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## **'Real people in real places': Conceptualizing power for emancipatory security through Tahrir**

Ali Bilgic

For Emancipatory Security Theory (also known as Welsh School, Aberystwyth School, heretofore, EST), which developed under the umbrella of Critical Security Studies (CSS), unpacking the concept of power and exploring myriad power-security relations has always been a central motive. This is not only because the theory's analytical-political objective is to examine insecurities of individuals stemming from oppressive power processes, relations, and structures; it is mainly because those 'victims' whose choices are restricted by oppressive and dominating power structures are regarded as agents for their own security within collectivities (Booth, 2007: 226). Any theory of security without an approach to power (what power means, how it works, and to what end) remains analytically incomplete. As put by Roberts (2010: 74), the politics of security is a power struggle. For EST, understanding the power of individuals who collectively resist oppressive power hierarchies is not simply an analytical question, but a normative motivation. However, the image of power in EST does not correspond to this motivation. This neglect fails to deliver its main promise of studying security of 'real people in real places' (Booth, 2005: 275)

This article discusses the issue of power for resisting individuals as the ultimate referents and agents of security. It aims to advance an understanding of power that re-articulates emancipation for 'post-liberal' global politics. In this way, the analysis aims to contribute to the reconceptualization of emancipatory security for 'post-liberal' politics, which transcends the state, its narrow and exclusionary, 'national' politics, and ostensibly 'rational' actors. This is performed by exploring alternative, pluralistic, and inclusionary political spaces where individuals claim political agency through their 'everyday' practices (Richmond, 2010; Richmond and Mac Ginty, 2013). 'The everyday is a space in which local individuals and communities live and develop political strategies in their local environment towards the state and towards international models of order' (Richmond, 2010: 670). This prioritizes the 'critical agency' of resisting individuals and their own localities, context, and needs (Richmond, 2010 and 2011a, Mac Ginty, 2010). As individuals increasingly claim 'critical agency' for their own security in Egypt, Turkey, and Brazil, EST should be better equipped to understand the *power* of this agency, which underlines the necessity of rethinking emancipation. In this light, emancipatory power of resistance will hereby be conceptualized as a *productive power emerging during the 'moments of emancipation' where individual subjectivities are reproduced within a collectivity based on trust.*

The analysis begins with the examination of the existing power conceptualization in EST. Following this, each section articulates one dimension of emancipatory power. The second section situates emancipatory power within the discussions of power in IR. It argues that Foucauldian productive power is a power approach where emancipatory power can be embedded in the post-liberal world. However, as feminists highlight, productive power also has setbacks, which will be addressed by introducing Hannah Arendt's understanding of power. Arendt's approach, enriched by Judith Butler's performativity, not only facilitates a bridge between individual and collectivity in moments of resistance, it also paves the way for introducing trust and empathy into emancipatory power. The third section will show that a new type of emancipation should be introduced as opposed to the consequence-oriented liberal one that currently dominates EST. As a result, a dynamic, social, and collective power can be defined without sacrificing individual differences and plurality in their own localities. The final section will illustrate emancipatory power through trust. This illustration will specifically focus on the first week of protests in Tahrir Square, Egypt, in January 2011.

A caveat concerning the empirical case is that the analysis will focus on a small part of the complex political, economic, and social realities in Egypt. It is acknowledged that the analysis of the political and social context of the protests, which has been performed elsewhere (Khalil, 2011; Dabashi, 2012; Joffe, 2013), is limited. However, data on personal life stories is useful to illustrate that individuals resist collectively by trusting each other while reproducing their subjectivities. This method is borrowed from feminist methodology in order to bring individual stories to the centre of analysis (Stern, 2006). These stories are narratives, and form the 'primary way by which we make sense of the world around us, produce meanings, articulate intentions, and legitimize actions' (Wibben, 2011: 2). In the last section, the focus will be on the narratives of protesters who explained their initial ideas towards other protesters and whose subjectivities were changed by being part of a collectivity in Tahrir. I argue that these narratives will reveal 'political subjectivities' (McLeod, 2013: 166) and their production and transformation within a collectivity through exercising power.

### *EST's Power Problematique*

Since the conceptualization of 'security as emancipation' by Booth (1991), criticism against EST within CSS has revolved around three main themes. The first criticism concerns the inability of EST to acknowledge and challenge political and epistemological practices that operationalize emancipation as a way to 'save' others (Dunne and Wheeler, 2004) or 'educate' peoples for their own emancipation (Wyn Jones, 1999: 160-162). In this way, emancipation-as-security becomes an ideological mechanism that exerts social power, which in turn reproduces individual subjectivities and communal identities from the perspective of the liberal, Western, male protector/saviour. The resulting

implication is the re-construction of neoliberal, West-centric, gendered global structures and relations (Duffield, 2010; Neal 2010; True, 2011). The second criticism originates from the scant analytical focus on resistance to oppression, especially when resistance takes a violent form with the purpose of 'emancipation' (van Munster, 2008; Peoples, 2011). It is indeed surprising that a security theory, which prioritizes resisting individuals as agents of emancipatory transformation, does not offer a satisfactory theoretical and empirical account of resistance and violence. Thirdly, students of critical approaches to security challenge EST because it neglects the oppressive dimension of security. This contravenes the logic of emancipation (Aradau, 2008; Neoclaus, 2008) and hinders the possibility of studying resistance (Aradau, 2004: 397). This criticism rightly questions the equation of emancipation with security in EST without considering how the concept of security is used for control and oppression in liberal governmentality.

