FRANS JACOBI: AESTHETICS OF RESISTANCE: 6.1.
SILENT STAND script and notes

The stage is lit by white light. The audience is placed on both sides of the empty floor. In the center a large black plastic-bag. A video-camera on tripod, a computer controlling the sound and a video-projection showing the title of the performance and the names of the participants as white text on the black wall.[i] *All through the performance the number and title of each scene are projected here in the background.*
FJ[ii] *+ 12 other performers, hidden in the audience.*

SCENE 1: THE MUMMY

FJ positions the video-camera and starts audio track 1 — a gentle synthesizer wave, rising and falling. FJ is standing alone in front of the audience. He takes of his trousers and shirt. He starts to cover himself up in bandages taken form the plastic-bag, transforming himself into a mummy.

SCENE 2: SADNESS

FJ re-positions the two video-cameras and starts audio track 2 – the voice-over of the artist/researcher fills the space, with the wave from track 1 in the background. The other performers, all dressed in black walks to 'the stage'. They stand in a line facing the audience with around 5 meters between them. The mummy is walking around, urging the audience to stand up. When the artist/researcher asks them to sway, the mummy is guiding them.

THE ARTIST/RESEARCHER:
"Well my dear audience, I think its time for an explanation. What you are listening to here is the sound of waves breaking on the shore.[1] Well ,actually its two different sets of waves and two different shores they break unto. And of course its not just any shores in the world: its the sea-shore of Alexandria, Egypt and the banks of the river Nile in the middle of Cairo. The word Cairo - Al Qahira in arabic – means 'the triumphant one',[iii] and this is actually what this story is about: triumph!

But before we reach Cairo and the triumphant conclusion we are going back to Alexandria, to the waterfront in the hot summer of 2010. Up on the curb by the balustrate along the street a long line of people are standing; silently looking at the sea. They are all dressed in black, standing silent. Its a strange moment, a sudden calm in middle of the chaotic traffic. Silence spreads and covers the entire esplanade. A calm, sad silence. Hundreds of black silhouettes, just standing still.

If we stand silent up here for a little while, maybe all of you can act as the water by standing up and swaying back and forth? ……Yes that's good, thank you![2]

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[1] **Waves (part 1)**
There is a discrepancy between the 'gentle synthesizer wave, rising and falling' and the sound of the real waves that the artist/researcher here announces. This small difference is used to introduce a distance between the textual information and what the audience is actually expiriencing, thus pointing at the two levels of information - the textual and the sensual – that this story is told on. The two levels don't fit exactly, thereby questioning the order between them.

[2] **Waves (part 2)**
At this point in the performance the whole audience starts swaying with their hands in the air, back and forth; it has a stark resemblance with the so-called 'wave', done by soccer-fans in stadiums. This association to mass behavior was not intended but it makes perfect sense. Below I introduce the 'Eros Effect', a term invented by the American sociologist Georgy Katsiaficas. The Eros Effect is closely linked to other kinds of mass behavior. My intention in this performance is to enact the three closely linked terms 'revolutionary becoming', 'sense-event' and 'eros effect'. The performance is pseudo-paraphrasing

Silent Stand is an activist act that was first practised in Alexandria, Egypt in the summer of 2010. To commemorate their friend Khaled Said, and to protest against the way he died, a small group of internet enthusiats invented the silent stand. A group of people meets up by the waterfront or elsewhere in their city, dressed in black, and stand in a line with about 5 metres between each, facing the water. They stand silent for some time, maybe reading the Quran or the bible.[iv]

Silent Stand was designed to bypass the strict Egyptian emergency law that had been in place for 30 years, banning mass public assemblies; mass meaning 5 people or more. By keeping the 5 meters between them the line of people in the silent stand does not become a public assembly. Signs, banners, slogans and other kinds of direct communication are also banned by the emergency laws, but by using the strict silence this ban is also not relevant.
Or as someone commented on Facebook: "if speaking up only brings more violence, then silence will have to articulate our grief."[v]

I will take that quote again since it is so brilliant: "if speaking up only brings more violence, then silence will have to articulate our grief."

Exactly by respecting the emergency laws, and inventing another way of acting accordingly the silent stand circumvent these laws. The main goal is to express sadness: "We will just stand silent upset wearing black clothes. Black because we are sad for what happened to our country, and to what is happening daily to our people."[vi] Sadness is a fundamental human feeling. Sadness cannot be forbidden. Sadness is also a feeling everybody knows and can connect to. Sadness connects everyone. This is wrong and we are all sad.[3] + [vii]

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the sense-event by staging the audience (and 13 performers and bellydancers) as a collective revolutionary subject. The audience not only learns about the revolutionary becoming through the voice-over in the performance, but re-enacts it themselves. This is of course still an art event, an image, but - in a Brechtian sense - the viewer is here at the same time inside and outside the image. An emotional glimpse of how the eros-effect would feel, if we were not here, inside art, but somewhere there, outside.

[3] **Martyrs**
If one accepts the dead of Khaled Said and the invention of the Silent Stand and the two feacbook groups (arabic and english) as the beginning of the events that led to egyptian revolution, it is highly intersting to note that the first two succesfull revolutions in the mid-east – Tunesia and Egypt – both started with performative, symbolic acts. On december 17th 2010 the young tunesian fruit vendor Mohamed Bouazizi was harrassed by a police-officer; frustrated and desperate he went to the square in front of the local govenors office and set fire to himself. This suicidal sacrifice was the spark that set off the tunesian uprisings that led to the flight of president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali on january 14th, 2011. The act of burning himself spoke directly in a visual symbolic language without words; without any

So, lets stand together here for a little while. Up here, we are sad and you, you are the sea; gently swaying.

