/P1, June 2021)

"They value the house that is fully finished with 3000 pounds/m² … there is nothing that exceeds 2,500 pounds/m². For example, a building for a friend I know got a land price around 250,000 pounds with their calculations – has 5 floors and 10 apartments and has shops on the ground floor. The building was valued at 1,200,000 pounds! … If we ignore the shops, how come 10 apartments worth 1,200,000 pounds??!"

(I-08, October 2021)

According to the previous inhabitant's statement, if 10 families were paid 1.45 million EGP - for their land and building – and each family got a social compensation (with an average of 48,000/unit), then each family would get roughly around 193,000 EGP, assuming apartments are three bedrooms. Meanwhile, the national subsidised housing programme offers social housing units between 194,000 and 310,000 EGP while middle-income housing units are sold for 1.7 million pounds per apartment (Saed, 2022), including possibly the alternative housing units on the island according to the inhabitants. Thus, the money given as compensation barely allows the inhabitants to take an apartment in the lowest housing category. Their alternative options would be either to move out of GCR or resettle in another informal area. This reality is also clear to the experts, as shown in NUCA's representative next quote when asked about the prices for the alternative housing units built on the island for the inhabitants in-situ resettlement.

"We haven't decided the average price for the apartments yet, it will depend on the market price at the time. And of course, not everyone can afford it. That is how things go. You don't expect a poor farmer with his cow and chickens to be living in a luxurious apartment like that!! They should go and find something that they can afford to live in and fits their lifestyle, another informal area or something!!"

(FMNU, October 2021)

This statement implies that officials do not perceive resettling in the island as a fair compensation for the inhabitants. It goes further when the government decided to evaluate the social/housing compensation in the island lower than what is offered in other places affected by the expropriation law where the average value is 40,000 EGP/room and not 16,000 EGP/room. The sense of inequality that the inhabitants got from these practices made them question governmental "fairness" in their evaluation process, increasing tensions accordingly. As expressed in the following inhabitant's statement, people were already giving away their properties for the sake of building Tahya Masr bridge until they found out they are being paid less than others.

"The government gave 40,000 pound per room for the housing allowance, that is for the expropriation for the buildings on the fringes of the roads to be expanded [across GCR], while here since the beginning three years ago, they are telling us that they will give us 16, 000 per room … they made 64,000 pound as the upper limit though …But when the expansions of the Ring Road started in 2020 and 2021, the families of the island started demanding to be equal to the others. We are aware that these people have different locations, and different attachments to the land, but I am a citizen, and he is a citizen, I settle, and he settles, so why should we get different values?!"

(C-00/P1, June 2021)

These practices increased inhabitants' sense of exclusion and provoked their refusal and aggression towards the redevelopment project. However, the government interprets the inhabitants' position as their inability to accept change, as implied by the AFEA and NUCA representatives' next quotes.

"They affect each other's position … Those people who have been attached to the agricultural lands, said things like "I won't leave my land, it will happen over my dead body, this is my family, my people, the well-being of my children" I told them we found you an appropriate alternative… I hired buses for the people to go visit the alternative agriculture lands in Sadat. They could take the land and build a home on a part of it just like the one they have on the island. Not a lot wanted these alternative lands, but it got them thinking about buying land in other places, like El-Menoufia. That was a success, to make them think about the alternatives I mean."

(PMEA, October 2021)

"The second challenge for the redevelopment project is the ideology of the people, it needs to change. There are bullies on the island who are threatening the rest of the people so that they don't sell. Also, there are the Muslim brotherhood members and a bunch of lawyers who are agitating the public and the people on the island, saying that we are throwing people out of their homes. This whole pressure doesn't make the people think straight. They are afraid to sell so others won't say that they are "traitors" for their cause and sold their land, and they don't know they are being used for political agendas."

(FMNU, October 2021)

In both the statements, there is a condescending tone towards the concerns of the inhabitants. The first assumed that inhabitants are ignorant about the possibilities while the second assumed that they are mobilised by political agendas of the opposition and are bullied to take this stand. Whether their assumptions are true or false, the result is reflected in the conflict upon the concepts of *"fairness"* and *"adequate compensation"*. The inhabitants argued that they are the only ones who could determine the costs and benefits of their displacement, and the government is poorly assessing the impact of this project on their lives. They expressed their frustration from the continuous negligence and exclusion of their welfare from the government's agenda. Some of the interviewed experts affirmed this exclusionary narrative where the UN-Habitat representative affirmed that the island was perceived as "vacant land". Furthermore, the confusion over whether these lands were valued based on their free-market value or their compensation value for a forced purchase, increased the lack of trust in government's agendas. However, the question of *"fairness"* is also connected with the calculation of costs and benefits that inhabitants and government shared in this redevelopment project and their *"fair"* distribution as discussed in the next section.

5.2.2 Capturing Market Value: The Costs and Benefits of Redevelopment Projects

Public strategies for capturing land value are influenced by a spectrum of ideologies in understanding distribution of the ownership rights of these values. In other words, the various practices adopted by responsible authorities reflect their perception about who owns the right to capture the increase in value, based on who bore the costs of its creation. Land-based taxes are the mildest tool for governments to capture a portion of *"unearned increments"* caused by the increase of land's market value due to market dynamics or surrounding developments (Walters, 2013). In this practice, the authorities claim the right to some of the benefits – to distribute it on the less privileged through services – because they bore some of the costs creating the surrounding environment or market, or because they are responsible for fair distribution of wealth across their communities (UN-Habitat, 2021). Meanwhile, land redevelopment practices also aim at capturing land market value through investments in planning and infrastructure provision /upgrading (Vejchodská *et al.*, 2022; Walters, 2013). This practice requires the active engagement of the people whose lands increase in value in determining the costs and benefits of value creation processes and their fair distribution across the different stakeholders.

In El-Warraq Island, there is a conflict between the inhabitants and the government around how to identify the costs and benefits of the redevelopment project and how to properly distribute it among different stakeholders. The government position is that the redevelopment project would have a large-scale impact that not only would benefit the island's inhabitants, but also the wider Egyptian community. Despite acknowledging that island's inhabitants may not experience this directly, the government believed that the inhabitants would eventually – as every other citizen – capture the benefits of national development and economic welfare. Meanwhile, the inhabitants argue that for decades they have paid the costs of living on this poorly serviced island and suffered throughout their lives to provide a decent quality of life for their families. Accordingly, they claim priority to capture the benefits of redevelopment. This section investigates capturing the land market value of El-Warraq Island by calculating the costs of value creation and then calculating the prospective benefits to be captured from the redevelopment project. Discussion of capturing other intangible values and calculating social costs and benefits will be explored in the next chapters.

Calculating Costs of Redevelopment

Generally, the feasibility study of redevelopment projects calculates the costs starting from the planning phase of the project until the delivery of this project. The protocol of NUCA – the authority responsible currently for El-Warraq Island redevelopment project – is to provide an investment opportunity for developers and real-estate investors by marketing the value capture and profit accumulation prospects. As discussed earlier, NUCA is an economic entity which works under the authority of the Ministry of Housing; however, it has a separate budget. The government assigns desert lands outside urban agglomerations for NUCA, and the entity is responsible for marketing these lands for developers, whether by providing these lands with infrastructure or selling large plots

for private developers with very low prices exempted from property taxes to encourage the urban development of these New Cities. Accordingly, NUCA draws the urban and architecture guidelines for this development, manages services of these cities through their authorities' offices, and runs the pricing and distribution of lands within their territories (Sims, 2015; Khalil and Dill, 2018).

Accordingly, the government follows a *Clientelistic* model of governance (Elsisy, 2018) where it plays the role of a broker/investor rather than a public servant. This implies that infrastructure costs are added to the costs of the redevelopment project where they are funded by the speculated profits of the project and not by land-based taxes. This calculation is made clear by the urban economist, when he explained why the inhabitants should not ask for the island's future value, as the government is the one invested in increasing this value and not the inhabitants.

> *"No one should tell us "... you are giving around 2,000 pounds for m² to buy the land from the poor farmer, and then sell it for 15,000 or 20,000 thousand?? That is not fair?!" ... it is not calculated like that! ... I am buying a raw land ... am I using it in whole, or am I extracting part of it for roads, plazas, green areas, open areas, and the setbacks?? ... so, at the end the land that I will be selling eventually will not exceed 40%. So, you add up that I put infrastructure for 100%, pay consultancy for 100%, pay compensations for 100% of the land surface, and then I sell only 40%. So, the costs for this land ... Then, add the margin profit and administrative costs and non-occupation costs – because it is not like once I announce the project people will instantly start living there ... So, when all these costs are added, the meter I have taken from the farmer in return of 1000 pounds costs around 10,000 pounds."*
>
> (UEPC, August 2021)

Thus, the business model that NUCA used to follow in their development projects did not have to bear the costs of eradication, infrastructure replacement, nor compensations for community displacement. However, to be able to provide a proper value proposition for the island, they need to raise its competitive advantage in comparison to other serviced lands in New Cities. That justifies why they are keen to keep the costs to the bare minimum – especially the compensation costs - to fit with their business model. When El-Warraq Island was transformed under the authority of NUCA, the authority struggled – according to NUCA representative in his next statement – because its working strategies are not customed for occupied areas and, according to their calculations, the island is absorbing funds rather than providing profits, which imbalanced their costs/benefits targeted ratio.

> *"Working in such an area has been very challenging. I have worked in 6 different new cities before it, and I haven't faced as many challenges as this. The normal strategy for the authority is to create a master plan, develop the infrastructure, and then sell the vacant lands to investors, developers, or interested individuals who can develop it under the control of the authority and according to its urban development regulations. This is the first time that we had to BUY land, not sell it, and we have spent so much money on this project and gained nothing yet. We haven't sold a single land plot."*
>
> (FMNU, October 2021)

Meanwhile, the inhabitants argue that their compensation should not be perceived as a burden on the costs of redevelopment or value creation if they are denied from capturing the benefits of this project. They also argue that the expenses of infrastructure provision/upgrading after buying their lands – and adding them to their paid costs – are ones that should have been paid by the government a long time ago for the welfare of its citizens. The failure of the government to use tax money for providing the island with its basic needs burdened the inhabitants with unnecessary costs throughout their lives. The inhabitants argue that they already pay different types of taxes – income, sales, and additional value taxes – like every citizen without receiving adequate services. Accordingly,

the inhabitants paid extra costs to provide themselves with these services to sustain an adequate standard of life. For instance, the interviewed inhabitants claim that they funded the building of one of the public schools in the island where some of them donated their land, some donated money for the building materials, and some participated in the building process itself. Also, they are the ones who extended the water pipes to their houses from the original grid as well as the electric wires, and the government only came to install the charging metres to collect fees as illustrated in the next statement by one of the inhabitants.

> *"The people are the ones who extended the electricity and water installations based on the original existing national grid, because if they applied through the government, most probably they won't deal with his application, and in all cases, he is going to buy the pipes anyway, so why wait for the government? … I know that whenever someone wants to install electricity legally to his house, and get an electricity licence and meter and everything, he buys a column or two at his own expense, and the government connection is only from this column to your house, that is it, they say you connect the rest."*
>
> (C-00/P1, June 2021)

The officials' counter argument that the island's inhabitants – as much as any informal developer – cannot expect the government to easily allocate budget for services and infrastructure delivery when it was not involved in the development decision from the beginning. From the government's perspective, the inhabitants made the decision to settle in this challenging location and the government cannot (and should not) bear the costs of those inhabitants' decision. Yet, the inhabitants argue that if they had waited for the government to actualize its plans or to give them proper alternatives for settling, they would have been homeless for all their lives. The AFEA representative expressed understanding of the core issue in his following statement:

> *"This is a housing problem that the whole nation suffers from … the state didn't do much for so many years … So, the alternative for the people was to build on agricultural lands. They own it, and much cheaper than the urban lands, besides it worked well with the old perceptions of the society, that when a man wants his son to get married, he builds a place for him on the nearby land, or on the top of his own place. The narrow 1.5-meter roads and the lack of sewage disposal systems are beyond the capacity of these people. They can't develop it on their own."*
>
> (ASEA, October 2021)

This argument is a key debate around the causes of informal urbanism within the Egyptian context, along with whether informal practices should be seen as proactive engagement improving the welfare of the most vulnerable or condemned as illegal trespass that violates the general code of conduct between the people and the government causing more pressure on the public welfare (Roy, 2005; Sharp, 2022). The argument is about who pays the costs of informal development and when these costs are paid; at the initial phase of development, the operational phase (when people must suffer the challenges of living in an unrecognised area), or the upgrading phase when the government starts to regularise and improve living conditions. Some of the interviewed inhabitants stated that they agree to pay more costs for that final phase to maintain their security of tenure; however, they do not agree to be completely denied the benefits of development, especially since the project announcement, they bore costs in 5 years more than they had to pay throughout their lives.

One example, the fixed purchase prices which denied them fair market prices, the right to speculate, and/or bargain for better prices as explained earlier. Another example is that since the project announcement, the land and property prices in nearby agglomerations – even in informal and agricultural areas – have increased tremendously because of market speculation; that some of the island's inhabitants would tend to sell their lands and resettle in nearby areas. A third example is that current living expenses in the island have increased. This was caused by the

reallocation of some amenities – like the post office and local authority office – outside the island, increasing transportation costs for the inhabitants. Another reason was because the island's population density is decreasing; thus, restaurants, shops, bakeries, and workshops are losing customers, so they are increasing prices to cover their losses. Furthermore, home improvements are becoming more costly because the government banned the entrance of any building materials, pipes, wires, wood, etc, (to restrain further informal development) and the inhabitants accordingly must pay extra for smuggling these materials inside the island. Finally, maintaining the agricultural lands also became more expensive when people started selling these lands to the government, as the shared costs of irrigation and fertilisation increased for those who did not sell their lands.

The inhabitants also consider costs of resettling like moving costs, increased living costs in new locations, and increased transportation costs from their jobs, schools, and other services. Many inhabitants were living on the bare minimum of expenses using their social networks for access to credit and financial security. All these aspects recalibrate the inhabitants' calculations for the benefits of the redevelopment. According to both interviewed inhabitants and officials, the government did not offer any support in helping inhabitants with reallocation whether offering facilitation in changing official or registered documents, shifting schools, providing transportation subsidises, or food stamps. The government also did not offer alternative shop/workshop facilities where the inhabitants could relocate their business, nor did it offer a different compensation evaluation for the losses in their established businesses. Since most of the reallocation apartments, including the alternative housing on the island, are restricted to residential uses, the inhabitants who had their own business had to reinvest in recreating it somewhere away from their residents which would increase their costs of daily transportation.

According to the previous discussion, there is conflict in determining which costs are to be considered for the redevelopment project of El-Warraq Island, and which time span is the just and fair one for calculating these costs. The government indeed has not considered many of the costs the inhabitants mentioned in its feasibility study calculations, as the cost/benefit analysis only considered costs paid by the government and not by the inhabitants. The underestimation of the inhabitants' paid costs arguably led to overestimating of their benefits from the project.

Calculating Benefits of Redevelopment

El-Warraq Island was promoted as one of the main national projects that would boost the economic development of the whole country, increasing its global competitiveness and attracting real estate and business investors by creating a Central Business District (CBD) in the heart of GCR. This vision was expressed by some interviewed experts/officials as exemplified in the next statements by the former consultant, GOPP, and AFEA representatives:

> *"It is a program that I have put to invest in the island … the investment will bring you money, and this money … not only for the island, the money will cover the island and the houses for the inhabitants, but it will also bring another money to make bridges, monorail, and service areas for the inhabitants of Cairo, not just for the inhabitants of the island."*
>
> (PCCC, July 2021)

> *"The project is all positives. El-Warraq Island has a great location … if this project is done, it will get an investment return which will compensate and pay for all the debts of Egypt."*
>
> (SCGO, July 2021)

> *"The island as well as all islands are state assets, either you maximise the usage of it, or neglect it and wait for problems to happen."*
>
> (PMEA, October 2021)

However, other experts expressed their concern about the project feasibility because they believed that the island will not attract as many investments as planned. Currently, Egypt is creating multiple CBDs across the nation, and some of them – according to the experts interviewed – are more competitive than El-Warraq Island. All these CBDs – in the New Administrative Capital, New Alamein City, New Cairo, and the Smart Village in Sheikh Zayed – are built on newly developed lands. Thus, their development does not have to bear the costs of eradication nor infrastructure replacement. Secondly, the island's surrounding agglomerations are mostly deteriorated formal areas and informal areas, aesthetically unappealing for the targeted investors, and its connectivity to the rest of GCR is relatively more limited than the other CBDs. These challenges could affect potential wide-scale profits that are meant to improve the national economic status. This is exemplified by the urban economist's next quote and supported by the statements of the urban consultant and UN-Habitat representatives in Appendix II.

> *"You are doing this in an area of the least accessibility. And on the other side, you are making an extremely over supply from all this … you have too many competitors, strong ones. If I want to live in a compound, why would I go and throw myself in the heart of Cairo? On an island whose entrances, and exits are very horrible, and they haven't been improved??! Would I go within this horrible urban fabric to reach the decent area that I am living in? And on my way in and out, I will meet with people who are from an entirely different social class … What will throw me out in El-Warraq Island, in a very bad urban context, ashwaye [random/informal] on the outskirts of Cairo, low accessibility, to invest in an unclear market, incomplete market, not obvious, and still emerging??!"*
>
> (UEPC, August 2021)

The uncertainties around the actual feasibility of the project affected the government's tendency to spend more in the preliminary phases without proper assurance of an outstanding return on investment. For example, the UN-Habitat junior consultant in his next statement argued that the main problem with the giving the inhabitants a fair market price for their land before developing the project, risks rewarding them with an increase in the prospected value which may never be captured if the project failed:

> *"I don't know how much the inhabitants wanted originally … They of course had an ambition for higher numbers, multiples of that… They leaned on the idea of market economics … the idea of "Why would I sell with today's value?" … and be aware that the lands in El-Warraq aren't adverse possession. They have documents that prove this land … well Theirs … so they see it is their right to take it with the highest price possible. Be aware that the price of land after development will be much higher than the surrounding areas … Should they really have compensated with the price of the m² after the redevelopment, or should it be with the current m² price? Or is there a middle ground? And if you reached a middle solution, is it their right? Be aware that the project could succeed and could fail, so will account someone for something I don't know if it is going to succeed or not? Or I don't know when it will be achieved?"*
>
> (JCUN, June 2021)

However, when the same consultant was questioned about the possibility of developing the project with a land readjustment scheme, where the inhabitants would bear the redevelopment risks instead of the government, he responded that this scheme is not economic because it accumulates profits for the inhabitants not the government as expressed in his next statement. That contradicted the official position of the UN-Habitat agenda within the Egyptian context which has been actively involved in promoting and actualizing this scheme in urban extension areas (Soliman, 2017). Land readjustment is a technique to reorganise fragmented irregular-shaped land plots in extension agricultural areas – peri-urban locations on the urban fringe – and provide these plots with roads, services, and infrastructure by combining all land plots and redesigning/replanning them as one big plot (UN-

Habitat, 2021). Although the scheme was an applicable and appropriate alternative for El-Warraq Island (as the built-up area was only 20% and the remaining 80% was agricultural lands, and more than 90% of the population had registered titles for their lands (Sites, 2019)) the government aspiration to capitalise from the increased land price after redevelopment determined their agenda in this particular case.

> *"Be aware that land readjustment … is not … is not economic, the goal from it is to make a housing area … an urban area … that is planned, instead of making an informal urban area. So, you plan the agricultural lands and who takes these lands are the inhabitants, they gave up a percentage for the infrastructure, from their lands … the state has benefited from that the area hasn't become informal and it can provide its services and goes in the process of the Egyptian urbanism. It avoids a problem. The land readjustment avoids a problem. It increases the value of lands for sure, but for the inhabitants. But the idea for El-Warraq was purely economic."*
>
> (JCUN, June 2021)

The former project urban consultant criticised this common perception, where officials and experts do not acknowledge the capturing of value by the inhabitants as redevelopment benefits. To him, these officials and experts argue if inhabitants were given alternative apartments in the island, without charging them for the accumulated profits, these inhabitants would sell those apartments later for much higher prices causing a class gentrification anyway, which is one of the common disadvantages of land readjustment (UN-Habitat, 2021), and the government would not be able to capture this increased value. The former urban consultant however argued that a gentrification driven by real market dynamics is better than one which is driven by forced displacement, as the earlier would be a win for all stakeholders:

> *"The goal was that we will invest the land and the inhabitants will be the first to get rich from this investment. They will have a housing unit in a house inside the island after redevelopment, and this house will be worth millions. They will definitely sell it, but you preserved their right, they became millionaires … The State doesn't do that … If you as a government are winning, why don't make the inhabitants win too? … In the end he is a citizen, and the State's job is to raise the level of the citizen."*
>
> (PCCC, July 2021)

However, on the other side, the urban economist and the former NUCA representative had their doubts that the rest of the island would be marketable if the inhabitants continued to the live there, so they argued that this idealistic sharing perception would be challenged by the lower market value of the island caused by the existing of lower-income groups within it. The urban economist argued that the best strategy is not to market the island for the high-end target group while the NUCA representative argued that the inhabitants should all move out of the island, so he would be able to market it for the high-end target group. All other experts interviewed agreed that the island should and could be developed for both groups. However, inhabitants stated that when they claimed any proof for their right to come back to the island, the government responded that it is only for those who would be able to afford it. Since the government has not decided the prices of the resettlement housing units in the island, the current inhabitants are not sure if they would be able to come back. Some inhabitants believed that hiding the market value of these units is a deliberate strategy by the government who does not want the inhabitants comparing the selling prices – they are forced into currently – with the future prices needed for the alternative housing units as per the next quote of a middle-aged lawyer male inhabitant.

> "*The official X said that he will buy from us and then sell the alternative apartment with the market price. When we agreed to that and about the price, he said that the construction company hasn't calculated the building costs yet, so they don't know the price of these apartments. So,*

isn't there a feasibility study? The State doesn't know how much this project will cost?! … We asked them to give us a rough estimate, but they said they can't do this as well. I know why he hasn't reallocated any of the inhabitants of the island in these buildings. Because if he did, and for example said that the apartment in the project will cost 750,000, and then the inhabitants found out that he is buying their apartments for 100,000, they will know that they are being robbed … That is why they are afraid to announce the prices for these apartments."

(I-10, October 2021)

The interviewed officials and experts however claim that the island's inhabitants would benefit from the redevelopment project whether they were resettled in the island or reallocated somewhere else. In both cases, they would have security of tenure and accessibility to services and infrastructure, where their alternative housing – wherever it would be – will become in the future as an asset – for loaning purposes – or a commodity that could be sold for the highest price. Furtherly, their living conditions would be enhanced, providing their children with better health and proper access to education, which in return would make them better equipped for the job markets. These arguments were made by most of the interviewed officials as exemplified by the GOPP representative's statement in Appendix II. The inhabitants, on the other hand, perceive these proclaimed benefits in a different manner. Regarding security of tenure, most inhabitants claim that they will not be able to find an alternative housing unit in the formal market, and thus, they would probably resettle in another informal area or rebuild their houses on agriculturally owned lands as explained by one middle-aged male inhabitant in the next quote. Furtherly, with the existing expropriation law that affects both formal and informal areas – along with the changing and untransparent government's development plans – there is no way for them to make sure that they would never be reallocated once again after they resettle somewhere else.

"The least price you will get outside is 5000 per m², and this is for desert land, not in agricultural lands or places that are near the city. In El-Warraq district, it is 25,000 per m², … The same thing in Shubra. All what you see [the informal urbanisation in the island] is being transformed to El-Kom El-Ahmar and Gezert Muhammed, there are still agricultural lands in these areas, but their prices are very expensive. I am not saying that they [the government] should give us 25,000, give us 15,000 for m², something near the prices outside, so when I go buy, I don't go buy in an ashwaya [informal] area and after 5 or 6 years, you come again till me that you need to be demolished and we need to upgrade you! Do it right from the beginning! Offer me something that I can use to buy in a formal good area, so I don't make you another ashwaya [informal] area once more in other places."

(A-01/P2, August 2021)

Furthermore, the inhabitants had a mode of development that would secure housing for their children and grandchildren where they incrementally extend their houses (vertically or horizontally) when they need and can afford it. The inhabitants argue that this security would be lost if they replaced their house with an alternative apartment, even if it is inside the island, and that is why they are negotiating for more values that would cover their future costs, especially given that the housing market prices are always increasing. They also argue that they were using their lands and buildings as security assets where they can sell parts of it when they need liquidity, even for lower prices in cases of emergency. However, if they are forced to sell all their properties and transfer them into one commodity that could only be bargained for its use value, they would lose this privilege as explained by a middle-aged male engineer in his next quote and another elder female in her statement in Appendix II.

"If we are talking about private property, then this is a demand and supply market. Now, in any market, those who supply are the ones who choose the price, but here he is the buyer, and he evaluates my land with pennies, and then he says if you didn't sell with these pennies, I will take

it from you with the expropriation law and could pay you even less. How is that fair?? Where is the justice? In any market, those who sell are the ones who evaluate their commodity and offer it for sale, if the buyer wants it with this price, then he takes it, otherwise he doesn't. It is the same here, the land is my commodity, and I am the one who should evaluate it. If you like it with this price, then take it, otherwise, leave it to me, I like it the way it is."

(A-01/P2, August 2021)

Calculating the benefits of redevelopment projects is as challenging as calculating their costs. Again, the problem manifests in which benefits are supposed to be considered and which milestone defines the end of calculating these benefits and consider any further profits as indirect ones. For a project such as El-Warraq Island, the project is supposed to have nationwide benefits as promoted by the government, so they are not only considering the direct benefits but also the potential surplus benefits of city-centre rebranding. However, the inhabitants are also considering indirect benefits for their future generations and how this redevelopment project would affect their children's ability to access the housing market and secure savings and/or credit for their financial security. Problematically, when the benchmark for calculating long-term benefits is far ahead in the future, it becomes very challenging to speculate these benefits or to agree upon aspects to be included within these calculations. In all cases, the government calculations of the project benefits – whether the ones it would collect, or the inhabitants would receive – is speculative at best from the inhabitants' perspective, which provoke their overall rejection of the promoted feasibility of the project and their questioning of the gain they will receive from the overall project accumulated profits.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter investigated three key ideological debates in understanding the land market value which are related to aspects of value creation, value criterion, and value capture. The main trigger of conflict found in understanding the creation of market value was whether it is formulated by essential qualities of the land, making this value an inherited right for all – or by constructed qualities making this value an earned right for those who constructed it and unearned increment for those who did not pay the costs of its creation. Within land development discussions, this reflects acknowledging some value attributes as essential (and thus needing to be preserved and not exploited by urban development schemes because they are irreplaceable and irreplicable), and on how the constructed attributes of value are influenced by urban development intervention (or the lack of it). In El-Warraq Island, the inhabitants argued against the idea that the government is solely responsible for creating the market value of the island. On one hand, they argued that the island had essential natural qualities that did not require the involvement of the government in market value creation. While on the other hand, the inhabitants argued their own contribution in increasing the island's attractiveness and competitive advantage for lower-income groups which was developed incrementally by the existence of their community, the services and housing they provided for migrants, and the safety and solidarity they provided for the new settlers. These empirical findings contribute to understanding the creation of the market value of lands with focus on understudied topics within the wider scholar debates around legitimacy of land taxation applied by governments and the fair evaluation and distribution of these taxes (Walters, 2013; UN-Habitat, 2021; Andelson, 2001; Dye and England, 2010).

Secondly, the main trigger of conflict found in understanding the criteria of evaluating the land market value in the context of redevelopment of informal areas was whether the evaluation should be for a fair market price or a fair compensation value. Within the fair market price debate, the conflict arises because of the inefficient market dynamics (which provided asymmetrical market information), the disagreement on the comparable sales, and the difference in the evaluation dynamics between a closed market (like El-Warraq Island) and an open one (like GCR) that have more variables. This conflict was further provoked in El-Warraq Island by the lack of the government transparency, efficiency, and consistency in their evaluation practices. These empirical findings contribute to literature showing how evaluation processes combine between objective and subjective parameters

(Bigger and Robertson, 2017; Millington, 2013; Richmond, 1994); thus, the land market value could not be conceptually reduced to be an objective value, as proposed in price theory (Harvey, 1917) or location theory (Alonso, 1960). The aspects of the bargaining power between the sellers and buyers, especially in the case of forced purchase, play a crucial role in determining the land market value, as well as shaping the conventions about the worth of this land (Elder-Vass, 2022).

Finally, the main trigger of conflict found in understanding value capture – asides from who has the right to it – was the calculation of costs and benefits and their fair distribution, especially in determining the time frame for the impact of these calculations (short-term versus long-term impacts), the scale of impact (localised versus nationalized), and the directness of the impact analysis (considering indirect costs and benefits). In El-Warraq Island redevelopment project, there was a disagreement between the inhabitants and the government about the starting point for calculating costs (in terms of who bore the costs of value creation) and the ending point for calculating benefits (in terms of how far the speculative measures for increasing land market value could be assessed as profitable gains for the redevelopment project and when the stakeholders should expect to enjoy these gains). These findings address the wider debate about evaluating the impact of redevelopment projects and how this evaluation sometimes is reduced to economic short-term gains, especially in the pursuit of rapid urban transformations, to acquire *"political achievement legitimacy"* (Goodfellow, 2018; Watson, 2014). However, the discussion in this case study added another layer which is the problem of calculating costs, where it elaborated how dismissing indirect costs for reallocation of vulnerable communities is problematic. It also signposted how the market value of prime locations could be reduced – whether intentionally or unintentionally – by depriving these areas of basic services or ease of access, transforming its potential value into a latent one that could be unleashed by development decisions.

There is also a disagreement about the scale of impact for calculating costs and benefits of value capture, where the inhabitants focused more on the localised costs and benefits on their community and the government focused on the national ones. The government within this debate was playing the role of an economic entity that evaluates its decisions in terms of maximising profit gains accumulated in the national budget rather than focusing on the general increase of public welfare or the increase of their share from these profit gains. Thus, within this project, the government acted as an investor negotiating costs and benefits with the inhabitants rather than as a serving political/public entity drafting its decisions to increase these inhabitants' welfare which made a potential scheme like land readjustment dismissible as the state does not benefit financially from it. The third disagreement was on which costs and benefits should be included in calculating the increase of value. The inhabitants focused more on the indirect costs they had to bear for the redevelopment project to be accomplished and underestimated – to a certain extent – the indirect benefits. While the government focused more on the indirect benefits of the project (like rebranding the capital and boosting economic development) and underestimated the indirect costs that the community had to pay. The arguments discussed here contribute to scholarly debates around adequate calculation of the impacts of redevelopment projects on vulnerable communities within different contexts like in Addis Ababa (Weldeghebrael, 2020), in Buenos Aires (Ogas-Mendez and Isoda, 2022), or in Delhi (Goldstein, 2023).

These different dynamics that influence the conceptualisation and mobilisation of land market value in El-Warraq Island are summarised in Figure 5.15. The diagram shows how the conceptualisation of value creation, value criterion, and value capture influenced their mobilisation in the case of El-Warraq Island. For example, in understanding value creation, the undervaluation of essential qualities of the island (like its soil quality) led to destroying the agricultural market value of the island, but promoted its urban market value which is heavily dependent on constructed qualities (as in the active urban intervention of the government to service and market the island). Another example, in evaluation criteria, understanding the influence of objective parameters (like market information) and subjective judgement (like selecting evaluation methods or comparable sales) could be mobilised by the bargaining power between sellers and buyers. That means that in the context of uneven power relations, like in the case of El-Warraq Island, the land market value could be deviated to serve the interest of the most powerful and not become an objective reflection of the land worth.

The diagram also shows how the structural mechanisms of value creation and criterion influence the understanding and mobilisation of land value capture in terms of how the increase in value is calculated – by means of speculation and market information for example – which in return influence the market value of the land; in terms of how much is needed to be invested to create a considerable value to be captured. Furthermore, the distribution of costs and benefits became integral in determining the land market value as it incorporates the impacts of the project on a wider scale which could go beyond the costs paid and benefits gained by direct stakeholders. There could be other components of value, like strategic or social values, that would be influenced by the dynamics of value capture distribution, which in return would increase or decrease the monetary worth of the island. The next chapter expands on the second component of land value (the land strategic value), the power play between different stakeholders, and the political dimensions of understanding land value that shaped narratives, discourses, dynamics, and practices of mobilising land value in El-Warraq Island's redevelopment project.

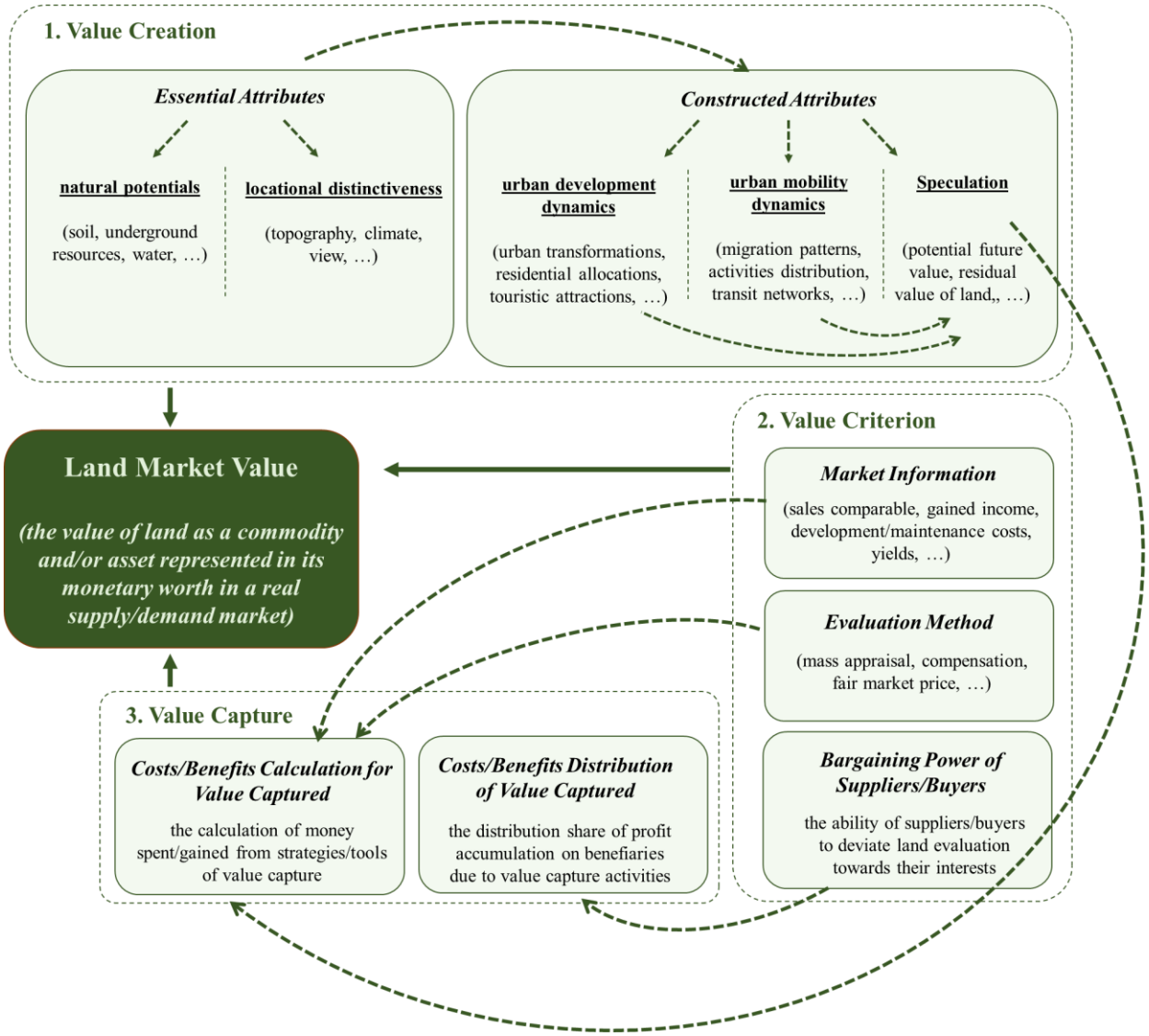

Fig. (5- 15) Conceptualisation and Mobilisation of Land Market Value in El-Warraq Island
Source: Developed by Author

CHAPTER SIX

LAND STRATEGIC VALUE AND POWER STRUCTURES

As argued in the previous chapter, within an inefficient real market, the conventions and speculations about the land market value are shaped by power dynamics that go beyond market dynamics, where informal discourses and narratives play a crucial role in the conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value. However, these informal discourses and narratives are influenced by the ability of different actors in shaping conventions about value that allow them to influence the market dynamics in their favour and accumulate wealth and power accordingly (Elder-Vass, 2022; Lake, 2023). Thus, in this research, the strategic value of land is evaluated by the amount of control gained/accumulated through acts of territoriality proving supremacy and domination over decisions, spaces, resources, and people (Elden, 2013). The land gains strategic value when its possession influences the distribution of power and/or the arrangements of social relations/configurations/order within the borders of territories (King, 2012). The reciprocal relation between land strategic value and power structures is investigated in this chapter through two main lenses generated from the thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews in the context of El-Warraq Island redevelopment project. The two lenses investigate conceptualisation and mobilisation of land strategic value in terms of controlling decision-making processes and in terms of controlling territories/spaces.

The first lens focuses on centralised mobilisation of decision making in the context of an authoritarian regime (with a military doctrine) aiming to redevelop the informal urbanism in El-Warraq Island. This lens investigates dynamics of decision-making throughout the redevelopment project while studying means for empowering/ disempowering the project stakeholders using the strategic value of land as a justification for those means. This section discusses how state's sovereignty is not only practised by tailoring laws consistently to fit the agenda in action, but also by mobilising the narratives around the redevelopment project and controlling general discourses around informal urban development. The second lens focuses on the concept of territoriality related to how the land strategic value is understood by both the authorities and inhabitants and how it is mobilised by practices of control over territories and the community living within. This lens investigates the uneven power structures in El-Warraq Island redevelopment project that enabled more social segregation and expropriated control from the island's inhabitants by infiltrating their territories and breaking their social bonds.

6.1 Public Participation and Exclusive Decision-Making

As discussed in Chapter 4, Egyptian urban practice has been influenced by colonial ideologies and laws (Sharp, 2022), where urban governance is influenced by the military doctrine in management (Tawakkol, 2020). The military doctrine in management relies on hierarchical centralised mode of decision-making which does not encourage feedback loops or stakeholders' participation as it requires fast mobilisation of decisions in the times of war (Osiel, 2017). However, when actors with militaristic ideology manage civilian matters (such as urban redevelopment), it becomes problematic to adopt the same doctrine even if there are colonial inspired urban laws supporting this mode of governance like in the case of Egypt. El-Warraq Island redevelopment project was influenced by the involvement of military institutions and actors who had active roles in the land strategic value conceptualisation and mobilisation through means of *"nationalisation"*. This section investigates mobilisation of the "*nationalisation*" concept on two levels after exploring El-Warraq Island's conflict narrative and different stakeholders' roles in it. The first level investigates how "*nationalisation*" was mobilised to empower/ disempower certain actors which limited decision-making as exclusive for few powerful actors. The second level investigates how "*nationalisation*" played a role in empowering/disempowering certain narratives to justify centralised exclusive decision-making, control public access to information about the redevelopment project, and promote specific discourses around the island's value.

6.1.1 El-Warraq Conflict Timeline and Stakeholders Power Dynamics

Within the Egyptian constitution, Article (63) states that:

> *"All forms and types of arbitrary forced displacement of citizens shall be prohibited and shall be a crime that does not lapse by prescription"*

while Article (236) states that:

> *"The State shall guarantee setting and implementing a plan for the comprehensive economic and urban development of border and underprivileged areas … This shall be made with the participation of the residents of these areas in the development projects, and they shall be given a priority in benefiting therefrom …".*

Thus, participatory development is an obligatory stage in generating strategic and detailed plans for populated areas, and it is always required from any private consultant assigned by a public entity to deliver the outcomes of participatory meetings with the existing community in any area designated for upgrading or redevelopment (Hassan, El Hefnawi and El Refaie, 2011). However, the dynamics in El-Warraq Island were mobilised differently with the involvement of powerful public actors – the military institutions – in the redevelopment process which reshaped the power structures between different stakeholders. The governance structure showing the relationships between the entities involved in El-Warraq Island redevelopment project is illustrated in Figure 6.1.

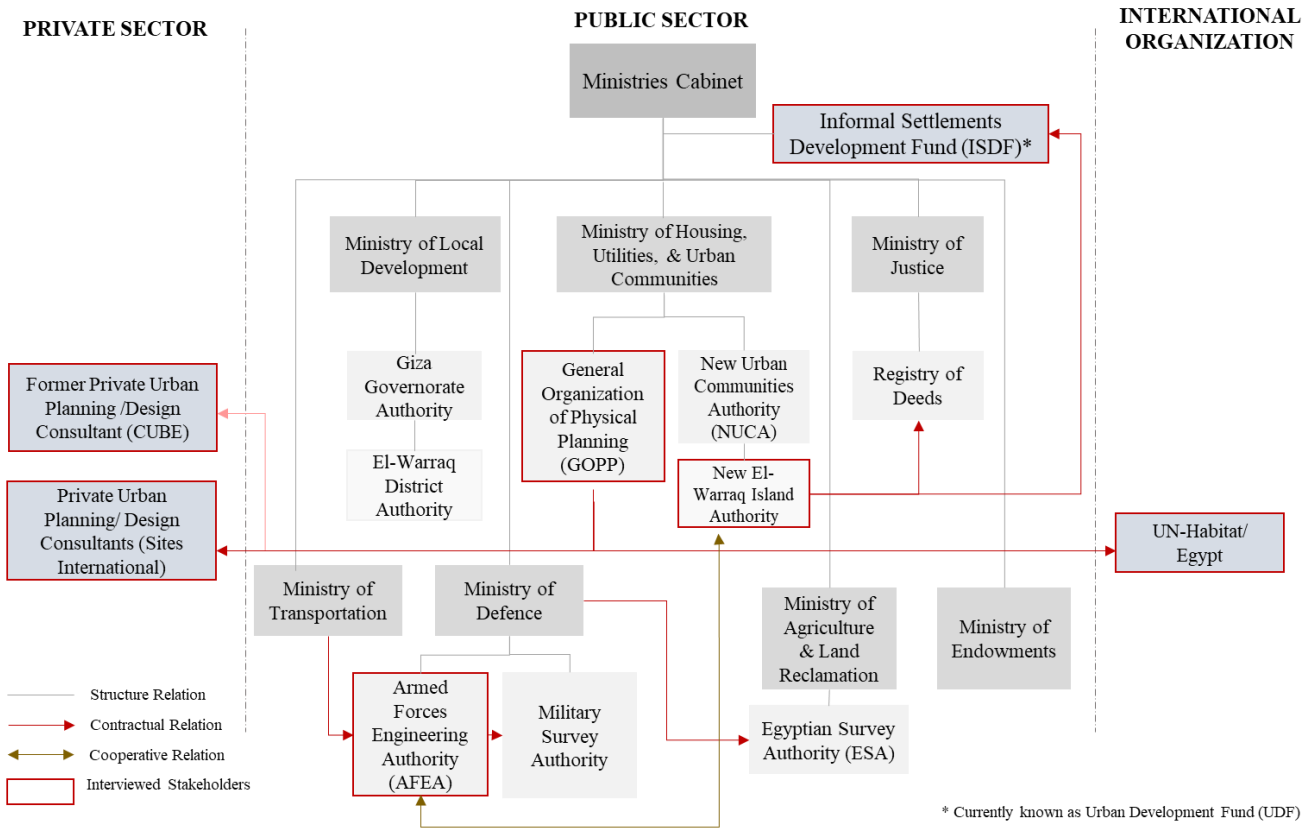

Fig. (6- 1) Structural and Contractual Relationships between Officials/Experts Stakeholders in El-Warraq Island Redevelopment Project

Source: Developed by Author

The usual practice in redeveloping or upgrading existing agglomerations is that areas of needed intervention are initially defined by the ISDF[1]. Afterwards, either the General Organisation of Physical Planning (GOPP) or the urban upgrading units under governorates authority develops redevelopment/upgrading plans. The responsible authority then hires a private consultant(s) who develops the plans according to the vision of the hiring authority. Whether the GOPP or the urban local units was responsible for developing the plans, the governorate/district

[1] ISDF (Informal Settlements Development Fund), established by Presidential Decree No. 305/2008 and cancelled/replaced by UDF (Urban Development Fund) by Prime Minister Decree No. (1779/2021) after they announced the eradication of all unsafe areas within the Egyptian context and the reallocation of their inhabitants in safe locations.

authority is the one responsible for the implementation. If the district authority lacks funds, and they usually do, the ISDF funds the local authority through long-term no-interest loans and monitors the redevelopment/upgrading projects' implementation. According to ISDF protocol, these projects should include a profitable sector – usually a plot of land sold and/or developed for commercial activities or high-income uses – so the governorates are able to repay the fund to ISDF who use it to fund other projects. El-Warraq Island did not go through this process as the ISDF – according to the ISDF representative – only works in areas within the urban boundaries and El-Warraq Island was considered a rural area.