EST's limited power conceptualization in tandem with its consequence-oriented liberal 'emancipation' definition (see below) renders the theory vulnerable to the aforementioned criticisms, primarily because it does not integrate into the analysis resisting individuals in their own localities as *agents* of security. As a result, their alternative 'bottom-up' security notions (Mac Ginty, 2010), experiences, and subjectivities are either overlooked or simply rhetorically acknowledged without entertaining local agents' own ideas of security. The type of power that individuals perform to render themselves agents of their own security has not been conceptualized. This results in analytical and normative problems, because EST remains under-equipped to support the arguments that its scholars have formulated to address the above criticisms (see, Hynek and Chandler, 2013: 54-56). Firstly, security is not necessarily about control and domination, but also about the freedoms of co-existing individuals (Booth, 2007: 111, Bilgic, 2013: 8-10). Secondly, EST does not impose liberal ideology over individuals and communities, but understands individuals in their own localities (Booth, 1999; Nunes, 2012). Third, EST is against the instrumental rationality which justifies violence to achieve an end (Booth, 2007: 429-431). The question then arises: where does the power of emancipatory resistance lie? EST identifies three approaches to address this question.<sup>1</sup> However, they all suffer limitations.

Booth's approach highlights an uneasy understanding power. While power is assumed as a political force which dominates, oppresses, and corrupts, it is also normatively motivated by the objective to 'empower' individuals with the purpose of emancipation. Booth attempted to solve this dilemma in his early writings by prioritizing the immaterial dimension of power over its material dimension, and by denouncing material power (Booth 2000: 54). In his later writings, he praised Foucault for the ability to show the power/knowledge nexus, while at the same time criticising Foucauldian power for permeating all spheres of social life. For Booth, the Foucauldian approach reduces all knowledge and truth to power. Calling for a counter-concept to power, he argues that 'the knowledge/power

relationship is one reason why we need a concept of truth, for without it power is the only arbiter' (2007: 242). On the one hand, Booth understands power as an oppressive material and immaterial phenomenon, which can victimize and silence particular groups of individuals. His rejection of the reduction of knowledge and truth to power is underlined by the concern that if claims to knowledge and truth are understood through oppressive and dominating power, the weak can be silenced and disempowered further. On the other hand, since he endorses the relationship between power and knowledge, students of EST are encouraged to generate knowledge to 'give voice the voiceless', and therefore, to *empower* them (2007: 242). However, he does not explain how empowerment can be thought and practiced without a concept of power compatible with emancipatory politics.

Fierke offers a more practical framework of emancipation, which is underlined by an alternative conceptualization of power. This power refers to the individual's ability to realize her ends in spite of oppression. Fierke's alternative power does not stem from fear, control and domination. Instead, power is 'to stand tall, with dignity, even though one is weak' (1998: 97). Although Fierke's approach to the power of the weak, or of resistance, provides a more practical account than Booth's, it also has shortcomings. First, power is taken for granted as an individual property which stems from individuals' legitimate and rightful normative position (for example, anti-racism in the case of Civil Rights Movement). Second, the thread linking individual empowerment (such as Rosa Parks) and the power of collective resistance (social movements towards the end of the Cold War such as *Solidarity* in Poland) is not well-developed. However, understanding power solely as an individual property cannot generate a collective resistance, nor can it challenge oppression. What is needed is a power understanding that explores the emergence of power through individual social practices and its effect on individuals and collectivities.

The social and dynamic understanding of power is most effectively and explicitly introduced in EST by Nunes' study (2012), which integrates Foucauldian power into the theory. Advancing the criticism that the governmentality of various forms of security has reproductive and controlling effects on individual subjectivities (Aradau, 2004 and 2008; Roberts, 2010; Richmond 2011a), Nunes' analysis is underlined by the concern that EST does not sufficiently consider the 'materializing' effects of oppressive security practices and structures on individuals. This raises a question for EST: it is not clear '*what one is to be emancipated from*' (2012: 353, italics original). For Nunes, the way to address this deficiency is to integrate a Foucauldian account of power into a more insightful explanation of how power works in the politics of security. As a result, he discusses how power produces subjects in governmentality, rather than dominating them. Through integrating 'productive power', Nunes argues that EST can be better equipped to examine the effects of security practices in the (re)production of individual subjectivities who, in turn, re-enforce existing security practices.

Understanding the relationship between how individuals produce power and how power produces individuals is essential for EST. That said, this Foucauldian approach can contradict the theory, as will be discussed next.

### *Thinking Productive Power for Emancipation*

In IR, the mainstream understanding is that actors exercise power over others either through direct coercion, using institutions and structures (Holsti, 1964; Schmidt, 2005; Rosecrance, 2006), or through persuasion (Nye, 2004; Lebow, 2005; Lukes, 2005; Van Ham 2010). Until recently the discussion was about how one can exercise power-over others in order to increase power-to (Hearn, 2011: 7). An alternative approach questions 'what does power do?'. It investigates performances of power in micro and macro politics, and the effects of power on those who exercise power and on those upon whom power is exercised (Guzzini, 2005: 508). This corresponds to 'productive power' in Barnett and Duvall's typology of power (2005: 13-22). Productive power unfolds relations of power by revealing how performances constitute individual subjectivities as subject and object positions in these relations (Bailey, 1993: 116-17). It also offers a critical prism to study power from the perspective of objects of power, who produce power through their performances (Shepherd, 2010: 6, Fraser 1989: 18, see Butler, 1990). Several critical studies examine these processes (Muppidi, 2005; Agathangelou and Ling, 2005; Amigot and Pujal, 2009; Shepherd, 2010; Bigo, 2011). Nunes' focus on the materializing effects that security practices have on the reproduction of individual subjectivities is similar to this critical practice, and potentially results in a better grasp of how power works in the formation of 'competing security claims of individuals'.