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political statement or ideological framework. The sheer desperation of this act was immediately understood by a large crowd of people in his hometown Sidi Bouzid and the demonstrations and riots that eventually led to the downfall of the tunesian regime started. The communication Mohamed Bouazizi makes with his act is emotional and symbolic. It is also – as is the Silent Stand – free of any direct political meaning or message. It is a basic human statement, a statement open for everyone to connect to. Here it is not sadness, but frustration and desperation, that is being expressed. Mohamed Bouazizi had just lost his license to sell fruit at the local marked and was facing unemployment and desperate lack of money to sustain his family with. Burning himself to death on the citysquare was a pure act of desperation but to his followers it became a symbolic act expressing all the anger and frustration of the poor unemployed tunesian masses. His act became an icon to the revolution.

Since the early 1960ties there has been a widespread international tradition of self-immolation, as the act of burning oneself up in public, is also called. Starting out with some vietnamese buddhist monks protesting the vietnam war, it became a very effective political tool. For instance the 1969 suicide of Czech student Jan Palach protesting the Soviet occupation of his country became an inspiration for political activists all over the world. In the recent uprisings in the middle-east Mohamed Bouazizi's self-immolation has inspired a whole wave of similar self-immolation protests.

Since no-one else is hurt in this act it is a very strong symbol of self-sacrifice for the common cause. "Self-immolations are often public, dramatic, political, and thus newsworthy. They can be seen as a type of altruistic suicides for the collective cause. Unlike suicide attacks, self-immolations are not intended to inflict physical harm or material damage.[1] They attract attention and become glorified as martyrdom – it maximizes pain and personal suffering, but does not guarantee death."

Both Mohamed Bouazizi and Khaled Said became 'martyrs of the revolution'. In the new mid-east uprisings there is already a whole range of new 'martyrs', and the idea of fighting for the revolution 'until death if necessary' is widespread and occurs again and again in interviews and and statements from central actors in the uprisings. As performance the self-immolation is irreversible: the act only works if it is a real sacrifice. The image only conveys if it is performed for real. The performance transforms the performer from a real person to an image. An icon.

SCENE 3: BLOOD

FJ re-positions the video-camera and starts audio track 3. The performers dressed in black are still standing silent. The mummy opens the black plastic-bag and drags out the first part of a large black carpet/piece of textile. He carefully forms a flat form on the floor with it, creating an image of 'a pool of blood'. As the voice of the artist/researcher reaches the end of this section he lays down as if this is blood seeping form his head.

THE ARTIST/RESEARCHER:
"Now my dear listener we move back into the city, into a small side-street, where we find a small internet-café. This is where Khaled Said, a 28-year-old internet nerd, was arrested on june 6th 2010. His crime was that "he posted a video on the Internet of police-officers sharing the spoils from a drug bust among themselves".[viii] He was on his way out of the café when two police-officers grabbed him and dragged him away. He was then beaten to death. "Several eye witnesses described how Khalid was taken by the two policemen into the entrance of a residential building where he was brutally punched and kicked. The two policemen banged his head against the wall, the staircase and the entrance steps. Despite his calls for mercy and asking them why they are doing this to him, they continued their torture until he died according to many eye witnesses."[ix]

The group behind the Silents Stands use Facebook to mobilize others to participate. Creating a Facebook group called "We are all Khaled Said" they soon mobilizes large crowds of people in Alexandria and all over Egypt to participate in the Silents Stands. By the third one on july 9th, hundreds of people gathered along the coastal line of Alexandria and the banks of the river Nile in Cairo, and by the fourth and fifth – on july 23rd and august 20th – its several thousand, standing 'silent upset wearing black'.[x]

The turning point comes when two photos of Khaled Said is made public on Facebook.[xi] The first one a portrait of Khaled - just a normal young guy with a smart haircut and a grey sweat-shirt. The second is a horrifying picture of Khaleds tortured face after he is killed. His face is completely demolished, one eye closed by the swollen eyelids, the lower lip split as if by a knife, several parts of the face swollen and his skull and chin looking almost amorphous. A pool of blood is seeping out beneath

his head. The 2 photos states the basic argument of the 'We are all Khaled Said'-group: Khaled was a human being like everyone else. But the way he was treated is inhuman. We are human. The way we are treated is inhuman. Human. Inhuman.

The pool of blood beneath Khaleds tortured face is dark red, close to black. Soon it turns even darker and a phantom rises out of it. This is the Mummy.[4] The mummy of Khaled Said, returning from the dead to haunt the Egyptian regime. During the next 8 months he staggers thru Egyptian society, from the bottom to the top, cracking open all the closed doors of a dictorial administration; from the deep dark torture chambers of the Egyptian police to the luxurious bright palaces of the Mubarak family."

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[4] **Pseudo (part 1)**
One of the things that is tested in this performance is the introduction of the narrative figure of the Mummy. It is not an entirely fictive figure. It is the mummy of Khaled Said, who is a real person. By his followers though, Khaled Said was turned into a martyr or a legend, when they invented the Silent Stands and the Facebook-groups "We are all Khaled Said". In this sense Khaled Said is already an image, a symbolic figure. It is one of the extremely interesting and brilliant imaginative moves of this group of activists, that they stage a dead person as their leader. This negative (in a positive sense) figure becomes a void to be filled out with the emotions of the movement that evolves out of his death. His absence becomes a point of identification. It could have been me who was being killed. It could have happened to all of us. Because Khaled Said was so normal – 'so middle-class that all of us young educated egyptian could immidiatly identify with him', as one of the 'We are all Khaled Said'-administrators Whael Ghonim states in an interview with on the CBS talkshow 60minutes - he is open for everyone to identify with. Khaled Said is a passive figure and because of this passivity it is impossible to critizise him. Because he is dead he is untouchable.

My idea with the mummy was to makes this figure active, to make it a narrative guide, that would guide the audience through the story and would be the protagonist of the performance. This would underscore the idea that Khaled Said is the only leader of the revolution and lead up to the argument of the 'headless revolution' in the last scene. In the classic horror-movie 'The Mummy' with Boris Karloff as the ultimate horror icon, the mummy rises from his grave and chases the son of the archeologist that neglected religious restrictions and opened his grave. He is stalking through the small circles of british colonial intellectuals and reveals their secrets. In my version it is Khaled Said that stalks through the entire egyptian society and reveals the hidden secrets.