> *"El-Warraq Island wasn't included in any of the projects because El-Warraq Island was like a rural area for us, it wasn't seen as a part of the city, it was like an extension area [peri-urban]. And in the fund executive regulation that it works on the city regions not in villages. For example, if there is an unsafe area in a village, it is not my concern according to ISDF's code of practice".*
>
> (JCIS, September 2021)

As discussed in Chapter 5, El-Warraq district was an agriculturally defined zone until decree no. 1179/2010 including the district in the urban boundaries of Giza governorate. In the same year, the government announced the redevelopment plan as one of the priority pilot projects of the 2050 Strategic Cairo Plan (Tawakkol, 2020). However, it could be argued that the first real mobilisation of the project started with the construction plan for Tahya Masr Bridge in 2015 and the involvement of the Armed Forces Engineering Authority (AFEA). The current practice in Egypt is that the Ministry of Transportation (MOT) assigns national networking projects to the AFEA which plan, fund, and execute these projects based on contractual agreement with MOT (Abul-Magd, Akça and Marshall, 2020; Amar, 2018). In El-Warraq Island, AFEA negotiated with the inhabitants to buy their lands and demolish the houses in the route of the bridge promoting the prospects of the island gaining access through the bridge to the roads network. Meanwhile, the GOPP signed a memorandum of agreement with UN-Habitat to develop pilot projects for GCR urban development which included redevelopment/upgrading of the Nile Islands as explained by the GOPP representative's statement in Appendix II.

However, in June 2017, the president declared in a public conference that there would be no longer reconciliation with informal development on the Nile Islands and places like El-Warraq Island should be completely evacuated from inhabitants as it is a national reserve (Elsisi, 7th June, 2017). However, in the same month El-Warraq Island among another 16 Nile islands were removed from the natural reserves map by a prime minister decree (El-Mahdawi, 2021). One month later, the governorate authority issued a decree of the demolition of 700 houses in El-Warraq Island and attempted one day later to execute the decree using the assistance of police forces which started a violent conflict in the island between them and the inhabitants. The clashes escalated, resulting in one death and 19 injured from the inhabitants' side. Furthermore, a couple of the residents who protested were arrested and around 35 of them got sentences between 5 and 25 years for obstruction of police work, terrorism, spreading false news, and illegal protesting (El-Mahdawi, 2021). Officials from the Ministry of Housing and AFEA had several meetings with the inhabitants later to calm the situation; however, their proposals were received with scepticism by the inhabitants because of the state's conflicting narratives about the island's future and the rights of its inhabitants in that future as one of the inhabitants explained.

> *"On 16th July, when the martyr died, the project of the bridge was taking a leave for 10 days. They wanted to eradicate the whole island. They came down with a decree to demolish 740 houses that was issued on 15th July, and they wanted to execute it the next day. So, they used the police force to do this and then the military would come and blame them for what happened, sympathise with the people for the bad execution, and then compensate them with 50,000 or something. And of course, if you have become homeless, you will take anything. When we confronted X in the public meeting, he had contradicting statements, first he said he swore that he knew nothing about this and then he said that he was given the order from the president to*

demolish these houses two months ago and he sympathised with us and didn't do it. He gave so many promises and every day is worse than the other. No promise was fulfilled."

(I-10, October 2021)

The sovereignty of the island was transferred to the New Urban Communities Authority (NUCA) in May 2018, which meant that the island is currently under the category of "Re-planning Areas", a formal category that frames it as a "public interest" and accordingly could be expropriated fully by means of expropriation law no. 10/1990. The inhabitants were aware of the ramifications; thus, they filed a lawsuit against the transfer decree. The lawsuit was still in court during the field visit (between June and October 2021); however, it did not stop any of the official entities from proceeding with their plans as stated by the interviewed officials. The official announcement for the redevelopment project followed in 2019 with a new proposal project for the island designed by Sites International in cooperation with GOPP, UN-Habitat, and NUCA. Meanwhile, AFEA was responsible for the execution of Tahya Masr Bridge, which was finalised in 2019, but its access to the island is still closed. According to the interviewed officials, AFEA was also responsible for funding compensations for displaced inhabitants, first directly during the establishment of the bridge and then indirectly by loaning NUCA after its involvement in the project. AFEA was responsible for authorising both military survey authority and Egyptian survey authority (a civilian entity) to conduct surveys required for building and lands evaluation and shared this information with NUCA and GOPP. Meanwhile, NUCA was responsible for coordinating with the registry of deeds to transfer the ownership of the lands to NUCA's property using the technical assistant of ISDF temporarily to negotiate with the inhabitants for selling their lands. The full timeline of the different actors' involvement in El-Warraq Island redevelopment project is illustrated in Figure 6.2.

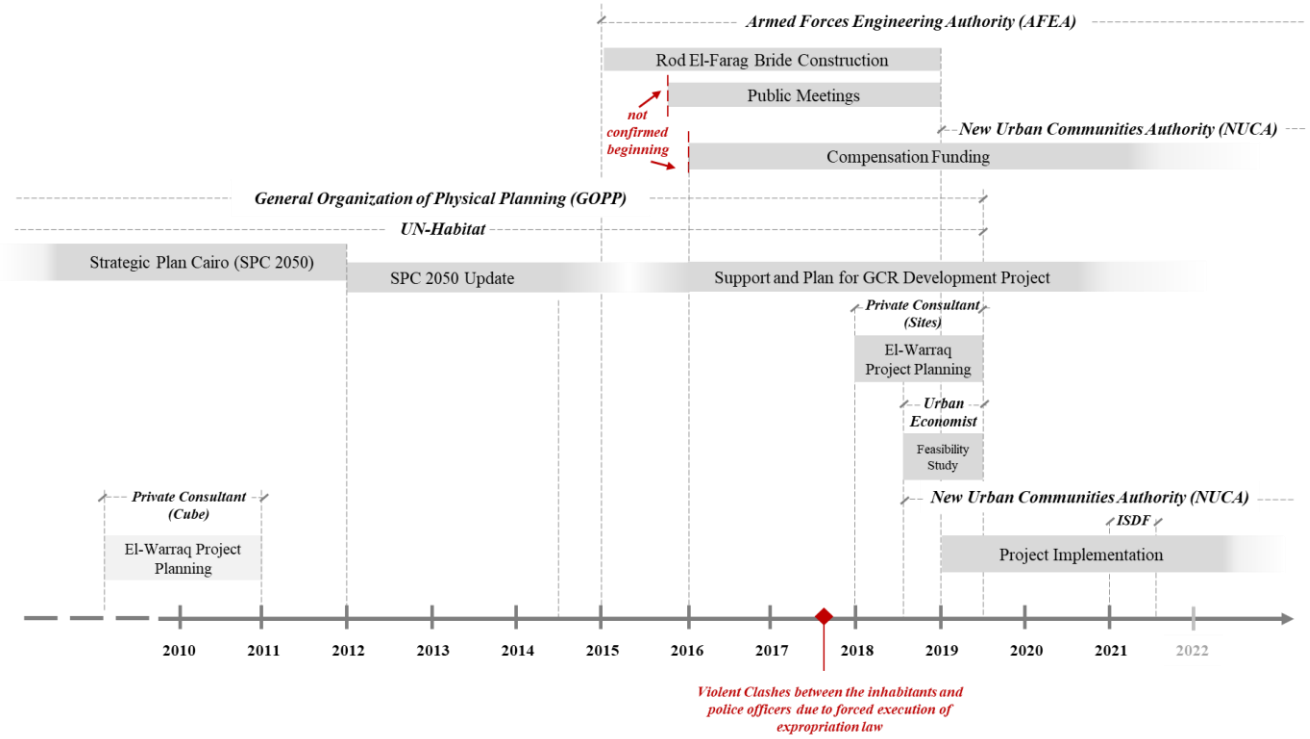

Fig. (6- 2) El-Warraq Island Redevelopment Project Timeline
Source: Developed by Author

Several expropriation decrees were issued since the announcement of the project, where the most recent one (no. 37/2021) included around 170 Feddan. However, compensation values were never identified in these decrees nor the criteria of their evaluation. The last decree expropriates 100 metres from both sides of the bridge and 30 metres from the shoreline all around the island. The government initially owned 50 Feddans in the island, which belonged to the Ministry of Endowments; however, after the expropriation and the "consented" purchase from the people,

it acquired around 500 Feddans in total and recently it claims the ownership of around 70% of the island's lands (Afify, 2022). Throughout this narrative, it could be argued that the involvement of a military authority had changed the dynamics between different entities and their roles in the redevelopment/upgrading project. The next subsection investigates how the involvement of AFEA was justified and perceived by different actors and how discourses of "*nationalism*" shaped the strategic value of the Island.

6.1.2 Nationalising Projects and Centralised Governance Model

One of the means that were used to highlight the strategic value of El-Warraq Island by the government was framing its redevelopment project as a "national project". This is a peculiar framing because usually informal areas' redevelopment/upgrading projects in Egypt are planned and managed on local levels even if they were considered subsets of a national programme/agenda (Khalifa, 2011). Through that framing, El-Warraq Island redevelopment project became a strategic project and a matter of national welfare and security which justified the involvement of military institutions as well as the president himself in the decision-making process regarding the redevelopment trajectory as explained by the private urban consultant.

> *"The National project … or so called National … doesn't start this way originally. So, how does it start? … It starts with a certain vision … with a preliminary study … It is presented to …to … President El-Sisi directly. If he likes it, it will be translated to planning and documents… then we present the plans to top officials, and of course they are not just from the ministry of housing … we go to the military authority and present there, then the military authority will say ok, or it will give notes, after the military authority say that is fine, it is presented on El-Sisi, if it is accepted, we start doing the planning studies."*
>
> (PCSI, June 2021)

"Nationalisation" in that sense alters common urban practice in the redevelopment projects where decisions are made on a national level, and the stakeholders involved need to accept the orders given to them from the head of the state even if they disagree with it on a technical level. The frustration of the interviewed officials from the strict decision-making practice could be deduced from their different statements. All interviewed experts stated that their work was merely a recommendation rather than a binding framework to the executive entities, and even this recommendation was influenced by top leading authority officials. This includes UN-Habitat representatives as well whose memorandum of agreement with GOPP was to assure working per global standards in avoiding discrimination, segregation, and forced evictions. The only entities who had considerable control over the project decisions and its trajectory were AFEA and NUCA. The private urban consultant gave an example with two key disagreements that her office encountered with officials from both those entities where key urban decisions were altered in the redevelopment plan's final version against the recommendations of her consultancy office. The first was a decision made to double the densities of the project's targeted population and the second was a decision made to have only one access/exit points to the island from Rod El-Farag bridge and establish checkpoints for collecting road fees there which would cause traffic on both the entrance and exit of the island from the bridge. She claimed her office argued intently against those decisions; however, they eventually were forced to alter their proposal to fit the vision of those in charge.

> *"These stories you feel that they have gone outside planning, and I here don't mean social or economic planning, I mean planning as urban physical planning, do you understand? … This can't be done. But they surprise you with these decisions, and it comes down on you as if it is …everything is coming to you from above, … it didn't have community dimensions or social dimensions … in the planning or in the general framework for planning."*
>
> (PCSI, June 2021)

A similar statement was made by the urban economist consultant who was responsible for drafting the feasibility study of the project. He had his concerns about the land use planning and proposed projects for the redevelopment scheme, which he asserted were not feasible in their capability of attracting the targeted investors/developers. However, he also altered his feasibility study to fit the framework of the project pre-defined plan by ex-military officials, as he explained.

> *"That's because the head of El-Warraq authority was from a military background, and he had just retired as a brigadier general, and he was working with X - he wasn't the Ministry of Y at the time – and they fixated some things and said it will be like that with no alterations."*

(UEPC, August 2021)

The involvement of the ex-military officials – even if they are retired and working in a civilian position as in case of NUCA – makes it difficult to negotiate, criticise, or alter decisions, as they get full political support from the head of the state. Delivering these national projects effectively is highly questionable when the governing structures are based on the decisions made solely by the trusted few regardless of their qualifications or relevance. It could be deduced from the frustration of interviewed consultants who believe they had no choice but to accept this power structure. These consultants stated that if they did not work with the system, they would not survive outside it. However, few interviewed officials argued that having an overpowering centralised entity is a justified governance model to overcome inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the government system. They claimed that bureaucracy, negligence, corruption, and lack of cooperation between different official responsible entities within government structure limited the ability to actualize urban intervention policies for decades as elaborated in the GOPP representative's statement below.

> *"The prestige status of the State is pretty strong right now. Me myself, I was one of the people who dreamt – through all my work in the organisation – we would have such power to intervene in the informal areas. These projects used to take years and were very difficult, there are areas that have been there for 50 years … and the military supported a lot in providing alternatives… So, when Elsisi came, he removed all these areas, and honestly, I was thrilled by this. Our work became much easier now that we have political support."*

(SCGO, July 2021)

Moreover, it is becoming clearer to experts and academics that the current regime seeks eminent results to prove its supremacy over the past regime and its legitimacy for running the country (Hamzawy, 2018; Elsisi, 26th April, 2017). The next narrative explains the steering structure process from the perspective of the AFEA representative, who was instructed to execute Rod El-Farag bridge on the island within a limited timeframe. He argued that nationalising this project made it easier and faster to implement unlike if it was handled through the regular dynamics of decision-making mobilised by the government civilian authorities.

> *"When I was working on the project, I had to get all stakeholders on the field at the same time and give them strict orders that we are going to start in a week. Everyone should manage to get all the clearances needed. Usually, things don't go this way. The contractor needs an excavation clearance from the local authority, and another clearance from the traffic authority for road closure, and then need to coordinate with other infrastructure managing authorities, and all this paperwork will go back and forward through the post service, you know the bureaucracy of the government, it would take months before you can start anything. So, I needed to get a representative from each authority on the ground to finish these things as soon as possible."*

(PMEA, October 2021)

What is problematic with this centralised mode of governance is being completely dependent on an overpowering authority – in this case the military authority – to achieve any kind of progress rather than empowering different entities through improving their collaboration dynamics and decision-making processes. One concern is the sustainability of this governance model as it does not work on solving problems within the common governance system, but rather surpassing its obstacles by overruling laws, procedures, and, in some cases, recommendations of qualified stakeholders. In the case of El-Warraq Island, the powerful entities surpassed the outcomes of the studies they requested from assigned consultants, dismissed participation with the inhabitants, and did not wait for the court's verdict regarding the lawsuit filed by the inhabitants to proceed with their plan. This could be framed as an extensive practice of disempowering different stakeholders (public/private consultants, national/ international agencies, executive/jurisdictional entities, and inhabitants).

Another concern is that this strategy is completely dependent on the ideology and motives of the one in charge which could be argued they would not always be legit or virtuous. The current regime does not only mobilise the land value to the state as being more of a strategic value, but it also conceptualises those who pledged to save and protect this land as being strategic actors that are trusted with the fate of the country (Hamzawy, 2018; Khalil and Dill, 2018; Sharp, 2022). Accordingly, there is no structure of monitoring decision-making processes in this mode of governance and there is no accountability for poor practices either, because the military and ex-military offices can only be held accountable in front of the military court, and there in no civilian framework to mobilise any disciplinary action upon them. This makes the success of this process heavily relying on the integrity and efficiency of those in charge, which is a questionable approach in a country that scores 30/100 in the global corruption index and is ranked 130 from 180 countries on the integrity scale (Transparency-International, 2022).

However, the most severe implications occurring because of this governance model are the subsequent practices of oppression upon the most vulnerable group in this power structure, the island's inhabitants. The following subsection shows that the same centralised power that was used to facilitate the procedures for the "greater good" was used to disempower the inhabitants of the island by limiting their access to basic services, undermining their narrative of vulnerability, and obstructing public access to accurate information about the redevelopment project. The promoted strategic/political value of the island allowed powerful actors to mobilise/frame the redevelopment project as a *"politically sensitive"* one, and accordingly justified their previous actions as means for maintaining national security as will be discussed in the next subsection.

6.1.3 Political Sensitivity and Empowerment/Disempowerment Dynamics

El-Warraq Island redevelopment project gained public attention after the violent clashes in 2017 and the following protests by the inhabitants of the island. These protests were perceived by the regime as alarming as it violated law no. 107/2013 (which restricted civilian rights for public protesting) and showed potential of public unrests similar to the events of the 2011's public apprising. Thus, after these incidents, the state was keen to control the narratives about the redevelopment project and treated the project as a "politically sensitive" one. This led to various actions taken by the involved powerful actors in the redevelopment project to paint a specific image of the island's inhabitants whether for other involved stakeholders or for the wider public domain.

First, the public meetings held in the island with the inhabitants did not include urban consultants/officials from neither the public or private sectors. In the urban consultant's next statement, she argued that the usual trajectory of public participation in redevelopment projects was not followed in the case of El-Warraq Island because of the charged emotional status that the inhabitants were at, and accordingly the only qualified entity that could have handled these public meetings was AFEA.

> *"The topic of El-Warraq specifically, unlike other places, there was a great mobilisation and great emotional charge … the participatory part wasn't there, it wasn't there on the level of the consultants, nor on the level of … if you looked at the participatory projects, it said that the*

needs of the people, then we see their priorities, and propose to them something … all this hustle didn't happen. The session that was made with the inhabitants was calming sessions and to confirm that there will be satisfactory compensations."

(PCSI, June 2021)

The previous statement of the urban consultant indicates that the inhabitants of El-Warraq Island were denied the right to participate in the redevelopment project and were only dictated the proposed plan. What is more problematic is that it was dictated by the armed forces officials, who were portrayed as the only ones capable of dealing with this *"politically sensitive"* project. The power play in this situation is highly questionable when civilians must deal with armed forces officials in the negotiations around the land value as the uneven power relations increases the vulnerability of the public in accessing their rights.

However, the second problem was the undermining of the inhabitants' vulnerability narrative by criminalising them. All the interviewed officials and experts who did not visit the island, were advised not to do so by AFEA officials claiming that the island is filled with thugs, drug dealers, and terrorists. Thus, those officials and experts justified the lack of public participation by denying those inhabitants this right due to their violent uncivilised nature which could be mobilised (according to those officials and experts) by political agendas and terrorist groups as represented by the GOPP consultant's following statement.

"It has been very difficult, every while and then they make a disturbance and start making troubles, with the police, and you know among them there are a lot of the Brotherhood members, so they make a media hype, as in "the people are suffering" and things like that, and also there are drug dealers among them, spread everywhere, who doesn't want the police to be present in the island, it isn't good for their business."

(SCGO, July 2021)

Nevertheless, the fieldwork visits to the island conducted for this research – from June 2021 to October 2021 – by the researcher could not confirm these claims about the violent nature of the inhabitants. Furthermore, those who have been to the island – like the former private consultant and the junior GOPP consultant – did not perceive the inhabitants as criminals or terrorists. In fact, this project's *"sensitive nature"* probably gained its sensitivity from the involvement of the military in the project, but this was never explicitly declared by any of the interviewed officials/experts, only by the interviewed inhabitants. Only the UN-Habitat junior consultant implied that the sensitivity of the project is because of the powerful stakeholders involved in it, not because of the inhabitants' violent nature.

"We got reports with the public meetings, and with the steps that they were taking. Well, the project is a little bit sensitive, so the participatory thing didn't happen in an intensive way … the government wasn't responsible for it, the consultant was responsible for it … But it didn't happen in a sufficient way … Be aware that this project is very sensitive, and a lot of stakeholders were involved in it, from the state, and there were different entities who were working on it."

(JCUN, June 2021)

Thus, the apparently sensitive nature of the project was rooted in the conflict raised between civilians and armed forces involved in the project, where the conflict had potential to escalate to a violent course. The consecutive protests in the aftermath of the violent clashes in 2017 that spread outside the island, probably concerned the authorities that it could trigger another revolution against the state, especially after authorities had successfully repressed such actions of public involvement since 2013's coup (Hamzawy, 2018). What is different in the island

is that the inhabitants mobilise their forces when it is under threat of violent forced eviction, as they act as one unit and defend each other, and that recurred more than once where the most recent clashes took place between 14th and 16th of August 2022 (Euronews, 2022; Sinbad, 2022). In this recent clash, shown in Figure 6.3, some non-official media sources claimed that the inhabitants were able to capture some of the police officers and negotiated their release in exchange of releasing the arrested inhabitants (Mada-News, 2022; Matar, 17th August, 2022).

Fig. (6- 3) The 2022 Clashes in the Island with the Police Campaign for Evacuating Expropriated Properties Source: (Euronews, 2022; Mada-News, 2022; Matar, 17th August 2022)

This community response is uncommon in other areas that were subjected to expropriation decree – even in the formally developed areas. This is probably one of El-Warraq community's characteristics that required a special mobilisation of their narrative and reframing its redevelopment project as being "politically sensitive". The inhabitants tend to agree with this justification – and are even proud of it – as represented in the following statement by a middle-aged male inhabitant working as a public sector employee.

> *"Any place I go, and people know that I am from El-Warraq Island, they would say "God be with you", I feel proud. Of course, there are people who don't understand the situation … saying that we have taken the land for free, and we have trespassed the State lands, so I explained it to them. And other people question what the real status of this land is, and when I explain it to them, they would say, no, what is happening to us is haram [unholy]. And this thing made us a symbol, because as you know all of Egypt has been infected by the pandemic of expropriation, but no one is standing against the government as we did."*
>
> (I-08, October 2021)

The AFEA representative confirmed that strategically his entity needed to be directly engaged with inhabitants – rather than any civilian authority – to insure reversing this community mobilisation. According to him, AFEA officials did not only rely on their power status in making the inhabitants cooperate but also on their promoted image as the protectors of civilians from all harms including police brutality and government abuse, as they did in the 2011 revolution (Hamzawy, 2018) . According to NUCA representative's next statement, this strategic role that the military wanted to have in the governance system – and in the steering structure of the redevelopment project – was also the reason for strategically removing themselves from the frontline of the project later.

> *"For NUCA, it started in 2018, I think in May or June. The Engineering Authority couldn't face the challenges on its own, they needed a civilian entity, so they are not accused of using their power to displace the inhabitants."*
>
> (FMNU, October 2021)

The NUCA representative claimed that his authority was an appropriate replacement for managing/ruling the project as a civilian façade with ex-military officers, and with a long-term contract with the engineering authority to fund the compensation payments of the inhabitants temporarily until NUCA can collect revenues from the project and start paying back. Thus, the clashes currently occurring between the inhabitants and the police forces due to forced evictions could now be framed as criminals against law enforcement and not civilians against the military. That gives the armed forces an opportunity to choose when to support the inhabitants of the island if the conflict escalates into an actual matter of national security. In this scenario, military officials can accuse police forces and the civilian entities involved with bad practice and reacquire the control over the project, a similar strategy for the military forces' involvement in 2011 revolution and 2013 coup, which allowed the military regime to regain control over the state by claims of civilian protection (Hamzawy, 2018). Despite that other officials claim that the involvement of NUCA was purely for economic reasons – as they are an economically rich entity who could fund the project unlike local authorities – it is an interesting angle of argument that could explain further coercive practices that are vaguely mobilised.

For example, until this moment, even though the government officially announced the redevelopment project, all the physical plans, urban designs, and feasibility studies have not been released officially on NUCA, GOPP, or any other official websites. All the information about the project that is shared with the public is through press releases that are still circulating old project proposals and design images. Circulating asymmetrical information (regarding the compensation plans, the legitimacy of the inhabitants' ownership contracts, the number of displaced inhabitants) through semi-official media platforms is another tool used in controlling narratives and signifying the fairness of the government in the face of the non-compliance of the inhabitants. However, the coercive practices exceeded just controlling the narrative about the project, but also mobilising different entities' power in increasing the pressure on the inhabitants.

According to interviewed inhabitants, some were arrested with generic accusations – like disturbing public peace or regime overthrown attempts – and their release was negotiated in return for selling their property with the assigned price.

> *"In the beginning, there was a families' council, the families' council appeared, and security pressures started … they started to take lawyers, governmental employees, big names, like the most famous case is the case of the 35 for anti-terrorism, it has big names that represented each of these big families, icon figures from these families were framed for state security cases… All this caused tremendous security pressure on the families … the security pressures on the heads of these families, and that took the shape of including some of the families members' names in anti-terrorism cases, they stared pressuring our interests, whether family or job ones … like if your son is working in a distinctive job, they could threaten his position, they could stop the*

promotion, or move him to a remote location, and if you don't work with them and you are for example a private contractor, they start to make your life harder … For them, there must be a point of leverage in each family. But of course, not everyone has a pressure point."

(C-00/P1, June 2021)

Furthermore, other entities providing services for the inhabitants in the island were also influenced by "someone" to deprive the inhabitants from accessing those services. It started with closing the agricultural association office and its associated veterinary unit, then the post office, the social security office, the only hospital in the island, and two out of five ferry boats servicing the island, all between July 2020 and November 2021, and there are current rumours about the possibility of closing one of the public schools in the island (El-Mahdawi, 2021). Despite that these services are governed by different public entities – following different ministerial authorities – the state was able to mobilise their practices of service delivery, increasing pressure on the community and making their livelihood in the island more unbearable.

Thus, the state is using different disempowering dynamics through its centralised mobilisation of decision-making to enforce the participation of the inhabitants in the project and influence the acceptance of the public to its practices. The backlash from the distressed community against the dictated orders is what framed El-Warraq Island as a *"politically sensitive"* area, and what required another strategy for mobilising these dictated orders in the least confrontational means. After all, the regime wants to force its domination over the urban development scheme, but it does not want to provoke the masses against it in the process, especially with the recent 2011 revolution is still in their memory.

On the other hand, the inhabitants tagged with criminality and terrorism had lost their bargaining power in the negotiation around their land value. The land value in El-Warraq project is not negotiated in a participatory framework that assures the fairness of valuation or even the acknowledgment of all the land incorporeal values that are affected by the project. The costs of development are dictated upon the community of El-Warraq rather than generated from a proactive engagement from the society to pay these costs for the greater good. In this case, terrorism and drug dealing are the accusations that were assigned to the people to discredit their cause and justify the existence of military forces in the island. This furtherly increased the already existing vulnerability of the inhabitants of the island and weakened their position in the power dynamics of the redevelopment project, where they no longer – under this narrative – could fairly negotiate their property values or their rights from the gains of development.

In conclusion, this section navigated the discourses of controlling decision-making within the context of El-Warraq Island redevelopment project which increased the tension between different stakeholders. Centralised mobilisation of urban governance was influenced by specific narratives – like nationalisation and political sensitivity – to accumulate control within the hands of the few and disempower the rest. Attaching a strategic value to the island allowed authorities to mobilise and justify their practices which deviated from the usual urban practices in redevelopment projects in Egypt. Thus, controlling the narrative about the value of the island and people inhabiting it was key in controlling the island itself through acts of territoriality. The next section investigates how the strategic value of land is conceptualised and mobilised within context of uneven power relations by both the inhabitants and the state through these practices of territoriality.

6.2 Controlling Social Hierarchy and Practices of Territoriality

In urban practice, territoriality is the action taken by agents to define territories of power mobilisation (Elden, 2010). This power mobilisation is manifested in societies taking more control over the spaces they live in and adding more of their values, beliefs, experiences, and individualities to the environment surrounding them

(Elden, 2013). However, the scale of influence a specific community could have on their environment is defined by the spatial boundaries of their territories whether they are naturally designed (essential like geographical terrains) or artificially placed (constructed like urban zoning or roads). Moreover, the degree of power mobilisation that is practised by acts of territoriality in a specific place is determined by the communal bond and the socio-economic homogeneity of the people living in this place and shaping its environment. Socio-economic spatial boundaries accordingly are defined either organically by power dynamics between different social groups aiming to identify their territory of power mobilisation (Elden, 2010; Elden, 2013) or artificially by authorities engineering spatial zoning that segregates different social groups aiming to maintain a specific power distribution (Bosselman, 1994; Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016).

Within the context of GCR, it is difficult to define such boundaries between different socio-economic groups on a spatial level because of informal practices resulting from the contestation of different socio-economic classes within the same spatial zones (Sims, 2011). This weakened the identity of places within the region, generating many intermediate zones that are characterised by a merged identity, like in the case of peri-urban areas (Salem, 2015). Although El-Warraq Island could be categorised as a peri-urban area (merging rural and urban identities within its borders) it had strong spatial natural boundaries that isolated its community from the rest of the region. The isolation of the island defined the territory for communal power mobilisation within its borders and solidified the social cohesion between its community members. This section focuses on investigating how dynamics of territoriality shaped the understanding of the land strategic value from both inhabitants' and state's perspectives. The first subsection focuses on how El-Warraq Island's community have built their resilience through acts of territoriality while the second subsection focuses on how the state is responding to these practices in their attempt to capture control over the island's territory and its inhabitants.

6.2.1 Strategic Value for Communal Power: Dynamics of Integration

Informal communities usually build their resilience through the social bonds created within their cluster which provide them with social security (ElMouelhi, 2014; Hardoy and Satterthwaite, 1989). These social bonds or configurations evolve through time defining community leaders, vulnerable groups, and those in between. However, El-Warraq Island had a different social structure that differentiated it from other informal areas within GCR but resembled those structures operating in rural areas in Egypt. The migration patterns to the island played a key role in defining the power dynamics within the community, as those who migrated first had more power than those migrated later. However, understanding the relationships that evolved through the development history of the island helps to understand how the dynamics of integration between the different groups worked until the beginning of the redevelopment project and how it was affected by the segregation strategies that were introduced to them to weaken their power structure during the redevelopment project. The migration patterns could be clustered into three waves of migration that defined the social groups living in the island and the relationships between them. This identification of social groups is based on the interviews with the inhabitants as illustrated below.

> *"You must know that there are 3 groups of inhabitants in this island … the first group are the expatriates, those are people who came into the island in the beginning of the 2000s but they are not really connected to the island or its roots … the second group are people who have been in the island for a very long time, they are not indigenous, but they have been feeling like one, they are living for 30 or 40 years and they got connected to the place … But it is more difficult for us, the fundamentalists [the original islanders]; the third group who have roots here and can be hardly separated from this island."*
>
> (C-00/P1, June 2021)

Thus, different social groups in the island developed in a layered manner, where each layer rooted themselves in the island incrementally through building financial and social capital. Each social group who settled in the island started to acquire more lands, stabilise their tenure status, build more houses, settle more of their family members while tying themselves with marital relationships with other families in the island, and – for some of them – transforming into service and housing providers for the next layer, the new settlers. This layered pattern of social configuration introduced a hierarchical social order within the community, that is not related with the size of lands a family is holding but the duration of time it spent on the island and how far they were able to root their customs and traditions within the society. Since each settlers' wave came in dependence on the predecessor wave, the newer settlers partially absorbed – or accustomed themselves – to the traditions and norms of the existing community. The isolation of the island allowed empowering the communal urban practices and norms within the territory more than any informal area developing within the city boundaries and affected by the formal laws and the overlapping traditions of diversified populations condensed around them.

This is one of the dynamics that shaped the strategic value of the island for its inhabitants as it gave them access to self-determination and practices of freedom in shaping their urban and social environment. The inhabitants claim they can integrate and collaborate in imposing their living standards based on their needs and aspirations without the control of the government. The value of freedom of expression is common in many informal areas within GCR (ElMouelhi, 2014) and it stretches beyond just the ability of building incrementally with whatever size or style wanted to the ability of choosing the economic activities and land uses required by the community. However, this is not appreciated by the authorities, where they do not want communities imposing their own rules of development claiming that these impositions are considered criminal acts of violation. Further, as the NUCA representative stated in his next quote, the officials believed that the island had a strategic value for the inhabitants because it isolated them from the reach of the law.

> *"The truth is that the people value this place because it isolates them, they are a republic on their own, and can do whatever they want without accountability. There are a lot of drug deals and people with criminal records that have hidden in the island for decades and can't get out."*
>
> (FMNU, October 2021)

On the other hand, the inhabitants argued that they never objected to the existence of police forces within the island and were continuously requesting a more effective involvement from them in keeping the island safe. However, the one police unit they had in the island was not concerned with any of their problems and was not active in enforcing any laws. The community played jurisdiction and executive roles through their customary meetings led by the community leaders and the heads of the families, where they solved disputes by customary norms and enforced punishments on the guilty, even in cases of accidental murder as illustrated in the next quote by one of the middle-aged male inhabitants. The worst punishment given was to ban the person and his family from the island when they no longer represent the values of the community by committing crimes. The rulings were always accepted and respected being a collective participatory ruling, something also that they claimed they would lose if they left the island.

> *"The safety here is what people love the most, we are kind here not like what is on the other side. I feel safe for my son to wander in the streets. I know that wherever he goes, the people here know him. If someone made a mistake, we would know how to punish him, if someone hurt him, we would get his elder and he would teach him a lesson. We are not going to hang people, but with respect and love everyone here takes his right, and he is assured that it won't be lost … There was one who got killed here by accident, he had a gun and put it on the table, and his son played with it and killed a man by accident. Something like that wouldn't have been resolved the way it did here. So, it was a customary verdict that we applied to protect his family, so they are not harmed also by anyone, they needed to pay the compensation for the accidental killing and*

they were boycotted for months, because of the man's recklessness, until they left the island, it was a merciful punishment for the crime."

(C-00/P1, June 2021)

This social order shaped the strategic value of the island to the inhabitants where its defined spatial boundaries – being isolated spatially – provided protection from the social change happening in the value systems and traditions within GCR; something that the inhabitants negatively perceived. The inhabitants claimed that the island's spatial isolation helped them maintain the good values and norms of their ancestors (like respect, cooperation, modesty, decency, …etc), which were things they no longer acknowledged in "modern Cairo" as shown in their statements below.

"When all these youths come to the island from volunteering work, none of the girls were sexually harassed on the island, it is impossible to happen. So, this is a value you won't find outside the island. It is safe here."

(A-01/P1, August 2021)

"Where will we find the safety that we have here? I mean you could travel for days and not worry about your wife and children on the island, but outside you won't be assured/secured … When I used to go outside to visit my aunt, I always find people in the streets arguing and raising their voices until it becomes a brutal fight, and there is absolutely no one who interferes to calm things down. Here it is different. If a dispute happened and just an old man looked at them, they would immediately stop. They would respect him … unlike outside where they could abuse him if he tried to interfere."

(I-11, October 2021)

"I swear to God the people here are the best, they have the best manners, the best respect, the best loving, the best everything in the World. The people here are living on primitiveness [with their basic intuition/instinct], they know nothing about manipulation or hiding their feelings. If they are sad from someone, they would simply say so, so he can apologise and everything is cleared out, and the problem doesn't happen again. We can't do this outside."

(I-09, October 2021)

"I have advantages that they don't have. I have a clean air, I have water surrounding me from all places, I have safety, there is no roads that could cause accidents, it is much less than anyplace else, I don't have thieves or thugs like outside, because there is a kind of respect to the families, because everyone knows everyone and they can't violate each other rights, so all this is safety, security that I won't find outside no matter what happened."

(A-01/P2, August 2021)

According to the interviewed inhabitants, "safety" was a key value that they attributed with living in the island as they believed its isolation made them safe from different attributes of immoral and life-threatening behaviour of strangers. They claimed that since they all knew each other, shared the same community values, and were judged by the same community leaders whom they trusted and respected, it was unlikely for someone (regardless their status or identified social group) to steal, kidnap, hustle, sexually abuse, or bully others in the island and get away with it. Thus, they felt safe, for example, to let their children and toddlers move around the island as if

it were their backyard without any concern that they would get lost, hurt, assaulted, or kidnapped. They also expressed that they felt safe to leave the doors of their houses and apartments open during the night and that they were sure that all their neighbours would help with no hesitation in cases of emergencies like fire. This lifestyle was imperceptible to those outside the island, where they have no control over the traditions or customary norms of other people and no means to enforce their own. They also believed they would lose their social status which they have built through decades living on the island.

> *"I had a fire in my place once, the gas tank exploded in my kitchen, and the amount of fire was massive. I can't tell you how many people have gathered from the island to help me out, and my family, I thought I would lose everything, I wasn't even there when it happened, but the people have worked together and used maybe 48 extinguishers and 20 bags of dirt to put out the fire."*
>
> (C-00/P1, June 2021)

> *"I love everything about the island, the air, the safety, being all together among one another, whenever I walk away, I know that my children will wander around on the island safely as everyone knows them here. If one of us had a medical operation, her neighbour will take care of her and her kids. But outside I will be on my own. I won't know what is going on with my daughter or what is going on with my sister-in-law."*
>
> (B-02/P3, June 2021)

> *"Here it is safe, I can sleep with the door open. But when I go to my sister outside of the island, she keeps locking everything. It is very safe here. But outside you feel like you are in a prison. Here is freer. We didn't sense the revolution at all and the curfew afterwards unless we got outside. We didn't sense the restrictions for the Coronavirus as if there is no virus in the island. The people here all know each other, if a stranger came, he would be known to everyone."*
>
> (I-04, September 2021)

Furthermore, the most vulnerable groups in the island correlated their sense of safety with their social security, where they built relationships with the community leaders in the island and lived under their protection; while some of the powerful family members mobilised their sense of control over communal norms, not allowing female children to continue their education outside the island or not allowing their male children to get married and settle outside the island. Although these practices were challenged by the younger generations, it was only possible within a confined isolated space like the island; a space that provided them safety from other traditions infiltrating their community norms. This dominance/dependence relationship between the community's different social groups in the island is what fed the social and/or status of the original families in the island and promoted the sense of belonging and identity to the inhabitants of the island. These structures of dependencies in return shaped the strategic value of the island for its inhabitants.

Another element that influenced the strategic value of the island to the inhabitants was their exclusive ability to navigate its territories. The urban agglomerations inside the island were family-defined territories; thus, inhabitants knew which social groups live in each area and used this knowledge for wayfinding. This made it easier for community leaders when they wanted to mobilise the masses (using mosques' microphones) to defend the people from forced eviction attempts. However, this family-territorial definition of places was only known by the inhabitants, so when the police forces tried to invade the island, they were unable to control the masses or surround them, which made them fail couple of times to execute eviction orders as explained in the previous section (El-Mahdawi, 2021; Euronews, 2022; Mada-News, 2022; Matar, 17th August, 2022; Sinbad, 2022). The inhabitants' ability of fast mass mobilisation to defend their neighbours and their fearless attitude towards the

forces was troublesome for the authorities. However, these same things are what shaped the strategic value of the island to its inhabitants where they could protect their territory, trust their community, and integrate to build resilience against the government's oppressive practices.

6.2.2 Strategic Value for State Power: Dynamics of Segregation

From the state perspective, the strategic value of land is framed in the power of controlling territories, as well as controlling the people and resources within them. Proving sovereignty over lands – from a military perspective – is what illustrates the supremacy of the state in dominating urban management. Thus, the use of "strategic" urban planning is one tool used by regimes which is inspired by colonial territorialism. As discussed in Chapter 4, Egypt created its urban planning laws in the era of British Protectorate where the land use standards (law no. 28/1948) for example dictated the spatial separation of residential, commercial and industrial areas (Sharp, 2022). These laws were not aligning with the common practice in neighbourhood development at pre-colonial times. Earlier, the neighbourhoods in Egypt were incrementally developing according to the needs of the growing population usually with narrow roads and close ended alleys (Akbar, 1992).

This made the urban environment more challenging for foreign colonisers and/or forces to mobilise their control over territories in times of unrest (King, 2012). Further, the urban growth scheme was based on mixed land uses, as the proximity to the markets and services served better walkable societies (Harding and Blokland, 2014). Within the colonial ideology of planning, cities were designed for the fast mobilisation of troops and later (by the evolution of technologies) the need to easily navigate by modern transportation means. These cities had either grid or axial planning morphology and well-defined zones of land uses. The difference could be spotted – for example - in the transforming urban morphologies of Cairo districts between the 10th and 11th centuries on one hand, and the 19th and 20th centuries on the other as shown in Figure 6.4. Within GCR, the urban morphology of informal areas is more like the pre-colonial districts, which made them more difficult to be navigated by people from outside the district or to control the activities and development practices within their territories. Accordingly, the current regime made its mission to be able to infiltrate these communities, especially that they held threat to the regime's political stability in the past few years (Tawakkol, 2020).

President El-Sisi made it clear that he aims to *"create a road network that holds Egypt tightly"* (ElSisi, 23rd May, 2014) which he furtherly explained later by claiming that the planning strategy followed would allow – in case of unrests – to *"deploy the forces across Egypt in 6 hours"* (Elsisi, 26th September, 2016) preventing the events of 2011 and 2013 from reoccurring. These statements are supported by the current massive urban transformations happening across Egypt, where the National Road Network is becoming the highest priority programme on the state's agenda for urban development. This network established new roads, widened existing axes, connected them, and established around 900 bridges and tunnels (SIS, 2017). At the same time, these roads destroyed many public places and pedestrian passages, obstructed walkability (ElMoghazi, 2019), demolished green areas (Aly and Dimitrijevic, 2022), infiltrated urban agglomerations, expropriated lands, and demolished private properties in the process (Tawakkol, 2020; Sharp, 2022). Examples from three unplanned areas are illustrated in Figure 6.5, where Abo-Bakr El-Sedek Axis was extended to cut Ezbet El-Hagana into two agglomerations, El-Tayran Axis was widened in Ezbet El-Arab making it challenging for the two sides of the agglomeration to cross over, especially as it walled up by high fence on both sides, and finally, El-Warraq Island separated by Rod El-Farag axis.

In El-Warraq Island, the construction of Tahya Masr Bridge (connecting Rod El-Farag Axis) was used to mobilise the authorities' control over the island's territory as explained by the NUCA representative. The authorities' strategy explained in his next statement illustrates how they perceived the island as a strategic territory which they needed to infiltrate by acquiring more lands – and accordingly more rights – to mobilise their control and legitimise their territoriality.

"At the beginning, we were like intruders that didn't belong, but then gradually we invaded the lands from the North. We have targeted all those who had lands in the island but didn't live there. Now we are owners of the land just like those people, so we can do whatever we want in our property. We have never forced anyone to sell before, but now when we start the infrastructure, anything that will come in the way will be eradicated by law, they can't refuse to move. So, the main strategy here is to access the island through the unpopulated areas and then work my way into the populated ones gradually."

(FMNU, October 2021)

Thus, the authorities developed different practices to impose their control over the island's territory. First, while establishing the bridge, AFEA built its own ferry bay – for transporting construction material and equipment – while putting security checkpoints on all other ferry bays controlling access to the island. After the announcement of the project, they used the security checkpoints to limit the access of construction material, so the inhabitants would not build more houses and claim compensations for them, which is a common practice across Egypt in informal areas designated for upgrading. Yet, according to the interviewed inhabitants, the people found other ways to "smuggle" construction materials, whether sneaking them in goods brought to the island, throwing them from above the bridge, or smuggling them in fishing boats at night. Some other inhabitants reused the construction materials (bricks, steel bars, sand, …etc.) of the expropriated demolished buildings. These practices of the inhabitants only materialised after the bridge was finished and its access to the island was closed. The inhabitants felt betrayed after they willingly sold their lands and properties cheaply for "public good".