Although productive power offers a dynamic, relational, social, and critical perspective, there are three shortcomings, which also hinder Nunes' attempt for wholesale acceptance of the concept by EST. The first concerns insufficient attention to the power of resistance, in other words, the power of 'docile bodies'. Feminists who use a Foucauldian approach not only analyse how female bodies are formed in docility and obedience through power, but also how they can find spaces of resistance (among others, see Bordo, 1993a and 1993b; Amigot and Pujal, 2009: 652). This leads Allen to argue that Foucault's power suffers from 'the paradox of agency': individuals are accepted as subjects who have agency (an ability to act, to resist), yet this agency is taken away when a deterministic account of human actions as subjected to power is accepted (1999: 55). Secondly, feminists raise the problem of normativity in Foucault's analysis. Although Foucault criticises oppressive power relations and calls for resistance to individuality 'which has been imposed on us for several centuries' (1980: 785), many feminists have been critical to Foucault because he overlooks normative distinctions between different uses of power (Fraser, 1989: 32; McNay 1992: 141). The last setback is related to power

stemming from collective action. While Foucault understands power as *assemble*, he rejects the idea of power based on concert, unlike Arendt below. This 'commits Foucault to a wholesale rejection of any sort of understanding of power that is generated through reciprocal, collective social action' (Allen 1999: 56).

Productive power's dynamic and social approach, which focuses on performances, renders it a conceptual backdrop against which emancipatory power can be conceptualized. That said, feminist criticisms to Foucault are useful to indicate how Foucauldian power in EST is incomplete with regard to its limited account of resisting agency and its power. By bringing them together, emancipatory power is generated through performances of individuals who resist and reject the objectification of power over/to and start to construct a new type of subjectivity that is defined in relation to a collectivity. It also analytically and normatively illuminates the ways in which individuals, in spite of their docility, can resist oppression in solidarity. To substantiate this, the next section will introduce Hannah Arendt's political philosophy.

#### *'Arendtian Corrective' to Productive Power for Emancipation*

Owens describes Arendt's political philosophy as challenging the approach which automatically equates violence with power, and therefore, 'to end[s] the modern fascination with reducing politics to violent domination' (2007: 14). She argues that Arendt puts human plurality, with all disagreements and differences, 'at the heart of politics', where plural equals bestowed with thinking and natality come together to resist the old systems and to create new spaces of freedom (30-31). Therefore, according to Arendt, power, freedom, and politics are interwoven in a way that can articulate the resistance of individuals in the language of power. Power 'corresponds to the human ability not just to act, but to act in concert. Power is never a property of individual; it belongs to a group, and remains in existence as long as the group keeps together' (1970: 44) in 'the space of appearance'. This is generated by individual performances, and in turn, reproduces subjectivities. However, it is not oppressing or dominating. Rather, it stems from the plurality of individuals who think and create anew.

In order to explain why Arendt conceptualizes power as a potential of individuals for collective action, two key concepts of Arendtian understanding on individuals should be stressed. The first concept is *thinking*: 'the effort to undo systems by continuous questioning' and 'empathy', the effort to understand others without losing one's self (Kateb, 2010: 36-38). The second concept is *natality*, which refers to 'the capacity [of individuals] of beginning something anew, that is, of acting' (Arendt, 1998). Natality points to the potential of individuals to take social initiative and start something new 'as a second birth' through speech and action (Gordon, 2002: 139). Each human being has 'the

capacity to initiate a new set of words and actions that are uniquely hers and that no human life can ever be the replica of any other' (Benhabib 2010: 5).

These two characteristics shared by human beings do not make it possible to overlook the modern politics that target and shape subjectivities (and bodies) of individuals, who in return reproduce existing relations and structures through their performances. However, it is also not possible to reduce the 'human condition' to processes of normalization and control. Indeed, Foucault and Arendt share various principles of modern politics and political philosophy: the rejection of ahistorical and asocial subjects, the 'normalizing' effects of modern political practices on individuals, and, most importantly for the purposes of this analysis, the acknowledgement of resistance (Dolan, 2005). However, while Foucault posits resistance against the normalizing, controlling, and yet productive power, Arendt seeks power in 'the potential that enables humans to break away, or more precisely, to disrupt the hold of Foucauldian power' (Gordon, 2002: 134). Thinking and nativity render individuals critical agents who reflect upon systems and launch initiatives to create anew. Arendt's political philosophy powerfully shapes Allen's concept of feminist power-with, which refers to 'a collective ability that results from the receptivity and reciprocity that characterize the relations among individual members of the collectivity' (Allen, 1999: 126). Power hereby does not take the form of limiting the choices of others, nor does it stem from solely individual empowerment and resistance. It is derived from solidarity among those who are victimized by oppressive power. Power-with emerges from collective action and transforms subjectivities. This is a productive power which is generated by and generates not Foucault's 'docile bodies', but Arendt's individuals who think, create, and resist *together*.