Using the figure of the mummy has another intention as well. Like the bellydancers that is introduced in scene 6, the mummy is a kitsch figure, a mainstream lense to see egyptian culture through from our north-european postion. It points at the touristical nature of my/our fascination with the egyptian uprisings. In this sense the mummy is a tourist-guide in the narrative, at once opening a possible door for us to step into the story, and simultainously marking our distance from the events.

In the discussion following the performance of Silent Stand at 'Samtalekøkkenet' where it was performed, one of the topics was my position in relation to the revolution in Egypt: Had I been travelling there? Had I been in Tahrir Square myself? As I stated I cancelled my trip to Cairo in the last minute and decided to stay on the distance, looking at events from afar. Trying to make this distance a part of my inquires and of my analysis. The kitsch gaze that the figure of the mummy introduces is an attempt at formulating that distance. Even if I had been there on Tahrir in the mids of events I would still have been a tourist; the distance isn't geographical, it's a cultural distance.

SCENE 4: TORTURE

FJ re-positions the video-camera and starts audio track 4 – a heavy beat and a moaning guitar + the artist/researcher. The mummy lies still in the pool of blood. The performers walks out in the audience each grapping on person by the collar; holding them tight like this and staring them in the eyes all thru this scene.[5]

THE ARTIST/RESEARCHER:
"As summer turns to winter another 4 people are beaten or tortured to death by the Egyptian authorities: Mohamed Ali Darweesh, Elsayed Belal, Mostafa Atteya, Ahmed Shaaban.[xii] The Egyptian state is notorious for its brutal and inhuman treatment of its enemies. By using the state of emergency laws - in function for 29 years - the government and the police-forces keeps up a hard-core regime of surveillance, arrestations, torture and killing that oppresses all legal opposition.

Although western governments have been fast to declare their support to human rights groups and democratic movements in the middle-east, a straight line goes from the AbuGhraib scandal in Iraq to the killing of Khaled Said and the other dead torture victims in the last desperate autumn of Hosni Mubaraks regime. When the systematic use of torture by the US military in Iraq and Afghanistan – in the prison-cells of AbuGhraib, Guantanamo and Bagram – was exposed in the international media around 2004/05, the 'coalition of the willing', had to find other ways of interrogating the prisoners taken during the ongoing war on terror. Building up an intricate web of secret, so called 'renditions', a vast number of prisoners, or illegal combatants as they are called, are transported around the world by the CIA, to secret prisons in a number of countries in the former eastern Europe and in the middle-east.[xiii] Here they are being interrogated by local officials who have no problems in using the whole palette of techniques that in other countries are labeled as torture. Egypt was one of

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[5] **Interpretation**
In this scene the 7 performers dressed in black walks out in the audience, each grapping a person by the collar; holding them tight and staring them in the eyes for about 5 minutes. This act is ambiguous; it can be interpreted in at least two ways: Either the persons being grapped are victims - the performers then stands in for the egyptian police officers grapping innocent victims. Or, the performers stay in the role of egyptian protesters, and the 7 persons in the audience are now being accused for all the sins of the western war on terror. Again, the difference between the narrative in the voice-over of the artist/researcher and the impact of the image being performed, is intended to open up the interpretation for the audience. The scene was quite emotional. Several persons escaped just before being grapped and one person starting crying after being held tight for a couple of minutes.

the key knots in this network. In the government of Mubarak, CIA were always able to find a reliable partner when torture was needed.[xiv] The rendition program was secret, but as recent documents revealed by WikiLeaks[xv] has probed, a range of European countries more or less willingly let the secret airplanes of CIA cross thru their airspace and use their airports. In this sense the US and their willing coalition did not only work with Mubarak in the bright day-light as a close mid-eastern ally, they were also with him down in the dark torture-cells; paying him off to do the dirty work for them. Encouraging and expanding the business.

When the gates to these dark prisons are now torn open by the staggering mummy of Khaled Said, the shit not only hits the fan of Mr. Mubarak and his police-forces. There are stains of blood hitting a whole range of western leaders, now queuing by the sink."

SCENE 5: ANGER

FJ re-positions the video-camera and starts audio track 5 – a rising cluster of screaming and shouting. FJ grabs a bunddle of metal rods from the plastiv bag and trows them on the floor. The performers each takes on, starts walking hastely up and down the floor while banging the metal rods on the pillars lining the floor. The mummy joins them and the noise mixes with the screaming on the soundtrack.

THE ARTIST/RESEARCHER:
"Now this, my dear listener, this is the sound of anger. By now the sad introversion of the silent stands has turned outwards. People are angry. On November 28 th, 2010 there is an election for the Egyptian parliament. The opposition groups, that by now has coalesced into a wide-reaching movement, documents not only a few, but an overwhelming mass of fraud and direct cheating in the election process.[xvi] There are reports of opposition supporters being barred from polling stations and subjected to violence by thugs and criminals hired by the government. Videos documenting election officials filling out voting cards.[xvii]

As a reaction November 26th is announced as 'Egyptian Anger Day'. The noise you are hearing here is from a noise-parade that day, organized by a group of activists called Lazem.[xviii] Anger is growing, the movement is growing, the noise is growing. Very soon it will be a roar; a roar of rage, a deep, wild howl that will penetrate and chill the bone marrow of every corrupt administrator and despot, far beyond even the entire middle-east. This is the shriek of the mummy, now becoming a roaring mass of angry protesters."