Fig. (6- 4) Urban Morphology of Cairo Districts built Pre-and Post-Colonial Time
Source: Elaborated by Author based on Google Earth Satellite Images (January 2024)

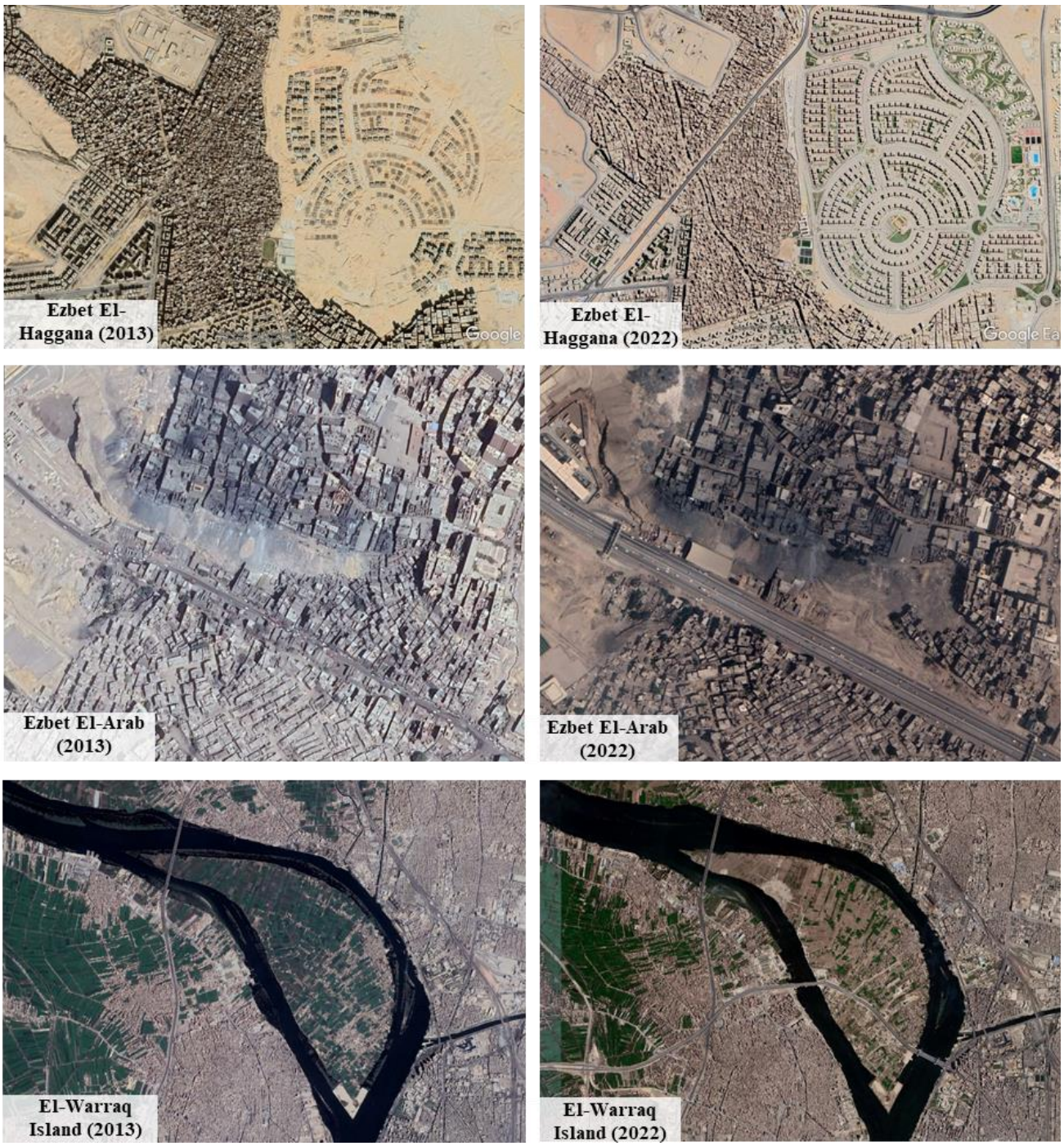

Fig. (6- 5) Road Axes Separating Informal Neighbourhoods in GCR
Source: Elaborated by Author based on Google Earth Satellite Images

Denying the inhabitants access to the only road axis, along with the continuous police harassment pressuring them to sell, increased tensions and promoted the idea that the authorities had tricked them, and that they had not considered the inhabitants' best interests as they claimed in the public meetings. Even the public meetings themselves stopped after the bridge construction and there were no more negotiations with the inhabitants nor alternatives for the displacement except financial compensation. This added up to a long history of negligence that the people suffered, and accordingly they perceived every action from the authorities – good or bad – as a strategic move to force them out. Thus, acts of non-compliance were justified by the inhabitants who felt they have been placed in competition with state's interests instead of included in them as illustrated by the GOPP consultant's next quote.

"Why do these people act like that basically? the people see that the government is marginalising them, they see themselves as the weakest link in the society, despite that some of them could even be richer than me personally, but he feels marginalised, he feels he is not important ... he sees that the government will never see me, so any benefit coming from the government towards me, I will be exploit it to the maximum."

(JCGO, July 2021)

As the inhabitants' cooperation in non-compliance acts against the authorities challenged the latter's ability in imposing their control over the island, the authorities worked on destabilising the power dynamics between the community members in three ways. The first way was disturbing the hierarchical dynamic that was illustrated in the previous section, where it gave voice – in the public meetings – to all the members of the community with equal degrees. This was not appreciated by the community leaders in the island, who felt that they were losing control over the community which evoked disputes between the community members. The community leader claimed that other community members do not have enough wisdom to negotiate for the community's best interest as exemplified by one of the community leaders' statements below:

"The elders are not the ones who negotiated. Only the prying ones who did. I am one of the elders, and I haven't attended those meetings. But the prying ones are people who want to be recognized among the community. And the people on the island didn't respect them because they knew who they really were. They didn't have the right to talk in the name of the island."

(B-02/P1, August 2021)

The second way was disturbing the relationship between the owners and renters. The authorities first negotiated with the agricultural landowners living on the island to give up their agricultural lands and keep their houses. The agricultural lands were not profitable, and the price offered for it – considering its use – was rewarding. The authorities obligated landowners to evacuate the lands from its occupying renters before sale; however, they did not obligate landowners to pay renters fair compensations. Thus, the landowners had to end the rental contracts to sell their lands, where some of them compensated the farmers and others did not, which increased the tension between lower-income groups and higher-income groups inside the island as exemplified by the statement of one of male farmers.

"I used to rent 3 Feddans, agricultural lands, but the owner of the land took them and sold them. He didn't compensate us or anything. The owner accused us of seizing the land against his well, because I used a small part of this land – away from agriculture – to build a place for me and my family. And thus, the government didn't see that we deserve any compensation. I have spent years in this land taking care of it and is this my reward? Nothing!! The landlord is also a powerful man, so he used his power to evict us. He only left us the land we bought from him."

(B-02/P2, August 2021)

The third way was disturbing the relationship between the families themselves, by putting pressures on some families and leaving others, making the families question each other's agendas from one side, and pushing some community leaders and known figures not to participate in the protests to weaken their frontline. This pressure was practised through various ways, as explained by one inhabitant's earlier statement, where they could threaten someone who work in the government to lose a job, do not get a fund/loan, miss a promotion, or they could furtherly arrest some of them – with the charge of illegal protesting – and negotiate his release with his family. The ones targeted with these practices were the original families who had more social ties in the island than any other social groups, and this was perceived by the rest of the community as a deliberate strategy to break down

the community leaders, and as a result the rest of the inhabitants would follow their lead. Furthermore, when the authorities bought a house on the island, it hired poor handymen from the island to do the demolition immediately, something that made the rest of the inhabitants perceive these workers as traitors.

> *"I consider anyone who attempted to sell that he sold me out, he betrayed the country [the island] that sheltered him, betrayed his people and his family, and made my frontline weaker, as in people having consistent and coherent bonds. Because everyone who sells weakens our position, us, the ones who don't want to sell. So, I am not going to tell them that they are being fooled, I don't care if they didn't get anything out of it … We shouldn't be helping them out, they are betraying us, aren't these people like the soldiers who left the battlefield?! Because of their betrayal, a part of the place that we are attached to has been sold!"*
>
> (I-10, October 2021)

Aside from the practices of destabilising the social relations within the island, causing social dissolution, there were other different practices that were used to demonstrate the domination of the state over the land. One example – specified by the inhabitants – is turning the island into a debris of rubbles and ruined lands. All the agricultural lands that have been held by the authorities were ruined, as illustrated in Figure 6.6, even though there was no construction or infrastructure work planned in these areas. Also, all the houses that were bought in the island were demolished, and they kept the rubbles in place causing life-threatening hazards upon the inhabitants living in the nearby houses or walking beside them. This urban depreciation made the inhabitants perceive their island as a war zone or an aftermath site, which decreased their sense of belonging to it. Some inhabitants called these demolished zones, as Syria or Gaza, which reflects their frustration from the situation, and provokes their sense of being occupied by foreign forces rather than upgraded by their own government.

Along with the closing of different governmental services, as illustrated earlier, the inhabitants of the island are starting to lose their sense of citizenship and belonging, something that is well-perceived by both the authorities and the inhabitants as shown in the following statements. The first statement is from the AFEA representative interview when he was reflecting on the failed promises of the government, while the second statement is from one of the inhabitants' interviews reflecting on the state's argument of *"expropriation for public good"*.

> *"These actions make any citizen feel bitter and indignant to the society. He would think: "Am I not a citizen like all citizens here?"*
>
> (PMEA, October 2021)

> *"Our belonging to the country starts from our belonging to the island because the island is our life … The whole idea from this recent decree is to evacuate the island from its population and use the "public interest" as an excuse to capture the lands and perforate the community agglomeration in the favour of the project, in the favour of the State. But what State? Any State is a land and a population. This is the land, aren't we considered the population?! And how are we supposed to belong to this State if it made us go through all this suffering? From where are we going to get this belonging? If someone's house and country has been snatched from him by force, how will he live? What will his spirit be like? Surely, he will be hating everything and everyone around him talking about the State. They are not just robbing the land, they are robbing us with it, damaging us with it."*
>
> (I-10, October 2021)

Fig. (6- 6) Abandoned Agricultural Lands and Ruins of Demolished Buildings in El-Warraq Island
Source: Taken by Author (July 2021)

Within this context, the strategic value of land is understood in the power of controlling the people living within certain territory. For the inhabitants, the island represented a place of social cohesion where their social dynamics and community integration were sources for their resilience and power. They reinforced their relationships by living within this territory and built their communal power upon their shared history, culture, experiences, memories, and sufferings. These assets are difficult to recreate within other resettlement, especially if they do not have a shared value system or an incrementally built power status and/or social security like in the island. For the authorities on the other hand, the island represented a place for resistance and opposition which was dangerous for the survival of the authoritarian state. Thus, their strategy of recapturing the territory was through segregating community power and using the already existing social tensions to mobilise this segregation. The

authorities did not want this communal power to reform once again, and that was probably the cause why they refused the inhabitants' proposal to be reallocated together within one agglomeration – whether in the island or outside it. The State was keen on maintaining the segregated urban development to diffuse the power of the community and thwart any possible opportunity of uprising against the regime.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter investigated the power mobilisation structures in the context of El-Warraq Island redevelopment project which influenced the conceptualisation and mobilisation of its strategic value. The first section explored how the ability to shape the narratives around land conflict is a crucial asset in gaining the legitimacy and support needed for imposing control over territories. The state used narratives of *nationalisation* and *patriotism* to gain support against the 'illegitimate" actions of El-Warraq Island's inhabitants and to assure commitment of other stakeholders with their agenda. The inhabitants on the other side used narratives of oppression and vulnerability to gain the sympathy of the public against the government practices and assure their rights to the island. However, the authorities undermined these narratives by tagging inhabitants with criminality and terrorism while controlling access to information about the project claiming it to be a matter of national security. The state used its armed forces to define the boundaries for its strategic territories, assigned – and trusted – a specific group to engage in the land development of these territories, and used its ultimate power to undermine the authority and involvement of others while accumulating more power through its sovereignty over lands. Meanwhile, the state used the authority of other governmental entities to deny the inhabitants access to basic services by practising their control over the space, resources, and people of the island. Analysing the previous land governance practices suggests that the doctrine of decision-making within the Egyptian state is inspired by the framework of colonial urbanism discussed in various literature (King, 2012; Harvey, 2012). This influence of colonial urbanism land governance structure is found by scholars to be quite common in post-colonial cities with authoritarian regimes – especially in the Global South – where motivations for urban planning and development are to create manageable territories and to have strict control over spaces, resources, and people (Mabogunje, 1990; Sáez and Gallagher, 2008; Myers, 2003). This control is integral in understanding and mobilising the strategic value of land.

The second section explored how the strategic value of land is shaped by the extent those in control of territories could control the social order and hierarchy through their acts of territoriality. On one hand, the strategic value of El-Warraq Island was shaped by the ability to control the power and status distribution between inhabitants through sustaining – or disturbing – the established social networks and hierarchies within the bounded territory of the island. Thus, the island was valued strategically by both the inhabitants and the authorities, where the inhabitants wanted to maintain the existing power structure claiming it gave them access to social integration while the authorities wanted to restructure the power hierarchy claiming that it was promoting an environment of social segregation. This is reflected in wider scholarly debates where acts of territoriality are heightened when there are spatial boundaries to contain them (Wacquant, 2007; Lupton, 2003), and thus these bounded territories are valued more by communities who want to practice freely their territoriality (Elden, 2013) or authorities who want to impose social order and a power hierarchy by stigmatising specific territories (Bosselman, 1994).

On the other hand, the strategic value of El-Warraq Island was also shaped by the ability to mobilise masses and promote their compliance. This was mobilised by having control over social behaviour, discourses, values, conventions, norms, and accepted narratives within a specific territory. This could be done to either promote social cohesion – as when inhabitants consolidated against the forced eviction actions – or to provoke social dissolution – as when authorities used existing tensions to disrupt the fabric of the island's community. This contributes to the debates around how the configuration of the physical environment allows or restrains actions of territoriality and public mobilisation, and how the land has a strategic role in these processes (Vaughan and Arbaci, 2011; Tawakkol, 2020).

These structural dynamics are summarised in Fig. 6.7, which shows the different attributes discussed in this chapter that defines the strategic value of land in the case of El-Warraq Island. It could be concluded that conceptualisation of the strategic value of land by the inhabitants of informal – and/or vulnerable communities – reflect their sense of ownership and control over their physical environment and community standards (Gibbons, 2018; Hardoy and Satterthwaite, 1989; Turner, 1968). However, the social structures and hierarchies within the community define their resilience against hardships and conflicts as well as the weaknesses that could be exploited by others to undermine their communal power and social bond (Dixon and Durrheim, 2000; Elder-Vass, 2010; Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983). The next chapter explores further how the social structures influenced conceptualisation and mobilisation of the land social value in El-Warraq Island.

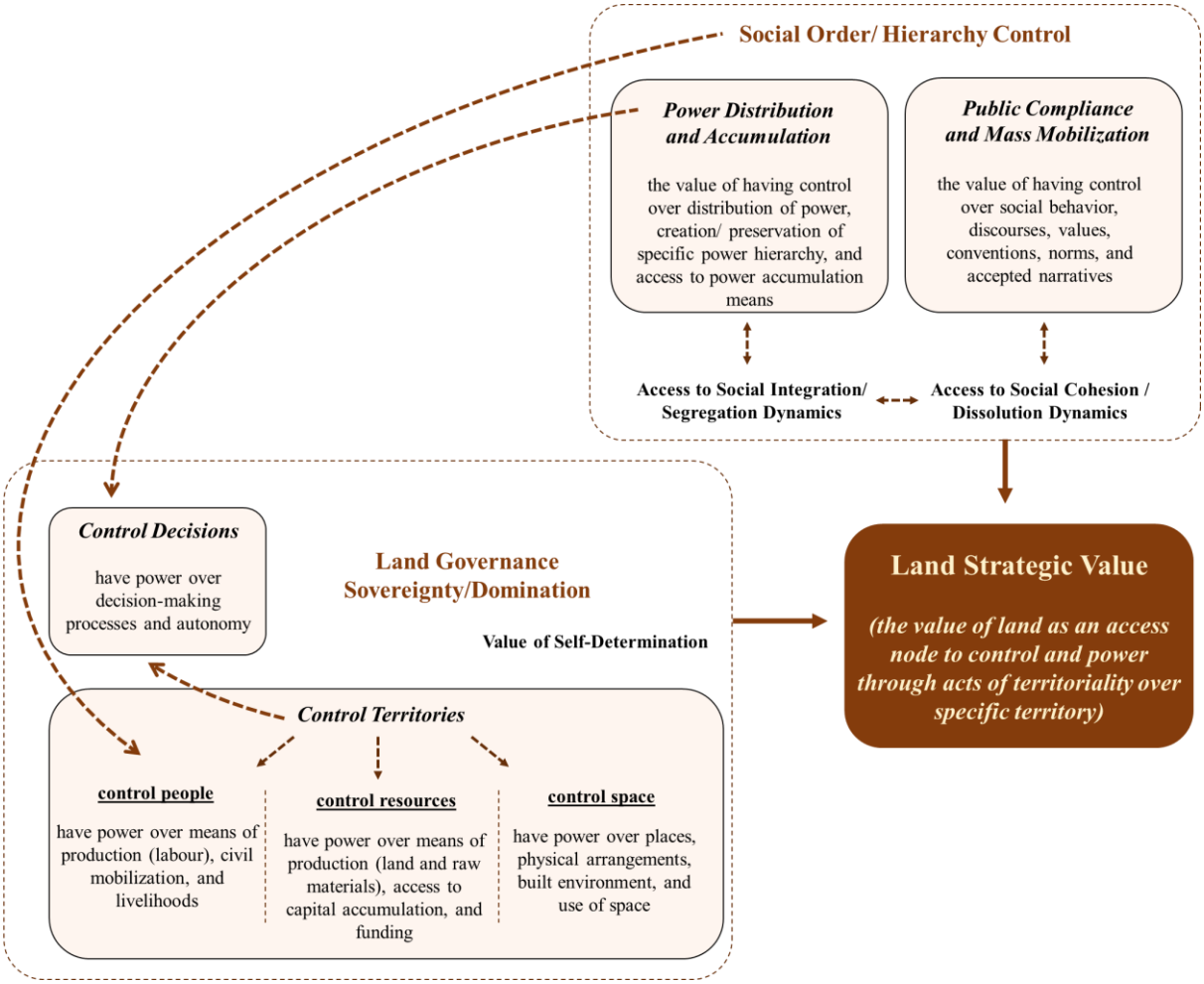

Fig. (6- 7) Conceptualisation and Mobilisation of Land Strategic Value in El-Warraq Island
Source: Developed by Author

CHAPTER SEVEN

LAND SOCIAL VALUE IN STRUCTURES OF IDENTITY AND BELONGING

From the previous two chapters, it could be argued that social structures and their intangible mechanisms influence conceptualisation and mobilisation of both land market and strategic values. On the one hand, social conventions about value and valuation determine how the market value is created and accordingly the mobilisation of its criterion and capture. While on the other hand, the social order/configuration of a society determines the strategic value of the territories where each social group could manifest their power mobilisation over decisions, resources, and people. Social structures represent norms, traditions, values, discourses, and perceptions that profile latent forces formulating the rules of engagement between different social groups and the embedded power dynamics between them (Martin, 2009). They are also considered driving forces for political and economic structures (Bourdieu, 2005). However, the precise specification of which social structures would have impact is challenging because these structures rely on many intangible factors like meanings, perceptions, and values that evolve and intertwine throughout time. Understanding how a specific community developed a sense of their identity and implicit/explicit agreement for their shared values would help understanding the influence of the social structures within this community on how *"meanings"* and *"values"* were attached to places. This research defines the social value of land by its role in fulfilling the social needs of a specific community (Martin, 2009), as in fulfilling their sense of identity, belonging, safety, security, pride, self-esteem, and self-actualization (Maslow and Lewis, 1987).

This chapter aims at addressing dismissed or underestimated intangible land values which influenced the conflict discourses in El-Warraq Island. The chapter discusses two main themes in understanding the social value of land – that emerged from analysing the semi-structured interviews – within the social structures shaping conflict in El-Warraq Island. The first theme investigates the relation between self-identity and place identity while addressing both of their influence on practices of place attachment and *"rootedness"*. This section focuses on the governing narratives and discourses around both the *"rural"* and the *"informal"* identities of El-Warraq Island's inhabitants, and the social structures that influenced the devaluation of those identities in the context of GCR. The second theme investigates the relation between sense of belonging and security of tenure while addressing their influence on social solidarity, community empowerment, and urban resilience. This section focuses on the perceived meanings of *"belonging"* and *"citizenship"* while investigating how they are influenced by structures of urban and social segregation. The discussion in this chapter is more focused on the intangible values of land that in a way influence its tangible representation, like its market value proposition – discussed in Chapter 5 – and its strategic value proposition – discussed in Chapter 6. The overall analysis in this chapter aims to uncover the underlying causal mechanisms of values, meanings, and social dynamics that shape the social value of land.

7.1 The Value of People and Place Identity

Within environmental psychology and phenomenological research, the understanding of *"places"* is associated with understanding of meanings and values attached to spatial contexts (Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983; Relph, 1976), where the investigation focuses on how different spaces enable (or limit) different human experiences and promote (or discourage) different social interactions within the physical setting. The quality of places is determined by their ability to provide the proper environment for different social groups to engage with the physical environment – according to the intended designed activity of the space – as well as provide them with the sense of security and freedom to express their identity (Vaughan and Arbaci, 2011). Accordingly, the concept of *"place identity"* became highly associated with concepts of *"familiarity"* and *"inclusiveness"* of the physical environment that allows an affective relationship to develop between the users and the spaces. This affective relationship is built by promoting *"good"* experiences and memories in designed places which make them unique and essential attributes of the social and/or self-identity of the people using them, reinforcing these people's attachment to the place (Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983; Lewicka, 2008; Ujang and Zakariya, 2015b).

However, within these studies, there is one crucial element that has been poorly investigated which highly impacts the human experience, which is the *"identity"* or *"perceived identity"* of users. Human beings bring their social conventions about the norms and traditions of using spaces, especially when the physical environment allows

them self-expression, where each group aims to personalise these spaces – imbue the spaces with their identity – to claim their belonging to the places and the belonging of these places to them. In other words, aspects like privacy, personal space, limitations of self-expression, and territoriality are shaped by the users more than they are shaped by the used spaces' physical features (Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983). Governing norms and traditions of these aspects are negotiated between different social groups using these spaces. These negotiations depend on the power relations between the different social groups and the power relations between all these groups and the physical environment, where the physical environment could have factors of limiting or enabling specific behaviour or practices.

From this standpoint, the identity of places is understood as a function of the identity of the people using these places, and thus, the value of these places becomes a function of the perceived value of the people using them. The *"Value of People"* is discussed in this section from two different angles aiming to understand how this concept shaped the social value of El-Warraq Island. The first angle discusses the inhabitant's perspective about the value of their community and how it shapes the identity of the place. While the second angle discusses the officials' perspective about the value of El-Warraq Island's community – being a rural and informal community – and how this perceived identity devalued the island and framed it with an *"undesirable"* identity according to them. The intersectional themes discussed in both these angles reflects on debates of urban/rural and formal/informal segregation discourses and divergence between how the inhabitants perceive their identity and how they are perceived, which resulted in the mismatch between how they valued themselves and their land from one hand and how the officials and experts valued both from the other hand.

7.1.1 Place Attachment and Social Identity

As illustrated in Chapter 6, the inhabitants of El-Warraq Island throughout the interviews identified themselves with multiple core values that they believed differentiated their community from others, like being respectful to the elders, trusted, dependable, cooperative, selfless, and proactive among many other things. However, the focus of this subsection is on the values they attached to their urban setting, rather than to their community. For example, one of the main features of the island that the inhabitants appreciate – on some level – is that it is isolated from the rest of the urban agglomeration which allowed them to have definitive territory for their practice of community power and control over the customary rules and traditions within these boundaries as discussed in Chapter 6. Despite the challenges that this isolation brought to the island's community, which were acknowledged by the inhabitants, the inhabitants' statements below express their sense of relief once they crossed the river and entered the boundaries of the island, as if they had entered their home.

> *"When the revolution happened, and they said the criminals had broken out of the prisons, and it was a mess out there, I was in Helwan, and the gunshots were everywhere. I couldn't come to the island. But the island was completely safe, there was no burglary and no thugs in the streets. Even when there was a rumour that there were some thugs going to attack the church, before the Christians were able to go there, the Muslims were surrounding it, protecting it, from the land and the river."*
>
> (C-00/P4, June 2021)

> *"When we pass from the other side with the ferryboat, we feel like we are home. The island is our home. If anyone knocks on your door, you know who he is. Hilariously, in the time of the Coronavirus, when everyone was putting on their face mask, once they got into the ferry boat on their way to the island, they took it off, as if they had already arrived home."*
>
> (I-10, October 2021)

From the previous inhabitants' quotes, it could be argued that the inhabitants felt safer and had more ability to express themselves on the island rather than outside it. Thus, they were keen to have all the needed services within its boundaries because they wanted to reduce their need to travel outside it. Moreover, the challenges this isolation brought to the community provoked one of the core values that the inhabitants self-identified with, which was being a self-sufficient community satisfying their own needs through their collective effort. The inhabitants claimed that before the redevelopment project they did not need to buy any essential food from outside the island – except for rice and spices – as they were growing all other needed crops and animal feed in their lands and were raising animals in their barns for their milk and meat. They depended on exchanging crops – bargaining system – while distributing the surplus on those who could not afford it as an act of charity. Thus, as a rural community, they perceived the agricultural lands in the island as one of the main features of their social identity that helped them develop self-sufficient and cooperative behaviour. They also argued that their lifestyle was healthier and more provident – than that of their urban counterparts – because sources of their nutrition were more natural and less consumable to the environmental resources. This correlation could be exemplified by the next statements from the island's inhabitants.

> *"The people here are connected to the land. The land has been irrigated by their sweat and their blood. They suffered a lot to make it the way it is right now, because our country [the island] was weed, and the people are the ones who transformed it into productive agricultural lands. They cleaned the land out from the natural plants and made it valid for agriculture.*
>
> (B-02/P1, August 2021)

> *"We didn't use to buy vegetables from outside, all the vegetables were grown on the island. This was around 1985, when my father-in-law used to farm all the vegetables organically, with no artificial fertilisers. So, we all could go and take these fresh vegetables for the cooking. Also, the wheat and corn were fresh and organic, and we used to bake the bread from it at home. So, there was so much good coming out of the land, you get everything. The dairy products, the gee, the bread, the fouls, the vegetables, so what else would you need from the outside?"*
>
> (A-01/P2, August 2021)

Furthermore, the inhabitants of El-Warraq Island extended their self-reliance to their built environment, which they were responsible for creating and developing its characteristics according to their customs (like privacy, family cohabitating, …etc.), needs (like spaces for poultry raising or shops in the ground floors), and aspirations (like having extending houses to be incrementally developed). For example, one of the things inhabitants valued was having private houses rather than living in apartment buildings that would make them share indoor communal spaces with strangers as exemplified in the next quote and supported by others in Appendix II.

> *"Living in a house is different, I can lay down in the entrance, leave the apartment door open, and use the house the way I want. What will compensate for that?! For example, I have a three-floor-house, and still have two children that I want to marry, so I will build for them, I will build other floors for my house and have apartments for them. What would I do outside? I will buy them. I want to live in a place that is comfortable for my nerves, not in manteq shabeya[1]. I know*

[1] *Manteq Shabeya* is a terminology used to refer to low-status housing areas, where it is crowded and has a lot of mixed uses like shops, markets, restaurants, workshops …etc. that are near the residential units. Also, the building status of these areas are quite poor and the people living in these areas are perceived differently by different people. Some perceive them as the traditional Egyptian community with their solidarity customs, while others perceive them as the lower social status of the Egyptian community with their aggressive, and informal behaviour.

the island isn't of very high social status, but at least I am living like a king in my house, I am living in a house with a garden, with a wide space in front of it, I am living in a house that is My House! Living among my family. What would I do outside? Live my whole life in debt, buy an apartment and spend years paying its instalments! What about my children?!"

(I-08, October 2021)

Accordingly, it can be concluded that the inhabitants' attachment to the island was highly associated with aspects they correlated with their social identity. Their biggest concern with the redevelopment project was to lose things like the territorial definition of their community and the sense of safety it provided; the rural lifestyle and the sense of self-sufficiency, self-actualization, and altruistic behaviour promoted by it; and the freedom of expression in the built environment allowing them to be authentic and true to their identity. So, the social value of the island to the inhabitants became a function in the experiences and memories shared by them in developing their built environment, overcoming poor living conditions, establishing, and actualizing traditional norms, and growing old with their families and friends. The inhabitants developed their sense of identity from their sense of significance in the society of the island where they could recall experiences legitimising this sense from their surrounding environment as expressed in their next quotes.

"The whole island is special. You can find your family members and memories spread all over the island. There is no one here attached to a specific place on the island, for us the whole island is like one home."

(I-10, October 2021)

"Each place on this island has a memory: the street, the riverside, my house, my children, my brother, my family, and my friends, all of them. I belong to this place, and I feel free to be myself. I feel like if they move me out from this country [the island], I feel that I will have a heart attack while riding the ferry boat for the last time. Forget about the money, what will they compensate us for?"

(I-05, September 2021)

Nevertheless, the interviewed inhabitants had different perspectives about which elements of their place identity they are willing to bargain to capture the redevelopment gains. Most of the interviewed inhabitants were willing to sacrifice the built environment they have constructed but they wanted to live on the island after redevelopment, knowing that it would lose all its distinctive rural lifestyle elements as shown in the following quotes.

"Anything that authorities will make is going to make us happy. What really are they going to make and upset us? nightclubs?! If he wants to do it, he can make a water barrier between us and them or a separation wall if he likes. Anything he will make will benefit us, it will create job opportunities for the handymen and the peasants who can work as gardeners in the parks. Our habits are within us, it is not a material thing, it is an incorporeal thing that will be inherited, kindness and decency, they are all incorporeal things, not material things that can be bought, sold, moved in, or moved out, we are the ones who will protect and sustain them."

(I-10, October 2021)

"The government can do whatever they want. Just keep us here and keep the schools. Also make the hospital better. Just take care of us. They are saying they want to upgrade and develop. We need education and health to be better than this, these are the essentials for any human being.

The only thing I am against is the displacement of the people … make a place for the people and let them stay, and take the rest of the island, do whatever you want with it."

(I-05, September 2021)

Other inhabitants were willing to sacrifice living on the island, but not willing to sacrifice the community nor the rural lifestyle, and their aspiration was to have an alternative house in a similar area surrounded by as many of their family and community members as it could be. Even when they admitted that leaving the island would be extremely difficult for them, they acknowledged that if the island's social identity changed drastically, they would not maintain their sense of belonging to it as shown in their next quotes.

"What attaches us to the old place, is the people living there, and the memories we have with them. We even told them, if you want to move us out of the island, find us a place where we can all live together. We don't want to be separated."

(B-02/P1, October 2021)

"We agreed as a family that if they forced us out, we would try to find a land that we can buy outside so we can all be together as well, a place in a rural area. However, it will be difficult because we will face the same building permits problem … the government is suffocating us. If we get outside, we will die, it is better to die here … I don't also mind if a small group of people came and lived among us here, but they are a big group, we will suffer as they will be different from our customs, traditions, and values."

(I-11, October 2021)

Finally, a small number of interviewed inhabitants were not willing to give up the island, their rural lifestyle, nor the community as exemplified in the next quote:

"It is impossible to find such a place like the island. Any place in the island has green and water sceneries. I don't believe that you can find a place in the whole world that looks like that. And even if there is, it won't be like the island. The most important thing if they did the project is that I will feel I am still in my place. You need to keep my environment as it is. Don't isolate me by bringing people from a very different social class that will make me feel as an alien among them … So, the most important thing is not to divide the community of the island, don't favour someone over others, because you – as a president – should help me to enhance my status. I am not saying give me money to be like the rich, I am saying don't divide us and make us feel as if we are coming from a different country. Make me feel that I have an equal right with everyone. Don't seize me away with a big wall separating us from the rich. Give me access to all the spaces that will be created on the island as everyone else you will bring here."

(I-09, October 2021)

While a fewer number (only 3 participants) were willing to give it all for something better. The latter group was the least attached to the island; however, their problem was to find a similar or better alternative with the compensations they would get from the government in exchange for their lands and/or buildings.

"It is better to take the money and move out. My house is small, and two of my children have already married in it as well as my nephew. My younger son can't get married, he doesn't have any money and so do I. So, it is better to take the money. It is to our benefit."

(I-02, September 2021)

Understanding the reasons behind these different rationalities in conceptualising place/land attachment and social value of land associated with it requires deeper analysis for the personal experiences each of the interviewed inhabitants had with the island. Agents/Individuals' conceptualisation and mobilisation of social values is discussed in the next chapter; however, there are two main general factors observed from the transversal analysis of the inhabitants' semi-structured interviews. The first factor is the inhabitants' sense of *"rootedness"* to the island while the second factor is their self-identification whether as a rural or an urban community. It could be argued that the combination of those two factors shaped the inhabitants' position on what was considered more valuable and more attached to their identity: the island's aesthetic natural/essential qualities or the island's physically socially constructed environment manifested in its rural lifestyle.

7.1.2 Place Attachment and Rootedness

As discussed in Chapter 6, the island is populated by different social groups reflecting the immigration waves settling in the island. According to the inhabitants, the first wave of settlers happened around the beginning of the 19th century where people started coming from different parts of Egypt buying the cheap lands in the island offered by the Authority of Endowments at the time of Muhammed Ali. As the island was not an attractive location for farmers to settle because of its isolation, the authority of endowments lowered the purchasing price of the land to encourage more farmers and rural notables to cultivate the highly productive lands in the island and contribute to the growing agrarian national economy. The richest group of those new owners – the rural notables – did not settle on the island, but instead rented the lands to lower income groups. Meanwhile, other lower-income farmers, who also bought small parcels of lands in the island, settled there, and farmed the lands themselves. The settler farmers were what the inhabitants currently identified as the original owners/families of the island – *the islanders* – while the non-settler owners were acknowledged only as non-indigenous landlords and are not considered as part of the island's community.

The *islanders* grew to enhance their living conditions through time and through participation in other economic activities, where the later generations started receiving education and had more opportunities in the job market. The families started growing, buying more land from the non-settling landlords, and building more houses for their growing families. Thus, these families have extended families in the island going as far as 150 years ago. This social group has the most intertwined social relationships with the community members and the most respected social position/status. They are connected to the island itself, calling it their hometown/homeland and claim that if they were forced out, they would be *rootless* as implied in their next quotes.

"I think they can't understand that the attachment of the people to the island is a blood attachment, something like if you extracted the nail from the finger, it will be very painful."

(I-11, October 2021)

"The island is not only buildings. It is not only land. It is roots and families, and selat araham [womb connections, i.e. blood relatives] and people who are close to one another, and marriage relations and lineage … It is not a just a house, you are uprooting me from my roots, from all the people that I have been raised up and lived among them all my life."

(A-01/P1, August 2021)

Depending on how far this social group adopted urban lifestyle and how much they were involved in agricultural activities, the degree of their attachment to the rural lifestyle and the agricultural land itself varied. Most of them have already sold their agricultural lands, but, according to the interviews, this act had a different impact on each individual depending on their age group, gender, level of education, and role in working with the agricultural lands as well be elaborated further in the next chapter. Most of the inhabitants from this social group belonged to the higher-income strata in the island. Thus, their attachment to agricultural lands was not because it was their only source of income, but rather associated with deeper emotional relationship with memories and experiences of working, growing, and living in these lands as expressed by one of the islanders in his next statement.

> *"The islanders who have roots here can be hardly separated from this island. We are the most difficult group for the government to displace because between us there are at least 56 marital connections between our families. It is true that most of us have an adequate standard of living, but we are much attached to the place because we were farmers, we can't live outside his land; we could die."*
>
> (C-00/P1, June 2021)

Meanwhile, the second wave of settlers came to the island around the 1950s during the industrialization wave at the time of Nasser and the increased migration from rural to urban areas (Abdel-Malek, 1964). The island maintained its rural environment and was still providing poor living conditions compared with other areas, yet it was in an appropriate proximity to urban agglomerations and job opportunities. Also, with the agricultural land reforms at the time of Nasser, many new settlers were able to buy and/or rent lands from the Ministry of Endowments (El-Hefnawi, 2005). The fragmentation of the agricultural lands in the island started increasing incrementally when the *islanders* started renting smaller pieces of their lands to the new settlers, and, after a while, the new settlers started accumulating capital gradually and were able to buy the rented lands from the *islanders.* Further, the socialist reforms during that time (Abdel-Malek, 1964; Bagley, 1956) encouraged many of those who rented lands from non-settler landlords to claim ownership for these lands and start to subdivide them and sell them to the new settlers as explained by one of the inhabitants in the following statement.

> *"These original owners were unable to take their lands. Our people didn't rent it, they stole it. They didn't want to pay the rent because they treated these lands as their own, because they are the ones who are working in it … And there are a lot of these lands on the island. The original owners got tired; they tried legal ways for decades … It is really difficult to know where the truth is, but I know for fact that this land isn't ours. In fact, these original owners haven't abandoned their lands, they just got tired from chasing their rights and you know how the court cases are like, it takes decades and a lot of money."*
>
> (B-03/P3, August 2021)

The socialist reforms in the time of Nasser restricted the relationship between the renters and owners in the attempt to protect the most vulnerable groups where it denied the owners the right to end the contract with the renters or increase the premium of the property (Hassan, 2011). This did not affect much the relationship between settling families and those who have rented lands or houses from them, because they used customary contracts instead of official registered contracts. However, it affected the relationship between the non-settler landlords – who did not completely lose their property to the government with the agricultural reforms – and those who rented lands from them. The renters started missing payments and mobilising their occupation of the land as evidence for the right of possession. Meanwhile, the non-settler landlords were in a weak bargaining position due to the strong socialist movement in the 1960s as well as the slow and costly jurisdiction procedures. The limited financial return from agricultural lands discouraged the landlords from fighting for the land with the trespassing renters. Some of the renters exploited this situation and applied to get an adverse possession verdict

from the court based on the absence of the original owners for more than 15 years, as the law regulates, and a proof of these renters' usage and settlement in these lands through all this time. These dynamics increased the number of agricultural landowners in the island and with it increased their social status among the *islanders*.

The second generation of landowners increased their social status by forming social connections with the *islanders* through marriage arrangements. This social group was identified by the people in the island as the *"residents"* who do not have huge extended families like the *islanders*. However, the more the *residents* were linked with lineage and marriage bonds with the *islanders,* the more they were perceived by the island's community as rooted as the *islanders*. However, during the interviews, the *"residents"* group always recalled their origin/birthplace – which was mostly a village in another rural governorate – and they self-identified with this place of birth. Despite settling in the island for more than 50 years and having developed strong social relationships with the *islanders*, they were still recalling their childhood memories from places other than the island. Within the *"residents"*, the younger generation – as explained in the next quote by one of the inhabitants – were more attached to the island than their parents, because the island had been their birthplace, and all their memories were linked to it. This was different from the *islanders* where the elders in this group seemed to be more attached to the island because they had more memories and experiences in it than their children.

> *"The younger generations are coming up more clinging to the place … it is better for them to live on the island, because they are freer, they can wander all over the island safely with no restrictions, not like outside. Also, the youth and a lot of the people of the island, come to hang around at the sunset on the shore of the Nile, they have attached to it and to this place. And for their friends who live outside the island, it is a luxury that you get to sit on the shore of the Nile as a daily activity, so our youth feels that they live in a more special place than anywhere else."*
>
> (C-00/P1, June 2021)

Throughout time, the *islanders* incrementally started to urbanize leaving low-paid agricultural activities and rural lifestyle to the newer settlers – the *residents* – who started acquiring more agricultural lands and dividing them across their offsprings. Thus, the second generation had the majority of those working in agricultural lands in the island, and thus, their attachment to the rural lifestyle was mainly an attachment to their only source of income and their only qualification for survival as explained in the urban economist expert's next quote. The government reported that out of 1227 Feddans of agricultural lands in the island, 1067 Feddans had registered owners in the agricultural association authority and were working in agricultural activities in 2019 (Sites, 2019). Since the number of these owners was estimated to be around 11,750 (Sites, 2019), then roughly 47,000[1] inhabitants in the island (almost 50% of the island's population) relied on small agricultural lands as their source of income. This social group depended highly on social solidarity networks found in rural lifestyles for their survival; thus, they were the ones attached to the rural context and were looking for a similar one as an alternative for the island.

> *"The percentage of conflict and attachment, and the adherence with the land, those who would get out kicking and screaming, they are 10% of the families …Those whose lives have been ruined completely. He is someone who got used to the island and to the agricultural and farming lifestyle and knows nothing else about life, and you are getting him out of this, so this one can't go live in an apartment. His problem is not to find an apartment, his problem is that he is a farmer, he is used to having a buffalo, chicken, and bread oven, …they can't live the urban way."*
>
> (UEPC, August 2021)

[1] Average family size in El-Warraq Island is 4.3 members/family (Sites, 2019).

Finally, the third wave of settlers started to move to the island around the 1990s as the informal urban expansion in peri-urban areas started sprawling (Dorman, 2013; Khalifa, 2011). This was driven by the urban transformations – explained in Section 5.1.3 – and speculations for the increased market value of the agricultural lands on the borders of the capital after they would enter the urban boundaries (Salem, 2015). This new group of settlers also came to rent and/or buy small agricultural lands in the island, either from the community of the island or the Ministry of Endowments. However, some of the new settlers illegally occupied public lands on the shore of the Nile and started informally developing these lands. All the other groups did not have building permits for the construction of their houses in the island, but this particular group did not even have legal ownership of the land. Since adverse possession law does not apply on public lands, they could not rectify their legal position. However, they were able to gain some sort of formal acknowledgment by the government by installing legal water and electricity metres and regularly paying their bills. This group was identified by the island's community as the *"strangers"*. Since most of the people in this social group were either still renters or illegal owners, they were considered the most vulnerable group within the community power dynamics. Some of the people in this group aimed also at strengthening their position by bonding themselves with the *islanders* and the *residents* through marriage bonds, the same strategy adopted by the second wave of inhabitants before them.

Evidently, the *strangers* were the ones who had the least attachment to the island, its rural environment, and its community. Most of them have not built strong relationships with the existing community nor have they identified themselves as a rural community. The island for them was only an appropriate affordable alternative for living; thus, they were the first to sell up and leave the island as illustrated in the next quotes. This cannot be generalised to the whole social group as there were individual major differences in their experiences living and working in the island. However, since the spatial configuration of the island was defined by the social groups and/or families living in them, it was an obvious observation for the inhabitants to identify which social groups have sold their properties. For example, the interviewed inhabitants used the name of the families' agglomerations to define places, instead of other landmarks – like saying go left to the Manaifas and around the Shraqwas – which indicates how the spatial territories were defined by those who were living within them. Thus, when specific areas started to be evacuated, the inhabitants concluded whose properties have been sold, and accordingly which social groups have sold out the community from their perspective.

> *"I think those who sold until now are the strangers, the ones who have sold their lands in their original village and came to build a house on the island".*
>
> (C-00/P1, June 2021)

> *"Most of the islanders and residents are agreeing with our position of staying on the island. The strangers don't really care much about it."*
>
> (A-01/P1, August 2021)

From the previous discussion it could be concluded that in El-Warraq Island place identity was associated with social identity based on the longevity and quality of the social experiences that the inhabitants had with the island; the degree of adaptations, compromises, sacrifices, and effort invested by them to appropriate their environment; and the accumulative social connections and roles they played within the community that gave them their current social status. All these factors impacted the inhabitants' attachment to the place/island, and thus promoted its social value. However, there are two emerging questions on this observed relation. The first is whether the island would have the same identity for the people if it lost all its original peri-urban environment and got replaced by a fully urbanised high-end one. The second question is whether the land social value could be replicated elsewhere if the community is reallocated altogether in another place. To investigate these two questions there is a need to understand how identities are attached to communities, places, and built environments.

In El-Warraq Island, the discourses of communities and places having a *"rural"* and/or an *"informal"* identity requires further investigation on both intangible and tangible levels. On an intangible level, there is a need to investigate conceptualisation of the values of being "rural" and/or "informal" from both the inhabitants and officials' perspectives. While on a tangible level, there is a need to investigate mobilisation of those values in the implications of attaching both these identities to communities, places, and/or the built environment. Furthermore, we need to understand whether these identities have real tangible meaning or they are just social constructions developed either for the sake of identification (the need to differentiate and understand social phenomenon) or for the sake of stereotyping and/or discriminating against specific social groups for political interests. The next section investigates how different perceptions on the social identity of El-Warraq Island influenced conceptualisation and mobilisation of the land social values by focusing on structures of urban and social segregation and their influence on the inhabitants' sense of belonging and citizenship.