While Arendtian power-with provides us with the theoretical and normative perspective to conceptualize emancipatory power for post-liberal world politics, it also has two setbacks, underlined by Butler (2011). Firstly, the Arendtian approach does not focus on the materiality of 'space of appearance'. Secondly, it potentially excludes what is assumed as pre-political and private from the space of appearance. This can result in a reproduction of inside/outside, inclusion/exclusion, us/them dichotomies. To address these problems, Butler argues that bodies gathering together in plurality re-configure the material space that in turn supports the resistance. In addition, 'the everyday' in the re-configured material space renders the resistance popular by encouraging more people to join. These issues will be revisited in the case of Tahrir.

In spite of its limitations, Arendtian power-with provides fundamental advantages to conceptualizing emancipatory power. Thinking in terms of reflexivity and nativity enables the critical agency of individuals to resist what *they* think as oppressive. Therefore, individuals' localities, needs, and

requirements can be situated at the centre of emancipatory security analysis in tandem with *their* ways of pursuing security. Furthermore, for EST, 'space of appearance' paves the way for exploring spaces which are constructed politically as alternatives to narrow state-level politics. In the post-liberal world, squares, streets, and parks are constructed as the spaces of resistance where individuals pursue security by challenging oppression through their bodily performances, as Butler rightly argues (2011). Emancipation, therefore, does not simply revolve around the transformation of 'non-liberal' structures, but emerges as the reproduction of resisting individuals' subjectivities in the pluralist space of appearance. Finally, power-with links the individual to a collectivity where pluralism triumphs over homogeneity. 'The everyday' is practised collectively in the space of appearance; this collective dimension is fundamental for emancipatory power. The following discusses how this collective body can be constructed through trust.

#### *Emancipatory Power-With through Trust*

For Arendt, one of the most important factors of power is the faculty of promising, which keeps the collectivity together (1998: 244-45). Power is actualized in a body politic when members of the group believe that other members will keep the promises that brought them together: 'sovereignty of a body of people bound and kept together, not by an identical will which somehow magically inspires them all, but by an agreed purpose for which alone the promises are valid and binding' (245). The body politic, depending on ruling, sovereignty or power-over, is not a realm of uncertainty because of domination and sometimes violence. However, in Arendtian thinking, power and uncertainty go hand in hand because power depends on keeping mutual promises in the collectivity (244). This is where we need to explore the relation between trust and power-with.

Trust can be defined as one's belief that s/he will protect and promote others' interests with the expectation that others will act in a similar way (Booth and Wheeler, 2008: 230). Furthering of interests (both narrow and broad) is essential for any definition of trust. One group of scholars argues that trust appears when 'rational' actors cooperate with each other with the expectation of gaining benefits from the cooperation. This is identified as 'cognitive trust', where the trusting parties rationally make calculations about each other while monitoring their behaviours (O'Neill, 2002: 64; Nielsen, 2011: 162). Prioritizing the role of self-interest in trust relations, 'cognitive trust' finds manifestation in the rationalist approach in IR (Kydd, 2005; Hoffmann 2006). The second social approach is 'affect-based trust' which is the belief that 'the goodwill and competence' of another will honour the interaction; in other words, the expectation that the trustee will be 'moved by the thought that we are counting on her' (Jones, 1998: 4; Hoffmann 2006). Trust has a social dimension whose source lies in social norms and moral qualities. These norms and moral qualities construct a

'bond' between individuals. Therefore, trust becomes an expectation that others will honour this bond and 'do what is right' (Hollis, 1996: 10-13). Booth and Wheeler (2008: 238) conceptualize empathy as a property of social trust, which enables bonding: a shared we-feeling among trusting parties.

Notwithstanding their pioneer role in integrating trust into the politics of security, the current studies have an important setback: they dichotomize the social/moral dimension and the rationalist dimension of trust. However, as Dietz (2011: 215) argues, 'there is always an assessment (however thorough) of the other party's trustworthiness', as it is unlikely that any individual makes oneself vulnerable without considering self-interest. In contrast to the aforementioned studies, an alternative approach argues that a trust relationship cannot be reduced neither to rational self-interest calculations nor to making oneself vulnerable in order to honour the moral bond with another (Ruzicka and Wheeler, 2010; Bilgic, 2013). Social trust can have a 'calculative antecedent', where the parties evaluate what they self-centrally can obtain from the relationship (Cohen, 2014). They monitor the other party's practices and even take self-protective measures. Even if the trust relationship is primarily motivated by self-interest, the performances of actors can transform parties' interests towards a construction of a common identity, as conceptualized in social constructivism (Wendt, 1999: 147-157). Following this perspective, one can argue that even if actors start a trust relationship for self-interest, it can potentially evolve into a deeper trust relationship. In other words, cognitive trust can lead to affect-based trust (Nielsen, 2011: 162).

Trust is necessary for the actualization of emancipatory productive power-with for three reasons. Firstly, trust is a practice of critical agency for Arendt's reflexive individuals. As Richmond (2010: 682) argues, 'agency is related to self-determination and self-government on everyday contexts, not necessarily channelled through the liberal model'. Trust cannot be imposed on individuals; instead, they *choose* to trust each other by acknowledging the self's and other's agency (Saligman, 2002). This choice can be made to initially further self-interests against a common enemy (such as an authoritarian regime). It can also evolve into a social trust relationship among previously socially and politically estranged individuals. Secondly, in post-liberal collective resistance, the factor that holds the resisting collectivity together is social trust and not a shared ideology, religion, nation, and class. Since the 'we-feeling' is not provided by an exclusively defined communal identity, it allows pluralism and co-existence of differences; critical agency defies homogeneity through trust by linking an individual to a community. As a result, Arendt's space of appearance is reconstructed as a space of resistance among trusting individuals transcending the liberal model's narrow politics. Thirdly, social trust is generated by bodily 'everyday', non-violent performances of individuals, such as forming a protective wall around the praying Muslims in Tahrir. 'The everyday' becomes a focal point where the

resistance is kept together, as trust is reproduced through 'the everyday' in the space of appearance. Empathy that develops between trusting individuals is crucial to constructing a shared we-feeling.