SCENE 6: REVOLUTION

FJ re-positions the video-camera and starts audio track 6 – first the voice-over alone, after a while the voice with some deep rumbling echoes behind it, then the fanfares of revolution, up-beat and ecstatic. The fabric is now extended to its full size, creating a kind of square in the middle of the space. In the middle are 7 holes in the fabric. In each hole a person is crouched down, with the mummy crouching in the front hole, and 5 belly-dancers dressed in black behind him. The camera occupies the last hole. The performers invite the audience to gather around the square. The mummy is now moving to standing position, performing a series of sign-like postures with the arms. The 5 dancers follow him but with more ease and grace. When the fanfares start the dancers start an improvised slow belly-dance.[6] *The fabric*

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[6] **Pseudo (part 2)**
As with the Mummy the inclusion of 5 belly-dancers (5 white danish women) marks a touristic distance. Here in the west the belly-dancer is another of the absolute kitsch icons of arabic culture. Using this figure as an illustration of 'revolutionary youth', even represented by 5 middle-aged white women, creates a kind of silly situation contrasting the quite heavy patos of the voice-over. All this to play around with the quite monstreous idea of re-enacting a revolution in an art club. Above (in note 2) I used the term 'pseudo-paraphrasing' to describe my aim. By using this somewhat silly representation I hope to give the viewer (the audience) a chance to both think about the social forces at stake in the real revolution and at the same time to take part in a playfull recreation of some of the aspects. The belly-dancers are not dressed in their usual dance-gear, but are also in black and they are improvising a dance to a completely different kind of music. This combined with the fabric floating in the air around them creates a poetic dreamlike atmosphere. Of course its not possible to create 'revolutionary becoming' as a staged emotion, but by playing with the thought it might be possible to give a hint of what it would be like.

Pseudo, paraphrase, cloning, copy, fake, re-enact, re-represent, 'MacGuffin', sketch. I use a whole range of terms to encircle this praxis of re-using concepts and images in new constellations. In various degrees these are active both in the events that I investigate and in the performances I use to consider these events (as well as in my artistic praxis in general). In the events the use of these concepts occur as 'cloning', that is the using of both the aesthetics, the strategics and the slogans of the counter-part (Tiananmien Square, COP15). Or in a MacGuffin-like strategy, where the activists (i.e. G13) proclaim to do one thing, as a kind of smoke-screen-operation to cover up for the real aims of a certain action.

In the performances I use this kind of concepts to create a 'constructed situation'. A scenario where we – the audience and me (and the performers) – can imagine what it would be like. The british artist Lian Gillick has made a series of works under the umbrella title 'The What If? Scenario' – my intentions here comes very close to this idea. If, for instance, the 'eros-effect' is in play in Tahrir Square, what would it be like to expirience this?

Liam Gillick writes: "A consideration of The what if scenario. Starting to think about new parallel histories that may be constructed from a set of specific documents. This is an exercise, the establishment of a specific super-bright environment in which to consider the possibility of learning from another's errors. Once the particular space has been decided upon, a number of halogen lights should be installed, up to the point where any reasonable person would comment upon the fact that the space was extremely brightly lit. Then a list of the appropriate documents, and even some examples of the documents should be left in this place. A sight for consideration, a place to start again. A moment to ponder upon the what might have." (THE WHAT IF? SCENARIO PART 1, 1995 (http://www.liamgillick.info/home/work/projects-and-work-5/the-what-if-scenarios))

Gillick is interested in the future; how to consider possible futures? The 'What If? Scenarios' are sites to

is now being lifted up and down by the mummy, the other performers and the audience, so they see the dancers and the mummy from over the fabric and under the fabric at various times. As the voice-over reaches the conclusion the music is cut off, the fabric is lowered to the floor and everybody stands still. Listening to the final sentence proclaiming Mubaraks retreat.[7]

THE ARTIST/RESEARCHER:
"Now my dear audience, if you will collaborate on this last part it will be nice. Please come closer and help us lift up this fabric. All of you, please! The pool of blood has now become larger, its a whole area now. I know

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think about these futures. My research is not concerning the future but the idea of a certain situation where certain ideas can be considered is similar. Another reference is the 'constructed situation' of the Situationist movement. Here it is the urban environment that is in focus. Through a process of selecting situations and moments, maybe adding artifical elements, a new situation is created where a new consciousness can be achieved. The situationists also use the word game, and are setting up small games or exercises (Gillick also talks of exercise) to test and expirience the ideas of psychogeography as they call the underlying theories. In this performance the staging of the audience also has some characteristics of a parlour-game – an indoor- game set up to amuse a social party, i.e. a dinner party. (The place where this performance took place is called 'Samtalekøkkenet' (the conversational kitchen) and has a similar idea as its foundation. An evening is comprised of a series of performances, discussions and a meal. There is a bar and the discussions have that kind of free floating character that could also be expirienced around a dinner table.)

I also use the word 'sketch'. It has a very fitting double meaning:
1 a rough or unfinished drawing or painting, often made to assist in making a more finished picture *or* a brief written or spoken account or description of someone or something, giving only basic details *or* a rough or unfinished version of any creative work.
2 a short humorous play or performance, consisting typically of one scene in a comedy program.
(New Oxford American Dictionary)

My intentions with this performance lies somewhere between all these: a sketch, a parlour-game, a psychogeographical game, a what if? scenario.

The relation to the original motifs – the egyptian uprisings – is paraphrastic; pseudo in the sense that is by intention created with elements of kliché and slobby staging. This to create an atmosphere of relaxed humour to contrast the heavy existential politics of the motifs. In this contrast it should be possible to consider – with the senses and with the intellect – the social and symbolic forces at stake in these events AND our own (the audience, the performers and my own) inherent engagement and distance to the motifs.

[7] **The abandoned scene 7**
In the performance on april 14th at Samtalekøkkenet/Warehouse9 in Copenhagen there was a final scene 7. It began with a short announcement: "Please join Khaled Said, the mummy, now dancing in the ruins of the regime that killed him. The curse is over! He has become millions! We are all Egyptians!". Then a loud dance-track, an arabic version of the 80ties classic hit 'Walk Like An Egyptian' was played. The belley-dancers, the mummy and the performers started dancing urging the whole audience to join them in this happy, cheerfull dancing. Only a few persons from the audience actually joined in and the whole scene felt too long. The completely different kind of music somehow broke the very heavy spell of the the rest of the soundtrack. Even though my intention was to end on a triumphant, ecstatic mood, it was a kind of double to scene 6. Too much icing on the cake. Even though I don't object to the idea of illustration, I think this scene was too illustrative in quite banal way. Because of this I have decided to skip it, now making scene 6 the final. As the script here is the final (conceptual) version of the performance (even if it is performed again after the completition of the script) I find it legitimate to change it here.