7.2 The Value of Belonging in Building Resilient Communities

In El-Warraq Island, the sense of place identity became under threat with the announcement of the redevelopment project. As the aspects that the inhabitants considered as elements of their social identity were not well perceived by the officials – and the rest of GCR community from their perspective – their sense of alienation and exclusion became their biggest concern. Yet, their sense of belonging to what they perceived as a resilient community that have faced the governmental oppression practices provoked their attachment to the community and the island, and thus increased the social value of the place to them. This section discusses how the sense of belonging within the community of El-Warraq Island shaped their resilience, not only towards practices of the government but also towards the poor living conditions and sufferings they had to face because of their isolation. The first part in this section discusses the impact of urban/social segregation structures of specific social identities in the context of GCR on the mobilisation of the land social value in El-Warraq Island. The second part in this section discusses the relation between the inhabitants' sense of belonging to the island versus their sense of belonging and citizenship to the wider community in the light of oppressive dismissive practices of authorities devaluing their sense of worth. The section reflects on how practices of segregation could create a poor functioning individualistic community that lack its sense of responsibility to the collective and limit its resilience.

7.2.1 Structures of Urban & Social Segregation

Within every diverse community, there are dynamics of social structures that categorize the community to different social groups and assign specific identities to each group (Martin, 2009). Moreover, there are also dynamics that play a role in either integrating these groups' diversities or enabling uneven power relations between them (Elder-Vass, 2010). The differentiation between social groups could be based on ethnicity, colour, language, religion, social class, and many other categorization imperatives constructed by the community sharing lives in specific territory, constructed by the most powerful members in this territory, and/or constructed by an external community or forces from outside this territory (Vaughan and Arbaci, 2011; Elden, 2013; Flanagan, 2010).The community segmentation in Egypt – and in GCR specifically – is class based, where it is affected by the economic status, educational level, and the working profession (ElMouelhi, 2014; Amin, 2001).

However, the apparent judgemental criteria of identifying the lower social classes – as perceived by the members of the community – are affected by how some people speak/interact with others, how they dress/represent themselves, and where they live and work (Amin, 2004). For example, if someone has high economic status, high educational level, and a socially respected profession but still have some remanence from the rural dialectic in their speech or would rather dress in the traditional fashion of their hometown than in the urban stylized fashion, this person would be probably mistaken for a lower social class (Amin, 2001; Amin, 2004). The findings of this research support the argument that community members are also identified – and accordingly valued – based on the place identity of their residence, where specific areas within GCR are perceived of lesser social value than others. El-Warraq Island – along with the whole El-Warraq district – are one of these areas in GCR that have a

communal reputation of having a lower social status than other places as observed in the semi-structured interviews. This subsection discusses the factors of this identification and how it relates with the structures of social and urban segregation, especially in the context of urban redevelopment.

As discussed in the earlier section, the inhabitants valued their social identity as being a rural, self-reliant, independent community that was able to sustain the virtuous norms and traditions. They also attached their social identity with the territory of the island, and thus perceived the island's identity – that they worked hard to create and appropriate to their values – as an essential element of who they were as a community. However, the same attributes the island's inhabitants valued (being a secluded community, being a rural community, and being an independent community), the officials and experts on the other side dismissed or criticised that these attributes of social identity were valuable. Their criticism is not just a matter of theoretical debate, but it highly influences the dynamics of urban redevelopment in GCR which are systematically eradicating/disempowering these elements of place identity from any redeveloped area within the region. For instance, the inhabitants of El-Warraq Island perceived being a secluded community beneficial in identifying and protecting their social values, while the officials perceived the isolation of the island as dangerous and socially disturbing. The following statement of the GOPP representative shows her perception about the value of the island's isolation to the inhabitants.

> *"We need to disinfect this island, because as you know all the people there are not good, they have weapons … and the island was infiltrated by the army, they settled there and infiltrated a lot of this … there are drug dealers and gangs among them, spread everywhere and don't want the police to be present in the island, it is not good for their business."*
>
> (SCGO, July 2021)

The officials argued that the inhabitants' isolation encouraged crime and ill-practices to thrive within the island as well as a discriminatory hierarchy among its members, which the most powerful members wanted to sustain. Some of the officials justified the inhabitants' attachment to the island with their fear of exposing their criminal and discriminatory practices if they were integrated with the rest of the community. The field observations and the inhabitants' interviews supported the claim that there were in fact some drug dealing activities in the island and some discriminatory practices. One example of these practices was discrimination against the female population in the island. The inhabitants argued that they could not enforce the social norms and values they adopted within the island outside it. Accordingly, they did not want their female children to be subjected to bad norms and values outside the island and wanted to protect their chastity from the immorality of the urban dwellers. The island had an elementary school for females up until the 9th Grade and that was the maximum level of education that most of the girls in the island had.

Knowing that they would not be allowed to continue their education, some of these girls either left school early or did not care about getting enough grades for the next educational level and failed their exams. Furthermore, a considerable percentage of these girls – having no other aspirations in life – got married customarily at the age of 14 on average and had temporary jobs within the island like selling goods in the market or cleaning houses. This was one of the practices that were not expressed by the inhabitants explicitly in the interviews; yet it was discovered through the following informal conversations with the female participants in the island. Meanwhile, the males in the island were perceived as more capable of protecting their values/morals than the females and thus were allowed to continue their education outside the island, which gave them more opportunities in the job market and higher social awareness levels than their female counterparts. A young female community worker stated her frustration from the situation when she was asked about the worst things in the island's community:

> *"I don't like that they get their girls married at a young age. Sometimes at 13 or 14 years old. They do a customary marriage until she reaches the legal age of marriage at 18 and then they legalise the contract. There are some girls who want it, they think they became adults, and they*

don't really know what it is like to get married, she knows afterwards that there are more responsibilities than she thought. But some of them don't want to marry at this young age and they are forced to."

(I-04, September 2021)

Gender discrimination is not restricted to El-Warraq Island – neither it could be generalised to the whole island's community – but it is rather rooted in rural Egyptian culture that perceives women as a potential source of disgrace if they sinned or lost their virginity, but do not attach the same perceptions to men if they were involved in similar acts (Wahdan, 2021; Fahmy, El-Mouelhy and Ragab, 2010). The field visits affirmed that there were powerful female leaders within El-Warraq Island who encouraged women empowerment by offering free educational classes for illiterate women, awareness campaigns for women's health, and financial support for families to allow their children – especially females – to continue their education. The officials and experts however still argued that it is dangerous to allow any community to construct and monitor their own set of social values away from the supervision of the state authority. The state authority in their argument was perceived as the entitled entity for deciding what values should be encouraged and/or discouraged. By infiltrating these communities and embedding them with the rest of the society, the officials believed their norms and traditions would fit the *"righteous"* values of a civilised society.

Secondly, being a rural community – as argued in the previous section – was something that again valued by the inhabitants yet was questionable for the officials. The discrimination issue between the rural and urban dwellers within the Egyptian context is affected by the perception of the superiority of the city image/identity (the urban one) over the village image/identity (Poole, 2012; Harding and Blokland, 2014; Flanagan, 2010). Experts and officials expressed in various ways that the village image and the rural lifestyle were not appropriate for the metropolitan city, and it undermined its value as the capital of Egypt. The village dwellers are usually perceived by the urban dwellers as spontaneous, law-free, and having a lower social status either because of their education, income, jobs, arts, or even their accents and ways of self-expression. On the other hand, the urban dwellers are perceived by the village dwellers as arrogant, annoyingly sophisticated, as well as being customs-free or traditions-free, and thus do not share the rural communities' appreciation for customs, tradition, social bonds, and community rules (Mellor, 2015). Even though the differences in levels of education and income are not usually in the favour of the urban dwellers (i.e. the rural dwellers could have better incomes and educational levels), people living in rural areas are perceived as lower class that do not belong to the city. Furthermore, rural areas are also mixed conceptually with being informal areas as expressed in the following statements of the former urban consultant and NUCA representative respectively.

"One of the projects that is proposed for Cairo, is that the islands won't become villages… The Maspero triangle with the same way, the most expensive triangle in Cairo, the most expensive place, and what it had? A Village!!"

(PCCC, July 2021)

"You don't expect a poor farmer with his cow and chickens to be living in a luxurious apartment like the ones we are building on the island!! They should go and find something that they can afford to live in and fits their lifestyle, another informal area or something!!"

(FMNU, October 2021)

The discourses around the *"appropriate"* or *"better"* social identity are empowered by the prestigious privileged position of the *"urbanised"* or *"civilised"* community members who make the laws and rules of engagement within the boundaries of the city. It is also empowered by the incremental transformation of the rural communities

to the customs and lifestyles of the urban areas, either willingly – to be perceived as a higher social status – or unwillingly to abide by the city laws (Giangrande and De Bonis, 2018). Stigmatisation of communities that have a different lifestyle becomes inevitable without engaging with these communities personally and experiencing their lives and understanding their social values. Since most of the experts did not interact with the inhabitants of the island or experienced the rural lifestyle, they were biased against what they perceived as different from the standard and more appropriate way of living. However, those who had experienced rural life – like the ISDF and junior GOPP consultant – had a less biased position towards the inhabitants. This elitist position of the experts makes them believe they know what is best for these rural communities and assume that it is better for them to upgrade and live up to the urban lifestyle. Some officials and experts even argued that allowing their participation would lead to chaos and delay urgent and crucial urban upgrading processes needed to improve citizens' quality of life. Problematically, this denies rural communities their right to freely express their identity, create a sense of place, or participate in shaping their built environment according to their social values and needs.

Furthermore, some of the experts did not perceive that the rural culture or history qualified as distinctive assets to be preserved like other areas of cultural and historical heritage. For example, the UN-Habitat representative argued in his next statement that inhabitants' attachment to their culture and history is more likely stronger in areas that have those distinctive elements of culture (like in Nubia in Upper Egypt) and/or distinctive elements of history (like in Fatimid Cairo). Within the Egyptian discourses – as well as in some of the international recognition of heritage sites ones – the word *"history"* is connected to existed civilisations like the Ancient Egyptian civilisation or Islamic civilisation (Elshater, 2019; Ezzeldin, 2023) and the word *"culture"* relates to distinctive costumes, arts, or architecture (ElMouelhi, 2014; Mellor, 2015). According to the officials, these identifiable elements of history and culture in the built environment shape the place identity and give the area its touristic attractiveness value. However, although there was an obvious distinctiveness in the rural identity and lifestyle reflecting rural culture, these elements of place and social identity were devalued and inhabitants' history of living in the island for 150 years was underrated.

> *"The attachment of the people to the land is different from one place to another. For example, if we are talking about inhabitants who have a civilisation dimension or a cultural dimension in the place, like the inhabitants of Luxor and Aswan, or the inhabitants of Saloum, or the inhabitants of Fatimid Cairo, these people could very likely – aside from Fatimid Cairo – be extended families, families extended from tribes like in Aswan, so there is a cultural dimension that connects the people to the land."*
>
> (SCUN, July 2021)

Finally, being a self-reliant community is the third identity attribute of El-Warraq Island's community which was perceived negatively by the authorities. Self-help communities in Egypt usually fall into the category of informal communities because they provide the shelter and services they need without the involvement – or the permission – of the official authorities (Khalifa, 2011; Sims, 2011). These practices, in spite of being tolerated by authorities, were never valued as proactive ones (Elsisy *et al.*, 2019). Nevertheless, unauthorised urban development of privately owned agricultural lands became implicitly accepted by the authorities' counter practices of readjusting urban boundaries to legalise the unauthorised urban development, reconciling with informal developers, and upgrading these areas by providing social and urban infrastructure (GTZ, 2009). Problematically, the continuous inclusion of self-built communities into the formal urban boundaries mixed with poor urban management to the existing urban environment created a contested environment in GCR that is characterised by being chaotic and challenging to identify, navigate, or control (Sims, 2011). These implications made officials and experts within GCR not in favour of self-help/self-built communities as they were perceived to create more problems than they solve. This could be detected in AFEA representative's next statement when he was describing El-Warraq District, not El-Warraq Island, which is an area formalised in 2010 after being informally developed.

"When I entered El-Warraq district, it was a very difficult context, very crowded, dense, huge ashwayea [random/haphazard/informal area]. It has been very difficult to reallocate infrastructure because the axis passes through highly dense areas. There are also completely unsafe areas because of the informal construction."

(ASEA, October 2021)

These newly recognized districts are highly densified, have irregular and complex urban patterns, lack many of the basic services, and have poor infrastructure quality, and accordingly they are still holding many of the informal areas' identity features. Another possible justification for these districts to maintain their perceptive *"informal"* identity could be because of the locally used wording to describe informal areas in Egypt – "*Ashwaeyat*" – and how this word in its multi-layered meaning in the Arabic language have tainted many of urban typologies in Egypt as being informal, even if they are not officially defined as one. Within the Egyptian discourse, there are two terminologies that are used to describe informally developed areas: "*Ashwaeyat"*[1] is used as a terminology for informal areas, and "*Eshesh*"[2] is used as a terminology for slum areas, where the latter is the worst typology of informal areas as people live in shacks built illegally on public lands (Khalifa, 2011). From the linguistic aspect, the origin of the first word is *"Ashawa"* means the inability to see at night, and thus, Arabs usually use it to refer to anything that does not have purpose, reason, and order. Both terminologies - *"Ashwaeyat"* and "*Eshesh*" – have been used since decades within the Egyptian urban practice and they are stated within the laws' transcripts, the titles of governmental entities[3], and the titles for the national projects[4].

Although the word *"Ashwaeyat"* is an accurate description for the physical environment, using the same word as an equivalent for *"informal"* or *"illegal"* within the Egyptian discourse made it difficult for many to perceive the difference. This provoked the false identification of many formal areas as informal ones, and the people living in them as trespassers and illegal occupiers. Furthermore, using this word as an equivalent of informal/illegal, made many experts conceptualise the antonyms of these words similarly where formal urbanism meant regular ordered urban pattern. This is illustrated in the ISDF representative's next statement as he was explaining why even programmes supporting self-help/self-built housing were no longer perceived by the government positively because they would not have this sense of regularity in them if developed by different builders in different time phases. Nevertheless, the formal regular social housing – that is currently highly marketed within the Egyptian middle and lower-income housing projects – denies these places and inhabitants living in them from their sense of identity. They limit the freedom of the people to live in a place that represents them, rather than a place that represents everyone and no one.

"The State currently is that you build according to my standards. I am [the State] not going to let you build ashwaye. So, if I told you to build this parcel of land in a determined time frame … in this way, in this style, could you do it? Do you have the possibility? … So, for example if I told someone you build 4 floors, and he doesn't have the money except for one floor, what about the rest of the 3 floors? So, you will find a place with one floor, one with 3, one who completed the whole 4. So, I will return to the ahwayeya system. Someone will tell you I want to build with

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[1] "*Ashwaeyat*" is a plural for the word "*Ashwaey*" (masc.) and "*Ashwaeya*" (fem.), where they all literally mean "*random, haphazard, or spontaneous*". It can be used to describe an urban pattern, a human behaviour, sampling technique, or a phenomenon (like the random mutation in the evolution theory).

[2] "*Eshesh*" is a plural for the word "*Esha*" which literally means *"bird's nest",* and it resembles the shacks (equivalent of favelas in South America). It is a temporary-structure housing that is usually made from wood, tin, straw, or clay, and can be either constructed on the ground or in some cases on the rooftop of buildings.

[3] like the name of the former *Ministry of Urban Renewal and Informal Settlements (MURIS)* and the former name of *Informal Settlements Development Fund (ISDF).*

[4] like the *Egypt without Slums* Programme

bearing walls, others will say I will build with columns and concrete just on the ground floor, to save money. Also, the level of finishing, everyone will pick the colour he likes and reject the one he dislikes. If it is like that then I am not upgrading, I am becoming an ahwayeya once more. So, the idea is that I don't want that. I want to upgrade, so I will upgrade in the right way."

(JCIS, September 2021)

It can be concluded from both the arguments of the inhabitants and officials that the value of the perceived identity of the inhabitants in the island played a crucial role in valuing/devaluing the place identity. It also affected the government trajectory of whether these elements of identity should be included or excluded in the redevelopment project, and whether the objective of upgrading should empower or disempower this identity. On one hand, the inhabitants wanted to maintain their community within the boundaries of the island, preserve the rural lifestyle and agricultural lands, and participate in building their community even if they had to rebuild their houses once again according to the standards of the government, but with the accurate representation of their identity, needs, and aspirations. On the other hand, the government wanted to breakdown the community to infiltrate the power hierarchy that disempowered vulnerable groups within the community, remove all elements of agricultural and rural lifestyle that were perceived inappropriate to the civilised metropolitan standards of living, and introduce a well-planned structured urban pattern that reflect regularity, formality, and order to the island's built environment. Thus, many of the socially appraised values in the community of El-Warraq Island were reframed by structures of segregation which devalued their attachment to the island and the social value it held for them. The implications of such narratives and discourses affected inhabitants' sense of belonging to their bigger community and provoked their sense of alienation and exclusion. The next section discusses aspects of belonging and citizenship with their association to the island's social value in building responsible and resilient communities.

7.2.2 Understanding "Belonging" and "Citizenship" in the context of Urban Practice

Throughout literature, there is a demarcation between the sense of belonging – which is mostly an intangible need and connection that is incrementally developed through the interaction of different aspects – and the politics of belonging which are manifested in political and urban practices of space creation (Yuval-Davis, 2006; Antonsich, 2010; Sakhaeifar and Ghoddusifar, 2016). Citizenship is one of the key components of the politics of belonging and is associated with the rights and responsibilities granted to citizens regulating the relationship between them, their governors (whether they were elected or not), and the places they share (Brown and Kristiansen, 2009). Within the previous discussed discourses of identity, citizenship is another factor that shapes the social identity of the community living within a specific territory. The inhabitants of El-Warraq Island had the privilege of being both recognized as GCR citizens and as a traditional indigenous community; however, their community was not seen as an asset for the image of the city that the government wanted to promote for the capital. Consecutive exclusionary practices towards the island's inhabitants incrementally denied them from their sense of citizenship.

One example of these exclusionary practices was the budget distribution within the local authority before the initiation of the redevelopment project. According to AFEA representative's statement, the district authority of El-Warraq did not proceed with many of the allocated plans for improving the living conditions in the island.

"The worst thing though is that people in the island felt that no one ever heard them from the side of the state. They felt as if they were not on the map. For example, there was a plan from the local development authority to build 12 ferry boats to serve the islands of the Nile. One was assigned for El-Warraq Island. When the ferry boat finished, the district heads didn't take it or work on running it. These actions make any citizen feel bitter and indignant to the society. He would think: "Am I not a citizen like all citizens here?"

(PMEA, October 2021)

El-Warraq Island's inhabitants affirmed this narrative – as shown in Section 6.2.2 – arguing that they were losing their sense of citizenship and belonging to the bigger community – Egypt – because of the governmental practices of exclusion. These practices address the right of citizens to the city (including their right to affordable appropriate housing, to security of tenure, to affordable adequate services, to access to job opportunities and social protection programs), their right to shape their cities (manifested in freedom of speech, self-expression, and fair distribution of redevelopment costs and benefits), and finally their right to self-determination. The island – through the cooperative and proactive involvement of its community – provided the inhabitants with all the mentioned rights to some extent – except for adequate services – and thus the inhabitants acknowledged their citizenship by living on the island. One of the inhabitants reflected upon why he considered himself proud to belong to the island, but less proud to belong to the state that oppressed the people of the island.

> *"The protests we are having in the island are a good and a bad thing at the same time. It is a good thing that I am standing and defending my land, that I am resilient. A bad thing that the state is coming to take something from me by force where it can have it by negotiation. You [the state] are the one who is supposed to protect me. Why should there be a conflict between me and you? Why should you make me feel as if I am in Syria or Iraq? Why do you eradicate the houses around me? After God, you are the one that should be protecting me! You are the one that should support me against displacement. How come I am standing against you?!"*
>
> (I-06, September 2021)

Regarding their responsibility as citizens, the inhabitants claimed that they were keen on legitimising their status, paying their dues to the state and/or society, and mobilising their community power to act as responsible citizens. For example, those who owned lands in the island were keen to register it in the record of deeds and made all the purchase and rental transactions through the legal channels, something that is not commonly practised across Egypt as explained in Section 4.3.1. Meanwhile, those who trespassed over privately owned lands in the island – that belonged to non-settler landlords – aimed to legalise their status by filing an adverse possession case in court and accredited any paper document that could prove their possession and usage of the land. Similarly, those who trespassed over state-owned lands, paid regular penalties to the local authorities to secure their stay on the island, as well as paying the water and electricity usage bills. Another example was inhabitants' mobilisation of local councils – before they got suspended after 2011 – to be their legal channel for requesting infrastructure and service provision as explained in their next statements. Again, this was not a common practice across GCR as there was always a lack of communication between citizens and their representatives in local councils because citizens did not have the ability to organise themselves the same way the island's inhabitants did.

> *"However, the thing that the local authority has served us the best is the establishment of the preparatory school. At the time of Mubarak, there was a local council for Giza governorate, a local council for El-Warraq, and a local council for El-Warraq Island that had representatives, family symbols from here. There was a sequence, a ladder that commutes the problem, a mechanism to escalate our requests, and there was a system to reach for the ministers and the high minister. This school hasn't been built from the void. It was a coordination between the councils and the local authorities to allocate a place that was a state property that belonged to the Ministry of Irrigation and the rest of the place was donated by the families. My cousin has donated his land to an electrical transformer."*
>
> (C-00/P1, June 2021)

The continuous struggle that the inhabitants had to experience to acquire their basic rights as citizens living in the city made them disconnected from the wider society and introverted to their own community, the only place they felt empowered and appreciated. The inhabitants argued that they had to break the laws because it was their only

way to survive. They also claimed that the government knew about these illegal practices and allowed them because local authorities were either incompetent and/or corrupt. Moreover, the inhabitants argued that they were not the only one who should be blamed for their informality, because they were not given any other legal affordable choice. Moreover, they claimed that the corrupted officials were benefiting from their situation, and accordingly did not want them to formalise. One of the inhabitants pointed out that this was a strategy of the government to be always in power by forcing people to act illegitimately, and thus have a privilege over them that can be used whenever they wanted. In his next statement, he implied that the informality of the island was being used now – regardless of all the informality around it – because it became an interest to those in power.

> *"All the buildings on the island are illegal because in all the times, when it was a rural area, when it was a natural reserve, when it entered the urban fringe of El-Giza, and now when it follows NUCA, in all these times it was never allowed to get a building permit. But all that happened was because of the corruption of the local authority, you get the water meter and the electricity meter from the government legally, even though you have built your house illegally. So, it is not fair to account me for my corruption and not account themselves for their corruption, it is not a problem of the island, it is the problem of the State."*
>
> (C-00/P1, June 2021)

> *"We have installed the water to the house, but not the electricity. I have applied for it three times, but they didn't install the meter for me. The last time I applied was nine years ago, I paid all the required fees and went through the whole process, and when the installation was delayed, I went to ask what the problem was. They told me that the island is now a natural reserve, and they can't install electricity to it accordingly. So, we got the electricity with the reversed way, connected the house to the public electric pole ourselves and then paid momarsa [usage fees][1]. I pay around 100 to 150 per month … they can only account us if they have installed the service … if he has provided me with the electricity meter, I won't go there and steal electricity."*
>
> (I-09, October 2021)

Nevertheless, former practices of the government did not alert the island's inhabitants to be concerned about their security of tenure because their informal/illegal practices were always tolerated. They anticipated to be eventually formalised like nearby peri-urban areas. The current practices since the start of the redevelopment project however made many inhabitants question their sense of security as well as their sense of worth and belonging to the country as citizens. Their following statements expressed the traumatic impact of the 2017's police raid on their houses and the accidental murder of one of the inhabitants in the violent clashes. Many of the interviewed inhabitants marked their acknowledgment of the redevelopment project with this incident which made it more difficult for them to trust the government's intentions or believe that it was working for the inhabitants' best interests. Many of the inhabitants still recalled the memory of the police swarming the island with bulldozers, evicting the people from their houses by force, throwing their belongings in the streets, and then demolishing the buildings instantly. They also recalled the memory when they hosted the evicted inhabitants in their homes and consolidated to stop the police raid preventing any further demolishing. This incident deepened their sense of belonging to the island community yet alienated them from their sense of citizenship and belonging to the wider community.

[1] It is a rough estimation for the electricity usage depending on the house size and the number of people living in it, because they can't install a registered electricity meter to measure the actual usage. Usage fees are usually higher than the regular charges for electricity measured by registered meters, but apparently not in his case.

"For days after the 2017 incident, my wife and I had to sleep in the same bed with our children, so they could go to sleep. Whenever we hear any strange sound outside the house, we come out in a hurry to check it … My son couldn't study anymore, he got distracted, and he didn't want to leave my sight, not even to do the things he liked … He even started urinating on his bed … Not just him, but all the children on the island. As a teacher, the students completely lost their concentration … One student asked me during class if they were really going to move us out of the island. He almost cried. Imagine that is happening with students in their 9th grade, so what about old people who spent their whole life on the island? Those who are more attached to it?!"

(I-11, October 2021)

"After what happened here with about 4 months, in the early 2018, there was a bombing in the security directorate here in Shubra, a terrorist attack on the state security office here in Subra, it was a sound bomb more than it is a firebomb, but the voice was too loud, it was 2:00 am in the morning. I wake up on the sound having an immediate assurance that the military is bombing the island. Imagine that I have reached the point to actually believe that this would happen!! I was ashamed but It was a general state in the island, a state of fear controlling all of us, because there were rubber bullets that had been shot on the people during the protests and a man got killed in the process, so it was a fear that controlled all the island for a considerable while."

(C-00/P1, June 2021)

During the interviews, the inhabitants of the island also recalled the difference between their perception of the government's intention before and after this incident. The inhabitants – as well as the officials – stated that they were highly cooperative with the government when they started establishing Tahya Masr bridge in the island, and they sold their lands and buildings cheaply with no resistance for the public good. At the time they believed to be a part of the bigger community and that they would all benefit from this project, so they welcomed the workers and some of them even joined in the demolition works and construction works of the bridge. It was not until the government decided to evict them without notice from the island that they started to get sceptical about the whole redevelopment project and what it meant for their future in the island. The aftermath practices of the government included denying inhabitants to perform any legal transactions for the lands in the island (except when selling to the government) and denying them to affiliate their current addresses with their ID (while issuing, renewing, and/or updating personal information). As explained by one of the inhabitants in his next statement, the inhabitants currently speculate that the government wants to expropriate what was left from their legal rights to the land by gradually removing all that could prove their association to the island.

"They have taken a procedure with the head of the registry authority to avoid the registry of any land in the island. If I now tried to sell my house legally and tried to transfer the deed, I won't be able to do it, even if I am selling it to someone in the island. Now, it is a felony to be a land or a real-estate broker inside the island, it is completely restricted. Not only that. One of the pressure tools they used was that you can no longer renew your ID if it has an address in El-Warraq Island, they want to make it addressed not to an accurate location and just be El-Warraq. So, now if the national ID must be renewed every 7 years, after say 10 years the island won't exist anymore in any registered address, our linkage with it will disappear."

(C-00/P1, June 2021)

Furthermore, according to interviewed inhabitants and officials/experts, the government did not offer any kind of social security support, nor did it assist the island's inhabitants in their reallocation process. It did not for example offer them any support for career change or starting new business, food stamps, assistance in reallocating children

between schools or changing the health insurance service provider – if it existed – between El-Warraq Island and their reallocated area. The officials also confirmed that there was not any strategy or plan designed to track reallocated inhabitants claiming there is no governmental capacity to do so, especially that the inhabitants were taking financial compensation and moving to various locations. Divorcing the inhabitants after the redevelopment project increased their sense of alienation and exclusion from the government's agenda where they were only visible when they became an obstacle in the way of the government's project and when removed, they no longer mattered. According to many of the inhabitants, as exemplified in the following statement, ignoring the emerging needs of the reallocated inhabitants would push the vulnerable groups further into adopting extreme measures for survival which would increase the social problems of the wider community.

> *"The people here who are running small businesses are heading for a disaster, these people will be homeless, you will have people who will sell themselves, sell their kidneys or their children, someone would sell his son, so he could sustain the life of his other children, what would they do?! I mean these people could reach extreme measures."*
>
> (I-08, October 2021)

The interviewed officials/experts affirmed that the redevelopment project dismissed many of the social aspects in favour of the economic objectives, especially in the planning and feasibility studies phases. The data provided to the experts, as stated by the urban economist in his following statement, did not include required information about El-Warraq Island inhabitants' sources of income, marital status, educational levels, or social solidarity programmes provided for them. Accordingly, these aspects were completely dismissed in identifying the community's social development needs, and the proposed alternatives did not consider most of these aspects. Consequently, the inhabitants were highly reluctant to accept the government's consecutive alternative plans because they did not match their social needs or incorporate the reallocation challenges in their scheme.

> *"I have requested a social survey to be conducted with sampling, and it didn't happen. I requested to go down and see these people and their requests, and their preference, orientation, and motives, like if you are going to push them out and throw them in any garbage, at least ask them what are the areas they would want to be resettled in? But this didn't happen either. So, we don't know if these people work on permanent or temporary jobs, if they are setting on Allah's door[1] or they have stable jobs, if their income is stable or fluctuating, what is their educational background or levels, what are the skills they have, whether they are working in formal or informal markets, what about their wives and children, how the children go to schools, and what about the mobility – the trip from the household to the facilities like the school or the daily work trip – have these trips been studied? have they looked into where these people come from and where do they go and how these trips are distributed and what is its volume? Their way of life? None of these studies have been made."*
>
> (UEPC, August 2021)

Furthermore, the different pressure tools used in the execution of the redevelopment project by the authorities to force inhabitants to sell their properties in the island raised questions about the state's true intentions about empowering its citizens or promoting their sense of belonging to the country. These tools were manifested in practices like expropriating the basic services from the island gradually, pushing police raids to demolish houses randomly every while and then, and threatening inhabitants with fabricated charges which would make them lose their freedom, jobs, businesses, and/or entitlement to any social support programme in the future. However, these same practices unintentionally provoked the sense of community in El-Warraq Island which forced them to

[1] Relying on charity.

consolidate their efforts to face past, present, and future negligence, discriminatory, and oppressive practices. It is difficult to predict whether the focus on breaking the community of El-Warraq was deliberate by the authorities – as they presented the highest reluctance towards the government agenda at the time that all other communities have submitted to its well – or whether the mere focus on the political and economic gains made the decision-makers disregard the social gains or impacts of the redevelopment project, and push the island's inhabitants to another cycle of despair and exclusion, similar to the beginning of their journey in developing the island.

The previous narratives unravelled the poor practices of governments that would affect their citizens' sense of belonging to the state; thus, provoking non-compliance to rules and regulations perceived as tools for oppression. These poor practices also increase the tension between different social groups, where their degree of citizenship and belonging to the place is varied according to their origin of place, lifestyle, and/or their socio-economic status. It can be concluded that official discourses and practices addressing informality and rural development in this case were key in shaping the tensions between formal/informal dwellers, urban/rural inhabitants, and lower/higher income groups. It is found that if there is an unfair formal distribution of the rights to the city among these different groups, the most vulnerable groups will likely push informal practices to declare their belonging to the city and defend their right to it. However, these informal practices were perceived by authorities as forced entitlement of these groups' "*rights to the city*". Accordingly, they aim at restraining such practices to protect the imagery of being "good citizens" that understand the "*right of the city*" upon its citizens and their responsibility in promoting its role and brand within the global platform.

7.3 Conclusion

This chapter investigated the social structures shaping the social value of land in the context of El-Warraq Island redevelopment project, focusing on the intangible social needs of the community. It is found that the social values of land are associated with the most abstract social needs (like the sense of identity, belonging, self-actualization) as well as the most basic ones (like the sense of safety and sustaining their livelihoods). Both ends of the spectrum are supposed to empower communities to be proactive and responsible actors since their resilience as a community supports their ability to face livelihood challenges whether they are natural (like floods, pandemic, earthquakes, famine, …etc.) or manmade (like wars, conflict, oppression, …etc). However, as discussed in Chapter 2, the most abstract levels of social needs are the least operationalised aspects within urban literature (Anderson, 1995; de Vries and Voß, 2018). This chapter tracked discourses of the intangible social needs associated with the social value of El-Warraq Island to map variables influencing land social value and contribute to better operationalising concepts of place identity and place attachment.

The first section explored the value of El-Warraq Island for its inhabitants as a place aligned with the community's social identity represented in their culture and history. From one side, it investigated the reciprocal relation between the value of rootedness (being identified with specific land/place as inseparable from its everlasting identity) and the sense of entitlement that community developed, and how this was shaped by the history of the community development in the island. On the other side, the section investigated the reciprocal relation between the value of being identified with a specific social group (whose identification is associated with their place identity) and the ability of this group to self-express their culture, traditions, and norms in their living environment. Accordingly, the social value of land was found to be highly associated with the value of people/community living in this land with their inherited rootedness (represented in their historical values) and social identity (represented in their culture and religious values). The places that provide a safe space to self-express the chosen social identity become of a higher value to those claiming entitlement to these places because of their rootedness, and thus, the degree of place attachment would be higher. However, this section also revealed that the elements shaping the place identity did not have the same value to all the community members equally. This supports the scholarly discussions arguing that individual personal experiences and memories of living in a place are integral in shaping and perceiving its identity and developing a sense of place (Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983; Dixon and Durrheim, 2000; Qazimi, 2014).

The second section expanded further on understanding the influence of place identity on place attachment, which in return has its influence on understanding the social value of land. This is proceeded by exploring the value of El-Warraq Island for its inhabitants as a place that provides an urban and socially inclusive environment and how this was associated with their sense of belonging and sense of citizenship. Within the case study, it was found that both these variables did not coincide, as the inhabitants had a sense of belonging to the island but not a sense of belonging/citizenship to their wider community due to layers of negligence and oppressive practices. The section tracked the relationship between the value of being included/integrated in a community and community's sense of social urban responsibility towards their living environment as discussed by some scholars (Sakhaeifar and Ghoddusifar, 2016; Relph, 2016), and how this relationship could be affected by structures of social exclusion and segregation. It also tracked the relation between the value of being protected by state laws and constitution and the communities' sense of nationalism/patriotism, and how this relationship could be affected by poor practices of negligence, oppression, and discriminatory discourses devaluing place and social identity of specific communities as argued in discussions around politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis, 2006) and deliberate creation for conflict/hostile environments (Bartos and Wehr, 2002; Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016).

This section however focused more on the governing narratives and discourses around both "rural" and "informal" identities of El-Warraq Island's inhabitants, and the social structures that influenced the devaluation of the places/ lands they inhabit. The dynamics between the community's self-identification and outsiders' identification was found to shape social structures that empower/disempower specific communities and determine their resilience, their attachment to the place, and accordingly the social value of this place to their community's existence. The overall findings of the chapter – summarised in Figure 7.1 – contribute to understanding land conflict on a deeper level as they reveal the dynamics shaping place identity and belonging on a more empirical level, showing the impact of social urban alienation, displacement, and devaluation on communities' engagement, empowerment, and resilience. By way of conclusion to the thesis, the next chapter discusses further the role of agents in empowering/disempowering the economic, political, and social structures discussed in Chapters 5,6, and 7 respectively, as well as the relationship between those structures and the environmental value of land, with relation to urban development and conflict production.

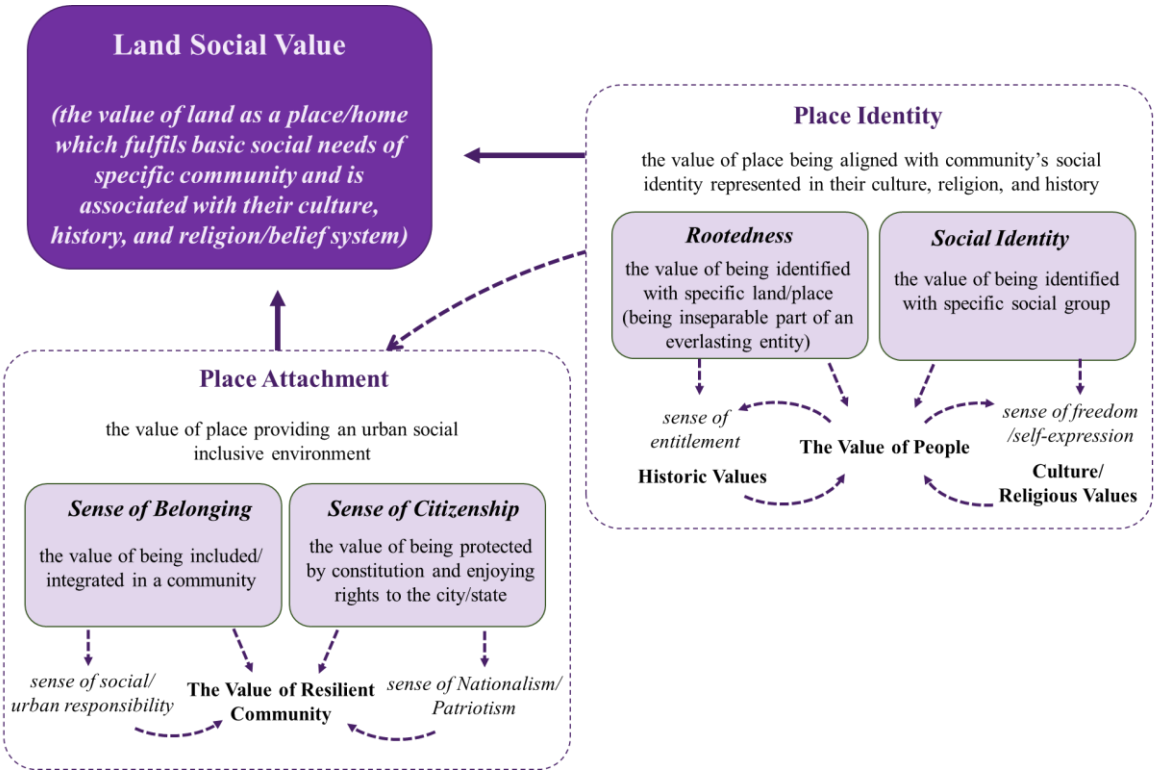

Fig. (7- 1) Conceptualisation and Mobilisation of Land Social Value in El-Warraq Island
Source: Developed by Author

CHAPTER EIGHT

UNDERSTANDING LAND VALUE BETWEEN STRUCTURES AND AGENTS: DISCUSSION, FINDINGS, AND CONCLUSION

Throughout this research, the overarching aim has been to investigate how land value is conceptualised and mobilised in urban practice, in order to unravel the causes/reasons for urban land conflict triggered by incompatible values and goals in urban redevelopment. Accordingly, the research domain was chosen in the context of conflict between uneven power relations, specifically the context of urban redevelopment of informal areas in the authoritarian autocratic state of Egypt. Consequently, the research design was based on intensive case-study research where the research aim was operationalised and contextualised by the question of '*how is land value conceptualised and mobilised in urban redevelopment of informal areas in Egypt?*'. Three main research gaps were identified by reviewing the literature, which were (1) the monistic reductionist approaches of value theories that did not reflect the practical reality within the urban context, (2) the insufficient operationalisation of intangible and incorporeal components of land value, and (3) the poor linkage between theorisation and mobilisation of different structures in urban research (and the different components within those structures) shaping the urban social phenomenon and influencing our understanding of land value. The research utilised a pluralistic pragmatic theory of value which gave equal merits to the different components of value and the different power dynamics of structures and agents in shaping land value. Accordingly, the research had three main objectives responding to the defined research gaps, the defined empirical domain of investigation (the case study of El-Warraq Island redevelopment project), and the conceptual framework linking land value, land conflict, land development, and the underlying power dynamics of structures and agents. These three objectives could be summarised as: (1) mapping the structures of land value conceptualisation and mobilisation, (2) investigating the impact of plural understanding of land value on conflict production, and (3) operationalising intangible components of land value within the research context.

Since the research used thematic qualitative analysis (for semi-structured interviews), four main components of land value (economic, strategic, social, and environmental) and their corresponding thematic structures – were used to organise the empirical work of this research. As discussed earlier, Chapter 5 explored conceptualisation and mobilisation of the land market value and the economic structures surrounding concepts of value creation, criterion, and capture. While Chapter 6 explored conceptualisation and mobilisation of land strategic value and the political structures surrounding uneven power dynamics of control, empowering/disempowering discourses, and practices of territoriality influencing the social order and power hierarchy. Finally, Chapter 7 explored the conceptualisation and mobilisation of land social value and the social structures surrounding dynamics of place production and the development of place identity and the sense of belonging. Those three chapters investigated structural mechanisms influencing the understanding of land value, but it did not explore the role of the reflexivity and responsiveness of individual agents/actors on these processes. This chapter uses the theoretical grounding of *Critical Realism* and *Islamic Ontology* to investigate the power of actors (using the four planes of social being theory) and then to synthesize the findings of the empirical chapters exploring the different layers, components, and impacts of structures (using realist constructionism).

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value on the agency level, where the theory of four planes of social being, explained in Section 3.1.2 (Chapter 3), is used to identify how the relationships between agents, physical environment, community, and structures influence the understanding of land value. While the second section discusses the conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value on the structures level reflecting on urban structures of redevelopment and urban structures of conflict production. This section reflects on the land environmental value, the fourth thematic component of land value identified in this research, situating the earlier discussed findings in the context of urban literature. Finally, the last section highlights the key findings, the contribution of this research to urban theories and practices, and the recommendations for further research needed to understand land value.

8.1 Agency Power and the Four Planes of Social Being

As explored in Chapter 3, the *Critical Realists* theory of "*Four Planes of Social Being*" argues that human agency functions on four planar dimensions where individuals conceptualise and rationalise their agency power through

inner-being interactions, individual-community interactions, human-material interactions, and agent-structure interactions (Bhaskar, 2010). The findings from El-Warraq Island unravelled different degrees of agency power affecting dynamics of urban redevelopment in the context of uneven power relations between different actors. This section uses the "*Four Planes of Social Being*" theory (infused by explanations from *Islamic Ontology*) to differentiate between the different elements that shape our conceptions. In the first part, the inner-being rationality is discussed with relation to the modes of reasoning and reflexivity in the Islamic ideology and how both the inhabitants and officials reflected this ideology in their realisation of the island's value. The second part discusses the interaction between the island's inhabitants with their community and their interaction with the physical environment. Both interactions are argued to shape inhabitants' rationalisation of their social responsibility and urban responsibility through an embodied hierarchy of values within their religious ideology. Finally, the third part in this section focuses on the relation between agents and structures in the context of El-Warraq Island, where it discusses different stakeholders' rationalisation of the reality of those structures and their responsiveness to them through the frameworks of *Durkheim Determinism* and *Weberian Voluntarism*. Synthesising the different dimensions shaping the rationalisation of land value on the individuals' level helps in explaining the triggers of conflict and the points of communalities that shape our collective realisation of the concept.

8.2.1 Modes of Reasoning and Reflexivity in Islamic Ideology

As argued by scholars, understanding the development of human intellect, emotions, and the sources or triggers influencing this development process, is important for understanding how they internally rationalise their ideas and concepts (Bagley, Sawyerr and Abubaker, 2016; De Monticelli, 2018). Within a religious community, the religious ideology is considered a distinctive element in the personal reasoning of individuals, where they usually rationalise their values, motives, practices, reasons, aspirations, and the events surrounding them through the lens of religious reasoning (Chapra, 2008). The trigger or motivation for reasoning accordingly results from an inquiry about the valuables in life and the value of oneself as an inseparable part of this life. Generally, within the Egyptian context, religious education varies extremely between one individual and another, and this variation is influenced by many aspects that are not the focus of this research. However, there are some remnants of core beliefs that every individual within the community is raised upon or has experienced which connected him/her with their religious identity (Naqvi, 2016).

In El-Warraq Island, many participants justified their reasoning and responsiveness in alliance with their understanding of Islamic core values regardless of how authentic they are in their claims or the degree of their claims' coherence with their actions. However, the rationalisation of each individual was also dependent on their positionality from the redevelopment project. The interviewed participants can be initially classified into three main groups: the inhabitants, the consultants, and the officials. As discussed in Chapter 7, the inhabitants' group could be classified based on the lengths of their stay in the island (islanders, residents, strangers as named in the interviews), their tenure status and property ownership in the island (landlords, owners, renters), their family connections with the rest of the community (whether they have extended family in the island), how they identify their relationship with the island (indigenous or immigrants), and the rest of their descriptive characteristics (as gender, age, educational level, marital status, socio-economic status, and occupation). Furthermore, there were two groups of consultants: the local private consultants and the international consultants both hired by the government. Finally, there were three main official groups who played the major role in the redevelopment project: the officials from the General Organisation of Physical Planning (GOPP), the officials from New Urban Communities Agency (NUCA), and officials from the Armed Forces Engineering Authority (AFEA).