However, empathy *per se* is not enough to enervate resistance, 'an essence of critical agency', which denounces homogeneity in favour of plurality (Richmond 2011b: 424). The first potentially useful approach is Christine Sylvester's 'empathetic cooperation'. For her, 'to be empathetically cooperative is to become relationally rather than reactively autonomous with those we have defined as unmistakably other, with those who are not inside "our" community, our value system' (2002: 119). This means that through negotiation, individuals can develop empathy towards others and adopt their standpoints. Confortini also underlines the importance of one's identification with victims of oppression through empathy. However, she observes that one should be very careful about the possibility that this shared we-feeling might involve 'hegemonic or imperialist moves' (Confortini, 2012: 28). These feminist perspectives, while recognizing the centrality of empathy for constructing a shared we-feeling, warn that this empathetic relation should be crafted in a way that not only protests the co-existence of differences, but also upholds them. Otherwise it might impose a hegemonic group identity on group members and thus hinders the realization of emancipatory power-with.

So far the three elements of emancipatory power are: productive collectivity, trust, and empathy. The last necessary element is to re-think emancipation in the post-liberal world. The claim by both pioneers and contemporary students of EST is that emancipatory processes are *prima facie* about transforming structures and relations in a way in which individuals enjoy extensive freedoms (Booth, 2007; Nunes, 2012). However, this approach presumes that an emancipatory process is about transformation of oppressive structures rather than the resistance, as if resistance itself was not a practice of freedom. Consequently, 'agency of the subject is rarely considered or is rhetorical unless mass mobilization occurs' since this mass mobilization has a potential to transform the structures (Richmond 2011b: 420). This leads to an understanding of power that potentially revolves around coercion and that can realize the possibility of violence, since 'the end' is normatively desirable. In addition, the liberal consequence-orientated emancipatory process is privileged over the *process* itself where individual subjectivities are reproduced through 'the everyday' in alternative political spaces. The conundrum, however, is about cases such as the protests in Turkey in June 2013 where no 'liberal' structural change was observed; or it is about the Tahrir protests which were 'hijacked by the Islamists' and then by the military (Bradley, 2012). Is it not possible to articulate emancipation for such cases? Moreover, if the consequence and not the process of resistance is important, can violence, coercion, and authority, which are articulated as power-over, be justified? In short, emancipatory power needs a different approach to emancipation for post-liberal world politics.

The ephemerality of emancipatory power is crucial in order to avoid the reification, institutionalization, and possible production of oppressive power-over on individuals. This requires a new understanding of emancipation which is developed by Basu as 'emancipatory moment'. 'Moments pass, actors and context change, and any security practice identified as such has to re-evaluate its vision for transformations accordingly, in the quest for emancipation' (2012: 106). Therefore, emancipation becomes temporal and momentary. That is why emancipatory power should be understood as a temporal, fluid, and ephemeral power-with enabled through trust. It stems from temporal collective actions of individuals who share a we-feeling, without imposing a dominating group identity that subjugates differences. Its objective is to enable a community of individuals to be referents and agents of security. In an emancipatory moment, the material space is re-configured through bodily performances of individuals in their own localities. When they build trust between each other through their performances, they exist in 'the space of appearance' together, which is the manifestation of their emancipatory power. Emancipation lasts for a moment, just like a week in Tahrir in 2011, and then generates two types of effects.

If the liberal approach to emancipation is dropped in favour of a temporal-spatial and ephemeral one, it is possible to separate the *critical* effects of emancipatory power from its *accompanying* effects. The latter can be understood in terms of power-over (such as the fall of an authoritarian regime) and power-to (empowerment of individuals). However, emancipatory power's ultimate practical test is whether it has *critical effect*, which concerns the reproduction of individual subjectivities in a collectivity without subjugating their differences. For example, in a liberal approach, the fall of the Mubarak regime can be the core of an emancipatory process, which eventually leads the idea that the process failed given the post-Tahrir political developments. In contrast, according to the approach adopted in this analysis, it is one of the accompanying effects of emancipatory power. It must be noted that the fall of the regime could also be explained by the alignment of the Egyptian military with the non-violent resistance (Nepstad, 2011). The critical effect is the reproduction of individual subjectivities in Tahrir in an emancipatory moment through trust. This new collectivity became one of the central factors that contributed to the fall of the authoritarian regime.

The differentiation between critical and accompanying effects also helps to situate emancipatory productive power vis-à-vis the other three powers in Barnett and Duveill's typology. Firstly, emancipatory power is defined and assessed in terms of its critical effect on individuals, not its accompanying effect. If the latter generates coercive, institutional, and structural power-over, this shows that the emancipatory moment has passed while calling for a new one, new resistance and collectivities. Resistance in the post-liberal world is not about violent coercion or persuasion to construct structures that dominate others (Richmond, 2011b: 421). Instead, it is about reproduction

of subjectivities in a pluralist collectivity without adopting a metanarrative. Second, emancipatory power is defined as the power of those individuals who are subjected to domination by coercive, institutional, and structural powers, which produce 'life shattering experiences' (Agathangelou and Soguk, 2012: 3). These experiences enable them to form resistance together and intervene in the status quo by reproducing individual subjectivities in a collectivity through trust.