its not a real square but maybe you can imagine it as a square, a public square. In this narrative it stands in for Tahrir Square, the famous Freedom Square in Cairo. Please gather around it and imagine that you are there, we are there. Its now january 25th, 2011. We are in Tahrir Square in Cairo and its time for a revolution:

"Worldwide Revolution! 2011 - Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, The World. SHARE IF YOU SUPPORT THE REVOLUTIONS!!! TheTruthArmy writes: "The whole of humanity has finally woken up! We have had enough of the corruption and destruction of the evil illuminati! God willing, we will destroy this worldwide corruption and replace it with a system of sovereign nations working together to build up economies, with real money based on credit systems (NO DERIVATIVES), and placing the HUMAN SPIRIT as the bottom line, NOT fake money and consumption. We are too intelligent to buy into false notions of 'communism' or 'capitalism', these things don't exist as systems, they are only aspects. The only good government is that which protects and benefits The People, anything contrary is illegitimate. PEOPLE OF THE WORLD UNITE!!! WE DON'T NEED THE ILLUMINATI!!! WE DON'T WANT THEIR NEW WORLD ORDER OF DEATH AND DESTRUCTION!!! WE ARE HUMAN BEINGS!!! WE ARE CREATED BY GOD WITH A PURPOSE!!! LET US UNITE AGAINST OUR COMMON ENEMY AS ONE HUMANITY!!! VICTORY IS WITH THE BELIEVERS. MAY ALLAH REWARD YOU! PEACE!"[xix]

The revolution starts January 25th 2011. Its like an ongoing explosion of fearless engagement. Thousands and other thousands of new protesters swarm into Tahrir Square, to be part of the uprising. The movement is now consisting of a whole range of independent groups and persons.[8] Even though the different groups have completely

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[8] **On april 6th movement**
The egyptian opposition consists of a variety of different groups and smaller movements, some them active for years. The most important ones are asembled under the umbrella of 'Coalition of the Youth of the Revolution': We are all Khaled Said, April 6 Youth Movement, Kefaya, Muslim Brotherhood, National Association for Change (led by Mohamed ElBaradei), RS = Revolutionary Socialists. It is generally acknowledged that the April 6 Youth Movement has been one of the deciding factors of the revolution, central in galvanizing the masses to take action. Starting out as a support group for a workers strike in spring 2008, they were from the beginning using facebook, flikr and twitter to mobilize large crowds of people outside of the traditional working class cadres. Already then in the first round of strikes they were promoting the idea of wearing black as would be later a central feature of the Silent Stands. April 6 Youth Movement is one of the main reasons that the uprising in Cairo in general and on Tahrir square especially was so extremely well-organised. They applied and kept a strategy of strict non-violence, setting up check-points at the entrances to Tahrir Square to prevent armed protesters to steal the focus. Even when the protests were attacked by the counter-revolutionary gangs of Mubarak-supporters on february 2nd, the answer were surprisingly non-violent. Even though April 6 leaders played this central role, they continuosly downplay this role and praise the uprisings as 'headless', just as Whael Ghonim, the administrator of the 'We Are All Khaled Said' website (see note 9 and 10).

In *Study Guide: Egypt and Organization* by the american right-wing commentator Glenn Beck (GLENN BECK The Fusion of Entertainment and Enlightenment (http://www.glennbeck.com/2011/02/14/study-guide-egypt-and-organization/)) traces the international

different agendas they act with sober restrain. Even the Muslim Brotherhood – feared by the whole European elite to be taking over with a new fundamentalist regime – refrain from taking the leadership or pushing their own agenda. "This is an uprising searching for a leader" as AlJazeera is repeating over and over again scanning Tahrir Square for possible candidates. But they are wrong: this revolution is headless, there is no leader.[9]+[xx]

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network that the April 6 Youth Movement is part of. He is focussed on an organisation called 'Alliance of Youth Movements' (later renamed to 'movements.org'): "So what is the Alliance of Youth Movements (AYM)? From their Mission page, they describe themselves as "a not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping grassroots activists to build their capacity and make a greater impact on the world." And boy, do they offer a lot of help. AYM was co-founded by Jared Cohen (Director of Google Ideas who formerly worked for the State Dept.) and Jason Liebman (Howcast founder.) AYM partners with MTV, Google, CBS, MSNBC, Facebook, YouTube, National Geographic, Columbia University Law School and even our own State Dept. Annual summits feature workshops from the best in the social networking business." Ahamd Maher, one of the leaders of the April & Movement, takes part in a conference organised by Alliance of Youth Movements in december 2008. Glenn Beck uses this fact to link April 6, not only to the mentioned leaders of the global internet-industry, but also to the American Government. Another active member of Alliance of Youth Movements is Maajid Nawaz. Nawaz is formerly on the UK national leadership for the Islamist party Hizb ut-Tahrir. After spending 4 years in egyptian prisons he changes his views and is founding the Quilliam Foundation – "Quilliam Foundation is the world's first counter-extremism think tank set up to address the unique challenges of citizenship, identity, and belonging in a globalised world. Quilliam stands for religious freedom, human rights, democracy and developing a Muslim identity at home in, and with, the West." (Maajid Nawaz, Feb. 4, 2011). In an statement on february 4, 2011 Maajid Nawaz strongly supports the egyptian uprising, connecting it with his personal expiriences of torture "in the dungeons of Hosni Mubarak's torture facilities" (http://www.newstatesman.com/middle-east/2011/02/egypt-brotherhood-uprising). In a rather paranoid argument Glenn Beck uses these links to prove that not only is Hizb ut-Tahrir, but also the American Government, the real organisers of the egyptian revolution. Glenn Beck is way out into conspiracy theory, but the interesting thing is how he actually points to what kind of network the April 6 Movement already soon after their founding was engaged in. The use of Facebook and other social media on the internet was already from the start backed up by personal contacts to some of the main actors in this field.