The in-depth interviews showed that conceptualisation of the island's value on the individual level could differ between two people within the same group, based on their value systems or what they believed was the Islamic or righteousness value, as in their normative perspective upon how things should be done. One example was the different rationalisation between the two officials who had military backgrounds: the AFEA and the NUCA representatives. The AFEA representative tapped into the understanding that land is a shared resource where the

few should sacrifice their well-being by giving away their right to it for the benefit of the greater public good (Kader, 2021), and that their sacrifice would be rewarded in the afterlife by the Divine as shown in his next quote.

> *"When I was executing expropriation in Rod El-Farag, one old, handicapped man came to take his cheque, it worthed millions, he was crying. … He just couldn't let go. He loved his land and felt sorry for leaving it. These aspects I must consider. I told him that this project is for public good, and everyone that will pass through this road will be written in his record of doings as a good deed[1]."*
>
> (PMEA, October 2021)

Meanwhile, the NUCA representative tapped into the understanding that the state is the guardian of the land – where the guardianship is a bestowed right by the Divine (Kister, 1994) – and accordingly have the legitimacy of deciding how to manage its development and how to distribute its resources among the people (who are also under the guardian of the state) and obeying the guardian is something dictated by Islamic belief (Dabashi, 2017). His next statement demonstrates his denial of the social attachment of the inhabitants to the island (when he was asked about it) and his belief that the state knows what is best for its population who are being mobilised by the regime's opposition parties, as he claimed.

> *"You want the truth or the common slogans! The people will use the common slogans of "My land is my A'rd[2], is my family, is my pride" and all this is a bunch of nonsense they keep saying in similar times. They live in a very horrible place … we are trying to make their life better. The challenge is the ideology of the people, it needs to change … They are afraid to sell so others won't say they are traitors for their cause and sold their land … they don't know they are being used for political agendas."*
>
> (FMNU, October 2021)

Both representatives were probably mobilising their understanding of religious values which associate with their positionality as ex-military officials, where the AFEA representative was coming from a doctrine of sacrifice and the NUCA representative was coming from a doctrine of obedience, both are rooted principles of being a military official (Osiel, 2017) and also being a Muslim. However, both the concepts of sacrifice and obedience – that were influencing how these two people are rationalisation land value mobilisation – are controversial concepts within Islamic scholarly that have been in the centre of major debates ever since the beginning of Islamic ideology in the 7th century (Dabashi, 2017; Naqvi, 2016). Yet, each of these individuals rationalised their position and justified their judgemental morality in mobilising the island's strategic value in influencing social conformity through their understanding of these concepts.

Another example was the different rationalisations of which elements of land value had higher priorities than others, and which elements were irreplicable and, accordingly, unnegotiable. For instance, the value of agricultural lands was debatable as explored in Chapter 5. Inhabitants who worked in farming had higher personal connection

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[1] This is an Islamic belief that everyone has a "Record of Doings" where good and bad deeds are recorded in them for the judgement day.

[2] The closest meaning of "A'rd" is *Dignity or Honour*. Translations from Arabic Dictionary: "*The **A'rd** is the location for appraise and dispraise in the human being whether it is in himself, his ancestor, or the ones he is responsible for*" and "*The **A'rd** is the side of a human being from (himself and/or his family bloodline) that he protects and defends it from being disparaged or taken away*".

with the agricultural lands and spoke of it as a living being and a source of all goodness. They tapped into the Islamic understanding that everything on Earth is a living worshipper of the Creator including the flora (Cuno, 1985); thus, destroying/killing these lands was an unforgivable sin that would curse whoever does it, as shown in the next statements. The first statement is by one of the island's elders and the second one is by a young male whose family is from the *islanders* who worked in farming.

> *"It looks like a curse had infected all those who sold their lands to be destroyed; all who sold on this island faced disasters, either they died or got a stroke or something."*
>
> (B-02/P1, August 2021)

> *"My uncles – who have been farmers their whole life – after they were forced to sell their agricultural lands and stay home, they look now as if they are ill because their health and life were connected by their work in the land."*
>
> (I-06, September 2021)

From another perspective, those who owned agricultural lands but were not personally involved with growing the plants, valued the urban land that incubated their home/residence more than the agricultural land that they hired someone to cultivate. Most likely, they were involved in building their houses, and thus had a higher connection through their experiences and memories of struggle and successes within these places. For both groups, the inner-being rationalisation of value was associated with their sense of self-actualization and their ability to shape their physical environment as a reflection of what they perceived as their identity. Letting go of these lands for them was as letting go of their personal journey in life, the journey they believed defined them as shown in Section 7.1.

The analysis of the semi-structured interviews showed strong positions from both the officials and inhabitants who used religious rationalisation to justify their position from the conflict. However, that was not observed in the consultants' group, where most of their justifications and reasoning came from a pragmatic technical perspective that seemed value-free. All interviewed consultants acknowledged that their power status in the dynamics of this project was rather weak, as they only had an advisory role in the process, and they only responded to the demands of their client, the government. Thus, the urban redevelopment project – and as a result the mobilisation of the island's value – was not driven by the experts in this project, but rather by the negotiation dynamics between the beneficiaries/users and the officials/decision makers. Thus, the inner-being rationalisation or the moral grounding for the value of planning from the consultants' perspective did not have much influence on the conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value. In conclusion, the inhabitants of the island associated the value of land with the values they stand for as a human being and their self-actualization journey, the officials associated the land value with their doctrine and moral code of serving their country, while the experts and consultants associated the land value with tangible objective aspects – like market dynamics or urban development necessities – deprived from their subjective moral judgement or associations with their religious values.

8.2.2 Hierarchy of Human Values: Conceptualising Urban and Social Responsibility

The second two dimensions regarding the agents' process of rationalisation are concerned with their interaction with their surroundings, whether physical material environment or social environment. The social interactions for human beings precede their physical interactions, as infants create memories, experiences, and understandings first through their relationship with their parents, then through their relationship with their home (Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983). Thus, the rationalisation and conceptualisation of values are greatly intersubjective from an early stage, and assigning values to our material world emerges from our collective consciousness and accumulative knowledge. Yet, the value of our physical environment also has an innate element that is not dependent on the social constructions built around this value. The physical and survival needs of human beings

are highly dependent on their surrounding physical environment and accordingly self-preservation instincts cannot be only explained in the terms of collective consciousness (Maslow and Lewis, 1987; Max-Neef, 2017). The mind/body dichotomy which shapes both our social and physical needs rests at the core of our conceptualisation of value and shapes the hierarchy of these values. The findings of this research illustrated that this values hierarchy is not universal and could not be generalised upon all agents from the same categorical group; however, it is rather highly connected with the core religious or ideological values those agents hold.

The most debatable argument between the inhabitants of El-Warraq Island was about which aspects of their existing life could be sacrificed for the redevelopment project. As discussed earlier in Section 7.1.1, the inhabitants were split upon what has more value to them: the island location and what it offered to them in accessibility to various services and transition nodes; the urban alternative and what it offered to them in accessibility to security of tenure; the rural lifestyle and what it offered to them in accessibility to familiar traditions and living standards: or the community itself and what it offered to them in accessibility to social security and customed traditions, values, and norms. Unfortunately, the dynamics of the redevelopment project forced El-Warraq Island inhabitants to choose between these alternatives.

Those who would choose – and could afford the choice – of living in the island after the redevelopment, would gain the locational accessibility and security of tenure, but they would lose the rural lifestyle and probably a big segment of the community who would not be able to afford resettling in the island. Meanwhile, those who would agree to take the compensation and reallocate in another urban area would gain the security of tenure but would probably lose the locational distinctiveness of the island (as they would not afford to get a housing in a well-serviced area) and would lose the social security and lifestyle standards. Finally, those who would choose to relocate in another rural area – probably with some of their family members – were probably sacrificing both the locational accessibility and security of tenure, because they would most likely build informally in another agricultural designated lands. However, they would probably get to keep some of their traditions and values.

As illustrated, in all the previous options the community was going to be fragmented and those who relied on their social security networks for their survival were going to be the most affected negatively by the redevelopment project. That was probably what provoked the community as a collective to rally against the project, despite their different aspirations from it. Through the analysis of these different needs of El-Warraq Island's community, the research was able to track their different conceptualisations regarding what they should be fighting/bargaining for in the negotiations with the government – or whether they should fight at all – based on what they believed was higher in the hierarchy of values. The dichotomy between their urban responsibility and their social responsibility became pivotal in their rationalisation of the proper hierarchy of values they should be defending.

On one hand, the community had a collective sense of responsibility towards the degradation of their environment, whether caused by their poor practices or by government negligence. As per the inhabitants' statements illustrated in Chapters 5,6 and 7, they worked collectively to improve their living environment, but eventually they had to compromise the living condition – and the well-being of their environment – for satisfying needs like creating shelter and disposing sewage disposal. They stated that even in some cases they had to substitute their valued agricultural lands with urban uses either to acquire more capital or just to build proper shelter for their children and other family members. Thus, their urban responsibility became a function in their social responsibility where their urban responsibility was reconceptualised based upon the needs and well-being of their society. This perception unfortunately is short-sighted and does not acknowledge the full ramifications of abusive interaction with the surrounding environment on the well-being of the society while assuming the ecological system can always regenerate, self-reform, and rehabilitate the physical damage to the environment. For example, one male elder from the inhabitants stated that the quality of agricultural lands was better during the floods because the removed agricultural silt – for manufacturing the red brick at the time – was regenerated through natural processes.

"It was much better at the time of the floods because the Nile flood generates the soil, cleans it from all the minerals, and provides the land with new clay. But of course, this all ended by building the High Dam."

(B-02/P1, August 2021)

On the other hand, consultants and officials claimed to have more concern with the well-being of the environment as an asset for the prosperity of future generations as well as the current ones. Their concern was for protecting the well-being of the inhabitants – and the surrounding community – more than preserving their traditions, customs, and values. Thus, the priority from this angle was to preserve the natural environment and improve the built environment, which would enhance the living standard for the society. Social responsibility from this lens became a function in urban responsibility, where the social responsibility of the officials and consultants towards their community was to provide the proper physical environment, and structure the social behavioural patterns and practices to fit and address the collective urban/environmental responsibility. Problematically, this perspective is also short-sighted as it does not fully acknowledge the ramifications of oppressive interaction with the society and repetitive attempts of enforced social engineering or moulding while assuming that the common inclination of human behaviour is to adapt under extreme pressure. The following statement of the NUCA representative exemplifies this argument.

"The real thing is that this is an infected area, a source of pollution. Is it reasonable to dump their sewage waste near the main water station??! This station doesn't just feed them, it feeds the whole district of Imbaba. You could imagine the amount of pollution and diseases that were caused. These people have lived as outlaws for years, and they want to continue living carelessly for the rest of their lives. And the agricultural land they are so sorry for, it used to drop its wastes and excess water in the Nile. Just go and look, how it looks like there, a pool of pollution!"

(FMNU, October 2021)

Both perceptions could be tracked to the Islamic concept that "necessities allow prohibitions" (Al Bajali, 2018), but the debate here is around what would be considered as a "necessity" (Abd-Allah, 2012; Muhsin, Amanullah and Zakariyah, 2019) that would allow for either compromising environmental sustainability or social sustainability. This again goes back to the argument of which valued aspect should be defended and accordingly should not be compromised/bargained in the context of conflict. The anthropocentric perspective would argue the environment is meant to serve humanity, and thus societies should exploit it with whatever means necessary to sustain their well-being (Kopnina *et al.*, 2018; Shoreman-Ouimet and Kopnina, 2015). Within Islamic framing, the argument would be deepened by the understanding that human beings are the successor of the Creator on Earth and were given the power and intellect to use all the resources on it for their own benefit as everything on Earth is harnessed to humans[1] (Akbar, 1992).

The ecocentric perspective however would argue that human beings are merely part of this world, and their interventions should be kept to a minimum as they are the ones who are supposed to be serving the environment and not the other way around (Callicott, 1989; Lo, 2001). This also could be rooted in some Islamic scholarly work in their understanding of the role of a successor where the gifts of God – represented in nature – should be preserved and treated with respect, as all of it as mentioned earlier are worshippers of Him and will be witnessing

[1] "*He subjected for you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth—all by His grace. Surely in this are signs for people who reflect*." Qur'an 45:13

upon actions of human beings at the judgement day[1] (Abd-Allah, 2012; Auda, 2022). However, this understanding does not nullify the social responsibility of human beings toward each other or devalue their social needs of maintaining their sense of identity, community, and belonging (Chapra, 2008).

Islamic mainstream ideology is at an equal distance from both positions, where it gives an equal amount of attention to both social and urban responsibilities (Mergaliyev *et al.*, 2021; Kader, 2021), as they both constitute essential elements in the framing of what is known as *Maqasid Al-Shariah* (Objectives of Islamic Law). Conceptualisation of the value of land in that essence is associated with the role the land plays in that framing, where its value is instrumental in the well-being of humans; physically and socially. According to this ideology, the urban environment should not be sacrificed nor abused for the uncontrolled ambitions of societies (Akbar, 1992; Abd-Allah, 2012) and the social environment should not be sacrificed nor oppressed for unrealistic urban improvements (Chapra, 2008; Kader, 2021; Naqvi, 2016). The land value should be mobilised considering both the social and urban sustainability aspects; however, in this case study both aspects became a source of conflict and dispute among which should take precedence. When the government showed their intention to sacrifice the social aspect, the inhabitants pushed back by defending its precedence in the hierarchy of values.

8.2.3 Perceiving Authority: The Role of Agents in Autocratic Regimes

The final dimension regarding the agents' process of rationalisation is concerned with their interaction with influential structures. Agents frame their position from the structure power affecting their lives through their reflexivity upon the concepts of resistance versus acceptance and their understanding of how they affect their fate. This is grounded in the dichotomy of *Weberian Voluntarism* and *Durkheimian Determinism* – or their equivalence in Islamic scholarly known as "*Qadariyyah"*[2] and "*Jabriyah*"[3] established in the 8th century (Dabashi, 2017; Hughes, 1895; Robinson, 1998). El-Warraq Island's inhabitants were conflicted about whether their resistance was obligated and whether it would make a difference to their fate. Those who believed that they would not get what they aspire to without fighting were tapping into the understanding that God has a *Shariaa Kawneya* [universal law] – as explained in Chapter 2 – that the means to cause change is through hard work and fighting for justice. Praying and submitting to God's will only, according to these inhabitants, was the forbidden kind of dependency. As shown in Section 8.2.1, they believed that those who abandoned the cause of the island – by selling their lands to the government – were being punished by God with illness and death.

On the other side of the spectrum, those who were more leaning towards a deterministic ideology of fate tend to receive this whole thing as a Divine test and/or punishment for their earlier sins, and thus they must accept what was happening to them and submit to the will of the government. From their angle, the government/state had also gained its power with the permission of the Divine and accordingly submitting to their power was part of following His plan. The next quote of one of the middle-aged female inhabitants explains this perspective when she believed her family was being punished for trespassing their landlord rights and falsely claiming adverse possession.

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[1] "*Corruption has spread on land and sea as a result of what people's hands have done, so that Allah may cause them to taste ˹the consequences of˺ some of their deeds and perhaps they might return*" Qur'an 30:41

[2] *Qadariyyah* school thought: Muslim scholars who believe that humans are in full control over their fate (in Arabic Qadar) and actions, and that God doesn't have any interference within this. The thought started in the time of Umayyad Khalifa Omar Ibn Abd El-Aziz by Ghaylan Al-Dimashqi in the 8th century and was highly criticised by most of Muslim scholars and Prophet Muhammed's companions at the time and accused him of deviating from the true thought of Islamic doctrine. The most well-known factions known for adopting this thought are the Shias and Mu'tazila.

[3] *Jabriyah* school thought: Muslim scholars who believe that humans have no control over their fate and actions, and the God forces (in Arabic Gabr) them on everything. The thought started near the end of Umayyad Khalifat in the 8th century by Gahm Ibn Safwan as a response to the earlier school of thought, and it was also highly criticised by the main streamers of moderate Islam (Sunis) who again said that this is a deviation from the original teachings of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH). The most well-known factions adopting this though are the Sufis and Ash'ariyya.

"Now the project helped these original owners to take back what is theirs, and God sent the punishment on us in the form of an unjust ruler, because we have been being unjust towards ourselves by stealing these lands and refusing to pay its rent. We were thieves and we deserve that these lands would be stolen back from us … So, these people found an opportunity in the project, it benefited them. See how fate worked out, it came from God and now you can't stand and say I won't give the land back. Taking these lands by force from their original owners – as adverse possession – didn't please God. Only God is the one who can stop this punishment, and all what we can do is pray to God that he removes the unjust."

(B-03/P3, August 2021)

There are two possible underlying causes for the existence of these two ideologies in resisting/accepting structures and their influence on land value mobilisation. First, those who believed in their agency power were highly connected with the discourses emerged with the Egyptian revolution in 2011, where the masses decided that they were no longer going to submit to the government's will and power, and it was their collective social responsibility to change the status quo and build a better future for their upcoming generations (Hamzawy, 2018). Muslims Brotherhood, who has a strong Suni ideology, was one of the main political parties leading this movement. They were able to establish and disperse their resistance ideology through their engagement in the socio-political movement and afterwards when they became in charge by winning the presidential elections in 2012 (Tawakkol, 2020). That was also supported by other political parties who did not have a strong religious ideology, but a liberal and secular philosophy demanding public freedom and self-determination through democracy (Hamzawy, 2018).

However, the Egyptian community historically were highly influenced by the Sufis' ideologies and teachings since the 12th and 13th centuries, where their school of thought became dominating especially in the rural areas within the Delta and Upper Egypt (Hofer, 2015). This ideology is also being supported by the regime in Egypt as a counter ideology to the Muslims Brotherhood's (Brown, 2011), where it identified their ideology as an extremist one – to undermine their political legitimacy for opposition (Hamzawy, 2018) – and marketed the Sufis 'ideology as the more moderate one. This support extends as a strategy also for the international allies of the Egyptian regime (Benard *et al.*, 2004), like the US, where Sufis' perception on resistance for oppression is quite malleable and thus has less threat towards the stability of autocratic regimes. Both groups within El-Warraq Island had a strong belief that they were serving their community and acting upon their perception of social and urban responsibility. Yet, the group that were operating from the ideology of resistance were tagged with being extremist and accused with affiliation to the Muslim Brotherhood party – currently identified as a terrorist group as exemplified in the GOPP and NUCA representatives' next quotes.

"It has been very difficult, every then and a while the inhabitants make a disturbance and start making trouble, with the police, and you know among them there are a lot of the Brotherhood members, so they make a media hype, saying the people are suffering and things like that."

(SCGO, July 2021)

"There are the Muslim brotherhood members and a bunch of lawyers who are agitating the public and the people on the island, saying that we are throwing people out of their homes. This whole pressure doesn't make the people think straight."

(FMNU, October 2021)

Generally, the Islamic ideology – as discussed earlier – basis its axiological premise on the fact that God is the only source of value, and thus He is the one who has the sole legitimacy of assigning, scaling, and prioritising values; demarking the evaluation criteria; identifying the ways of capturing it; and defining the meaning and

means of fair distribution. Thus, it is challenging for the state to attempt to have this kind of legitimacy within an Islamic community (An-Naim, 2008; Hashemi, 2009), and accordingly there have been two approaches adopted by Egyptian rulers throughout its history when they needed this kind of power. The first approach is to make the State as the Divine, whether literally like in Ancient Egyptian Civilisation when the rulers were gods (Gajdo, 2014) or operationally by claiming that they are governing by the rule of the Divine aligning with his doctrine, like in many of Islamic Caliphates (Afsaruddin, 2016). The second approach is to lessen the community's attachment to religious beliefs through promoting secular ideologies and separating the religion from the other aspects of life like politics, economics, education, …etc. In that way, the knowledge and practice of religious values would not dominate the common discourses and narratives, and accordingly would be easily mobilised towards the state's interests (Agrama, 2010). Ignorance with Islamic laws and ideologies confuse many about the legitimacy boundaries of the state in shaping the lives of the people and thus transforms religion as a mere tool for mobilisation value as explained in the previous subsections.

On another level, the Egyptian state is torn between two historical structures, one influenced by the Ancient Egyptian Civilisation, and one influenced by the Islamic Civilisation. The first's legacy was memorial buildings, mega-projects, massive urban transformations, and innovations that promoted the strong state with a hierarchical top-down centralised governance that used religion to empower the rulers over the ruled and mobilise the masses towards the regime's aspirations (Gajdo, 2014). The second's legacy was organic needs-driven development which focused on building societies not cities, and empowering communities with religion and reprioritising their development trajectory from the material/urban environmental development to human/communal development (Akbar, 1992; Chapra, 2008). From the case study, it is evident that this debate about the trajectory of creating and/or regenerating legacy through the urban redevelopment project is underlying the conflict about the priorities and trajectory of the project, and how the land value should be mobilised within this process.

In conclusion, different interactions between agents, their physical environment, their community, and influential structures shaped their rationalisation of different concepts and their responsiveness in mobilising these concepts. The range of value conceptualisations and mobilisations on individual levels shape the latent dynamics of conflict (Bartos and Wehr, 2002). However, this latent conflict is experienced if there are structures enabling and/or encouraging it to manifest. Agent power's ability in actualizing conflict depends on either the collective action by individuals sharing the same value systems (like the aggregate power of El-Warraq Island inhabitants) or the absolute authority of a powerful agent who has sovereignty over decision-making (like the exclusive power of the president in an authoritarian state of Egypt). The next section synthesises the power of structures discussed in Chapters 5, 6, and 7 in shaping processes of land value conceptualisation and mobilisation which underlabours our understanding of the trajectory of the redevelopment and the manifested conflict in the island.

8.2 Structures Power between Development and Conflict Theories

As discussed in Chapter 2, structures have great influence in shaping human perceptions about the world and thus affect their behaviour and practices which formulates the social phenomenon. The extent of this influence however could vary dramatically from highly influential to suggestive, where this variation depends on the aggregation of structures that have direct and/or indirect impacts on this phenomenon, the power dynamics between them, and the power of agency that would allow or resist these structures. The first part of this section summarises the interaction between different structures in El-Warraq Island redevelopment project shaping the four components of land value (market, strategic, social, and environmental) and their impact on understanding the value of urban development/redevelopment practices. While the second part synthesises the impact of these structures on creating conflict in El-Warraq Island, theorising this conflict from the perspectives of rationality and tangibility – discussed in Section 2.1.2 – using the stratified reality model theorised by Bhaskar in *Critical Realism* explained in Section 3.1.2 (Bhaskar, 2017).

8.1.1 Urban Structures in Theorising Land Value

The findings of El-Warraq Island showed how different structures influenced conceptualisation and mobilisation of the different components of land value. Chapter 5 discussed how land value creation, criterion, and capture influenced the understanding of the land market value, while Chapter 6 discussed how the dynamics of proving legitimacy by practices of control (whether through controlling social order or practices of territoriality) mobilised the role of land strategic value for both the inhabitants and the authority. Finally, Chapter 7 discussed how land social value was influenced by understandings of place identity and place attachment which mobilised practices of social integration/segregation and social cohesion/dissolution through politics of belonging and dynamics of community resilience. The analysis of the semi-structured interviews showed that the land's environmental and/or ecological value was the least considered aspect in the redevelopment project from the perspectives of the participants, although El-Warraq Island was considered a national reserve for 19 years. The contestation between other components of land value in El-Warraq Island undermined considering the project's environmental impact despite being used instrumentally by different actors to legitimise their position as discussed in Section 8.2.1.

However, this research did not reduce the environmental/ecological structures to natural ecological systems as explained in sections 2.2.2 and 3.1.1. The operationalisation of land environmental/ecological value is understood in terms of both natural and built environments, where land is a scarce irreplicable resource in a balanced sustainable system. Accordingly, it could be argued that the land environmental value – in the case of El-Warraq Island - was driven from its instrumental role in the mobilisation mechanisms between the other land value components, where land was the empirical domain/field of these mechanisms' manifestation. Thus, the three reciprocal mechanisms between different components of value (social/economic values, social/strategic values, and economic/strategic values) were mobilised by the land environmental value as illustrated in Figure 8.1.

Firstly, the research found that the land social value influences its market value where the factors of place identity and attachment increases the value of land to its inhabitants, making them in some cases define it as priceless. Accordingly, this decreases their willingness to sell which increases its market price in a fair market dynamic, which as explained earlier was not the case in El-Warraq Island. While the land market value influences its social value by branding a superior social identity (identifying inhabitants as higher-income class) for those who live in high-priced environments. Thus, place attachment – representing its social value for its inhabitants – increases by the inhabitants' sense of value shaped by living in a place which is valued highly in the market implying their perceived privileged social status in the community. The discussion in Chapter 7 illustrated how El-Warraq Island inhabitants were perceived as the ones who reduced the market value of the island, because they had a social identity – and an urban environment representing this identity – that was not valued as high-status for the wider community. This reciprocal relation between land social and market values was mobilised by the place/land observable natural and urban quality attributes reflecting the social identity and the status of its inhabitants.

Secondly, it was also found that the land's social value influences its strategic value as places providing security, safety, and freedom of expression to its inhabitants are encouraging contexts for enabling practices of territoriality and control over the living environment. Furthermore, places/lands which have historic, cultural, and/or religious values could be harnessed for establishing a social order and/or power hierarchy by means of mobilising these values, or for promoting collective responsibility by means of mass mobilisation in times of conflict or wars. Chapter 6 illustrated how the social value of El-Warraq Island framed its strategic value for the inhabitants who believed that only within the island's territories they felt safe, secure, free, integrated, cohesive, and resilient. It was also shown how authorities aimed to disturb these attributes to decrease its strategic value for the inhabitants. Meanwhile, the land strategic value influences its social value as the sense of entitlement and ability to control the environment of a certain place increases the sense of pride and attachment to this place/land. The value of self-determination is core in any society's sense of actualization. As shown in Chapter 6, the territorial definition and spatial isolation of the island provided the inhabitants with a naturally controlled environment where they could control the social traditions, values, and norms. Thus, authorities needed to capture this kind of control over

the territory and its inhabitants to redefine the social value of the island, and accordingly decrease its market and strategic values for the inhabitants.

Finally, the land market value influences its strategic value where access to wealth accumulation also provides access to power accumulation, social status, and decision-making processes. As shown in Chapter 5, El-Warraq Island as a prime location had a latent high market value which made it attractive for investors, developers, and even the authorities who wanted to capture its value by increasing the difference between its current and speculated values. Meanwhile, the land strategic value increases its market value because willingness to pay and competition increases in locations providing access to bargaining power in the market. Landlords who own strategic locations could lobby and influence market value conventions, evaluation processes, and trajectory of urban development/ redevelopment projects to increase their profit gains and reduce their costs of development. In the case of Egypt, the ability of the state to control all lands allowed it to control wealth and profit accumulation. It also allowed the state to control means of production, i.e., reducing costs for its national projects by controlling the land resources and its market. El-Warraq Island was a strategic location for the authorities – as shown in Chapter 5 – to increase its revenues from value capture practices, which could only be mobilised by increasing its prospected market value through controlling speculation narratives.

Thus, the land environmental value within this context is shaped by its role in these three reciprocal mechanisms between other values as shown in Figure 8.1. The diagram in this figure compiled diagrams showing structures of conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value in Chapters 5, 6, and 7 (Figures 5.15, 6.7, and 7.1 respectively) illustrating their interaction with one another and their influence in the conceptualisation and mobilisation of the land environmental value in El-Warraq Island. The environmental value was instrumental in the social/economic mechanisms where attributes of physical environment shaped the social identity of the place, in the social/strategic mechanisms where attributes of territoriality and controlling space shaped the dynamics of power mobilisation, and in the economic/strategic mechanisms where distribution of land rights shaped the distribution of power, wealth, and prestige between community members. Land environmental value accordingly is influenced by the urban practices and dynamics of value creation (the essential vs constructed debate), place creation/making, and power creation by the distribution of land rights. The next section discusses the interaction between these three dynamics (value creation, place creation, and power creation) with conflict creation/production influenced by the urban practices in El-Warraq Island redevelopment project.

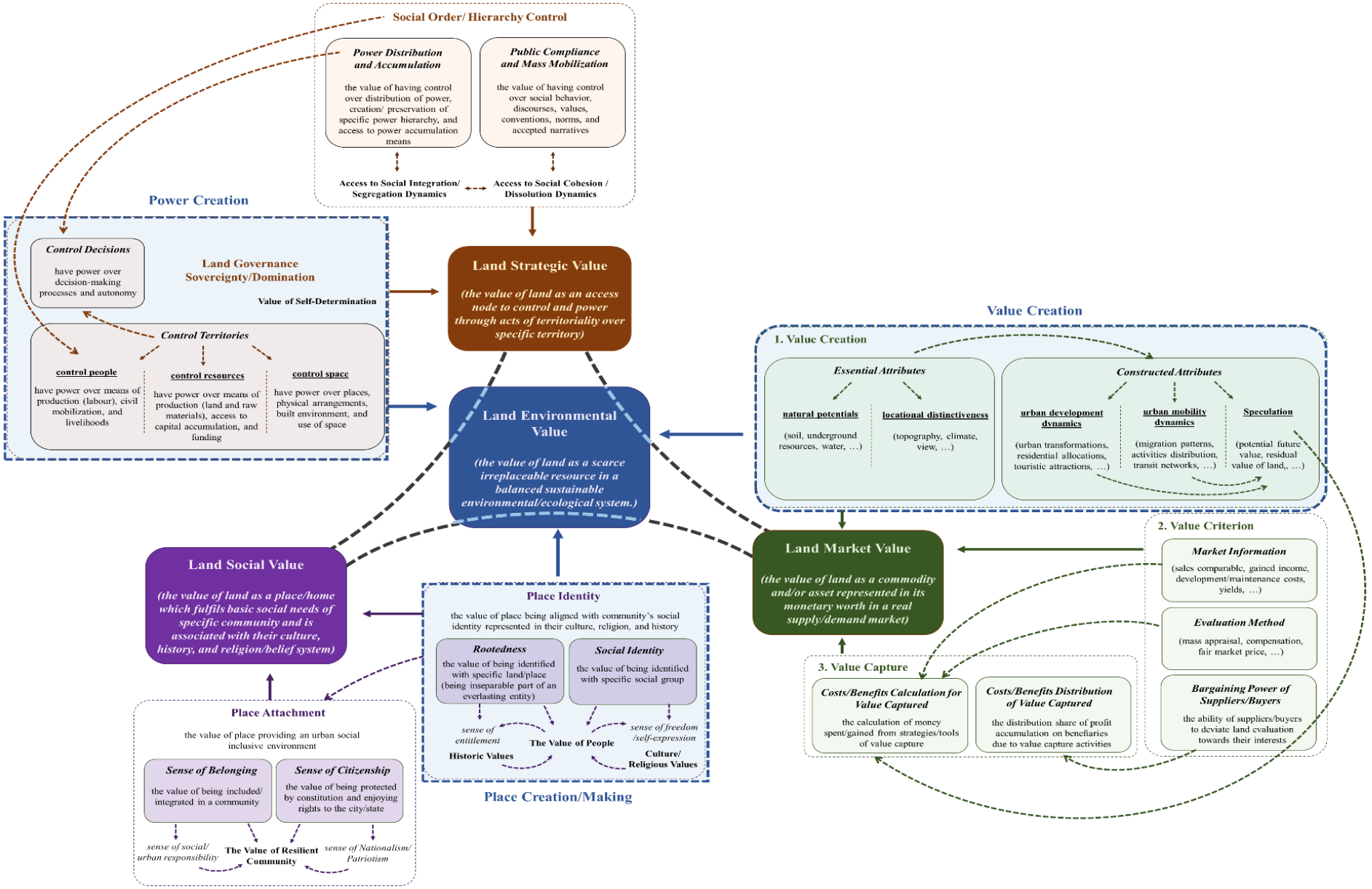

Fig. (8- 1) Structures Shaping Land Value Conceptualisation and Mobilisation in El-Warraq Island
Source: Developed by Author

8.1.2 Conflict Structures Mobilised by Land Value

As discussed in Chapter 2, there are different approaches in theorising the production of conflict in general (Bartos and Wehr, 2002; Jackson, 1993) and land/land-use conflict in particular (Boone, 2013; Lombard and Rakodi, 2016; Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016). Investigating conflict creation/production in El-Warraq Island in terms of rationality and tangibility showed the complicated structural mechanisms underlying these processes. In terms of conflict rationality, El-Warraq Island experienced *instrumentally driven rational conflict* as in the dispute around distribution of redevelopment project costs and benefits explained in section 5.2.2 (Chapter 5), and *value driven rational conflict* as in identifying priorities for the redevelopment project objectives and which land values were considered irreplaceable and should not have been bargained for economic benefits. Meanwhile, the redevelopment project of El-Warraq Island also experienced layers of affective/emotional aspects where the violent expropriation acts and the exclusion from basic services and citizenship rights have added to the underlying mistrust between the inhabitants and the government. Furthermore, those instrumental acts used by the authorities to impose their power on the territory of the island triggered latent bias against rural and informal inhabitants who in return became more protective of their social identity against what they perceived as immoral practices of modernization as explained in sections 6.2.1 and 7.1.1. The affective/emotional triggers add further challenges to strategies of conflict resolution as they go beyond the pragmatic rational negotiations and trigger violent responses as represented in the case of El-Warraq Island. The diagram presented in Figure 2.2 is contextualised for El-Warraq Island case in Figure 8.2.

	Rational	***Affective/ Emotional***
Instrumentally Driven	triggered by dispute over means to power, wealth, and prestige conflict on: distribution of costs and benefits of the redevelopment project	triggered by underlying enmity resulting from historical oppressive or aggressive behaviour conflict caused by: ▪ violent expropriation acts ▪ exclusion from basic services/citizenship rights ▪ historical mistrust in authorities' intensions
Value (Identity) Driven	triggered by dispute over norms, values, and belief systems conflict on: hierarchy of land values and priorities for redevelopment	triggered by underlying racism and bigotry towards the other conflict caused by racism against inhabitants' social identity (rural, informal)

Fig. (8- 2) Triggers of Conflict based on Rationality in El-Warraq Island Redevelopment Project
Source: Developed by Author

In terms of conflict tangibility, the experienced tangible manifestation of conflict in the case of El-Warraq Island redevelopment project could be categorised into four key aspects: contestation between formal and informal urban practices in GCR (explained in section 4.2.2), dispute on the fair purchase market price or compensation value for the lands in the island (explained in section 5.2.1), violent conflict between inhabitants and authorities on the matter of forced expropriation (explained in section 6.1.1), and provocative environments of conflict created by

urban social segregation (explained in section 7.2.1). The investigation of the case study illustrated that there were deeper layers of conflict as shown in Figure 8.3. However, some of the underlying factors had a more direct relationship with the observed aspects. For example, the dispute over the fair market price or compensation value was directly influenced by conflicts around value capture (costs/benefits calculation and distribution for the redevelopment project) and around the evaluation methods and comparable data in this evaluation. However, this dispute was also indirectly influenced by disputes over power distribution (in terms of who had the right to accumulate wealth and power from the increased land value, by disputes on territoriality rights (in terms of who had the right to control land resources), and by disputes on the right of the city (in terms of the sacrifice the few had to pay for the public good/interest) among others.

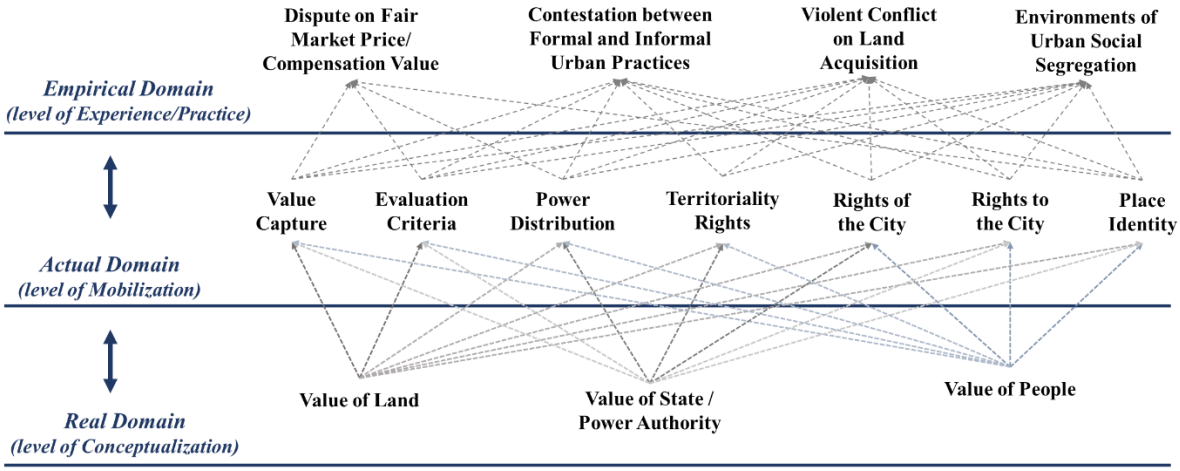

Fig. (8- 3) Triggers of Conflict based on Tangibility in El-Warraq Island Redevelopment Project
Source: Developed by Author based on (Bhaskar, 2017)

Another example was the contestation environment created by urban social segregation was directly influenced by the disputes over place identity (as in who had the right to express their social identity and shape their living spaces according to their needs and by what means) and disputes over rights to the city (as in the fair distribution of city resources on its inhabitants in terms of access to infrastructure and services). Yet, the conflict of urban social segregation was also indirectly influenced by debates on the right of the city (as in the right of authorities to shape the urban environment in the most efficient way for its governance) and disputes over territoriality acts, distribution of power, and wealth. These events might not be observable in all contexts, where some events might have observable manifestation in the empirical domain while others are more latent/intangible. However, these structures in the actual domain – as defined by (Bhaskar, 2013) – play a role in shaping the mechanisms of the experienced phenomenon of conflict in the empirical domain.

The disputes over the actual domain were also mobilised by a deeper layer of conflict production which was the abstract conceptualisations layer. As shown in Chapter 4, ideological geopolitical socio-economic transformations of the Egyptian context continuously redefined the relationship between the land, the state, and the people. This redefinition was absorbed with different degrees by the various social groups within the Egyptian community. The previous section showed how different agents/actors used Islamic reasoning in understanding and reacting to the conflict in El-Waraq Island despite that many of the land laws and practices within the Egyptian context have been westernised since the colonial era. Thus, the conflict production on the abstract level could be reduced to disputes in understanding the value of land, the value of the state/power authority, and the value of people/public/ community. As discussed in section 2.1.1 (Chapters 2) and section 5.1 (Chapter 5), the dichotomy between essentialism and existentialism shaped the contested understanding of value creation, which influenced the rationale for its evaluation and capture. While, as discussed in sections 2.2.2 (Chapter 2), 4.3.1 (Chapter 4), and 6.1 (Chapter 6), the value and role of the state or power authority were also disputed through means of nationalism which shaped the politics of belonging in terms of power distribution between the ruler and the ruled (in autocratic

and democratic regimes) and boundaries of their practices of territoriality (the right of the city versus the right to the city). Finally, section 7.1 (Chapter 7) showed how the value of people and their social identity was undermined in the narratives of the authorities and praised in the narratives of the inhabitants, which reflected on which attributes of place identity were considered superior and instrumental in shaping resilient communities.

To develop efficient practices for conflict resolution, both elements of rationality and tangibility in conflict production should be considered. Although it is challenging to address this complexity, the rationale of conflict resolution strategies could identify the most dominant/prevailing factors in conflict production and the most direct relationships between these factors influencing conflict dynamics. It is also crucial to theorise the relationship between conflict creation, value creation, place creation, and power creation. This research elaborated how power structures influence conventions about value creation, which in return influence the means to place creation (by promoting, preserving, capturing, or defending specific attributes in land development), which in return influence the dynamics of power creation (in terms of accessibility to land rights in creating these places and capturing their value), which go back to influence structures of power accumulation and distribution. Each element within this cycle has triggers for conflict creation/production; and thus, need to be considered in strategies for conflict resolution. Conflict resolution could be pre-emptive if potential factors of conflict production were considered in feasibility studies of urban redevelopment projects rather than discovered after the escalation of a violent conflict like in the case of El-Warraq Island.

8.3 Conclusion: Land Value between Theory and Practice

Within the current global contested environment dominated by disputes and wars, there is an emerging need to understand the structural mechanisms of contestation and explore strategies for conflict resolution. It is evident that the question of land is central within these debates (Boone, 2013; Boudreaux and Abrahams, 2022; Lombard and Rakodi, 2016; UN-Habitat, 2012; Van Leeuwen and Van Der Haar, 2016), and it was crucial to investigate how the land gained the value provoking communities to fight over its worth and its capture. This research builds on scholarly work arguing that value cannot be reduced to monetary worth (Anderson, 1995; Bagley, Sawyerr and Abubaker, 2016; Brown, 2007; De Monticelli, 2018; Lake, 2023; Mason, 2023; Oddie, 2005), that land value cannot be reduced to price or locational theories, and its market value is not only a function of market dynamics (Elder-Vass, 2022; Bosselman, 1994). Understanding the conceptualisation and mobilisation of land value was predicted to unravel understudied relationships with other debated concepts (like power, structures, and agency) as well as with other relevant topics in urban practice (like land conflict and land development/redevelopment).

8.3.1 Research Contributions

This research contributes to scholarly debates within the field of urban studies on three different levels. On the ontological level, the research showed how it is possible to blend between Western and Middle Eastern ontologies, using the commonalities within them, to empower their arguments and fill the gaps in their reasoning. This could possibly encourage further scholarly investigation on how to contextualise Western urban theories in Middle Eastern contexts, and on how to introduce Middle Eastern philosophies to the Western body of knowledge. The research illustrated common grounds between Critical Realism and Islamic Ontology in their understanding of transcendental reality, and how there are latent/intangible structures that play a role in the experienced social urban phenomenon. The research took these ontologies into practice by using their theories in unravelling layers of understanding land value. These theories illustrated how observed dichotomies and disputes around evaluating and capturing land values were triggered by implicit structures and rationalisations of different actors on abstract levels. Despite the increasing efforts from scholars to decolonise urban literature and social discourses (Hamadi, 2014; Wildcat *et al.*, 2014; Dang, 2021; Kenjio, 2020; Styres, 2018) as well as blending high level theories to bridge conceptual gaps (Bagley, Sawyerr and Abubaker, 2016; Wilkinson, 2013; Tarip, 2020), the growing complexity of the social urban phenomenon and its related challenges require more cross-cultural dialogues in theoretical interdisciplinary research that has the ability to address such complexities in a more comprehensive and inclusive manner.

On the theoretical level, this research operationalised a pluralistic pragmatic model of value theory that was driven from the work of Bosselman in land ethics (Bosselman, 1994), Anderson in value theories in ethics and economics (Anderson, 1995), as well as Lake and Elder-Vass in value theories in land management, real-estate development, and urban practice (Lake, 2023; Elder-Vass, 2022). The conceptual framework allowed investigating different components of land value without falling into reductionism or epistemic fallacy (Bhaskar, 2017). This model allowed also the research to address literature gaps between urban theories and practices by introducing operationalisation models for concepts (like land value components and thematic structures) and relationships (like between the value of people, state, and place or the creation of value, place, power, and conflict) that have been little mobilised in empirical research, urban development/redevelopment proposals, and feasibility studies.

The research attempted to propose some working definitions for these concepts and relationships that could be further developed by other scholars into measurable attributes and indicators needed for forecasting and evaluation models, like system thinking models (Batty, 2007; Bedinger *et al.*, 2020; Davidson and Venning, 2011; Meyfroidt, 2016; World-Bank, 2009) and urban morphometrics (Dibble *et al.*, 2016). Different scholars could adapt, develop, contextualise, and use these operationalisation models in their empirical work within other related topics, as the pluralistic pragmatic model with realist constructionism approach gives equal merit to different ontological stands, which makes it compatible with different research fields and conceptual frameworks. However, these models would be more beneficial to interdisciplinary studies aiming to investigate polarising phenomena in urban science.

The research was also able to contribute to theorising land conflict in the urban context, where it mapped the different rationalities and different levels where conflict would be shaped. The research did not only focus on the level of structures, as many studies do, but also on the level of individuals/agents, showing how inner-being rationalisation and intersubjectivity influence conflict production and development. Furthermore, the research was able to elaborate how theorisation of other concepts (like power, structures, identity, state, informality …etc.) and relationships (like between land, state, and people; between individual, community, environment, and structures; between market, social, strategic, and environmental values; or between ideologies, discourses, narratives, and institutions) influenced conceptualisation and mobilisation processes of land value.