A conceptualization of 'emancipatory power' aims to advance the developing discussion about EST in four areas. It opens up the security analysis to infinite possibilities focusing on individual critical agency. EST set out to pluralize the politics of security by integrating alternative notions of security (Browning and McDonald, 2011; McDonald, 2013). These alternative notions are to be found in resisting individuals' experiences, 'the bottom-up' (Hoogensen and Stuvoy, 2006). Kaltofen (2013: 44-45) argues that if security is articulated in term of 'the ineffable', it becomes possible to integrate individuals' experiences of in/security into the analysis, which 'restores individual human agency'. As a result, infinite possibilities exercised by Butler's 'bodies in alliance' can challenge the idea that security and oppression are 'two sides of the same coin' (Aradau, 2004). Furthermore, emancipatory power reveals how emancipatory processes can work in theory and practice not as an end-point imposed on individuals by the Western-liberal order, but as moments of self-realization of individuals in a collectivity while maintaining their differences. Emancipatory power cannot emerge when the individual is singled out from a collectivity. It is a result of a local, collective action, in contrast to the Western liberal individual's self-realization. Finally, this analysis addresses the criticisms about violence and emancipation (Peoples, 2011) by showing that emancipatory power is an opposite of violence. A moment of emancipation in Tahrir (2011) will illustrate how emancipatory power operates in practice in the post-liberal world.

#### *'Emancipatory Moment' in Tahrir: Power-with through Trust*

Tahrir Square, which was built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and used by the successive oppressive regimes as the embodiment of authority and political power, was re-configured as a space of appearance, an alternative political space where individuals collectively resisted domestic and international power hierarchies. Although, for some, this showed the Egyptians' desire to join the 'modern world' (Fandy, 2011: 221), the events from 25 January to 2 February were an abrogation of 'the modern' and an example of collective resistance in the post-liberal world. In Tahrir, individuals who were not united by a common ideology, nation, religion, or class (Mellor, 2014) formed 'a functioning social universe, a temporal community', where the extraordinary met 'the everyday' (Rashed, 2011: 22). In that 'moment of emancipation', cognitive trust evolved into social trust through the everyday bodily practices of individuals. Considering the critical effect of emancipatory power, individual subjectivities

were reproduced as members of a resisting collectivity where pluralism defied homogeneity. As a result, resisting individuals as agents of security generated and experienced an emancipation that exceeded the narrow, Western, liberal one. Focusing on 'real people in real places', the following discussion brings both 'people' and 'places' into the emancipatory security analysis.

Mass protests against the British in 1919, student protests in 1968 and 1972, protests during the Second Intifada in 2001, and anti-Mubarak and -US protests in 2003 in the wake of invasion of Iraq have been integral parts of the Egyptian political history. Although these protests sometimes produced limited political reforms (such as 1968), they generally resulted in more oppression of the opposition in the name of protecting 'stability', a catchword of Mubarak's regime (Cook, 2012: 101-105 and 274). In spite of this since the early 2000s, protests started to politicize the wider public. This gave rise to new resistance movements, such as The Popular Committee in Solidarity with the Intifada in 2001 and the *Kifaya* (Enough!) in 2004, which opposed the Mubarak regime and brought ideologically different opposition groups together (Hirsckind, 2012: 922). Mass protests were revitalized in the April 2008 'Bread Strikes', mainly organized by workers from the textile industry and joined by students. In June 2010 there were protests about the murder of blogger Khalid Said. The middle-class was subjected to police brutality which, according to the middle-class, was previously targeting 'only members of lower classes and the Muslim Brotherhood' (Bauer and Schweitzer, 2012: 4). As a result, trade unions and other labour organizations joined by students and the middle class became stronger and emerged as important groups in the 2011 protests (Teti, 2011: 273-275). In addition, women, who had been subjected to gendered violence by the 'hypermasculinized' regime of Mubarak, invoked their critical agency to resist in Tahrir (Johansson-Nogués, 2013).

During the Mubarak regime, urban planning in tandem with the Emergency Laws aimed to depoliticize public spaces such as squares (Gregory, 2013: 239). While the pre-January 2011 protests re-politicized and re-configured Cairo's urban space as space of resistance, January 2011 was a political project whose management was previously planned. Starting from 2006, 'the Academy of Change', a civil activist group of Egyptians in the UK, collected texts about non-violent protests, which were widely circulated in Egypt (Bauer and Schweitzer, 2012: 9). In addition, Egyptian students also learnt from other non-violent resistance movements while appropriating them in their own localities (Rosenberg, 2011). In the months leading up to January, activists adopted three methods that reveal 'discontinuity with past strategies of resistance: maximum secrecy, new tactics for mobilizing common people and the adoption of a different rhetoric' (Trombetta, 2013: 140). Alaa Abd al-Fattah, a leading activist, stated that the real difficulty before the protests was not gathering liberal, Islamists, and leftists, but getting 'the people who do not identify themselves with any of these labels' to join the protests (Hirschkind, 2012: 922). The tactics appealed to the low economic-status groups, which

were primarily created by Enver Sedat's liberal economic turn (Cook, 2012: 273). The new non-violent tactics rendered the January protests possible. However, Tahrir's reconstruction as a politicized space of appearance where individuals resist collectively was achieved through trust built by 'the everyday' during an extraordinary mass movement. Similarly, expressions such as 'Facebook' or 'Twitter Revolution' only reflected one dimension of the reality of the protests that overemphasise Western technology as 'a tool of liberation' (Ramadan: 2013: 147). They underestimate local individuals' bodily performances, which were also 'performances of space' (Gregory: 2013: 235; Butler, 2011).