[9] **Acéphale?**
The egyptian revolution has been called a 'headless revolution' with reference to George Bataille who wrote about chiefless or headless secret societies, using the term 'acéphale'. Bataille was co-founder of the magazine 'Acéphale' and of an esoteric "secret society" with the same name. What actually went on in this secret society is rather unclear. Bataille only gives fragmented hints in his writings. *The Sacred Conspiracy*, which prefaced the
first issue of *Acéphale*, contained an appeal *to go beyond the world*: "It is time to abandon the world of the civilised and its light. It is too late to be reasonable and educated, which has led to a life without appeal." Furthermore: "A world that cannot be loved to the point of death, in the same way that a man loves a woman, represents only self-interest and the obligation to work. If it is compared to worlds gone by, it is hideous, and appears as the most failed of all." Acéphale is, he states, "*ferociously religious*," yet this religion is atheological: "The *acephalic man* mythologically expresses sovereignty committed to destruction and the death of God, and in this the identification with the headless man merges and melds with the identification with the superhuman, which is entirely the death of God.'" (Absolute, Enthousiasme). God is the enemy of community, or a creator of false community, associated with tranquillity, absence of movement, the finished, time made finite: a prison. [5]"

The swedish artist duo goldin+senneby are currently researching a project called 'Headless'. Here they investigate the realm of off-shore economy as a contemporary version of Acéphale. As the curator Lisa Rosendahl writes: "Goldin+Senneby are interested in how the juridical construction of offshore financial centres can be seen as performative acts of fictionalizing place and staging realms of invisibility." Here the metaphor of Acéphale makes perfect sense – what is different from the egyptian uprisings is urge for invisibility. Tahrir Square is on the contrary a site of visibility. In Tahrir the incoming masses of protesters becomes visible as 'the people'. Tahrir is a stage to be performed, a place to become visible.

Whael Ghonim is one of the two administrators of the "We are all Khaled Said"-facebook-page. In an interview on the CBS talkshow 60minutes he states: "Our revolution is like Wikipedia, okay? Everyone is contributing content, but you don't know the names of the people contributing the content. This is exactly what happened. Revolution 2.0 in Egypt was exactly the same. Everyone contributing small pieces, bits and pieces. We drew this whole picture of a revolution. And no one is the hero in that picture."[10]+[xxi]

But if there is no direct leadership and still more and more people participating, how does the movement develop? How are decicions taken and how is the correlated, highly diciplined and extremely focussed attitude of

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The headlessness in Tahrir has to do with how the uprising is organised by a mesh of small independed activist-groups that create a non-hierarchical structure.

[10] **Wiki**
New Oxford American Dictionary: wiki | ˈwikē| noun
a Web site that allows collaborative editing of its content and structure by its users.
ORIGIN coined by programmer Ward Cunningham (1949-), from Hawaiian *wiki-wiki 'quick-quick.'*

Ward Cunningham and co-author Bo Leuf, in their book *The Wiki Way: Quick Collaboration on the Web*, described the essence of the Wiki concept as follows:

- A wiki invites all users to edit any page or to create new pages within the wiki Web site, using only a plain-vanilla Web browser without any extra add-ons.
- Wiki promotes meaningful topic associations between different pages by making page link creation almost intuitively easy and showing whether an intended target page exists or not.
- A wiki is not a carefully crafted site for casual visitors. Instead, it seeks to involve the visitor in an ongoing process of creation and collaboration that constantly changes the Web site landscape.

A wiki enables communities to write documents collaboratively, using a simple markup language and a web browser. A single page in a wiki website is referred to as a "wiki page", while the entire collection of pages, which are usually well interconnected by hyperlinks, is "the wiki". A wiki is essentially a database for creating, browsing, and searching through information. A wiki allows for non-linear, evolving, complex and networked text, argument and interaction. (Black, Peter; Delaney, Hayden; Fitzgerald, Brian (2007), *Legal Issues for Wikis: The Challenge of User-generated and Peer-produced Knowledge, Content and Culture*, 14, eLaw J., p. 245)

When Whael Ghonim resembles the egyptian revolution to Wikipedia, it is exactly this 'non-linear, evolving, complex interaction' he is evoking. Again it is an image, an attitude, that he is evoking. By denouncing his own role, giving all credit to the anonymous many - just as he himself was anonymous until he was arrested on january 27th 2011 – the movement becomes all-inclusive. Everyone contributes in equal messures. The power is spread out into the masses. There is no heroes, no leaders, everyone is equal. This is the pure image of democracy, an icon of ideal democracy.

Using the wiki metaphor also links the revolution to new social media on the internet. In his 'normal' life Whael Ghonim is working for Google and the movement has used facebook, youtube, twitter and other socials media on the internet extensively. Of course this have huge communicative and logistic functions in connecting activists in fast and uncontrollable ways, but it also gives the revolution a strong profile as 'young, intelligent and connected on a global scale'. The egyptian revolution was soon named the 'facebook-revolution', a label with massive positive connotations in the international media. This branding made it a revolution for the future, not a fundamentalist return to the dark past, as many in the west feared in the beginning.

non-violence kept?[11] How does these millions of individuals and a seemingly dispersed bunch of small activist groups suddenly – in one day – become one? How do the masses become 'the people'? Overnight and out of the blue?

