

Appendix for “Coordinated Dis-Coordination”

This research was guided by an attempt to maintain the utmost research ethics, including compliance with the *Principles and Guidance for Human Subjects Research* as adopted by the APSA Council in 2020. This project was conducted with IRB approval HUM00171824. However I recognize that ethics are complex and should not be outsourced to a review board. As such, this document provides my field research details as well as an ethics discussion for the field research given the country’s on-going political crisis.

Research Protocol: Interviews and Focus Groups

My in-person interviews and focus groups were semi-structured to allow the subject(s) to discuss their specific experiences. Interviews were conducted in either Arabic or English; participant-observation was conducted in Arabic. I conducted most interviews alone however some were done with a research assistant who helped facilitate introductions. Given the sensitive nature of the topic amid Sudan's on-going transition, I gauged the willingness of interviewees to be recorded. For those subjects with especially sensitive accounts, I forwent the opportunity to record the interview to allow the interviewee to speak more openly. Quotations come from interviews in which permission to record was granted or verbatim transcripts taken in the moment. Indeed, many subjects who were unwilling to be recorded were very willing to repeat answers multiple times to aid in my verbatim transcription of their comments.

During and shortly after the uprising, I began open-ended interviews with contacts that I had developed over years. From there, I began snowball sampling based on individuals that my interviewees had a connection to and who were active during the uprising: at the end of an interview or focus group, I would suss out 4-5 people that the research subject suggested I speak with. Though I would collect as many contacts as possible, I would privately rank them in order of importance to the research project – taking into consideration factors including the contact's age, gender, education, involvement in formal civil society, as well the regional diversity and socio-economic status of the contact's neighborhood – and reach out to them accordingly.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and given the temporality of the subject matter, subsequent field research was conducted through the phone. This virtual data collection largely took the form of one-on-one interviews with individuals I had meet in-person during earlier bouts of in-person field research. However some interviews were with individuals who I was put into contact with by a mutual contact. I complied with the phone preference of the interviewee: some preferred the encryption of WhatsApp whereas others preferred that I call them through a regular phone line. Whether in-person or over the phone, I informed subjects about my research interests and obtained their consent before starting the interview, including permission to name their particular neighborhood. I also informed participants that I would not be sharing any recorded material (albeit written or verbal) with others, and that any published research would not include identifying information save one's neighborhood.

Interview and Focus Group Sample Questions

Each semi-structured interview or focus group with protest participants and neighborhood resistance committee members differed. But below I list questions I asked commonly and for what purpose:

- Are you involved in your neighborhood resistance committee? If so, why did you join and how long have you been a member? How did you come to join it? (**assess interviewee's participation and/or rationale for (not) joining their resistance committee**)
- How close-knit would you consider your neighborhood? What made it so? Were you close with nearby neighborhoods? How did the committee start? (**determine background information about the neighborhood resistance committee**)
- Before the uprising, how would you describe your political behavior? How political is your family? Your friend group? (**discern their politics**)
- Are you involved in any formal civil society organizations (labor union, political party, women's group, etc.)? Why or why not? If yes, for how long? and did that organization suffer from regime repression (infiltration versus direct repression)? (**determine interviewee's involvement within formal civil society**)
- What was the first protest you attended in 2018/19 and why (why not try to organize before 2018)? What was the most memorable protest you attended and why? How often would you protest? What factors made you decide to participate? (**establish interviewee's participation in uprising**)?
- How do you and others in the resistance committee perceive the role of the FFC/SPA? How critical was the FFC in organizing protests? How often did you follow the weekly schedules? What did that look like? (**assess operating procedures of neighborhood committee vis-a-vis the FFC**)?
- What role did regime repression play in your decision to protest? What were some ways, if any, that you tried to evade repression? What measures did you or your resistance committee put into place to attenuate repression? (**determine effect of repression**)
- How did you communicate? If through ICT, which format (Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, text messaging) did you (and your neighborhood resistance committee) use? How did you use it? Can I see some of the group chats? (**assess role of ICT**)
- Are there other people – perhaps someone in your neighborhood, civil society organization, family, or friend group – that you suggest I speak with? (**begin conversation to snowball sample**)

The paper draws on some elite interviews with members of the FFC, SPA, political parties, and other prominent civil society groups. These interviews were tailored to each individual and their role within the uprising. As such, I did not follow any specific script.

Research Protocol: Participant Observation

Some participant observation data for this project was drawn from formal meetings of civil society elites (e.g., leaders of opposition parties, rebel leaders, heads of large civil society organizations). For these events, I was formally invited and introduced as a researcher interested in authoritarianism and Sudan. Organizers explicitly asked all participants to follow “Chatham House” rules whereby participants agree that we may quote or cite the content of what is discussed but may not attribute the content to any individual so as to prevent attributability.

Other participant observation data is drawn from grassroots dissident meetings, including those of different *lijān*, civil-society workplaces, and opposition party offices. I was only invited to these meetings or enter these spaces after having established strong connections with one or more members of the group. My contact(s) would then ask other members of the group if I could attend upcoming meetings as a researcher. If the group agreed, I was then introduced at the beginning of subsequent meetings or when I entered the space as a researcher interested in understanding how dissidents mobilize against repressive regimes. While I was aware of power dynamics given my positionally as an academic from the US, being introduced through trusted members of a group limited this dynamic and I did not perceive any Hawthorne effects.

Still more participant-observation data is drawn from protests and collective action events. Given the public nature of these events and that I did not directly engage with subjects, I did not obtain consent for these observations.

Ethics Discussion Amid 2021 Counterrevolution

There may be additional security concerns in light of the on-going (as of October 29, 2021) counter-revolution in Sudan. While events in Sudan are concerning and repression on protestors harsh, the data conveyed in this paper does not increase the level of danger for participants in this new environment. To begin, this paper does not reveal secret tactics of Sudanese revolutionaries. Reliance on parallel protests is not a tactical innovation that Sudanese protestors created, and indeed, the regime was very aware of the movement's reliance on parallel protests (e.g., the paper describes how the regime came to post security forces near busy cross-streets and active neighborhoods to reduce the regime's lag time in responding to parallel protests). In addition, while the paper cites interviews with particular neighborhood resistance committees, the majority of neighborhood resistance committees sampled were among the most active during the uprising. These are neighborhoods that even lay civilians – let alone the regime with its infiltrating security apparatus – knew to be more active than others: the citing of interview locations does not provide the regime with any additional information about opposition to their rule.