For example, the research demonstrated how the different conceptualisations of urban informality influence the perceived social identity of people living in informal areas: whereby when they are perceived as survivor entrepreneurs – a positive image – it is more likely that authorities include them in decision-making processes and capture the value of their resilient community. On the contrary, when they are perceived negatively as trespassers and criminals, their urban intervention is devalued and dismissed, decreasing with it the value of the land they inhabit. This contributes to the academic discourses on urban informality as it demonstrates the perception about the value of people living in these areas (Acioly Jr, 2010; d'Alençon *et al.*, 2018; Dorman, 2013; Roy, 2005), and how this perception could be manipulated if they happen to inhabit prime or strategic location aspired by powerful agents (Sharp, 2022; Tawakkol, 2020). Likewise, the research demonstrated that the different conceptualisations of the state authority's role in land governance influence the relationship between the state, land, and people regarding distribution of land rights and control over land market dynamics, which in return has influence on conventions about the land value. This discussion contributes to theorising the state's influence on urban development schemes discussed by different scholars (Brenner *et al.*, 2008; Scott, 1998; Weldeghebrael, 2020; Goodfellow, 2018), and understandings of the value of land in planning (Adams and Watkins, 2014) and conventions about the monetary worth (Elder-Vass, 2022; Anderson, 1995).

On the practical level, this research contributed to literature promoting best practices for land conflict resolution and urban redevelopment. These practices usually face challenges due to reductive approaches in understanding land value which focuses on market and tangible value aspects. This research demonstrated how dismissing social and intangible values could lead to violent disputes and extreme impacts on societies' welfare, especially vulnerable segments of the community. The research addressed how the intangible components of land value are highly devalued in an economically driven redevelopment project, and how land's environmental value is

mobilised in the context of conflict to serve the interests of the actors in dispute. These findings support discourses around displacement (Elshater, 2019; Fernandes, 2006; Robinson, 2003; Goldstein, 2023) and gentrification (Atkinson, 2000; Butler, 2007; Freeman and Braconi, 2004), where it could be argued that reducing the challenges of the reallocated communities to financial difficulties would undermine the impacts on their livelihood. The research also showed how land conflict could have layers of latent historical and cultural tensions between different social groups. These tensions could be triggered by tangible radical events of oppression, aggression, and/or disturbance of communities' livelihoods (Bartos and Wehr, 2002). Long-term segregation and exclusionary practices were found to increase the levels of latent tensions if they were incrementally applied, but they would be slowly absorbed by the communities as the common norm and would be tolerated and accepted eventually. However, sudden intense practices were found to trigger violent disputes and allow those latent tensions to the surface, as in the case of El-Warraq Island.

Another contribution on the practical level relates to understanding land value capture. Discussions of land value capture have always been conceptualised and mobilised in terms of market value; hence the term land-based finance (Alterman, 2012; Walters, 2013; Andelson, 2001; Dye and England, 2010; UN-Habitat, 2021). The research demonstrated that there are other values that could be captured in the process of land redevelopment. For example, the historical value of a place could be captured by increasing communities' sense of belonging and provoking their sense of responsibility as proactive actors who work collectively for the overall well-being of their societies (Devine-Wright, 2009; Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983; Ujang and Zakariya, 2015a). Also, the environmental value of a place could be captured through means of conservation and preservation, promoting sustainable practices, and capitalising on an existing natural potential to improve the citizens' quality of life, and accordingly their productivity and participation in economic development (Basiago, 1998; Boström, 2012). This research recommends that other components of land value need to be included in urban intervention policies and feasibility studies as the mere focus on economic values would increase the social and environmental costs.

One example of focusing on the land market value in urban practice in Egypt is the adopted approach to land readjustment. This scheme was dismissed as a suitable approach for El-Warraq Island redevelopment because, from the point of view of the experts, the value of land was going to be captured by the inhabitants not the state; thus, there will be minimal improvement in local economic development. However, the current proposed practice by the UN-Habitat in Egypt is infusing the scheme with mobilising the Betterment Levy law (222/1955); an approach that will ensure that half of the increased market value would be captured by the state authority (UN-Habitat, 2023). This scheme requires high-level participation and trust from the landowners who are expected to give away their land to the planning authority, so it can be replanned comprehensively as one unit (Soliman, 2017). However, in the case of Egypt, the inhabitants are expected to give away 33% of their land plots (for service provision), pay a betterment levy equal to 50% of the incremental value in cash or in kind after the land plots are reassigned to them (and before the service provision), pay real-estate tax, transaction fees (in case of selling), and income tax (if they are developing their land for commercial purposes) (UN-Habitat, 2023). All these financial burdens provoke the landlords into developing their lands informally and avoiding all these taxes, making the scheme less promising to solve urban sprawl in Egypt.

Furthermore, the evaluation of the land market value before and after the readjustment process is still one of the challenges of applying land readjustment in Egypt (UN-Habitat, 2023). All the problems discussed in the case study of El-Warraq Island about the devaluation of the essential properties of agricultural lands, disagreement on comparable sales, and disqualification of inhabitants' entitlement to capture maximum value could be repeated in the context of land readjustment if the focus of the scheme is on boosting the market value instead of improving socio-economic, political, and environmental welfare to communities, and capturing the value of their social cohesion to empower a resilient sustainable environment (Mahmoud and Elrahman, 2016). This argument could further support discussions about the impact of monetization and financialization of policies, common rights, public properties, and resources on the wellbeing and welfare of communities (Anderson, 1995; Chapra, 2009; Kader, 2021; Naqvi, 2016; Weber, 2010). The different attributes, structures, and processes elaborated in this

research cannot be generalised in full at the level of urban practice (or even at the level of redevelopment of informal areas), in this respect the methodology could be replicated and the operationalisation of concepts – that are not contextually driven – could be generalised and reused in evaluating other urban intervention policies and land-based finance strategies.

8.3.2 Future Directions for Research

There are several ways that this research could be taken further in academic work. First, this research bounded its empirical domain to the context of El-Warraq Island for analytical purposes, but further research could investigate other redevelopment projects in the context of Egypt to validate, update, and/or refute the findings of this investigation. Further research is also needed to investigate how many of the found structures and relationships exist in other contexts (beyond redevelopment projects, informal areas, metropolitan cities, Egypt, autocratic states, or the Global South post-colonial contexts) and what other attributes, structures, and processes affect conceptualisations and mobilisations of land value. There are various contexts of land conflict across the world that would provide a rich environment for such investigation, improving our understanding of the role of land in the dynamics of these disputes and potential approaches to conflict resolution.

Second, further research is needed on an extensive level, using quantitative methods, to be able to associate conceptualisation and mobilisation of land values on individual levels with attributes like gender, age, profession, educational backgrounds, …etc. The research barely touched upon understanding the individual rationalisation of land value and how reflexivity and responsiveness of different individuals could influence the collective notion of concepts and the collective action aggregating to enable/restrain specific structures. Quantitative research would provide patterns and correlations that could be beneficial for forecasting and evaluation models needed to improve urban development feasibility studies and conflict resolution action plans. It would also help mapping the influence of land value conceptualisation and mobilisation processes on other urban, socio-economic, and political dynamics, in other words the relation between the creation of value, of place, of power, and of conflict.

Third, while this research contributed to discussions about monetization, financialization, and assetization of rights and resources (Weber, 2010; Willmott, 2010; Birch, 2017; Birch and Muniesa, 2020; Anderson, 1995), more research is needed to investigate the influence of the domination of economic and financial studies on other fields of research, even beyond urban practice. There is also a need to re-evaluate the internationally promoted urban intervention strategies, especially related to land-based finance, and recalibrate these approaches' socio-environmental impact. Many of these approaches are focused on capturing the market value, which could lead to catastrophic consequences like extensive resource-consuming urbanisation; natural-habitat loss or degradation; disturbing social fabric; and/or destroying place identity.

Finally, another urgent topic related to investigating other impacts of displacement beyond impacts on economic welfare. In the current politically challenging times, more communities seek safer living conditions away from brutal wars, oppressive environments, and/or environmentally dangerous contexts. Consequently, it is crucial to prepare our cities to host displaced communities and provide them with an inclusive home responsive to their diverse backgrounds, beliefs, needs, and aspirations. There is a need to start developing action-based research aiming to provide sustainable homes for displaced communities, improve their livelihoods post-trauma, and give them access to means for recovering their well-being. This research must include studies on socio-environmental impacts of displacement and track the livelihood trajectory of displaced/reallocated communities after being disconnected from their birthplace (Goldstein, 2023; Atkinson, 2000; Pantuliano *et al.*, 2012; Robinson, 2003; Black, 2018; Sanyal, 2012).The discussions need to move beyond the impact of displaced communities on land prices and market dynamics where it must be more inclusive to other components of land value. As this research demonstrated, understanding land value is a complex topic where many layers and aspects intertwine; however, it is an important topic which cannot be dismissed.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I
(SURVEY)

I/01 Online Survey Propositions

Objectives	1. To identify Egyptian urban actors' perception of existing market valuation factors of land and their personal judgment. 2. To identify aspects/factors of valuation for intangible land values as defined by selected population and correlate these aspects with gender, age, marital status, educational background & level, occupation, and tenure/living status. 3. To identify priorities of different social aspects (like security, identity, belonging, self-worth, freedom, …etc.) in identifying social land value. 4. To compare responses of this survey with responses from El-Warraq Island to identify any variations in the conception of land value between people living in an informal area and those living in formal ones.
Design and Dissemination	▪ Survey is designed using Qualtrics Software ▪ Survey is bilingual (Arabic and English) ▪ Survey is disseminated electronically through existing social and professional network of the researcher via emails, Facebook, WhatsApp, and LinkedIn. ▪ Random sampling and snowballing techniques are used. ▪ Collection period is estimated for at least 6 months.
Expected Participants Portfolio ***(approximately between 350 to 400 participants)***	▪ Gender: Almost equal distribution (*probability of more female participants based on researcher network*). ▪ Age Range: From 20 to 60 years old ▪ Ethnicity: Muslim majority (*the national majority*) ▪ Living Location: GCR; (*expected majority living in formal areas*) ▪ Education Level: Graduated (*expected majority*) ▪ Educational Background: Architecture / Urban Planning (*expected majority*) ▪ Job Occupation: - Students and academics (*high percentile*) - Architects, urban planners, and urban consultants (*average percentile*) - Urban developers, official executives, other occupations (*low percentile*)

I/02 Online Survey Design

- The survey was designed in three main parts, besides introduction and conclusion, using Qualtrics platform.
- Estimated duration of completion was between 25 and 30 minutes.
- The online survey is bilingual, participants could view questions both in Arabic and English at the same time, to avoid confusion/misinterpretation because – within urban practice in Egypt – some terminologies are more commonly known in English while others are more commonly known in Arabic.
- Introduction section included the information sheet and consent form.
- The first section included personal information (demographics and living status).
- The second section included questions around economic and tangible land values.
- The third section included questions around social and intangible land values.
- The conclusion section included overall reflection and feedback of participants.

Understanding Land Value through Investigating Redevelopment of Informal Areas in Egypt

Online Survey on Tangible & Intangible Value(s) of Land

Section I: Information Sheet

You are being invited to participate in a research project titled "Understanding Land Value through Investigating Redevelopment of Informal Areas in Egypt". Before you decide whether to participate or not, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

This research project is for educational purpose as a requirement for the researcher to achieve her PhD degree in Urban Studies and Planning from the University of Sheffield. The researcher is a teacher assistant in the Architecture Engineering Department – Faculty of Engineering at Ain Shams University and her research is funded through a scholarship offered by the Mission Sector at the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education. The aim of this research is to understand the meaning(s) and concept of land value as understood by communities. Its main objective is to investigate how land value is perceived, practiced, and protected in the case of conflict, and how it affects the discourse and implications of urban practice especially in the context of redeveloping informal areas. This is a 3-year project that includes a case study for the redevelopment project of El-Warraq Island in Egypt.

You have been chosen to participate in this research survey as you are a residence of the Greater Cairo Region (GCR), and your responses will benefit the purpose of the research. This survey is distributed electronically through the researcher's social and professional networks emails, social media platforms, and will be distributed physically on the residents of El-Warraq Island. The survey will include questions about your understanding of the meaning of land value (especially its intangible component) and how it is connected with other human values like sense of security, identity, belonging, self-worth, freedom, and equality among others. It will also include a section for investigating the role of land value in affecting decision-making from your own perspective.

For further information on Data Protection and Control; Your Rights and Participation Impact; and Complaints and Suggestions, please click on this link or contact the lead researcher.

Thank you for your time and shared experience.

Section II: Consent Form

Please tick the appropriate boxes	*Yes*	*No*
Taking Part in the Project		
I have read and understood the project information sheet dated (dd/mm/yyyy) or the project has been fully explained to me. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)	☐	☐
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	☐	☐
I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will include completing a questionnaire.	☐	☐
I understand that by choosing to participate as a volunteer in this research, this does not create a legally binding agreement nor is it intended to create an employment relationship with the University of Sheffield.	☐	☐
I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time during the survey. I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw. I understand that my responses will not be able to be excluded from the research once I submit my answers.	☐	☐
How my information will be used during and after the project		
I understand my personal details such as address and email address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.	☐	☐
I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that I will not be named in these outputs unless I specifically request this.	☐	☐
I understand and agree that other authorised researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.	☐	☐
I understand and agree that other authorised researchers may use my data in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs, only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.	☐	☐
I give permission for all my survey responses, including my gender, age, marital status, tenure status, educational background/degree, job/affiliation and district of residence to be deposited in University of Sheffield data repository (ORDA) so it can be used for future research & learning	☐	☐
So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers		
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield	☐	☐

Section III: Personal Information

Please tick the appropriate boxes and fill the blanks in open-ended questions

1.1.1. Gender :	Male	☐	Female	☐			
1.1.2. Age:	< 18 Years	18:28	29:39	40:50	51:61	62:72	> 72 Years
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.1.3.Nationality	Egyptian ☐		Other ☐		Please specify:		
1.1.4. Marital Status:	Single ☐		Married ☐		Other ☐ Please specify:		
1.1.5. Do you have children?				Yes ☐		No ☐	
1.1.6. Are you living alone in a private dwelling?				Yes ☐		No ☐	
1.1.7. If No, who are you living with? You can choose more than one answer.							
Spouse	Parent(s)	Sibling(s)	Aunt/Uncle Cousin(s)	Grandparents	In-laws	Friends	Others (Specify)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.2.1. Are you currently a student?				Yes ☐		No ☐	
1.2.2. If Yes, what is your educational level?							
Illiterate Erase	Elementary	Secondary	Technical / Vocational	College	M.Sc.	Ph.D.	Others (Specify)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.2.3. If No, what is your educational degree?							
Illiterate Erase	Elementary	Secondary	Technical	College	M.Sc.	Ph.D.	Others (Specify)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.2.4. If above Secondary Degree, what is your educational major? Don't give more than 3 answers Please specify:							
1.2.5. Have you been involved in academic research?				Yes ☐		No ☐	
1.2.6. If Yes, do you have any publications?				Yes ☐		No ☐	
1.2.7. If Yes, what type of publications? You can choose more than one answer.							
	Academic Journal	Conference Paper	Book/Book Chapter	Thesis	Blogs/ Internet Articles	Reports	Others (Specify)
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.3.1. What is your current occupation? Please specify:							
1.3.2. Who is your current employer? (optional) Please specify:							

1.4.1. In which governorate do you currently live?	Cairo	Giza	Qalyubia	Other
	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.4.2. Do you live in a new city?	Yes	☐	No	☐

1.4.3. If Yes, which new city do you live in?

15th May	6th October	Sheikh Zayed	El Sadat	El-Obour	Badr	El-Shorouk	10th Ramdan	New Cairo	New Capital
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

1.4.4. In which neighbourhood/area do you live? Please specify:.....

1.4.5. If you are not living in a new city, in which district / county is your neighbourhood / area is located?

Cairo Governorate Districts		Giza Governorate Districts	Qalyubia Governorate Districts
• Al Salam Awal • Al Salam Second • El Marg • Al Matareya • Al Nozha • Ain Shams • East Nasr City • West Nasr City • Heliopolis • Al Azbakeya • El Mousky • El Waily • Bab El Shaareya • Boulak • Abdeen • West • Manshaet Nasser • Wast • 15th May	• Al Basatine • El Tebeen • Al Khalifa • Al Sayeda Zeinab • Maadi • El Masssara • Al Mokattam • Helwan • Dar Al Salam • Tora • Misr El Qdema • Amiriya • El Zawia El Hamra • El Zaitoun • Al Sahel • Al Sharabiya • Hadayek El Kobba • Rawd El Farag • Shoubra	• North Giza • South Giza • Al-Agouza • Al-Omrania • Al Haram • Boulak Al-dakrour • El- Warraq • Dokky • Monshaat Al Kanater • Auseem • Kerdasa • Abo Al Nomros • Al Hawamdya • Al Badreashen • Ayaat • Al Saf • Atfee • Al What El Baharya	• Banha • Kafr Shokr • El Kanater El Khayria • Shebeen El Kanater • El Khanka • Qalyub • Qaha • Khosoos • Shoubra El Khema West • Shoubra El Khema East

1.5.1. What is your current tenure status?

Freehold/ Ownership (Fully Purchased)	Freehold/ Ownership (Paying instalments)	Leasehold / Rental	Others (Specify)
☐	☐	☐	☐

1.5.2. Do you have a legal share in the land, where you live?	Yes	No	I don't know
	☐	☐	☐

1.5.3. What is your current residence type?

Apartment	House/Villa	Kiosk/ Tent	Other (Specify)
☐	☐	☐	☐

1.5.4. For how long have you been living in this residence?

	< 5years	5: 10 Years	10:15 Years	15: 20 Years	> 20 Years	All my life
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

1.5.5. Was your past residence in the Greater Cairo Region?	Yes	☐	No	☐

If Yes, Repeat questions (from 1.4.1)
1.5.6. If No, Please specify.

Section IV: Economic and Tangible Land Values

Please answer the following questions according to your best knowledge

Part 1: Land Uses and Land Price

2.1.1. Within GCR, Order the following land uses according to their price from highest (1) to lowest (5) according to your best knowledge	Agricultural Land ☐	Residential Land ☐	Industrial Land ☐	Commercial Land ☐	Business / Admin. Land ☐

2.1.2. Which of the following land uses you believe should receive the highest investments from the government? Choose Only Two

	Agricultural Land	Residential Land	Industrial Land	Commercial Land	Business / Admin. Land	Touristic / Historic Land	Natural Reserves	Others (Specify)
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2.1.3. Please specify at least One reason for each of your choices

	1st Choice:	2nd Choice: .....

2.1.4. Which of the following land uses you believe should receive the highest investments from the private sector? Choose Only Two (You can repeat your choices)

	Agricultural Land	Residential Land	Industrial Land	Commercial Land	Business / Admin. Land	Touristic / Historic Land	Natural Reserves	Others (Specify)
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2.1.5. Please specify at least One reason for each of your choices

	1st Choice:	2nd Choice: .....

Part 2: Land Valuation Factors

2.2.1. Order the following factors according to their impact on land prices in GCR from highest (1) to lowest (7 or 8) according to your best knowledge

Location ☐	Land Use ☐	Soil Condition ☐	Access to Infrastructure ☐	Supply & Demand ☐	Construction Costs ☐	Average land price in the area ☐	Others (Specify) ☐

2.2.2. In your opinion, how far do you agree that these factors should affect land prices valuation:	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
1. Location	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Soil Condition	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Access to Infrastructure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. Supply & Demand	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Construction Costs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Average price in the area	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Others (Specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.3. What factors of location have the highest impact on land prices / land valuation process in GCR?	**Extremely High Impact**	**High Impact**	**Moderate Impact**	**Low Impact**	**Extremely Low Impact**
1. Proximity to markets	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Proximity to services (schools, health care facilities, ...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Proximity to other urban agglomerations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Proximity to transition nodes, public transportation, and/or roads	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Proximity to touristic attractions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Proximity to aesthetic views (water fronts, gardens, ...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Proximity to newly developed areas (new cities)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Being in prestigious urban zones (like gated communities)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Others (Specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.4. How far do you agree that these location factors should impact land prices / land valuation process?	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
1. Proximity to markets	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Proximity to services (schools, health care facilities, ...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Proximity to other urban agglomerations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Proximity to transition nodes, public transportation, and/or roads	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Proximity to touristic attractions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Proximity to aesthetic views (water fronts, gardens, ...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Proximity to newly developed areas (new cities)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Being in prestigious urban zones (like gated communities)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. Others (Specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.5. Do you believe that land prices reflect the actual land value in the GCR?			Yes	No	I don't Know
2.2.6. If No, Why?			☐	☐	☐

Part 3: Land Management, Market Efficiency, and Valuation Policies

2.3.1. To what extent do you agree the following statements apply to the land market in GCR:	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
Land prices are simply a reflection to market dynamics (supply & demand)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information about land prices are accessible to everyone	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information available about land prices are accurate and they are not contradicting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Changes in land prices can be easily predicted / forecasted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Land prices in GCR is an accurate reflection to its real value	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is high speculation in land prices in GCR	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Land prices in GCR suffer from poor activities like money laundry and corruption	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Land prices fail to capture social and intangible values of land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All socio-economic classes have equal opportunity for affordable land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a deficiency in land valuation process when it comes to compensating people for their expropriated land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is an adequate governmental monitory over land prices in GCR to avoid speculation and prices manipulation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2.3.2. To what extent do you agree the following statements apply to the land management in GCR:	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
All genders have equal opportunity to hold, buy, sell and/or use their land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

All socio-economic classes have equal opportunity to hold, buy, sell and/or use their land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a clear procedure for formal land registry in GCR	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a clear procedure for formal land transactions and disposals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are clear laws and regulations regarding the rights and responsibilities of land holders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Procedures related to land registry and transaction activities are complicated and time consuming	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Procedures related to land registry and transaction activities are affordable for everyone	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2.3.3. In the past 3 years, there are laws that have been announced and discussed in the Parliament to capture the land value and manage the land market in Egypt. Some of these laws were disabled for now.

What was your position regarding the following laws?	**Strongly Support**	**Support**	**Neutral**	**Against**	**Strongly Against**	**I don't know this law**
The New Property Registry Law (186/2020) *(Qanon El-Shahr Al-Agaqri Al-Gaded)*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reconciliation Law (17/ 2019) *(Qanon Al-Tasaloh)*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
New Property Tax Law (23/2020) *(Qanon Al-Dareeba Al-Aqaria)*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Are there any other laws you think were controversial regarding property and land management in Egypt?			Yes	☐	No	☐
If Yes, Please specify the law and your position from it			Law		Position	

Section V: Social and Intangible Land Values

Please answer the following questions according to your best knowledge

Part 1: Land Values and Human Values

3.1.1. Regardless to their price (economic value), Rank the following land uses according to their value:	Extremely High Value	High Value	Moderate Value	Low Value	Extremely Low Value
1. Agricultural Land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Residential Land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Industrial Land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Commercial Land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Business / Admin. Land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Touristic / Historic Land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Natural Reserves	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Others (Specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.1.2. Do you believe that there is an intangible value of land that is beyond its market value?			Yes ☐	No ☐	I don't know ☐

If Yes/ Don't Know – Go to questions 3.1.3 & 3.1.4.
If No – Go to questions 3.1.5 & 3.1.6

3.1.3. To what extent do you believe the following human values are shaping the intangible value(s) of land for the land holders:	Very Likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Very Unlikely
▪ Their Sense of Social Security	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Belonging	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Inclusion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Autonomy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Self-worth	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Identity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Equality/Equity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Freedom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Recognition	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Power positions/Authority	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Pride	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Others (Specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3.1.4. To what extent do you believe the following aspects of land are shaping its intangible value(s) for land holders:	Very Likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Very Unlikely
▪ Its aesthetic characteristics (topography, land cover, ...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Its historical/ cultural/ religious meaning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Its environmental qualities (air quality, natural habitat, …)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Its social meaning (the shared experience of the community living on this land)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Its territorial character (its connection to nationality, tribal networks, …)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Its physical / material characters (containment of basic survival resources like water, food, ...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Its physical / material characters (containment of basic survival resources like water, food, ...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Others (Specify) ……	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.1.5. To what extent do you believe these aspects of land holders affect the land prices they estimate / offer for their land in the market:	**Very Likely**	**Likely**	**Neutral**	**Unlikely**	**Very Unlikely**
▪ Their Sense of Social Security	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Belonging	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Inclusion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Autonomy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Self-worth	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Identity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Equality/Equity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Freedom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Recognition	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Power positions/Authority	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Their Sense of Pride	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Others (Specify) ……	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3.1.6. To what extent do you believe the following aspects of land affect the land prices land holders estimate / offer for their land in the market:	Very Likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Very Unlikely
▪ Its aesthetic characteristics (topography, land cover, ...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Its historical/ cultural/ religious meaning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Its environmental qualities (air quality, natural habitat, …)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Its social meaning (the shared experience of the community living on this land)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Its territorial character (its connection to nationality, tribal networks, …)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Its physical / material characters (containment of basic survival resources like water, food, ...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Its physical / material characters (containment of basic survival resources like water, food, ...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Others (Specify) ……	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Part 2: Sense of Place, Identity, and Belonging

3.2.1. Do you take pride for the neighbourhood/area you belong to?	Yes ☐	No ☐	Not Sure ☐
3.2.2. Please mention at least 2 reasons for your answer: ……			

3.2.3. To what extent do you agree to the following statements:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
▪ My neighbourhood/area has distinctive urban qualities (urban spaces, urban fabric, architecture styles, …)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ My neighbourhood/area has distinctive natural qualities (green spaces, waterfronts, attractive topographies, …)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ My neighbourhood/area has distinctive social qualities (social events, communal activities, proactive social networks/media platform, ...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

▪ My neighbourhood/area has good environmental qualities (air quality, cleanliness, …)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ My neighbourhood/home has distinctive economic activities (shops, markets, services, …)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ My neighbourhood/area is properly managed by relevant authorities (security management, waste management, complaints resolution, …)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ I feel connected/belonging to my neighbourhood / area	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ I feel safe in my neighbourhood	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ I feel as an empowered community member	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ I feel I am an important member of my community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ I am well-connected to people in my neighbourhood/area	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ I take pride of my identity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ The land / area I am living in is connected to my self-identity.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ The land / area I am living in is connected to my sense of belonging to my community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.2.4. Have you ever participated in a communal activity to enhance the living condition of your neighbourhood / area/ district?		Yes	☐	No	☐
If Yes:					
3.2.5. What activity did you participate in? ……					
3.2.6. What was your participation type?					

Financial Participation ☐	Raising Awareness through social media or other platforms ☐	Engagement in Public Debates ☐
Organizing/Participation in Petition ☐	Organizing events ☐	Designing / Planning Interventions for Upgrading ☐
Physically upgrading places (planting trees, cleaning spaces amending facilities, …) ☐	Fund-Raising ☐	Others (Mention) ☐

If No:

3.2.7. Have you ever participated in any voluntary activities?	Yes	☐	No	☐
3.2.8. If Yes, Please Specify ……				

Part 3: Personal Experience and Sense of Security

3.3.1. Which of these rights do you believe you have over your land/property? You can choose more than one answer			
The right to sell or transact it ☐	The right to rent it ☐	The right to distribute its rights among others (ex. divide and distribute its ownership rights) ☐	The right to use it in its designated use (according to government regulations) ☐
The right to change its use (going through the legal procedures) ☐	The right to upgrade / develop it if it is a building (change height, design, space, architecture style, …) ☐	The right to build on it if it is a land (according to regulations ☐	Other Rights (Specify) ☐

3.3.2. If your property / land has been subjected in whole or in part to the law of "Expropriation to Public Good". To what extent you believe the following statements are true:	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
▪ I will be getting an adequate compensation for my property/land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

▪ I will be able to win a lawsuit against the government to keep my property / land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ I will be able to consolidate with others who are affected by the same law in my area and take a collective action against the government	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ I will be pleased that my property/land will be used for public good.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.3.3. In the next five years, how likely for these events could happen to you?	**Very Likely**	**Likely**	**Neutral**	**Unlikely**	**Very Unlikely**
▪ I could lose the right to use my residential property / land (or part of it) against my well	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ My property/land could damage/collapse due to instable structure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ My property/land could damage/collapse due to extreme weather conditions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ I could need to be engaged in a lawsuit to protect my tenure rights	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ I would sell my property/land and move to another place with my full well	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ I could invest in enhancing/upgrading my land/property	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ I could take a loan using my property/land as mortgage	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.3.4. Have you ever been evicted from your residence/ land / property?		Yes	☐	No	☐

If Yes:

3.3.4/1 Who did proceed with the legal actions against you? Who evicted you?	The Government	Family Member	Private Owner	Others (Specify)
	☐	☐	☐	☐

3.3.4/2 Why were you evicted?

I failed in payments	I acquired the property illegally	Someone acquired my property by the act of eminent domain	I was a victim of forgery	It was expropriated by government for Public Good	Family disagreements/ lawsuits	Others (Mention)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3.3.5. Have you ever proceeded with a legal pursuit to protect your land/property rights?	Yes	☐	No	☐
If Yes:				
3.3.5/1 Who did you proceed with the lawsuit against?	The Government ☐	Family Member ☐	Private Owner/ Renter ☐	Others (Specify) ☐
3.3.5/2 Why your land/property was at risk?				
3.3.6. Have you ever evicted/ participated in the eviction of someone from their residence/ property?	Yes	☐	No	☐
If Yes:				
3.3.6/1 Whom did you proceed with the legal actions against? Whom did you evict?	The Government ☐	Family Member ☐	Private Owner/ Renter ☐	Others (Specify) ☐
3.3.6/2 Why did you do that? What was your legal basis?	Failed in Payment ☐	Illegal Acquisition ☐	Expropriation for Public Good ☐	Others (Specify) ☐

Part 4: Power Structures, Freedom & Equity

3.4.1. To what extent you believe the following statements are true:	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
▪ The amount of land held by one person gives him/her a high-power position in the society.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ The amount of land held by one person gives him/her a high recognition and respect within the society.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ The amount of land held by one person gives him/her higher economic security.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ The amount of land held by one person gives him/her more land rights.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ The amount of land held by one person gives him/her more autonomy on how they could develop the land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ The amount of land held by one person projects him/her with higher responsibility towards their community.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

▪ Land ownership is connected to our sense of self-worth	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Equitable access to land promotes a more equitable society.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Having a secure land status enhances our practice of freedom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Having a secure land status encourages us to proactively participate in developing our societies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▪ Having a secure land status helps us secure our future.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3.4.2. Do you believe there is an equal distribution of land rights among land holders in GCR?	Yes ☐	No ☐	Not Sure ☐

If No /Not Sure,

3.4.3. Who / Which category of the society do you believe have more rights over land in GCR?
Please Specify ----------

3.4.4. Who / Which category of the society do you believe have less rights over land in GCR?
Please Specify ----------

3.4.5. Do you believe there is a land lobby controlling laws and regulations connected with land rights in GCR?	Yes ☐	No ☐	Not Sure ☐

3.4.6. If Yes, Who do you think could be involved with this lobby (whether they are people or entities?)
Mention at most Three: ....

Section VI: Conclusion

4.1. In not more than 5 words, what do you believe "Land" represents to the government?
.....

4.2. In not more than 5 words, what do you believe "Land" represents to you?
.....

4.3. Do you have any comments or further contribution? **4.4. If Yes, Please Specify**	Yes ☐	No ☐

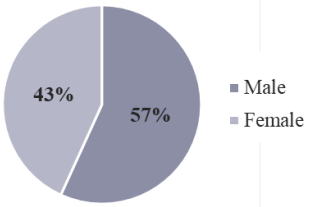
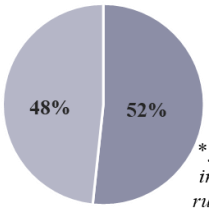
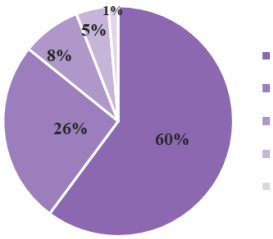
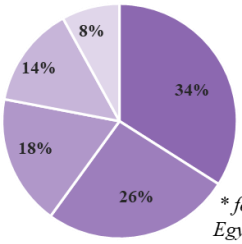
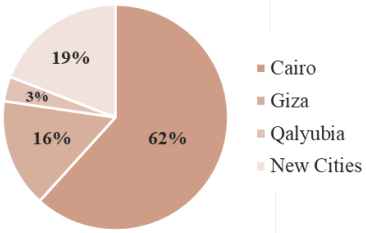
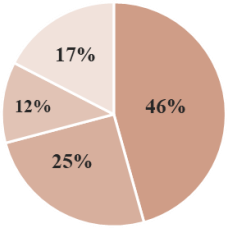
I/03 Online Survey Dissemination

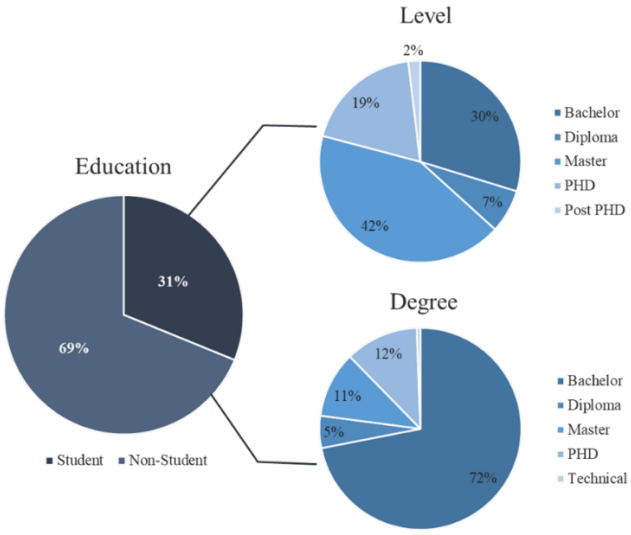
- The sampling focused on GCR population as they would have a more accurate understanding of the urban practice dynamics surrounding the case study context.
- The expected number of responses is deducted from previous experiences by the researcher in electronic dissemination of surveys with regards to survey completion duration and frequency of survey publication announcements posted.
- The participants' profile expected was determined based on researcher's original network and demographic majority within GCR.
- As the estimated number of people working in construction, building, and real-estate industry is around 3,000,000 in GCR (CAPMAS, 2022), then the required sample size for 95% confidence level is 384 and for 99% confidence level is 665 (Kotrlik and Higgins, 2001).
- The researcher decided to work with the 95% confidence level as it is within the limits of the expected response rate.
- The survey was published in May 2021 and was extended to July 2022 when it was reported to the researcher from initial responses that for some participants it took longer than 30 minutes (from 45 to 60 minutes) to complete the survey and some of them had to do it in separate sessions.
- Survey dissemination was done initially by random sampling where the link to the survey was shared through the researcher's social and professional networks on Facebook and LinkedIn expecting that the topic would gain responsiveness only from actors involved in urban practice.
- The initial results showed some irreflective responses and non-response biases due to the participation of actors who are not involved in the urban practice.
- The researcher accordingly chose to work with quota sampling by sending private messages to specific participants – involved in urban practice – in her network through emails and WhatsApp while encouraging them to pass it on to their peers as a snowballing technique (Bowling and Ebrahim, 2005; Stockemer, Stockemer and Glaeser, 2019).
- The researcher avoided the biases in quota sampling by sending the private messages to her professional contact list in alphabetical order, only checking professional background (making sure it is relevant to urban practice) and residence location (making sure it is in GCR) of her targeted sample; thus, avoiding any gender and age biases.

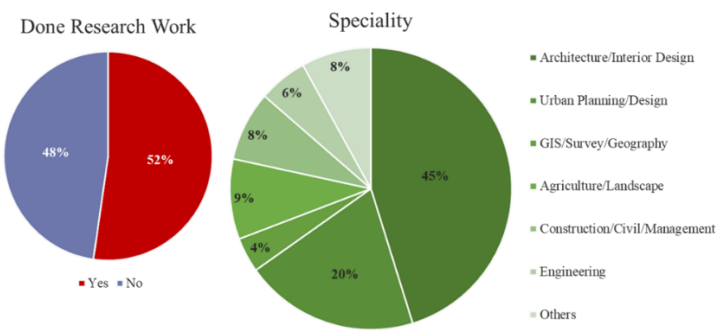
I/04 Online Survey Responses

- The sample size that initially was responsive to the survey was 1400 participants, from which 1046 agreed to the consent form.
- Only 507 participants fully finished the survey (48.5%), 13 finished four out of five sections (skipped the overall reaction and conclusion), and 52 finished three out of five sections (skipping the social and intangible values and conclusion sections).
- The probable cause for this was the length of survey which was relatively long to recommended standards (Bowling and Ebrahim, 2005).
- The participants' profiling was slightly different from the expected, but within the demographic representation in GCR/Egypt.
- The following diagram shows the descriptive analysis for the online survey sample in comparison with the descriptive analysis of the population demographics in GCR[1] – when available.

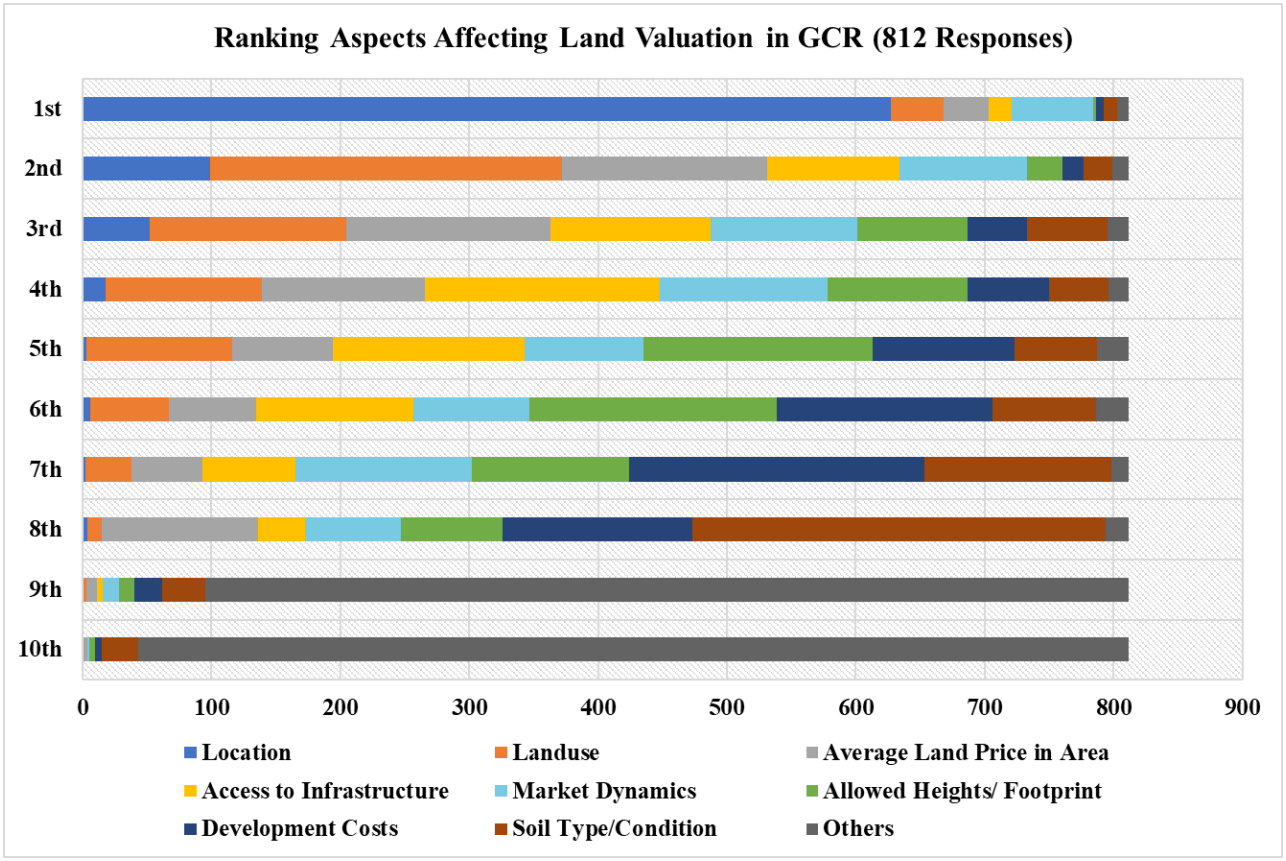
[1] GCR includes Cairo governorate, the urban areas in Giza and Qalyubia governorates, and the new cities following the administrative boundaries of those three governorates.