The american sociologist Georgy Katsiaficas has invented the term 'the eros effect' to describe such a development. Yes, its not a joke, he actually calls it 'the eros effect':

"Essentially, the eros effect refers to the transcendental qualities of social movements, to what occurs in moments of suddenly popular social upheavals which dramatically transform established social orders. … the eros effect occurs in moments when the basic assumptions of a society -… the authority of the government, the hierarchy….- vanish overnight. During moments of the eros effect, popular movements not only imagine a new way of life and a different social reality but millions of people live according to transformed norms, values, and beliefs."[xxii]

For Katsiaficas the eros effect transforms the normal individual self-interest into what he calls species-interest. Here the instinctual need for freedom becomes a new collective identity.[12] In Tharir square the opressed

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[11] **Non-violence**
In the February 9th episode of 'People & Power' on AljazeeraEnglish called 'Egypt: Seeds of Change' by Elizabeth Jones there is an interview with Srdja Popovic of the serbian Otpor Movement, who is in Cairo to supervise the April 6 Youth Movement on riot strategics: "One of the key things is to understand that non-violence struggle is a form of warfare. Non-violence dicipline, this is key. Because violence contaminates your movement. And creates your opponents excuse for using police and military forces, also there is this big problem with media and violence. If you have a march of one hundred thousand people and one single idiot trowing a stone, he is going to be the star of the day. And this is how media operates so you need to avoid this violence at many different ways and this is specificly crucial at this stage." This is exactly what the April 6 Movemnet is so brilliant at: guiding the masses and keeping a strict non-violence dicipline. The egyptian movements differ from many of the scandinavian movements I have investigated in this sense. Here on Tahrir Square it is the activists who have the control of the images projected via the international media. The egyptian regime looks disorganised, brutal and unfocussed time and time again. To a large extend the succees of the revolution is a consequence of the powerfull 'image-politics' of the activist movement.
(http://english.aljazeera.net/programmes/peopleandpower/2011/02/201128145549829916.html)

[12] **Emotional rationality**
For George Katsiaficas the eros effect is "simultaneously natural and non-pathological, rational and emotional. Rather than conceiving of group behavior as being artificially stimulated by the mass media, spontaneously facilitated, induced through contagion or the product of a new norm, episodes of the eros effect are regarded as the collective sublimation of the instinctual need for freedom. In contrast to the traditional positing of the irrational as evil and the non-rational as unworthy of respect, the eros effect reflects an understanding that inner nature is a source of rational action--of freedom--an insight which leads to the postulation of a liberatory dimension to certain types of popular outbursts. In moments of the eros effect, there is simultaneously a negating of the systematic institutionalization of the "survival of the fittest" as the organizing principles of society and a spontaneous cathexis between human beings at fundamental levels of social solidarity. Mobilization for action occurs through

masses are now becoming human, human for the first time in 30 years and the whole state system of repression is fought back. And soon, very soon, everyone is actually participating. High and low, rich and poor, young and old, woman and man, Christian and Muslim, even the secular, joins in.

After a couple of days of dramatic street fighting with the police forces Tahrir Square is taken. People are now staying overnight, living on the square. Tahrir becomes an image, a model of a possible society. A model of public space. Truly public, open for all. It is the power of this image that overthrows the regime. It is not so important if the number of protesters are 1 million or half a million, as soon as the true symbolic image of Tahrir Square is established, all resistance becomes futile. The image of open participatory democracy as performed by the millions in Tahrir Square is so strong that no one can resist it. It's a new icon of liberation.[13]+[xxiii] And as long as the revolution can hold Tahrir Square, this image radiates out to the rest of

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participants' intuition as much as through their rational beliefs, and this intuitive species identity forms a basis for collective activity." (eroseffectpaper p.8)

"Ironically, it is in post-modern society, whose fundamental characteristics are a decentered objectivity and deconstructed subjectivity, that the reconstruction of the species can occur through the eros effect. The instinctual species unity manifested in the …(eros effect)… is at the same time a lived experience of freedom-- freedom understood as the dialectical unity of what are generally regarded as opposites: autonomous individual existence and collective solidarity." (eroseffectpaper p.9)

"Traditional theories, even those which postulate the rationality of social movements, fail to comprehend the merger of instrumental and aesthetic rationality during moments of the eros effect. (..) The emergence of an emotional rationality in the midst of political struggle itself transcended the categories of action which established theories of social action and collective behavior assume." (eroseffectpaper p.10)

The merger of instrumental and aesthetic rationality. It is exactly in this merging of aesthetic, performative imagery and political action that characterizes the egyptian (and the tunesian) uprisings. By creating large scale participatory scenarios – the silent stands, anger day & tahrir square – the activists enable a massive collective emotional identification. These scenarios are aesthetic in the sense that they are based on basic human emotions: Sadness, anger, solidarity, freedom. This instrumental emotional rationality facilitates the revolutionary becoming, the eros effect. The millions of individuals becomes the people, the millions become one.

[13] **Liberation**
The norwegian writer Inger Elisabeth Hansen has called Tahrir Square the next great icon of liberation after Che Guevara. She describes how the egyptian regime all of a sudden was seen naked at Tahrir Square. How the uptil then 'secret' precedures of humiliation and torture in an instance was caught in the spotlight of the new everpresent media: "They, the security police, did what they were asked to do and what they had always done: They acted the security police in a dictatorship, they shot, kidnapped, and tortured. But on Tahrir Square they were seen. With all the new media focussed on them as a facet-eyed mirror, they couldn't recognize the image of themselves. They lost dignity, respect and fiction. The leaders of the security police were wrong, they miscalculated the audience. They looked outdated, as without any kind of communicational strategy, completely out of time." This is the frame in which the new icon emerges. The stage is set for liberation to be performed and the icon of liberation erases the old images of the arabic people as either islamic fundamentalists or desillusioned, compliant supporters of dictatorship.

Egypt, to the rest of the Middle-East, to the whole wide world. Tahrir becomes the center of the world, a new site of hope in bleak and dark times.