Despite long-term preparations, Tahrir's temporal community did not emerge immediately. Mubarak's clientalist/authoritarian regime undermined a sense of community in Egypt and divided people along religious and class lines (Cook, 2012: 275). In the beginning, negative preconceptions prevented some protestors from sharing a we-feeling with others. What connected them, but not united them, was their resistance against the power-over of the authoritarian regime. The following reflection of a feminist activist on other female protesters belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood illustrates this:

There would be a group of women – whom I would have once avoided and labeled them as Muslim Brotherhood – walking in a group around the Square with strength and vitality calling for the downfall of the regime. I joined them as they passed beside me in the sea of people in the Square. Remembering the protests of students who called themselves the youth of the Muslim Brotherhood and how the young women would walk silently after the men, I would be infuriated (Magdy 2011).

However, while they were targeted by the police, their trust relationship started to improve. Bodies of individuals from different socio-political and economic backgrounds stood up together against the security forces, and 'imaginative identification' or empathy appeared. Although surprising in the beginning, the idea that they can trust each other by building a we-feeling began to emerge:

The first time I was in Tahrir in the middle of the waves of people I was about to be trampled on, and suddenly this guy standing beside me lifted me and put me on the curb we were standing next to so I would be a bit higher. I don't remember his face. What I remember was that I wasn't scared, or straining my brain to react fast. My sister got on the curb beside me and a woman whom I personally would never have thought I would accept - or she would accept me - put her arm around my sister's shoulders, hugging her, embracing her warmly, as we all stood there chanting and singing. Friends who witnessed one attempt at harassment at the Square told me how everyone taught the guy a lesson he wouldn't forget any time soon (Magdy 2011).

What once was a loose gathering of individuals against the regime started to become a community of individuals, a body politic. However, resistance against the police or the regime's thugs offered a partial perspective about the formation of a body politic. 'The everyday' bodily performances of

individuals deepened trust among individuals, leading to we-feeling and a temporal community of resistance. This restored the sense of community for individuals. A participant stated:

During the demonstrations I have seen surprising things: I discovered the huge generosity of Egypt's people. I saw, for example, a guy who loaded his motorcycle with baskets of bread for the demonstrators. Other people came with bags full of taameya and koshari sandwiches. A guy carried boxes of bottled water. Cigarettes were passed hand to hand. And the most impressive thing: people picked up both their own and other people's garbage. Everything was organized so quickly. This is an Egypt I haven't seen before, and it's so beautiful to see...This is the first time I have seen a united people sharing people food, water, and opinion, despite their differences (Sampsoniaway, 2011).

Tahrir's materiality was re-configured on two levels. While the edges of the square were protected by the football club fans and members of Muslim Brotherhood as two of the most resilient groups against police brutality, the centre was hosting a society where 'the everyday' bodily performances (such as queuing up) were building social trust between the protesters, each of which seemed to honour the moral bond. Bodily performances were sometimes extraordinary, such as Christians setting up a human-wall to protect the praying Muslims. Performances sometimes reflected 'the everyday', such as teachers opening a kindergarten for protesters' children.<sup>2</sup> Another protester reflected:

Amid continuous, often creative chanting, young men and women are going around collecting rubbish, one of them telling me 'this is our square, our home, we must keep it clean'. People are forming neat queues – something Egyptians never do – to buy tea at improvised stalls. Everywhere everyone is on their best behaviour; a few days later, women will tell me that sexual harassment, an endemic problem in Cairo, is absent from the square (Rashed, 2011: 25).

The everydayness of Tahrir attracted more people to protest while blurring the boundaries between 'us' and 'them', inclusion and exclusion (Rashid, 2011: 26). According to one protester, 'the everyday' in Tahrir became a tool of attracting more people to join:

When people came to the square, they weren't just protesting against the Mubarak regime. They immediately became involved in the clean-up crew, or with the sign painters, or setting up tents, or on a security detail. Many people who were not affiliated with any party or association joined us in this way (Hirsckind, 2012: 922).

The everydayness of Tahrir also proved to the Egyptians that there were no 'foreign' powers behind the protests, only regular people like themselves (Rashed, 2011: 26). The bodily performances of individuals re-constructed Tahrir as a 'home'. Their subjectivities were reproduced in a pluralist, local collectivity – a critical effect of emancipatory power. In the process, initial cognitive trust evolved into social trust through 'the everyday'. The same feminist activist who had been suspicious towards Islamist female protesters stated:

Now, these women I joined and others are making history, shouting and singing and sending out trills of joy without thinking that a woman's voice shouldn't be heard. This revolution proved that Egyptian women have a voice which they aren't afraid to use (Magdy 2011).

In a moment of emancipation, the body politic in Tahrir showed that power can result from a shared we-feeling which is not necessarily dominating and hegemonic, but allows differences and pluralism in an Arendtian space of appearance. This collective feeling was pluralistic, open to differences, and inclusive. A feminist activist's reflection on the movement in Tahrir is useful to make this point:

During the weeks Egyptians have spent in Tahrir square, we have come to see another side of us as a people. In Tahrir square there was no harassment, there was no division in religion, age, social status, educational status or gender...Women were side by side with the men and no one stopped to question someone's gender. There was something bigger holding the people together. Personally, I was always apprehensive about walking in the streets. The possibility of someone grabbing you or maybe worse was on my mind all the time (Magdy 2011).