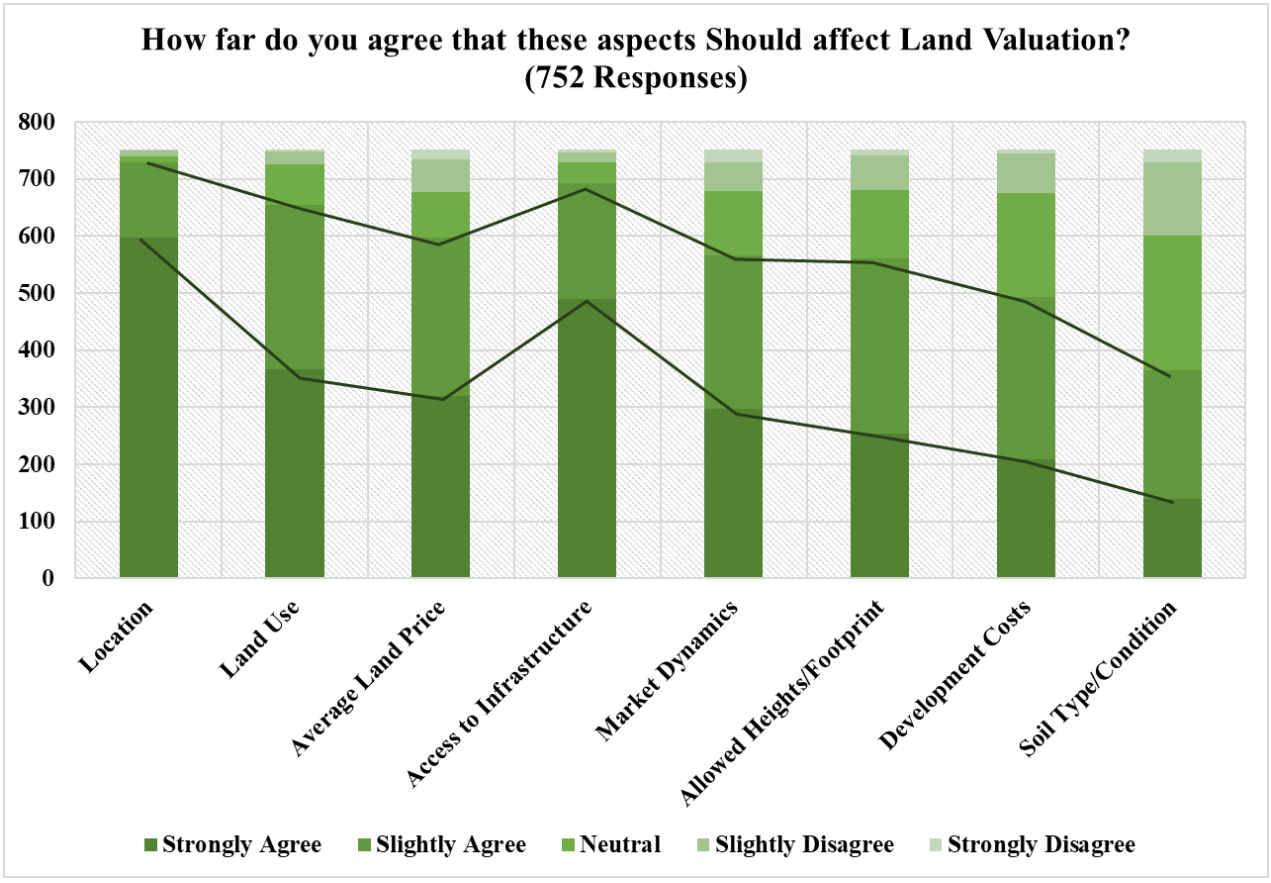
	Survey Sample Demographics	Context Population Demographics based on (CAPMAS, 2022)
Gender		 ** for GCR including rural areas*
Age		 ** for Egypt*
Residence		

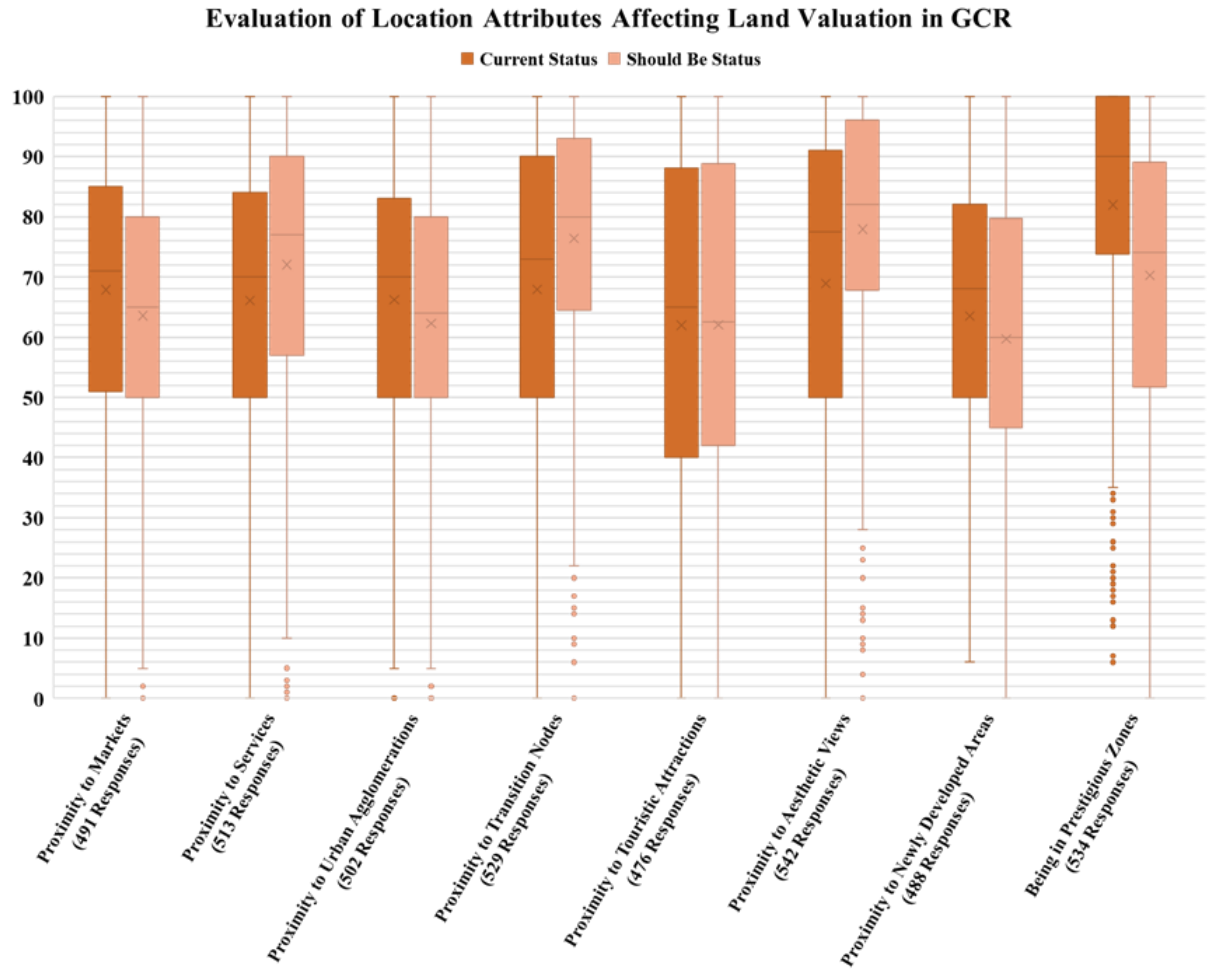


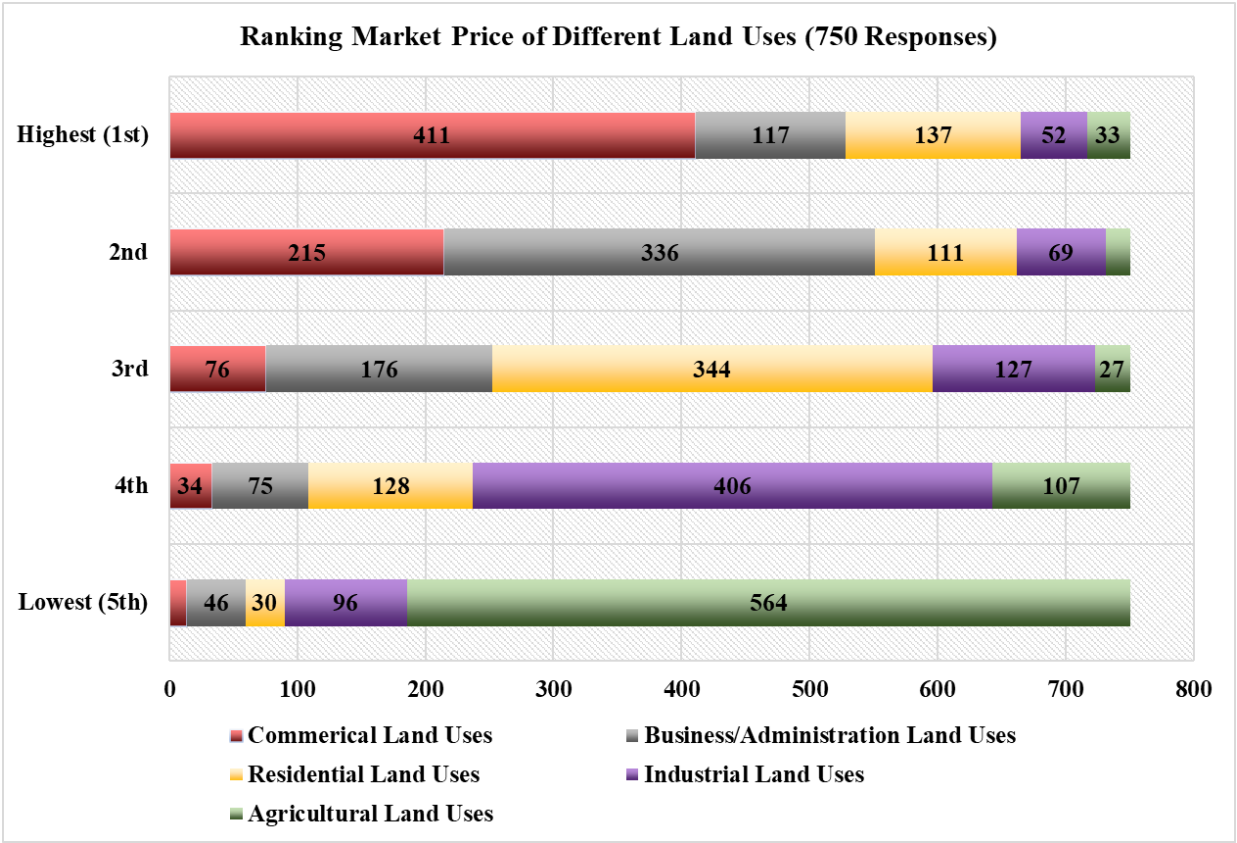


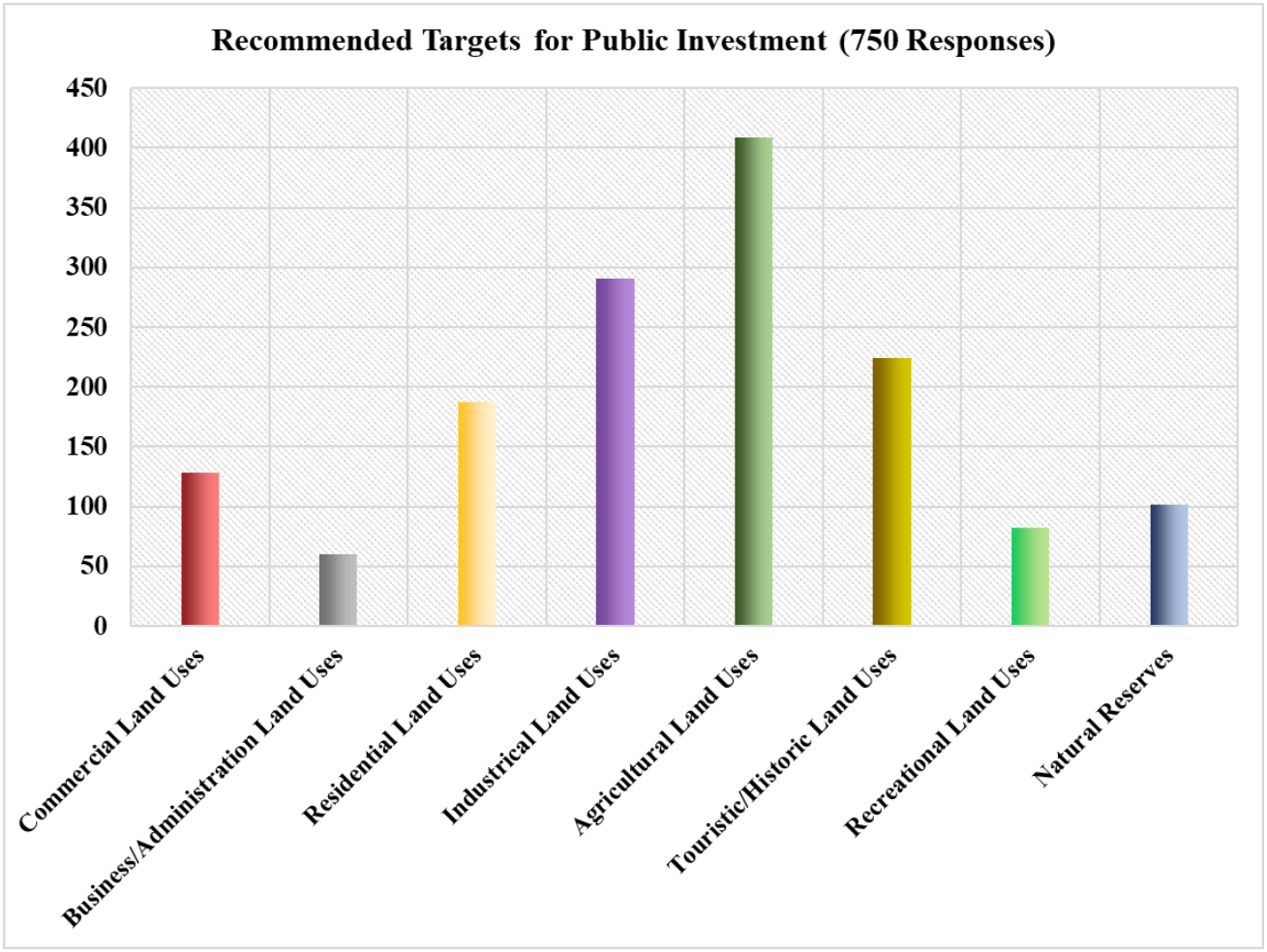
- The following diagrams show some of the survey results regarding land in the GCR context:

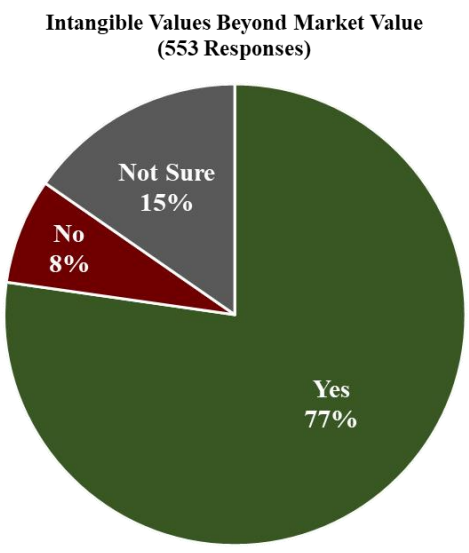


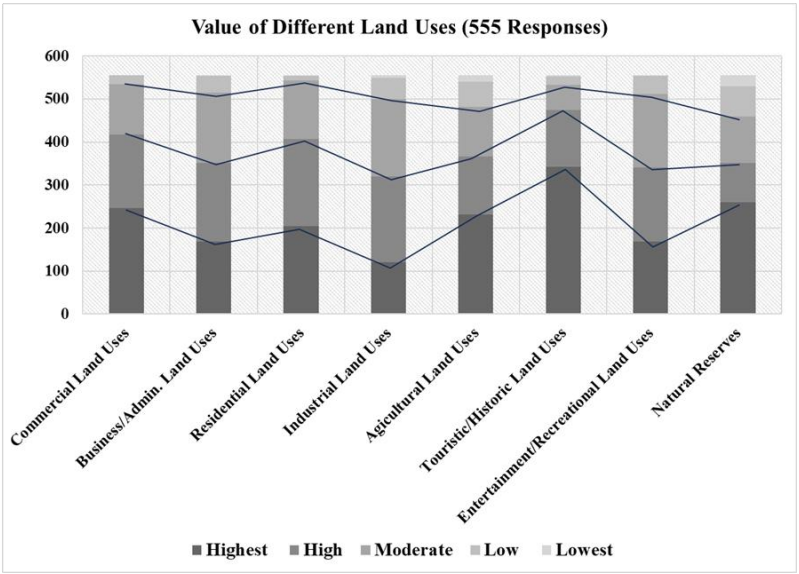


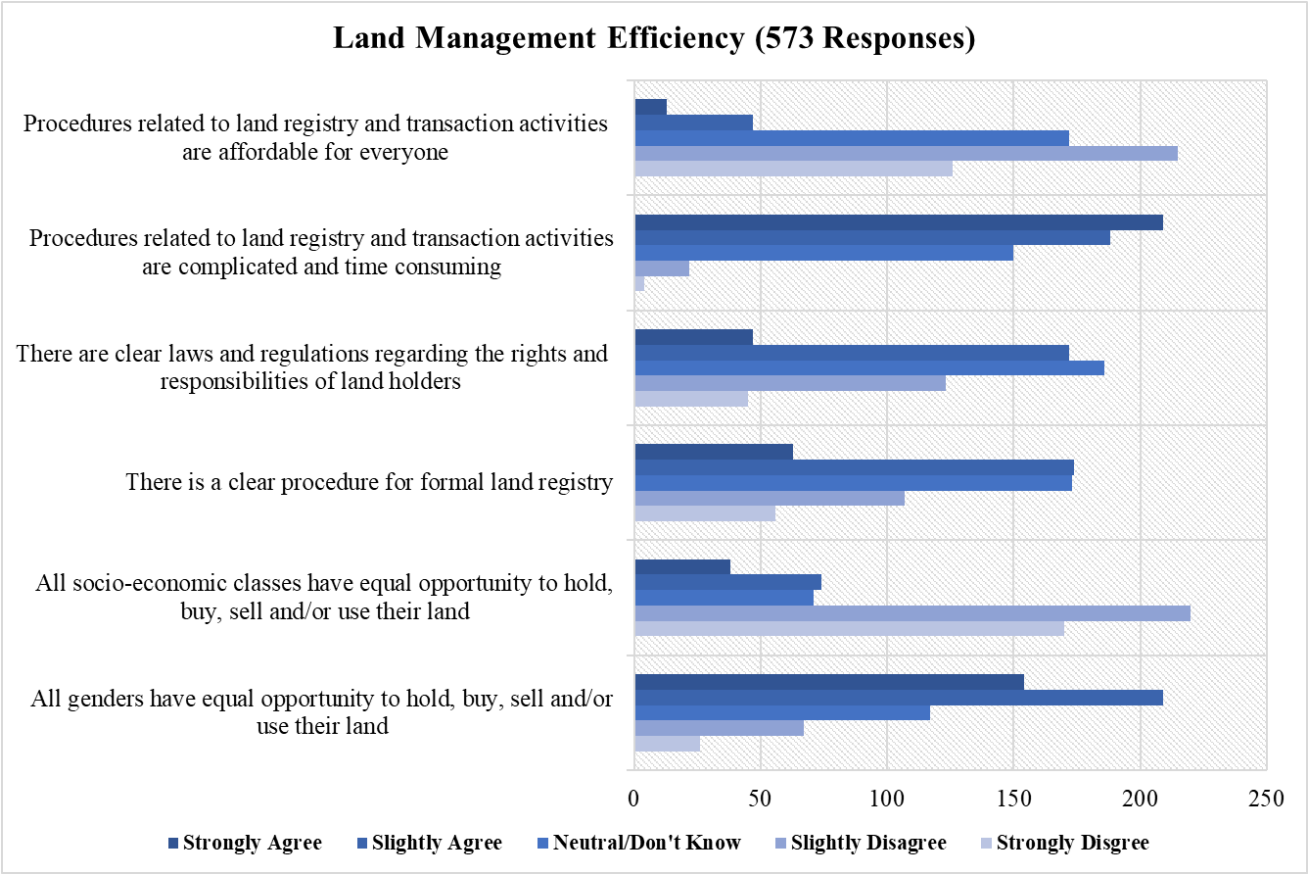

Evaluation of Location Attributes Affecting Land Valuation in GCR
Current Status
Should Be Status
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Proximity to Markets (491 Responses)
Proximity to Services (513 Responses)
Proximity to Urban Agglomerations (502 Responses)
Proximity to Transition Nodes (529 Responses)
Proximity to Touristic Attractions (476 Responses)
Proximity to Aesthetic Views (542 Responses)
Proximity to Newly Developed Areas (488 Responses)
Being in Prestigious Zones (534 Responses)

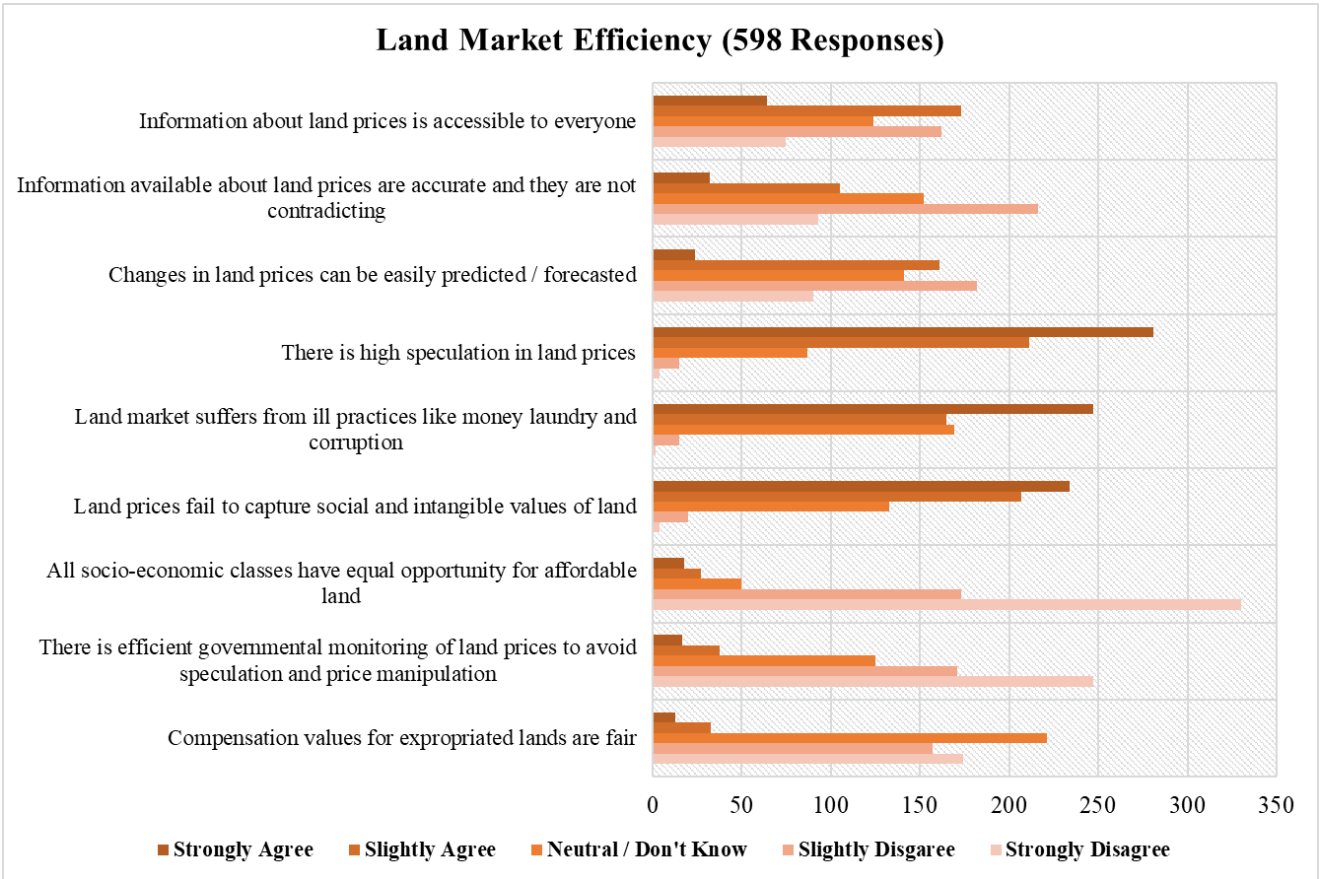

Ranking Market Price of Different Land Uses (750 Responses)
Highest (1st)
411
117
137
52
33
2nd
215
336
111
69
3rd
76
176
344
127
27
4th
34
75
128
406
107
Lowest (5th)
46
30
96
564
0
100
200
300
400
500
600
700
800
Commerical Land Uses
Business/Administration Land Uses
Residential Land Uses
Industrial Land Uses
Agricultural Land Uses

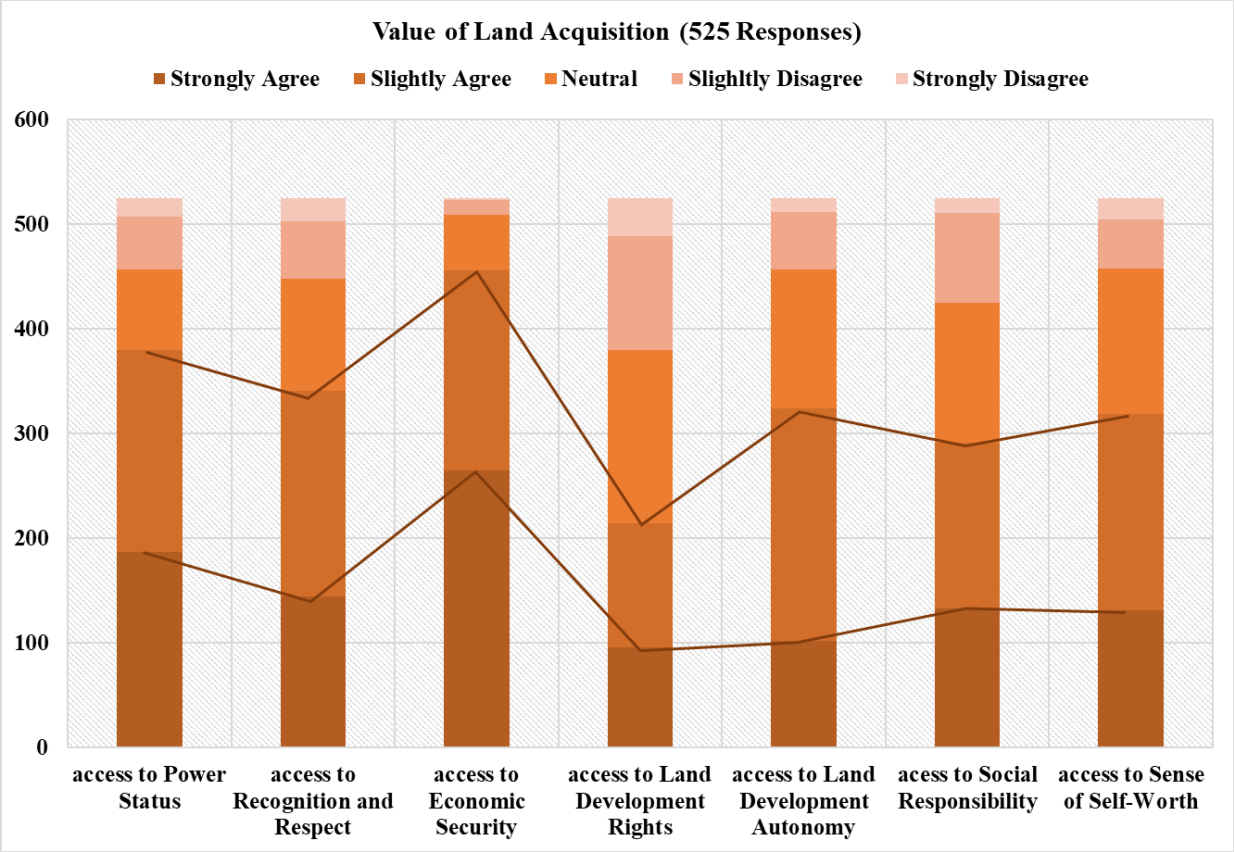

Recommended Targets for Public Investment (750 Responses)
450
400
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
Commercial Land Uses
Business/Administration Land Uses
Residential Land Uses
Industrical Land Uses
Agricultural Land Uses
Touristic/Historic Land Uses
Recreational Land Uses
Natural Reserves

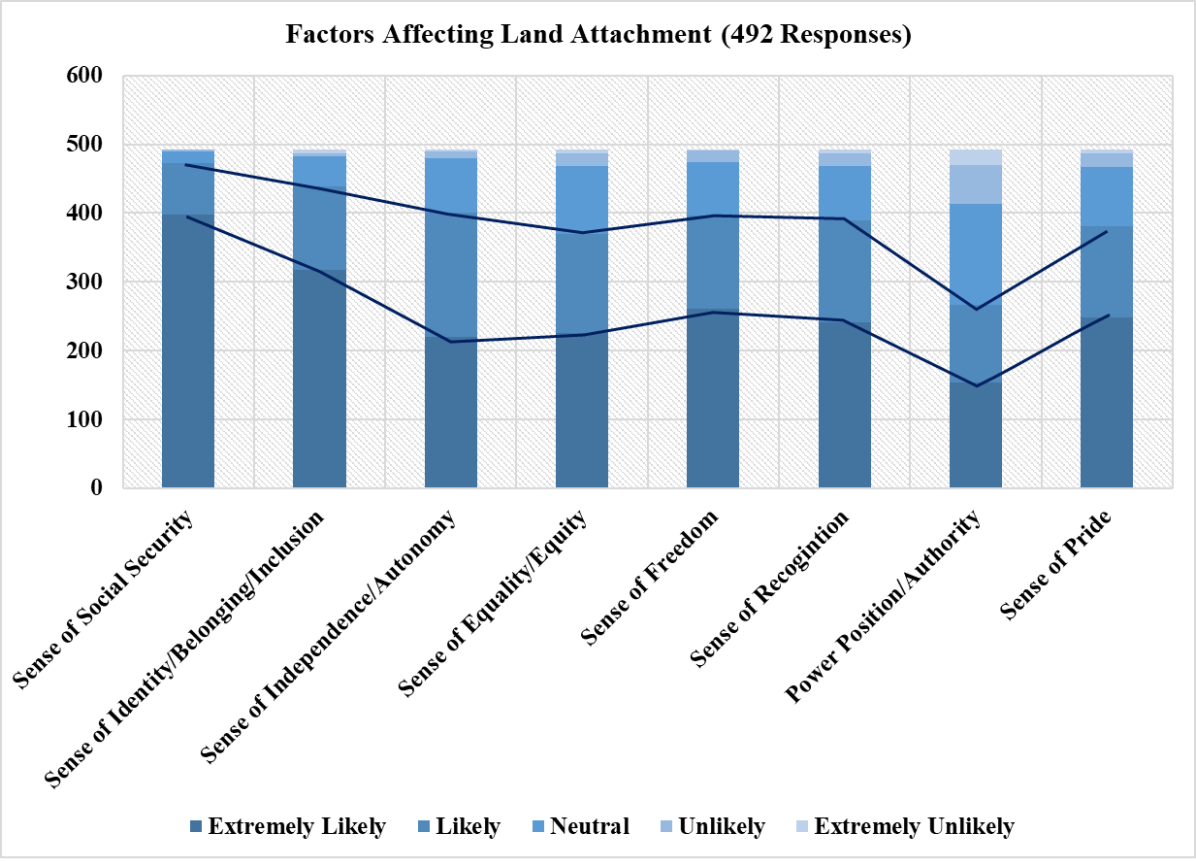

Intangible Values Beyond Market Value
(553 Responses)
Not Sure
15%
No
8%
Yes
77%

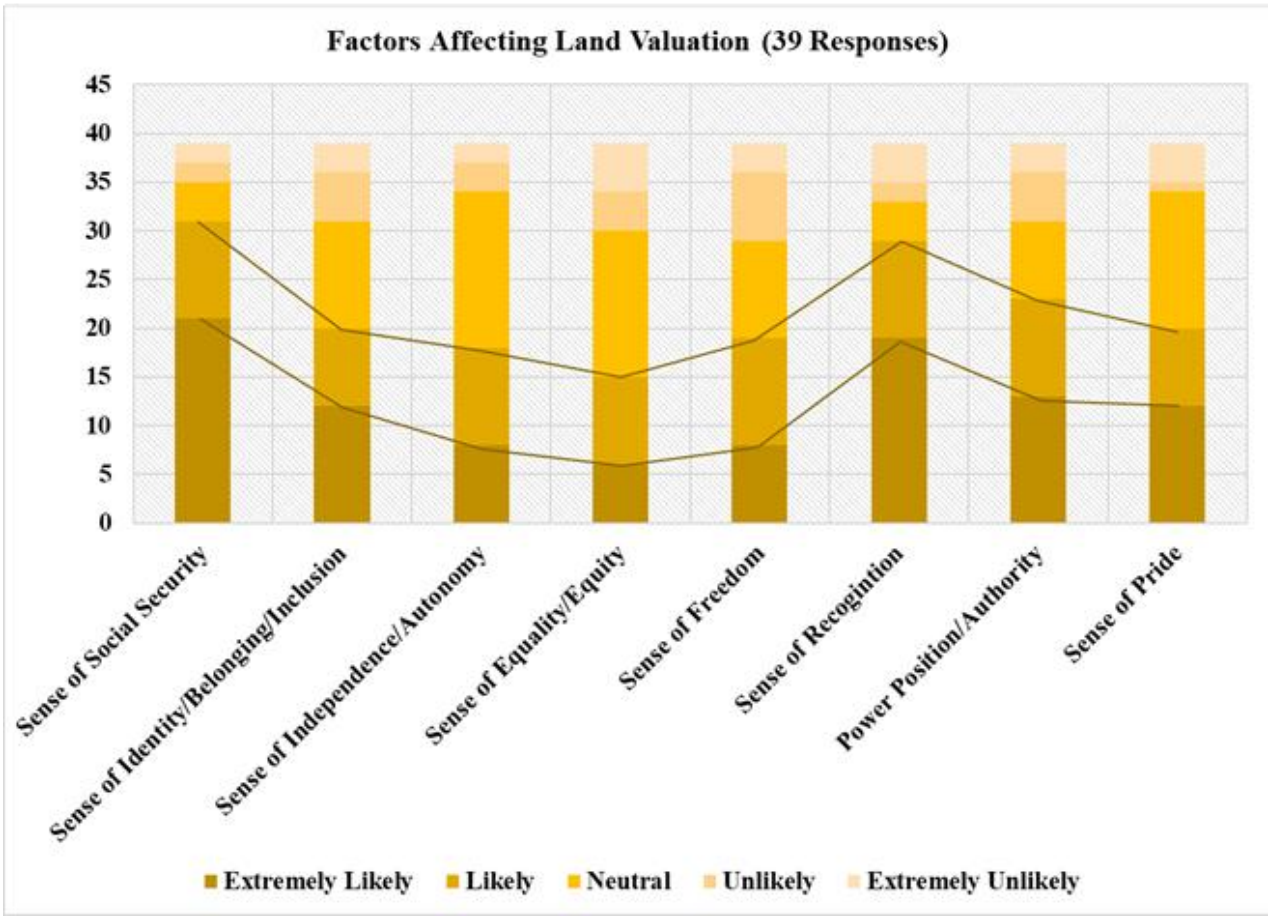

Value of Different Land Uses (555 Responses)
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
Commercial Land Uses
Business/Admin. Land Uses
Residential Land Uses
Industrial Land Uses
Agricultural Land Uses
Touristic/Historic Land Uses
Entertainment/Recreational Land Uses
Natural Reserves
Highest
High
Moderate
Low
Lowest

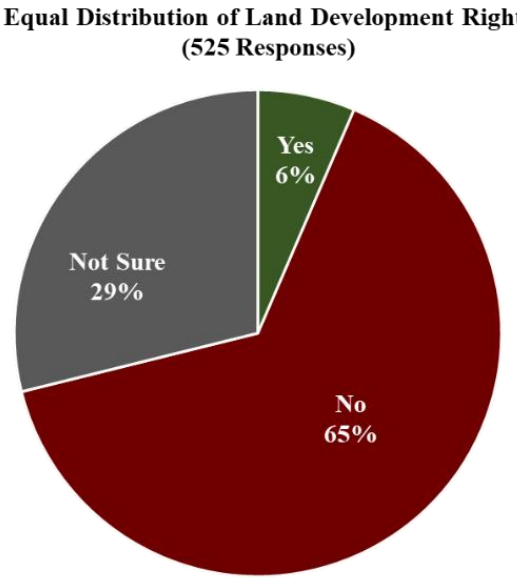

Land Management Efficiency (573 Responses)
Procedures related to land registry and transaction activities are affordable for everyone
Procedures related to land registry and transaction activities are complicated and time consuming
There are clear laws and regulations regarding the rights and responsibilities of land holders
There is a clear procedure for formal land registry
All socio-economic classes have equal opportunity to hold, buy, sell and/or use their land
All genders have equal opportunity to hold, buy, sell and/or use their land
0
50
100
150
200
250
Strongly Agree
Slightly Agree
Neutral/Don't Know
Slightly Disagree
Strongly Disgree

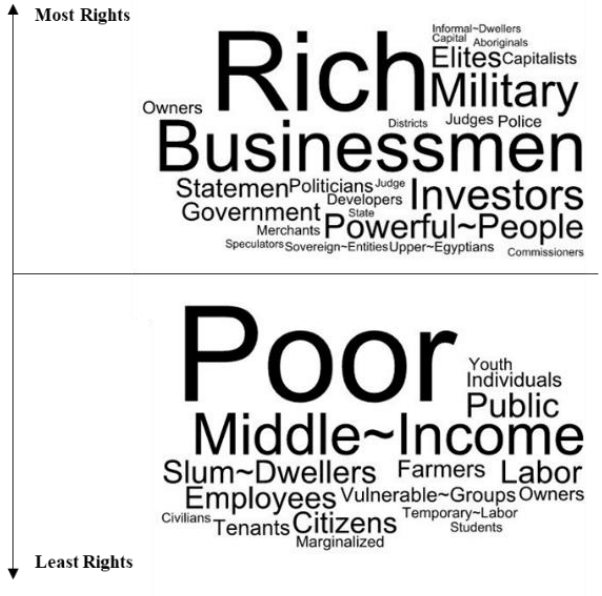

Land Market Efficiency (598 Responses)
Information about land prices is accessible to everyone
Information available about land prices are accurate and they are not contradicting
Changes in land prices can be easily predicted / forecasted
There is high speculation in land prices
Land market suffers from ill practices like money laundry and corruption
Land prices fail to capture social and intangible values of land
All socio-economic classes have equal opportunity for affordable land
There is efficient governmental monitoring of land prices to avoid speculation and price manipulation
Compensation values for expropriated lands are fair
0
50
100
150
200
250
300
350
Strongly Agree
Slightly Agree
Neutral / Don't Know
Slightly Disgaree
Strongly Disagree


Value of Land Acquisition (525 Responses)
Strongly Agree
Slightly Agree
Neutral
Slighltly Disagree
Strongly Disagree
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
access to Power Status
access to Recognition and Respect
access to Economic Security
access to Land Development Rights
access to Land Development Autonomy
acess to Social Responsibility
access to Sense of Self-Worth

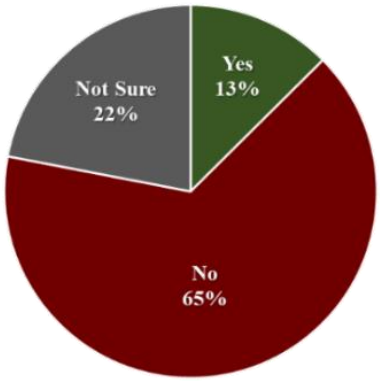

Factors Affecting Land Attachment (492 Responses)
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
Sense of Social Security
Sense of Identity/Belonging/Inclusion
Sense of Independence/Autonomy
Sense of Equality/Equity
Sense of Freedom
Sense of Recogintion
Power Position/Authority
Sense of Pride
Extremely Likely
Likely
Neutral
Unlikely
Extremely Unlikely


Factors Affecting Land Valuation (39 Responses)
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
Sense of Social Security
Sense of Identity/Belonging/Inclusion
Sense of Independence/Autonomy
Sense of Equality/Equity
Sense of Freedom
Sense of Recognition
Power Position/Authority
Sense of Pride
Extremely Likely
Likely
Neutral
Unlikely
Extremely Unlikely


Equal Distribution of Land Development Rights
(525 Responses)
Yes
6%
Not Sure
29%
No
65%


Most Rights
Rich
Owners
Informal~Dwellers
Capital
Aboriginals
Elites
Capitalists
Military
Districts
Judges
Police
Businessmen
Statemen
Politicians
Judge
Developers
Investors
Government
State
Merchants
Powerful~People
Speculators
Sovereign~Entities
Upper~Egyptians
Commissioners
Least Rights
Poor
Youth
Individuals
Public
Middle~Income
Slum~Dwellers
Farmers
Labor
Employees
Vulnerable~Groups
Owners
Civilians
Tenants
Citizens
Temporary~Labor
Students
Marginalized

Does Land Prices Reflect Actual Value?
(637 Responses)



What does land represent to the government/state?

What does land represent to you (the participant)?

APPENDIX II
(INTERVIEWS)

II/01 Experts/Officials Interviews Guideline

Understanding Land Value through Investigating Redevelopment of Informal Areas in Egypt

Semi-structured Interview Template

Section I: Information Sheet

1. Introduction

You are being invited to participate in a research project titled "Understanding Land Value through Investigating Redevelopment of Informal Areas in Egypt". Before you decide whether to participate or not, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

This research project is for educational purpose as a requirement for the researcher to achieve her PhD degree in Urban Studies and Planning from the University of Sheffield. The researcher is a teacher assistant in the Architecture Engineering Department – Faculty of Engineering at Ain Shams University and her research is funded through a scholarship offered by the Mission Sector at the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education. The aim of this research is to understand the meaning(s) and concept of land value as understood by communities. Its main objective is to investigate how land value is perceived, practiced, and protected in the case of conflict, and how it affects the discourse and implications of urban practice especially in the context of redeveloping informal areas. This is a 3-year project that includes a case study for the redevelopment project of El-Warraq Island in Egypt.

You have been chosen to participate in an in-depth interview in this research because you are an expert involved in the redevelopment project of El-Warraq Island (either directly or indirectly) and your responses will benefit the purpose of the research to understand how the value of land affect the process of redevelopment. This research is meant to cover the understanding of land value from different perspectives, and accordingly other stakeholders involved in the case will be interviewed as well to have an unbiased and inclusive investigation for the case study. These stakeholders include the island's inhabitants, landowners, tenants, people who work in the island, as well as government officials, urban consultants, developers, contractors, and survey authorities involved in the redevelopment project. The interview will include questions about your role in the redevelopment project, the role of other partners and stakeholders, your personal judgment upon the process, and your understanding of the role of land value in mobilizing decision-making.

2. Data Protection and Control

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that the University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. This project has been ethically approved via the University of Sheffield's Ethics Review Procedure, as administered by Urban Studies and Planning department in the Faculty of Social Science. Also, the researcher has a security clearance from the Egyptian authority – through the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Egyptian General Intelligence Service, the Central Authority of Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) and the Ministry of Higher Education.

According to data protection legislation, it is required to inform you that the legal basis applied in order to process your personal data is that 'processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest' (Article 6(1)(e)). Further information can be found in the University's Privacy Notice https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general.' As we will be collecting some data that is defined in the legislation as more sensitive (information about name, occupation, educational degree and background), we also need to let you know that we are applying the following condition in law: that the use of your data is necessary 'for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific research purposes or statistical purposes' (9(2)(j)).

3. Your Rights and Participation Impacts

Your participation in this research is optional and you can withdraw at any time during the interview with no negative consequences and once you do that the information you shared will not be included in the research. You can also choose not to discuss any of the previously mentioned topics and that will not exclude your other responses from the research. As your insights are crucial to the research investigation, the researcher will use your full name and affiliation in the research in the discussion of your role in the redevelopment project and your position on the importance of land value. If there is any information you would like to provide anonymously, please make it clear in the interview. In case you have already conducted the interview, but you no longer want your interview to be part of the research project, you need to contact the researcher via email within 6 months from conducting the interview. In all cases, the researcher will contact you after the interview via email (or your preferred communication medium) to confirm that the interview transcript is consistent with your statement(s). You will have to respond to the confirmation email within one month with any comments or objections. Otherwise, the researcher will continue with your statement as it is.

The information and quotation you will provide will be used in the PhD research and other academic publications like journal articles and conference papers related to the topic. The researcher could engage with you after your participation for further clarification or updated information and that will still follow the privacy act regulations. Any information or quotation you provide will not be shared informally on formal or social media platforms, personal blogs, reporters, or other participants without your consent. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications unless you have given your explicit consent for this. If you agree to us sharing the information you provide with other researchers, then your personal details will not be included unless you explicitly request this. Your statements and their identifiable information will be accessed by the research team only (the lead researcher and her supervisors) and will be kept in the University of Sheffield Google Drive for the whole time of the research project (3-years) and will be archived in the University of Sheffield Repository (ORDA) for 10 years after the PhD publication date. If you provided any sensitive information, these information will be deposited in the University X Drive, will be encrypted and password protected, will only be accessible by the researcher, and will be destroyed 5 years after the end of the project.

You must be aware that personal and social experiences are crucial parts of this research. It is recommended not to participate if you are experiencing a severe condition of distress or anxiety in accordance to current or/and past personal experiences which the research will subject you to reliving them. If participation caused you any kind of emotional distress or anxiety, please contact the researcher immediately to assist you with the appropriate help or guide you to someone who will. Despite that there are no direct benefits for you that will come from participating in this research, the aspired impact of this study is to enhance the governmental process in addressing issues of informality, redevelopment, and land management.

4. Complaints and Suggestions

If you have any complaints regarding this research or suggestions regarding other relevant participants, please feel free to contact the researcher (provided her contact details). If you feel your complaint hasn't been handled to your satisfactions by the main researcher or supervisor, you should contact the Head of Urban Studies and Planning Department, who will then escalate the complaint through the appropriate channels. If the complaint relates to how your personal data has been handled, information about how to raise a complaint can be found in the University's Privacy Notice: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general. You should know that you will be provided by a copy of this information sheet and a signed consent form to keep.

Thank you for your time and shared experience.