"Welcome to the Republic of Tahrir Square, Cairo: In addition to Freedom of speech & Democracy for all, we have the following FREE services: hospital, daily newspaper, kitchen for hot meals, security, artists corner, singing & slogans club, poetry competitions, border control, signs exhibition & political brainstorming sessions. Not only that, a free school has just started were several languages are taught free."[xxiv]

And now, my dear audience, please join us here in a short, final Silent Stand while you listen to this:

On February 11th in the evening there is a short communiqué by the vice-president Omar Suleiman on national TV: "In the name of Allah the most gracious, the most merciful. My fellow citizens, in the difficult circumstances our country is experiencing, President Muhammad Hosni Mubarak has decided to give up the office of the president of the republic and instructed the supreme council of the armed forces to manage the affairs of the country. May God guide our steps."[xxv]

The curse is over! Khaled Said, the mummy, is finally free! He has become millions! We are all Egyptians!"[14]+[xxvi]

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[14] **Thank You**
On the Facebook page of 'We Are All Khaled Said' admin writes this on february 11th at 17.54: "THANK GOD. THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO DIED FOR US TO LIVE IN FREEDOM. THANKS TO ALL EGYPTIANS WHO SLEPT ROUGH IN TAHRIR, ALEXANDRIA AND EVERYWHERE. THANK YOU ALL ON THIS PAGE FOR YOUR SUPPORT & YOUR AMAZING GREATNESS & HELP. THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO CALLED HIS LEADER AND HIS REPRESENTATIVE. THANK YOU TUNISIA. WE ARE ALLL EGYPTIANS. YOU ARE ALL EGYPTIANS. WE ARE ALL KHALED SAID"

THE END[xxvii]

Notes:

[i] Title-sign: SILENT STAND a reading-piece for 1 voice & 13 performers by Frans Jacobi
soundtrack & music: Lonely Boy Choir (+ Hakim featuring Cleopatra)
voice of the artist/researcher: Yvette Brackman
activists: Julie, Sirid, Eva, Olivia & Sofia, Runa Norheim, Kim T. Pedersen a.o.
dancers: Maizena, Linnea, Zasja, Jannie (Danmarks Mavedanserskole), Helle Winther (Zahfia).
the mummy: Frans Jacobi

[ii] Frans Jacobi = FJ

[iii] *New Oxford American Dictionary* (Apple, Inc., 2005-2009)
+ http://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cairo
+ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cairo

[iv] http://www.elshaheeed.co.uk/silent-stands/

[v] Nadine Wahab: Flash Mob in Egypt: *Protesters find a way around Emergency Law* , huffingtonpost.com 19.06.2010, (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nadine-wahab/first-flash-mob-in-egypt_b_618412.html)
+ http://www.elshaheeed.co.uk/2010/07/02/flash-mob-in-egypt-protesters-find-a-way-around-emergency-law/

[vi] We are all Khaled Said: *FAQ Jul.22, 2010* (http://www.elshaheeed.co.uk/faq/)

[vii] David Rosenberg: *Self-immolation spreads across Mideast inspiring protest,*
Jerusalem Post 25.1.2011 (http://www.jpost.com/MiddleEast/Article.aspx?id=205180)
+ Biggs, Michael (2005). "Dying Without Killing: Self-Immolations, 1963–2002". In Diego Gambetta. *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*. Oxford University Press

[viii] http://www.elshaheeed.co.uk/home-khaled-said-full-story-background-truth-what-happened-torture-in-egypt-by-egyptian-police/

[ix] same

[x] http://www.elshaheeed.co.uk/silent-stands/

[xi] http://www.elshaheeed.co.uk/home-khaled-said-full-story-background-truth-what-happened-torture-in-egypt-by-egyptian-police/

[xii] http://www.facebook.com/elshaheeed.co.uk January 14th 2011 + January 7th 2011 + december 9th 2010 + november 15th 2010
http://ireport.cnn.com/docs/DOC-526968
http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/0,1518,729527,00.html#ref=rss

[xiii] An informative and in depth article on secret renditions is to be found at:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extraordinary_rendition_by_the_United_States

[xiv] MATTHEW COLE and SARAH O. WALI *: New Egyptian VP Ran Mubarak's Security Team, Oversaw Torture* (http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/egypt-crisis-omar-suleiman-cia-rendition/story?id=12812445)
+ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omar_Suleiman
+ Lisa Hajjar: *Suleiman: The CIA's man in Cairo*
(http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/opinion/2011/02/201127114827382865.html)

[xv] John Goetz and Matthias Gebauer: *US Pressured Italy to Influence Judiciar*y (http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/0,1518,735268,00.html)

[xvi] Shadi Hamid: *Viewpoint: Egypt election 'blunder' by Mubarak's NDP,* (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11961685)
Human Rights Watch: *Egypt: Elections Marred as Opposition Barred from Polls*, (http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/11/29/egypt-elections-marred-opposition-barred-polls)

[xvii] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNAA9rWE0kI
+ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ug6Nba3GNlg
+http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=10150100218730539&oid=104224996294040&comments&ref=mf

[xviii] http://www.facebook.com/elshaheeed.co.uk november 27th 2010
+ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=miCFb6O6ZHU

[xix] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gxfMzHnFbh4&feature=channel_video_title
+ http://www.youtube.com/user/TheTruthArmy#p/u/4/gxfMzHnFbh4

[xx] *The Secret Society of Acéphale in Encyclopaedia Acephalica Comprising the Critical Dictionary & Related Texts* (Edited by Georges Bataille), http://athemita.files.wordpress.com/2007/04/encyclopaedia-acephalica.pdf
[5] *Propositions on the Death of God*, *Visions of Excess, Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, ed. Allan Stoeckl, UK: Manchester University Press, 1985; USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1985, pp.199, 201
+ http://www.goldinsenneby.com/gs/?p=116

[xxi] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki

[xxii] http://www.eroseffect.com/articles/eroseffectpaper.PDF

[xxiii] *HVORFOR LUKKET INGEN ØYNENE PÅ CHE (Che i pysjamas med lukkede øyne)(*Why didnt anyone close the eyes of Che (Che in pyjamas with his eyes closed)) folkebiblioteket april 2011, Forlaget Attåt 2011, www.folkebiblioteket.com

[xxiv] http://www.facebook.com/elshaheeed.co.uk/posts/191307190893133

[xxv] http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/feb/11/full-text-hosni-mubarak-resignation?intcmp=239

[xxvi] http://www.facebook.com/elshaheeed.co.uk/posts/163270607057045

[xxvii] End-sign in the performance:
SILENT STAND a reading-piece for 1 voice & 13 performers by Frans Jacobi
thanks to all involved + Susanne Jacobi, Boris Schiøler, Sarat Maharaj
WE ARE ALL KHALED SAID: http://www.elshaheeed.co.uk, http://www.facebook.com/elshaheeed.co.uk