A protester, Muhammed Ramadan, tells of the plurality of body politic bound by a common we-feeling by stating that 'in my whole life I'd never seen protests like that. Girls! Some wore hijabs, some didn't, Christians, Muslims — I'd never seen that' (Anderson, 2011). Another protestor concurs that 'I saw all these different and surprising kinds of people protesting and thought, Wow, this can happen' (Anderson, 2011).

Trust offered them a motivation to carry on even when the collective resistance was under attack by the police and pro-Mubarak militia (Khalil, 2011: 219-230). The words of Khalid Abdalla, an Egyptian actor and activist, are the most illuminating expression of how trust enabled individual protesters to continue their protests thanks to the (elusive) certainty that trust offers:

When you know there are thousands upon thousands upon thousands behind you, you don't stop...It's a matter of—it's how, kind of, consensus expresses itself as a movement. And essentially, your heart takes over your body. It takes over your mind. We're fighting for things far bigger than this.<sup>3</sup>

The reflection of a female protester, Marwa Faroak, showed how subtle the trust relationship in Tahrir was: 'One of the things that gave me an incredible sense of wonder was how safe I felt...Tahrir Square became safer than anywhere else for a woman to be (Lally, 2011). For some women, trust between individuals sharing we-feeling in Tahrir was an empowering experience. This is a manifestation of how power-with can feed into power-to. Mona Ahmed Saif, blogger and activist, said:

I felt accepted and welcome for the first time by young men in my country. They treated me as a peer, and it was great getting into political discussions with random guys in Tahrir square feeling completely at ease and safe.

The critical effect of emancipatory power was demonstrated in Tahrir. The experience in Tahrir changed her, Mona said: 'It changed how I see myself among a crowd in the streets of Cairo. It changed my body language in public. I became stronger and more confident while dealing with others...I walk around alone late at night feeling safe. I haven't had a single sexual harassment incident' (Magdy, 2011). In a moment of emancipation in Tahrir in 2011, individuals were able to develop a trust relationship without giving up their differences. They reconstructed Tahrir as a material space of appearance and acted collectively in solidarity. Their power emerged through the bodily performances of individuals in concert; it produced subjectivities in return. As trust enabled the presence of the group, emancipatory power-with with its ephemerality appeared in Tahrir. It lasted for a moment and its end calls for a new moment given the post-Tahrir period. Temporal dominance of the Muslim Brotherhood over politics and the military coup to topple down the Brotherhood highlight the importance of the narrow, state-centric politics. How the streets and squares would respond to the coercive power of oppression is yet to be seen. A possibility of a new moment of emancipation depends on how local agents practice 'the everyday' as a way to pursue their own security, perhaps generating 'the extraordinary' such as a week in Tahrir in 2011.

### *Conclusion*

This analysis frames 'emancipatory power' in the post-liberal world by synthesising Hannah Arendt's power conceptualization with feminist approaches to resistance and trust in collective actions. This three-dimension approach can be entertained as a theoretical foundation for the analysis of resistance in emancipatory processes, without abandoning emancipation or security. It links the individual to the collectivity while upholding differences. In addition, it also addresses the question of violence. Another potential of this discussion is that it challenges the 'victim-oriented' understanding in EST, which renders individuals 'powerless' waiting to be 'emancipated' (Spegele, 2002). If individuals and social groups are *the* agents of emancipation, the victim-narrative should be dropped in favour of a local, critical agency. Surely, critical agency is agonistic and contested (Richmond, 2011b: 420), but also constructive, as the case of Tahrir illustrated.

Through this theoretical exercise and illustration of power-with in a moment of emancipation in Tahrir in 2011, three conclusions are achieved. Firstly, one of the primary tasks of EST scholars should be to think about power in consideration with the theory's analytical and normative objectives. Rather than avoiding power, it is necessary to enrich power understandings in EST. Recent works such as Nunes' are necessary, albeit incomplete without a theoretical substantiation of the power of resistance in the post-liberal world. In this sense, bodily performances of individuals that re-configure the political space through emancipatory moments are crucial. Secondly, while thinking about power,

the ephemerality of such power is important in order to highlight its fluidity and temporality in emancipatory projects. The objective of emancipatory power as the power of collective resistance is not to coerce and/or subordinate members and non-members of the social group, but to enable the *presence* of the resistance. This also requires re-thinking emancipation in the post-liberal world. Finally, emancipatory power can easily disappear, and therefore destroy the social group, if members of the resistance start to impose a group identity over each other. One of the most important functions of trust through feminist empathy is its potential to maintain solidarity while preserving and upholding differences. To conclude, if EST aims to deliver its promise about the examining security of 'real people in real places', the scope should be directed to 'people' and 'places'.

### Notes

1. Three scholars chosen for the analysis are those who explicitly study power in relation to emancipation. They offer a perspective about power. For this reason, Richard Wyn Jones (1999) is not included in the analysis.
2. Available at <http://peacetour.org/Egypt-revolution>
3. Defiant, inspiring voices from Tahrir Square — “This time we won’t go home until we get all our rights.” Available at <http://citizenactionmonitor.wordpress.com/2011/11/29/defiant-inspiring-voices-from-tahrir-square-this-time-we-wont-go-home-until-we-get-all-our-rights/>

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