Section II: Consent Form

Please tick the appropriate boxes	*Yes*	*No*
Taking Part in the Project		
I have read and understood the project information sheet dated (dd/mm/yyyy) or the project has been fully explained to me. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)	☐	☐
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	☐	☐
I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will include being interviewed.	☐	☐
I agree that whilst I am participating in this interview audio recordings will be made. I agree to being audio recorded and for transcripts of these audio recordings to be used in the research.	☐	☐
I understand that by choosing to participate as a volunteer in this research, this does not create a legally binding agreement nor is it intended to create an employment relationship with the University of Sheffield.	☐	☐
I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw.	☐	☐
How my information will be used during and after the project		
I understand my personal details such as phone number, and email address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.	☐	☐
I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that I will not be named in these outputs unless I specifically request this.	☐	☐
I understand and agree that other authorised researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.	☐	☐
I understand and agree that other authorised researchers may use my data in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs, only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.	☐	☐
I give permission all my interview responses (excluding any identifiable data) to be deposited in University of Sheffield data repository (ORDA) so it can be used for future research and learning	☐	☐
I give permission for my name, educational background/degree, and affiliation/job that I provide to be deposited in University of Sheffield data repository (ORDA) so it can be used for future research and learning	☐	☐
So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers		
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield	☐	☐

Section III: Semi-Structured Interview Guiding Questions

Theme 1: Informal Development and Land Conflict in the Island (15 minutes)

Main Objective:	*Investigate root causes for land conflict between different stakeholders involved in the redevelopment of El-Warraq Island*

Topic 1:	Redevelopment Project Status & Participant's Role
Information (Data)	*Guiding Questions / Points*
Project Brief	▪ Occupation and assigned responsibility regarding the redevelopment project. ▪ How was the project announced to the inhabitants of the island? What information was given to them, and when? ▪ What aspects of public participation were included in designing the redevelopment plans? Were inhabitants included in the decision – making? ▪ Were there any channels for them to comment on the project / participate in the decision-making /object? ▪ What alternatives were given to the inhabitants? How many people approximately are welling to get an apartment in the new project / an alternative apartment / a compensation? ▪ If inhabitants are being displaced, where they are going to be reallocated? What procedures / measures were taken to monitor the facilitation of the displacement process and the well-being of those inhabitants.
Position from Conflict	▪ How people responded to the announcement of the project? How did they engage in the public participation events? ▪ What is your position regarding the redevelopment project? Why do you think there are other experts/ academics disapproving of the project? ▪ What is the status of the lawsuit raised by the inhabitants? How it is affecting the redevelopment project? What changes could happen?
Role in Land Conflict	▪ Have there been any acts of violence from the inhabitants towards people working on the project, like engineers, contractors, district officials, …? ▪ How do you think we should handle highly reluctant inhabitants/ owners? ▪ What are the possible solutions to reduce this conflict? What better practices could the government engage in? ▪ What measures have been taken to increase inhabitants trust in the government plans and increase their sense of security? What guarantees were given to them?
Topic 2:	Historical Background (the process) of El-Warraq Informal Development
Information (Data)	*Guiding Questions / Points*
History of the Island	▪ Narrate what you know about the history of the Island
Land Acquisition	▪ How the informal development of El-Warraq Island started? How did it develop? ▪ What authority was responsible for urban management prior to the announcement of the redevelopment project? ▪ What procedures did the government take to restrain these informal practices in the island? Incentives and Penalties.
Challenges of Registry	▪ Were the inhabitants given an opportunity to legalize their status earlier to the announcement of the project? Challenges and Opportunities.

Theme 2: Power Structures of Stakeholders and the Island Community (25 minutes)

Main Objective:	*Investigate power dynamics and structures and their impact on the redevelopment project /process in El-Warraq Island*

Topic 1:	Community Power and Social Structures
Information (Data)	***Guiding Questions / Points***
Social Networks and Social Security	▪ Are the inhabitants of El-Warraq Island considered as a strong community? Are the social networks and support systems strong? ▪ Are there any certain families / tribes that have a higher power status in the island? Why do they have such power? Are they leading the negotiations with the government? Are there anyone community leaders? ▪ Are you aware of any sort of segregation or exclusion to some segments of the island community? If yes, who are they and what types of excluding practices they suffer?
Community Participation	▪ Have the community ever worked together for a common interest goal? What was it? Who managed it? Who was the leader? Was there any organization that helped them with it? ▪ How does the community manage the rights of different people when it comes to land rights? like right of way, equitable distribution of water sources, …? How do they share the roles and responsibilities regarding maintaining their land?
Topic 2:	Land Status and Power Dynamics
Information (Data)	***Guiding Questions / Points***
Stakeholders Analysis	▪ What organizations / authorities are involved in in the redevelopment project? ▪ Which entities are going to benefit more from this project? In what ways they will benefit from it? ▪ What is the role of each entity? Who have the highest power in the decision-making process? What governance model are you following? ▪ Which of these entities is most involved with negotiations with inhabitants? How you evaluate their practice? ▪ What are your communication and cooperation strategies? How do you maintain being updated about the status in EL-Warraq Island? ▪ What was their role in the conflict of the redevelopment project? Have there been changes in the relationship / responsibilities according to the conflict?
Land as a Bargaining Power	▪ Does any of the following aspects affect bargaining position in the negotiation around the redevelopment project: 1. Owning land in a certain location? 2. Owning a certain amount of land? 3. Owning a certain type of land use? 4. Having a certain tenure status? 5. Having a building on your land?

Theme 3: Land Value (10 minutes)

Main Objective:	*Investigate how land value is conceptualized and mobilized*

Topic 1:	Economic/Tangible Land Value
Information (Data)	***Guiding Questions / Points***
Land Valuation	▪ How land prices are calculated in the island? What aspects of valuation are most relevant in this case? Do you believe inhabitants are receiving fair compensations? ▪ How do you believe inhabitants value the price of their lands / property?
Access to financial security aspects (jobs, credit, markets, transportation, …)	▪ Are you aware if people are profiting from their land / property? using it as a mortgage /for a loan? How far do you think the price of their land affect their financial security / their credit accessibility? ▪ Do you believe people are willing to invest in their land / property to raise its value? ▪ Do you believe they will sell their land / property when the prices increase in reallocate in other places?
Access to prospect security aspects (education, health, …)	▪ What is the social infrastructure status in the island? What aspects need improvement? ▪ Do you believe people will have better sense of security after the project is completed? What aspects of security you believe is going to be improved (financial, income, social, …)? ▪ How far children /women / elderly are safe in the island? What challenges do you think they face? What jeopardizes their wellbeing?
Topic 2:	Social/Intangible Land Value
Information (Data)	***Guiding Questions / Points***
Land & Sense of Place	▪ What does this island represent? What land in general represent to people in your opinion? ▪ How far do you think the aesthetic / natural / cultural / spiritual / urban features of the island are connected to the identity of the place? connected to the sense of identity of the inhabitants? Do you believe the redevelopment project will enhance or degenerate this sense? ▪ What is special about the island?
Identity & Self-worth	▪ Do you think people take pride of being inhabitants of the island? Are they well perceived among the rest of the community?
Belonging, Recognition, and Inclusion	▪ What is special about the community in this island? Do you believe they will become a better / stronger community after the redevelopment project? ▪ Why do you think they feel connected to this land? Are you aware if there are special zones in the island that received higher value from the inhabitants? ▪ Are you aware of any sort of segregation of exclusion to some segments of the island community? Is there any reported conflict between them? ▪ Do you think people feel recognized/visible and respected in this community?
Freedom & Equity	▪ Do you believe there is an equitable distribution of rights among the residents of the island? Who do you think is going to benefit more from the redevelopment project? ▪ How far do you think inhabitants have a freedom to express their opinion about the redevelopment project? the valuation of their land / property? ▪ Do you believe people feel more empowered when they own their land? when they have some sort of control over developing their land? Does that increase their security?

Theme 4: Impacts of Redevelopment Project (10 minutes)

Main Objective:	*Identify possible impacts of the redevelopment project of El-Warraq Island on the socio-economic structural dynamics within the Island*

Information (Data)	*Guiding Questions / Points*
Quality of Life (Physical Aspects)	▪ Environmental Quality ▪ Urban Quality ▪ Safety & Shelter Security
Socio-economic Aspects	▪ Impacts on Social Security ▪ Impacts on Financial Security ▪ Impact of Prospect Security ▪ Impact on human values (identity, belonging, self-worth, recognition, freedom, and empowerment)
Wide-scale Impacts	▪ How this project is connected to the local economic development of the GCR? How is it connected to the national planning strategies? ▪ What does this land represent to the government? How it benefits its long-term strategies? How it enhances its power position?

Thank you for your time and shared experience

II/02 Inhabitants Interviews Guideline

إدراك مفهوم قيمة الأرض من خلال دراسة إعادة تطوير المناطق الغير رسمية في مصر

Understanding Land Value through Investigating Redevelopment of Informal Areas in Egypt

Semi-structured Interview Template — **نموذج أسئلة المقابلات الشخصية**

Section I: Information Sheet — **القسم الأول: ورقة المعلومات**

١. المقدمة

تدعو الباحثة سيادتكم للمشاركة في بحث لرسالة الدكتوراة بعنوان " إدراك مفهوم قيمة الأرض من خلال دراسة إعادة تطوير المناطق الغير رسمية في مصر". قبل أن تقرر ما إذا كنت ستشارك أم لا ، من المهم أن تفهم سبب إجراء البحث وما الذي سيتضمنه. يرجى تخصيص بعض الوقت لقراءة المعلومات التالية بعناية ومناقشتها مع الآخرين إذا كنت ترغب في ذلك. إذا كان هناك أي شيء غير واضح أو إذا كنت ترغب في مزيد من المعلومات يرجاء التواصل مع الباحثة مستخدما بيانات التواصل الموضحة أدناه.

غرض هذا البحث هو تعليمي حيث أنه متطلب أساسي للحصول على درجة الدكتوراه في مجال التخطيط والدراسات العمرانية من جامعة شيفيلد بالمملكة المتحدة. الباحثة الرئيسية تعمل كمدرس مساعد بقسم الهندسة المعمارية بكلية الهندسة ،جامعة عين شمس ويتم تمويل بحثها من خلال منحة دراسية مقدمة من قطاع البعثات بوزارة التعليم العالي المصرية. الهدف من هذا البحث هو دراسة معنى ومفهوم "قيمة الأرض" من وجهة نظر المجتمع المصري وكيفية إدراك هذه القيمة. يركز هذا البحث على الممارسات العمرانية الهادفة لاستخدام قيمة الأرض أواستغلالها أوحمايتها في حالة النزاع والآثار المترتبة على تلك الممارسات خاصة في سياق إعادة تطوير المناطق العشوائية في مصر. مدة هذا البحث ثلاث سنوات ويتضمن دراسة حالة لمشروع إعادة تطوير جزيرة الوراق في مصر.

لقد تم اختيار سيادتكم للمشاركة في هذا البحث كواحد من من أهالي جزيرة الوراق وستكون مشاركة سيادتكم عن طريق إجراء مقابلة فردية مع الباحثة للإجابة عن الأسئلة البحثية الخاصة بفهم كيفية تأثير قيمة الأرض على عملية إعادة التطوير. يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة مفهوم قيمة الأرض من وجهات نظر مختلفة ، وبالتالي سيتم إجراء مقابلات مع آخرين من الأفراد والهيئات المعنية بمشروع تطوير جزيرة الوراق وذلك لإجراء تحقيق غير متحيز وشامل لدراسة الحالة. الأفراد والهيئات المعنية يشملوا كل من سكان الجزيرة وملاك الأراضي والمستأجرين والعاملين في الجزيرة ، بالإضافة إلى المسؤولين الحكوميين والاستشاريين المعماريين والمطورين العقاريين والمقاولين ولجان تقييم الأراضي والعقارات والتعويضات المشاركة في مشروع إعادة التطوير الجزيرة. ستتضمن المقابلة أسئلة حول دورك في مشروع إعادة التطوير ، وحكمك الشخصي على المشروع وآلياته ، وآثار هذا المشروع على حياتك الشخصية والمهنية ، وفهمك لمدى تأثير قيمة الأراضي على صنع القرار.

٢. مسئولية الحماية والتحكم بالبيانات

جامعة شيفيلد بالمملكة المتحدة هي المسؤول الرئيسي عن البيانات لهذه الدراسة. هذا يعني أن الجامعة مسؤولة عن العناية بأي معلومات ستشاركها مع الباحثة ومسؤولة كذلك عن استخدامها بشكل صحيح. تمت الموافقة على هذا البحث من قبل لجنة أخلاقيات البحث العلمي بجامعة شيفيلد بعد مراجعتها كما هو منصوص عليه من قبل قسم التخطيط والدراسات العمرانية في كلية العلوم الاجتماعية. كما أن الباحثة حاصلة على تصريح أمني للقيام بهذا البحث من السلطات والهيئات المصرية متمثلة في وزارة الداخلية ، وجهاز المخابرات العامة المصرية ،وكذلك موافقة من الجهاز المركزي للتعبئة العامة والإحصاء (CAPMAS) ووزارة التعليم العالي. لمزيد من المعلومات عن القوانين المتبعة (والملزمة للباحثة وجامعة شيفليد) في استخدام وحماية البيانات برجاء التوجه إلى الرابط التالي :

https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general.

٣. حقوق المشاركين وآثار مشاركتهم

- مشاركتك في هذا البحث اختيارية ويمكنك الانسحاب في أي وقت أثناء المقابلة دون أي عواقب وبمجرد قيامك بذلك لن يتم استخدام أي من المعلومات التي شاركتها مع الباحثة أثناء المقابلة.
- يمكنك أيضًا اختيار عدم مناقشة أي من الموضوعات المذكورة سابقًا وهذا لن يستبعد ردودك الأخرى من البحث.
- نظرًا لأن رؤيتك مهمة للبحث ، ستستخدم الباحثة بيانات كعمرك وجنسك وحالتك الاجتماعية ومستواك التعليمي وحالتك الوظيفية والجهة التي تعمل بها كبيانات تحليلية مرتبطة بدورك في مشروع إعادة التطوير ، آثار مشروع إعادة التطوير على حياتك ، وموقفك من أهمية قيمة الأرض، ولكن لن يتم استخدام اسمك أو ربط أي من بياناتك الشخصية السابقة بتصريحاتك في أي من الأبحاث المنشورة المتعلقة بهذا المشروع.
- إذا كنت قد أجريت المقابلة بالفعل ولم تعد تريد أن تكون مقابلتك جزءًا من البحث ، فيجب إبلاغ الباحثة مستخدما بيانات التواصل الموضحة أدناه في فترة لا تزيد عن ٦ أشهر من تاريخ إجراء المقابلة.
- سيتم استخدام المعلومات والآراء التي ستقدمها في بحث الدكتوراه وكذلك الأبحاث العلمية والأكاديمية المنشورة كأوراق بحثية في المجلات العلمية والمؤتمرات العلمية.
- المعلومات والآراء التي ستشاركها مع الباحثة لن يتم نشرها على منصات وسائل الإعلام الرسمية أو منصات التواصل الاجتماعي أو المدونات الشخصية، أو مشاركتها مع المراسلين الصحفيين أو المشاركين الآخرين في البحث دون موافقتك.
- لن يتمكن أحد من تحديد هويتك في أي تقارير أو منشورات إلا إذا أعطيت موافقتك الصريحة على ذلك.
- إذا كنت توافق على مشاركة المعلومات التي تقدمها لنا مع باحثين آخرين ، فلن يتم مشاركة بياناتك الشخصية معهم ما لم تطلب ذلك صراحةً.
- بياناتك الشخصية لن يتمكن أحد من الوصول إليها إلا فريق البحث فقط (الباحثة الرئيسية ومشرفيها) وسيتم الاحتفاظ بها في Google Drive جامعة شيفيلد طوال فترة مشروع البحث (٣ سنوات) وسيتم أرشفتها في نهاية المشروع في مستودع جامعة شيفيلد (ORDA) لمدة ١٠ سنوات بعد تاريخ نشر الدكتوراه وأي معلومات حساسة سيتم إيداعها في الـ University X Drive ، وسيتم تشفيرها وحمايتها بكلمة مرور ، ولن يتمكن من الوصول إليها إلا الباحثة الرئيسية فقط ، وسيتم إتلافها بعد ٥ سنوات من انتهاء بحث الدكتوراة.
- يجب أن تدرك أن التجارب الشخصية والاجتماعية هي أجزاء أساسية من هذا البحث. يوصى بعدم المشاركة إذا كنت تعاني من حالة شديدة من الضيق أو القلق وفقًا للتجارب الشخصية الحالية أو السابقة التي ستعرضك المقابلة إلى إعادة تذكرها.
- إذا تسببت لك المشاركة في أي نوع من الاضطراب أو القلق ، فيرجى الاتصال بالباحثة على الفور لتوفير المساعدة المناسبة أو إرشادك إلى الشخص/الجهة التي ستفعل ذلك. على الرغم من عدم وجود فوائد مباشرة لك ستأتي من المشاركة في هذا البحث ، فإن التأثير المنشود لهذه الدراسة هو تحسين السياسات الحكومية في التعامل مع مناطق إعادة التطوير وإدارة الأراضي بشكل أفضل.

٤. الشكاوى والمقترحات

إذا كانت لديك أي شكاوى بخصوص هذا البحث أو اقتراحات تتعلق بالمشاركين الآخرين ذوي الصلة ، فلا تتردد في الاتصال بالباحثة . إذا كنت تشعر أنه لم يتم التعامل مع شكواك على نحو يرضيك من قبل الباحثة أو المشرفة الرئيسية ، فيجب عليك الاتصال برئيس قسم التخطيط والدراسات العمرانية ، الذي سيقوم بعد ذلك بتصعيد الشكوى من خلال القنوات المناسبة. إذا كانت الشكوى تتعلق بكيفية التعامل مع بياناتك الشخصية ، فيمكن العثور على معلومات حول كيفية رفع شكوى في إشعار الخصوصية بالجامعة: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general. سيتم تزويدك بنسخة من ورقة المعلومات هذه واستمارة موافقة موقعة للاحتفاظ بها.

نشكر سيادتكم على المشاركة

Section II: Consent Form — القسم الثاني: نموذج الموافقة

أوافق	لا أوافق	برجاء اختيار المربع المناسب
		المشاركة في البحث
☐	☐	لقد قرأت وفهمت ورقة معلومات البحث أو لقد تم شرح البحث بالكامل لي. ***إذا كانت إجابتك لا أوافق على هذا السؤال ، فيرجى عدم متابعة نموذج الموافقة هذا حتى تكون على دراية كاملة بما تعنيه مشاركتك في البحث**
☐	☐	لقد أتيحت لي الفرصة لطرح أسئلة حول هذا البحث
☐	☐	أوافق على المشاركة في المشروع. أفهم أن المشاركة في المشروع ستتضمن إجراء مقابلة مع الباحثة.
☐	☐	أوافق على أن يتم تسجيل هذه المقابلة صوتيا مع العلم أنه لن يتم ذكر اسمي أو بياناتي الشخصية في هذا التسجيل ولن يطلع عليه أحد غير الباحثة الرئيسية.
☐	☐	أفهم أنه باختيار المشاركة تطوعاً في هذا البحث ، فإن هذا لا ينشئ اتفاقية ملزمة قانونيا ولا يهدف إلى إنشاء علاقة عمل مع جامعة شيفيلد.
☐	☐	أفهم أن مشاركتي طوعية وأنه يمكنني الانسحاب من الدراسة في أي وقت ولست مضطرًا لإبداء أي أسباب لعدم رغبتي في المشاركة ولن تكون هناك أي عواقب سلبية إذا اخترت الانسحاب.
		كيفية استخدام المعلومات الخاصة بي أثناء وبعد المشروع البحثي
☐	☐	أفهم أن بياناتي الشخصية مثل اسمي، رقم تليفوني، محل سكني وبريدي الإلكتروني وما إلى ذلك لن يتم الكشف عنها لأشخاص خارج فريق المشروع البحثي (الباحثة الرئيسية ومشرفيها).
☐	☐	أفهم وأوافق على أنه يمكن اقتباس كلماتي في المنشورات العلمية أوالتقارير أوصفحات الويب أو أي من مخرجات البحث الأخرى. أفهم أنه لن يتم ذكر اسمي في هذه المخرجات إلا إذا طلبت ذلك على وجه التحديد.
☐	☐	أفهم وأوافق على أن الباحثين المعتمدين الآخرين لن يتمكنوا من الوصول إلى هذه البيانات إلا إذا وافقوا على الحفاظ على سرية المعلومات كما هو مطلوب في هذا النموذج.
☐	☐	أفهم وأوافق على أنه يجوز للباحثين المعتمدين الآخرين استخدام إجابتي في المنشورات البحثية والتقارير وصفحات الويب ومخرجات البحث الأخرى ، فقط إذا وافقوا على الحفاظ على سرية المعلومات كما هو مطلوب في هذا النموذج.
☐	☐	أوافق أن يتم إيداع ردود المقابلة الخاصة بي (باستثناء أي بيانات شخصية أو ما أرفض أن يتم نشره) في مستودع بيانات جامعة شيفيلد (ORDA) حتى يمكن استخدامها للأغراض البحثية في المستقبل
		حتى يمكن للباحثين استخدام إجاباتك قانونيا
☐	☐	أوافق على التنازل عن حقوق النشر التي أمتلكها على أي مواد يتم إنشاؤها من إجاباتي كجزء من هذا البحث إلى جامعة شيفيلد.

Section III: Semi-Structured Interview Guiding Questions القسم الثالث: نموذج المقابلة الشخصية

الموضوع الأول/ النمو العمرانى لجزيرة الوراق ورصد النزاع على الأرض

Theme 1: Informal Development and Land Conflict in the Island (15 minutes)

Main Objective: Investigate root causes for land conflict between different stakeholders involved in the redevelopment of El-Warraq Island	**الهدف الرئيسي:** دراسة الأسباب الرئيسية للنزاع على الأرض ما بين الأطراف المعنيين في مشروع إعادة تطوير جزيرة الوراق

Topic 1: Historical Background (the process) of El-Warraq Informal Development	**النقطة الأولى:** تاريخ جزيرة الوراق والنمو العمراني للجزيرة
1. Building Rapport	**1. التعرف على المشارك**
برجاء تعريف نفسك وكيف استقر بك الحال في الجزيرة Talk to me about yourself and how you came to settle in the island	
Socio-economic Status	الحالة الاجتماعية/الاقتصادية
Age:	السن:
Occupation:	المهنة:
Marital Status:	الحالة الاجتماعية:
Education:	التعليم:
Tribe / Origins:	العشيرة / العائلة:
Family Role:	الدور الأسري (عائل؟)
Others:	أخرى:
Tenure Status	حالة الحيازة
Building Type:	نوع السكن:
Building Condition:	حالة السكن:
Tenure Type:	نوع الحيازة:
Tenure Document(s):	مستند الحيازة:
Way of Acquisition (inheritance, self-built, buy, …)	كيفية الحيازة (ورث، جهود ذاتية، شراء)
Duration of residence	مدة الحيازة
Other tenants & their relation	مستأجرين آخرين وعلاقتهم
Other tenures	أملاك أو حيازات أخرى:

2. **The Island History and its development**	**2 . تاريخ الجزيرة ونموها العمراني**
احكي ما تعرفه عن تاريخ الجزيرة والتحديات التي واجهت الأهالي خلال نموها العمراني Narrate what you know about the Island history and the challenges inhabitants faced during its development	
History of Development First Settlers: First Agglomerations: Social Structures/ Relations/ Networks Evolution Causes of Settling: Local Authorities Involvement: Others	تاريخ نمو جزيرة الوراق النازحين / السكان الأوائل أول تجمع عمراني العلاقات الاجتماعية بين سكان الجزيرة أسباب النزوح إلى الجزيرة / الاستقرار بها تدخلات الجهات الحكومية / المحليات أخرى
Challenges & Possibilities Registry of Property (Legal Challenges) Living Conditions Economic Aspects (jobs, financial security, basic needs, …) Social Aspects (safety, social networks, services (schools, healthcare, …), social bonds, …) Environmental Aspects (access to clean water, sanitation, air quality, waste disposal, …)	التحديات والفرص تسجيل الأراضي والعقارات الظروف المعيشية العوامل الاقتصادية العوامل الاجتماعية العوامل البيئية
3. **Community Power and Social Structures**	**3.نفوذ المجتمع والعلاقات المجتمعية**
تكلم عن علاقتك بأهالي الجزيرة وكيف يدير المجتمع حياته اليومية بشكل جماعي / تعاوني / تشاركي Explain your relationship with the community and how the community manage collectively their daily lives	
Social Bond and Social Security Community Participation / Proactive Engagement / Solving Problems Conflict Management / Distribution of Rights / Roles and Responsibilities in Maintaining Land Collective Financial Security / Revolving Loans NGOs / CBOs / Agriculture Association (role, support, accessibility, changes, role in redevelopment)	الترابط المجتمعي والأمان الإجتماعي المشاركة المجتمعية / المبادرة / حل المشكلات إدارة النزاعات / توزيع الحقوق والواجبات / الأدوار في الحفاظ على المجتمع / الأرض / العقارات الاستقرار المالي / الجمعيات والتكافل مؤسسات المجتمع المدني / الجمعيات الأهلية / الجمعية الزراعية (الدور ، الدعم، إمكانية الوصول لها، الدور في التطوير)

Land Status and Social Position Community Leaders (causes of that position - *does it have to do with land? tribes, academic or occupational status?* - their roles, conflicts, …) Land as a Bargaining Power (area, location, land use, tenure status, buildings, …etc.) Equity in power distribution (signs of exclusion, vulnerability, unfairness, …)	مكانة الأرض والوضع الاجتماعي رموز المجتمع (أسباب كونهم رموز مجتمعية، أدوارهم، الصراعات) الأرض كقوة تفاوضية (مساحة، موقع، استخدام أرض، حالة حيازة، وجود مباني، ...) العدالة في توزيع النفوذ (مظاهر الإقصاء والتهميش وعدم العدالة في نمط المجتمع)
Topic 3: The Redevelopment Process and Position from Land Conflict	**النقطة الثانية:** عملية التطوير والموقف من النزاع على الأراضي
Explain what you know about the redevelopment project, how you came to know about it, and your position from it	اذكر ما تعرفه عن مشروع تطوير جزيرة الوراق وكيف تعرفت عليه وما موقفك منه
Redevelopment Project Announcement Process Available Information Public Meetings (frequency - information given – participants – management) Participation in the decision-making / in project Feelings about the project Alternatives for settlers (chosen one and why?) Feelings about alternatives (fair, adequate, challenges, opportunities, ...)	مشروع إعادة التطوير الإعلان عن المشروع تفاصيل المشروع الجلسات العامة (عددها - المعلومات – المشاركين – إدارة) المشاركة في اتخاذ القرارات / في المشروع احساسك تجاه المشروع البدائل المتاحة للأهالي في المشروع (اختيار المشارك ولماذا؟) احساسك تجاه تلك البدائل (العدل والمساواة ما بين الأهالي، مناسبة البدائل وتحديات اختيار أي منها، الفرص، ...)
Actions taken by Society Formal Registry (challenges?) Collective Lawsuit (Status/ Position/ Challenges) Petition/ Raising Public Awareness/ Social Media Riots / Protests (former?) Others	رد الفعل المجتمعي للمشروع التسجيل الرسمي (هل أصبح أسهل؟ التحديات؟) القضية الجماعية (موقفها، موقفك منها، التحديات والفرص) عريضة / رفع الوعي المجتمعي بالقضية / منصة التواصل الاجتماعي التظاهر السلمي السابق أخرى

Main Objective: Investigate how land value is conceptualized and mobilized	

Topic 3: Economic/Tangible Land Value	
Explain the difference between the inhabitants' valuation for their land and the government's valuation for it	
<u>Inhabitants Valuation</u> Valuation Aspects (proximity to transit routes, services, commercial zones, infrastructure, soil type, land use, …) Average Market Value (inside and outside the island, in other similar areas, vacant lands vs built areas, …) Land as an asset (access to credit, loans, investments, jobs, food and water sources, …) Valuation after the Redevelopment	
<u>Government Valuation</u> Aspects of Valuation (how the government value the land / property?) Compensation criteria Alternatives Valuation (replacement apartments/ land value, …) Other Financial Facilitation (facilitation of access to routes, jobs, markets, social security funds, well-being and mental health support, food stamps, …)	

Topic 4: Social/ Intangible Land Value	
What does the Land represent to you, and what is so special about living in the island? Why do you feel connected to it?	
Land & Sense of Place Shared Memories and Experiences Spiritual, Cultural, and Historic Meanings and Connections Aesthetic and Natural Aspects (what do you believe need to be preserved and special zones in the island) Place Identity and Sense of Pride / Ownership / Responsibility towards the Island (difference between the island and elsewhere)	▪
What aspects of Human Values are adopted/ encouraged/ practiced in the Island? What aspects are missing?	
Connection to Human Values (Human Needs) Belonging, Recognition, Empowerment, and Inclusion Freedom of Expression and Equity (Equitable opportunity for public participation) Social Justice (handling conflicts and ill-behaviour, distribution of assets, consolidation, customary rules, ….)	▪

Theme 3: Impacts of Redevelopment Project (10 minutes)

Main Objective:	*Identify possible impacts of the redevelopment project of El-Warraq Island on the socio-economic structural dynamics within the Island*

Information (Data)	*Guiding Questions / Points*
Quality of Life (Physical Aspects)	▪ Environmental Quality ▪ Urban Quality ▪ Safety & Shelter Security
Socio-economic Aspects	▪ Impacts on Social Security ▪ Impacts on Financial Security ▪ Impact of Prospect Security ▪ Impact on human values (identity, belonging, self-worth, recognition, freedom, and empowerment)

II/03 Categorizing Income Status

- One of the challenges of conducting group interviews was that the participants did not feel comfortable sharing their income status in front of others.
- The researcher created a matrix that would allow her to predict their income level based on combination of three factors: practised activity, tenure status, and owned assets.
- The income level categories represented in the next table do not reflect the same measuring criteria for the categories determined in the national statistical documents (CAPMAS, 2022). It is rather an adaptation for the relative income levels of the inhabitants in the island.
- According to this matrix, participants who scored 9 points are categorised as high-income group, those who scored 8 & 7 are medium-high, those who scored 6 are medium, those who scored 5 & 4 are medium-low, and finally those who scored 3 are categorised as low-income group.

	High (3)	**Medium (2)**	**Low (1)**
Practiced Activities	Own Business / Stable / High Income Activity	Temporary Technical / Commercial Activity / Public Employee	Low Income Temporary Activity / None
Tenure Status	Own house(s) in a registered land	Own an apartment/ Own in a non-registered land	Rent
Assets	Own lands and houses aside from residence	Own their residence	None

II/04 Thematic Analysis Development

- Each analysis file had a split between keywords relevant to the theme/sub-theme, participants' direct statements/quotes, and participants' indirect narratives related to the interviewed questions as shown in the following table, where statements and narratives from interviews were copied into this file.
- This allowed the researcher to go through every transcript three times, where each time the focus was on the main categorical theme (economic, political, or social) to avoid reducing one theme to another.
- The researcher documented all emerging sub-themes and highlighted crosscutting ones – like socio-economic themes – to avoid redundancy.
- Some of the predefined sub-themes were renamed/recategorised according to frequencies and confidence level in the arguments of the participants.
- The initial writing for each categorical theme was done after the analysis directly and before the start of the next thematic analysis, again to avoid reductionism and be coherent with adaptation of pluralistic approach in investigating value.

Theme	Predefined Sub-theme	Emerging Theme/ Topic	Participant Code	Time Stamp / Page Number	Words	Statements	Narratives
Economic Structures	Economic Drivers of Development						
	Land & Housing Commodification Strategies						
	Land Valuation Criteria						
	Cost / Benefit Analysis						
Political / Strategic Structures	Military Governance Doctrine						
	Decision Making Ideology						
	City Image						
	Strategic / Political Value of Land						
	Ecological Values						
Social Structures	Identity& Belonging						
	Solidarity & Resilience						
	The Value of People						

II/05 Interviews Participants Coding and Log

I- Experts Interviews

Participant Code	Date (2021)	Time (Duration)	Position	Entity	Role	Audio Recorded
PCSI	19 / 06	11:00 AM (1 Hr.)	Urban Consultant	Sites International	Project Coordinator / Planner	Yes
JCUN	22/ 06	01:00 PM (30 Min.)	Urban Consultant (Former)	UN-Habitat	Project Reviewer	Yes
SCGO	13/ 07	10:00 AM (1.25 Hr.)	Senior Urban Consultant	GOPP	Project Reviewer & Approval	Yes
PCCC	14 / 07	05:00 PM (30 Min.)	Consultancy Office Head (Main Consultant)	Cube Consultants	Former Project Planner	Yes
JCGO	15 / 07	11:00 AM (1 Hr.)	Junior Urban Planner	GOPP	Project Reviewer & Coordination	Yes
SCUN	27 / 07	12:00 PM (40 Min.)	Senior Urban Consultant	UN-Habitat	Project Reviewer	Yes
UEPC	08 / 08	11:00 PM (1.5 Hr.)	Economic Urban Consultant	Private	Project Feasibility Study	Yes
JCIS	29 / 09	09:00 PM (40 Min.)	Junior Urban Planner	ISDF	Technical Support	Yes
PMEA	30 / 09 10 / 10	10:00 AM (1.5 Hr.) 9:00 AM (1.5 Hr.)	Project Manager	AFEA	Project Operation Management – Bridge Construction	No
FMNU	10 / 10	11:00 AM (45 Min.)	Top Management	NUCA	Project Operation Management – City Development	No

II – Inhabitants Interviews

1. Individual Interviews

Code	Date	Time	Gender	Age	Occupation	Education	Marital Status	Tenure Status	Income Level
I-01	11/08	11 AM (4 Hr.)	Male	30s	Ferryboat Driver	High School	Single	Rent	Low
I-02	20/09	12 PM (25 Min.)	Male	50s	None	None	Widow/Ch.	Own	Low
I-03	20/09	2 PM (30 Min.)	Female	20s	Housewife	Technical Degree	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
I-04	20/09	2 PM (30 Min.)	Female	20s	Community Worker	BSc Degree	Single	Own (Live with Parents)	Medium
I-05	21/09	1 PM (25 Min.)	Male	30s	Tuktuk Driver	High School	Married/Ch.	Own	Low
I-06	28/09	1 PM (1 Hr.)	Male	20s	College Student	High School	Single	Own (Live with Parents)	High
I-07	04/10	12 PM (1 Hr.)	Female	50s	Housewife	Technical Degree	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium High
I-08	06/10	12 PM (1 Hr.)	Male	40s	Government Employee	BSc Degree	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium High
I-09	06/10	3 PM (45 Min.)	Male	30s	Handyman / Fisherman	Primary Education	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
I-10	06/10	5:30 PM (1 Hr.)	Male	40s	Lawyer	BSc Degree	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium
I-11	07/10	12 PM (1 Hr.)	Male	40s	School Teacher	BSc Degree	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium High

2. Group Interviews

A) Group A - Two Participants

Code	Date	Time	Gender	Age	Occupation	Education	Marital Status	Tenure Status	Income Level
A-01/P1	16/08	3 PM (75 Min.)	Female	60s	Charity Head	BSc Degree	Widow/Ch.	Own	Medium High
A-01/P2	16/08	3 PM (75 Min.)	Male	40s	Engineer	BSc Degree	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium High
A-09/P1	14/09	1 PM (0.5 Hr.)	Female	40s	Housewife	Illiterate	Married/Ch.	Rent	Low
A-09/P2	14/09	1 PM (0.5 Hr.)	Male	30s	Grocery Shop Owner	Primary Education	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium
A-10/P1	28/09	12 PM (40 Min.)	Male	18	Student	Secondary Level	Single	Own	Medium Low
A-10/P2	28/09	12 PM (40 Min.)	Male	18	Student	Secondary Level	Single	Own	Medium Low
A-12/P1	07/10	2 PM (0.5 Hr.)	Female	20s	Chemist	Bachelor	Single	Own	Medium Low
A-12/P2	07/10	2 PM (0.5 Hr.)	Female	40s	Housemaid	Primary Education	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low

B) Group B - Three Participants

Code	Date	Time	Gender	Age	Occupation	Education	Marital Status	Tenure Status	Income Level
B-02/P1	18/08	12 PM (1.5 Hr.)	Male	70s	Researcher	PhD Degree	Married/Ch.	Own	High
B-02/P2	18/08	12 PM (1.5 Hr.)	Male	50s	Farmer	Illiterate Erase	Married/Ch.	Own/ Rent	Medium Low
B-02/P3	18/08	12 PM (1.5 Hr.)	Female	40s	Housewife	Primary Education	Married/Ch.	Own/ Rent	Medium Low
B-03/P1	19/08	12 PM (1 Hr.)	Female	30s	Vegetable Seller	Primary Education	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
B-03/P2	19/08	12:30 (0.5 Hr.)	Female	20s	Fish Seller	Secondary Education	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
B-03/P3	19/08	12:30 (0.5 Hr.)	Female	40s	Housemaid	Illiterate	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
B-05/P1	25/08	12 PM (1Hr.)	Female	60s	None	Illiterate	Widowed/Ch	Own	Low
B-05/P2	25/08	12 PM (1 Hr.)	Female	30s	Clothes Seller	Primary Education	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium
B-05/P3	25/08	12 PM (1 Hr.)	Female	30s	Fruit Seller	Primary Education	Single	Own	Medium Low
B-06/P1	26/08	12 PM (1 Hr.)	Male	30s	Commercial Seller	Technical Degree	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium
B-06/P2	26/08	12 PM (1 Hr.)	Female	40s	Housewife	Illiterate	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
B-06/P3	26/08	12 PM (1 Hr.)	Female	40s	Nursery Teacher	Diploma	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
B-07/P1	08/09	1 PM (0.5 Hr.)	Female	40s	Housewife	Illiterate	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
B-07/P2	08/09	1 PM (0.5 Hr.)	Female	20s	Housewife	Illiterate	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
B-07/P3	08/09	1 PM (0.5 Hr.)	Female	40s	Housewife	Illiterate	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
B-08/P1	13/09	12 PM (1 Hr.)	Female	50s	Housewife	Diploma	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium High
B-08/P2	13/09	12 PM (1 Hr.)	Female	30s	Housewife	Illiterate Erase	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
B-08/P3	13/09	12 PM (1 Hr.)	Female	30s	Housewife	Primary Education	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium

C) Group C - Four Participants

C-00/P1	19/06	3 PM (2.5 hrs.)	Male	40s	Engineer	Bachelor	Married/Ch.	Own	High
C-00/P2	19/06	3.30 (0.5 hrs.)	Male	60s	Farmer	Illiterate	Married/Ch.	Own	Low
C-00/P3	19/06	4 PM (2.5 hrs.)	Male	50s	Tok-tok Driver	Illiterate Erase	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
C-00/P4	19/06	5 PM (0.5 hrs.)	Male	40s	Handyman Private Worker	Illiterate	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium
C-04/P1	23/08	11 AM (1 hr.)	Female	60s	Clothes Seller	Illiterate	Widowed/Ch	Own	Medium Low
C-04/P2	23/08	11 AM (1 hr.)	Female	40s	Housewife	Primary Education	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
C-04/P3	23/08	11 AM (1 hr.)	Female	40s	Housemaid	Illiterate Erase	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
C-04/P4	23/08	11 AM (1 hr.)	Male	30s	Technician	Illiterate Erase	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium

C-11/P1	03/10	1:30 PM (1 Hr.)	Female	30s	Illiterate Erase Teacher	Diploma	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium
C-11/P2	03/10	1:30 PM (1 Hr.)	Female	30s	Housewife	Illiterate Erase Student	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
C-11/P3	03/10	1:30 PM (1 Hr.)	Female	20s	Housewife	Illiterate Erase Student	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low
C-11/P4	03/10	1:30 PM (1 Hr.)	Female	20s	Housewife	Illiterate Erase Student	Married/Ch.	Own	Medium Low

Semi-structured Interviews, Group Interviews, and Quick Reflections (El-Warraq Inhabitants)

Method (No of Meetings)	Documentation (No of Meetings)	No of Participants/ meeting	Comments
Unstructured Collective Meeting (1)	Audio Recorded (1)	4	Organized by Gate Keeper 1
Semi-structured Interviews (23)	Audio Recorded (9) Written Notes (2)	1	
	Audio Recorded (4)	2	One of them include Gate Keeper 2 and her son
	Audio Recorded (5) Written Notes (1)	3	Total Number of Participants 18
	Audio Recorded (2)	4	
Quick Reflections (5)	Audio Recorded (4) Written Notes (1)	1	Someone just shared his/ her opinion about the project and my work without giving any information about their identity or hearing any of my questions.
Total Number of Participants		**54**	

II/06 Thematic Analysis Supporting Quotes

Thematic Topic	Participant	Quote
Value of Agricultural Land	PCCC, July 2021	*"All Giza were originally farmlands, and all Giza is built on agriculture basins, and it is all ashwayeat [random/ informal areas], unplanned areas, so even if the island is 1000 Feddan even if it is an agricultural land, we can compensate it in another place."*
Evaluation Differentiation Price	SCUN, July 2021	*"The valuation or putting a price for the lands have known criteria … it has to do with the location, the size, the surrounding uses, … we haven't been exposed to this … but I imagine that this is not necessarily what happened in the island. They were calculated as agricultural lands, and they didn't necessarily have done the valuation differentiation matrix … you shouldn't take the whole island as a lump sum. The lands on the shore are one thing, the agricultural lands are another thing, the one with existing building another thing, the places with urbanism, and all these are factors that inputs the calculations. Because we were not involved in the valuation, so I don't know exactly how did they calculate it? I don't know."*
Displacement Alternative	JCIS, September 2021	*"These alternatives were to take an apartment in exchange of his apartment, so if he had 10 apartments, he would take 10 apartments instead of them, fully finished with areas of 90-m², and the places are also near them like in Imbaba Airport … Of course, some people accepted this, but they were few, the rest of the people didn't accept this. All they wanted is to take an alternative apartment inside the island, in one of the residential buildings that are being built in the island, they don't want to get out of the island."*

Thematic Topic	Participant	Quote
Redevelopment Feasibility Study	PCSI, October 2021	*"The operation of the project and how it is related with the perimeter [context] that surrounds it and how it will accommodate the trips [daily traffic] from and into [the project] … they have competitive lands, if I am someone coming to buy … if I am an investor and I have the New Capital – and I am not pointing the beauty of the capital – but I mean it is an open area, it is not throttled with one entrance and exit, and this is a very important thing … why would I go to the island and leave the new capital?? … The government is competing with itself … you are decreasing the value of something when you provide it with different shapes … if you are - as a government – presenting this location as prime location between Shubra and El-Warraq? It is not a great thing, for an investor I mean, what is the environment that you are providing??"*
	JCUN, June 2021	*"The project will face too many challenges. For example, you have one side looking over Maspero and the other side looking at El-Kitkat, so that is not the sweetest thing, the second thing, what will make an investor to come put his money in this area, while he has the administrative capital and the development happening in Sheikh Zayed and the other side is very strong, and high-end people now are targeting these areas, the same target audience for El-Warraq project? So, the project will face big challenges to succeed, and its marketing need to be done in a special way."*
Capturing Land Value	JCUN, June 2021	*"Be aware that land readjustment … is not … is not economic, the goal from it is to make a housing area … an urban area … that is planned, instead of making an informal urban area. So, you plan the agricultural lands and who takes these lands are the inhabitants, they gave up a percentage for the infrastructure, from their lands … the state has benefited from that the area hasn't become informal and it can provide its services and goes in the process of the Egyptian urbanism. It avoids a problem. The land readjustment avoids a problem. It increases the value of lands for sure, but for the inhabitants. But the idea for El-Warraq was purely economic."*

Thematic Topic	Participant	Quote
Benefits of Redevelopment (Experts)	JCGO, July 2021	*"You have raised the benefits of the place, in case the project got implemented in the right way, you have gained a lot of benefits. You will develop a place that was not used/exploited. From my own perspective, you raised the status of certain people, those who stayed in the island or those who will stay in the island, they will live in an elegant status, not even a normal one, not the same way they were living. Even those who will be move out of the island, you also raised their status. Instead of living in a house without sewage, without electricity, the services are very simple, the efficiency and the quality of the life itself is much less in the island than any other place. I have moved them in a more decent place, yes it could be far away, not on a ground floor that they want, but still, it is a better life."*
Benefits of Redevelopment (Inhabitants)	A-01/P1, August 2021	*"They say that if the people of the island used to sell with 1000 pound/m² then I [the government] will give those 1400 for it, and that will be more than fair. But he is not considering that no one was forced to sell his whole land, just pieces of it. And is it logic that the evaluation since he made them before freeing the pound rate, would be the same after 4 years? Is the price of the pound the same since 2017? It is not, and accordingly, if I will sell my land today, I would have sold it with a higher price than 4 years ago."*
El-Warraq Redevelopment Project	JCGO, July 2021	*"It is called the Support and Planning of GCR Development Programme. This programme started in 2016, but it had an older extension… this program of GCR includes 39 projects … We have another 5 islands in the program beside El-Warraq which included 5 projects: the strategic plan for El-Warraq, the detailed plan for the first phase, the traffic study, the environmental impact study, and the upgrading of the emergent phase of El-Cornish [waterfront]. All these projects are originally outputs from the strategic general plan."*

Thematic Topic	Participant	Quote
Rural / Informal Development Mode	I-11, October 2021	*"I was enhancing my house for my children. I love the privacy that my house gives me. I like to keep the doors and windows open, not to confine myself in air-conditioned space. I love to sit down on the rooftop after dawn and read Quran in peace. I love to raise pigeons on the roof top and breed different species together. Even when my uncle suggested that I would have a place for my cousin's family until he was able to build his own house, I refused, so I could keep my privacy and my family's privacy as well."*