

The changes of women's space caused by the revolution of 2011 in Egypt



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Anouk Soomers

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Women:

A queen?
A sex object?
A submissive women?
A house wife?
A wife?
A sister?
A mother?
A women?
A human?
A citizen?



Bachelor thesis Human Geography

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A Birth

After such a long, long labor, so tired, weary, painful,
the scans assured us that this time, this time
the pregnancy was not false.

And hours after the birth
on a Tuesday, on 25 January 2011,
was born Egypt,
was born millions
of people, millions
of new men, new women.

Yet some remain still drifting, numb, lifeless,
unconscious, unknowing, stillborn,
—orphan detainees blindly loyal
to the old agenda, the party, the sterile pharaoh
who still looms in stone.

Still, Egypt, alive now though fragile,
alive now though now banned,
alive now though forbidden,
drew that first ragged breath burning
into its lungs, and Egypt
let loose that first raw cry so wild and free
the strongest rock began to fracture at the sound,
crumble, and then melt,
as if ancient stone statues of the kings were
filmy sheets of wax, melting, pooling,
vanishing in the desert air.



Egyptian feminist writer Mona Helmy. (Helmy, 2011)

Foreword:

I am pleased to present my bachelor thesis about women's space in Egypt. This thesis project is the result of fieldwork with interviews in Cairo and a literature study.

I really liked working on this thesis. It is such an actual topic, and it was really great that I got the chance to go to Egypt to talk with a lot of people there and could see the situation with my own eyes.

I really would like to thank several persons that have had a great contribution to my research. Firstly I want to thank my supervisor Olivier Kramsch, for his enthusiasm, support, flexibility and expert guidance. Secondly I want to thank Henk-Jan van Maanen, for his support in Egypt. I want to thank the people in Egypt who help me with my research, were willing to do interviews and showed me around this beautiful country. I also want to thank the NVIC (Dutch-Flemish Institute Cairo) for their hospitality and time and Arab- west report for their extensive contact information. Especially I want to thank Yasmeen Mustafa for all here time and effort, you became a real friend. I fell in love with Egypt, and I wish the people I met all the best for their future.

Finally, I am glad that my thesis has the content I wished for at the beginning of my research period. It was a lot of work to write this thesis but I enjoyed the research and writing process, I learned a lot and I am proud of this result.

Nijmegen, June 2011

Anouk Soomers

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Summary:

This research aims to provide information about women's space in Egypt. This during the periods of before, during and after the January 25th revolution in 2011. With this research I wanted to see if there is any change in women's space during this time.

To set up this research I made use of the theory of Lefebvre about space and feminism. According to Lefebvre space is produced and representational. Feminist agree with this and they say that the body is not passive in a social context. In the Middle East you can find two groups of feminist, secular and Islamic feminism. Secular feminism is the Egyptian feminism based on multiple discourses; Islamic feminism is based on the Qur'an. There is a growth in numbers of feminist in Egypt and culture and religion play a role in the acts of these feminists. The first mainline of feminist is gender as a difference, this means in Egypt inequality between men and women in their culture, religion, work situation, politics, economics, in the social sphere, the traditional sphere and in laws. The second mainline, gender as a social relation, links relations between men and women and watches the possible changes in these links. The third mainline, gender as a social construction, means for Egypt that Egypt is a masculine country.

The Methodology I used in this research are feminist research methods. The world is interpreted by people and there are already socially structured gender relations. I went for my qualitative research to Cairo to do semi-structured in depth interviews, with individuals and groups. Besides these interviews I got a lot of information from literature, newspapers and YouTube movies.

My research is divided into three main parts, namely before, during and after the revolution. First I want to speak about the position of women before the revolution. Baby boys are preferred over girls and women are discriminated and the property of men. There is a lot of domestic violence and genital mutilation against women. Women have higher unemployment rates and illiterate numbers and a lot of them are uneducated and homemakers. Twenty percent of the people live under the poverty line and in this lower class there are still a lot of women who do not work because of a tradition. If women have work then there is a lot of inequality at work, for example: women always have lower salaries than men. Egypt has a men culture and the rates of sexual harassment and abuse are very high.

Most of the people saw a big difference in the situation and inequality between men and women before the revolution. People saw and felt this differently during the revolution.

During the first few days there was a special place on Tahrirsquare for women. Men were standing in chains and wanted to protect women. After these first few days, people were intermixing and there was no special place for women anymore. The Muslim brotherhood tried to separate men and women but people refused this. All kinds of women participated and were at the forefront in the demonstrations on Tahrirsquare. There were slogans for more equality and there was no harassment. There were also women who were making meals and were working in the field hospital. Men and women did the best they could during the revolution.

People felt human during the revolution and citizens of Egypt. They not especially felt as men or women. People felt free to speak out on the square and men felt that the

participation of women and kids gave a great sense of power. Only during the camel attack there were lesser women and children on the square. The revolution was not only taking place on Tahrirsquare but in every Egyptian house.

After the revolution there were three main groups with different people. The first group are people who think that now is the time for women to fight for more rights. The second group of people thinks that this process should go step by step and the third group are the more skeptics. The people who think the most positive feel reborn, they have a voice and they know this voice can be heard. Many women are more active now to get their rights. A lot of people think that they have to call for their rights and not just wait until things come to them and that extreme equality should prevail between men and women. Others say that Egypt should take this step by step and that women firstly have to change the views of their selves. If women do not feel submissive anymore than the position of women would improve. Part of the people say that they can give an eye to women's issues after the elections. These people feel Egyptian at this moment and not women. Skeptics say that there is a risk that women not have the benefits from this revolution. There are also people who think that by the resign of Susan Mubarak there will be less done for women. Others say that Susan Mubarak wanted her own women's council to succeed and killed other women's movements before the revolution, now the other movements have a chance.

In Egypt there is a mentioning of a female president. There are also many political parties that are getting established every day, most of them are liberal but also the Muslim brotherhood and the Salafi group established their own political party. Some people say that the door is open for political women participation. Also research from before the revolution advices to place women on the lists of political parties. This revolution is political, social, cultural and economical. A change in the regime can affect the culture of Egypt. After the revolution there are a lot of women activists. Feminism in the Arab world wants to change everything in the economical, cultural, political and social area.

A lot of women are afraid for the power of the Muslim brotherhood because they say that women have to stay at home. The Muslim brothers also think that women cannot be a president of Egypt, according to a rule in Islam, and that women connect more with their feelings. They see a women as a queen, so you cannot touch women. By saying this you place women indirectly in an unequal position.

People now discuss all sorts of things, before the revolution you could not speak about a lot of things and there is a change in the day to day treatment of people. Most of the women are treated as citizens now a day instead of women. A lot of people think that women can change the future of Egypt; some think that women can change the future with the help of men. Women who participated on the square feel that they own Tahrirsquare now, that it is theirs. But there are also some difficulties after the revolution. Prices of food are higher so it is hard for poor women to make a living for their families. Families are more worried about girls; they cannot go alone outside the house after the revolution. Men and women made a deal about harassment, most of the men do not intimidate women anymore. Women are now not afraid to talk; they know that they are not the only one being harassed and that it is not their fault. On the other hand Amnesty International reported that women were being abused by the army on international women's day.

The comparison of the situation of before and after the revolution shows a change in women's space. Before the revolution women's space was very limited, only the rich and well educated women had a larger space of their own. But for most of the women their space was limited. People had to face a great inequality. After the revolution women still feel this inequality, but they feel it in a different way. A lot of women now know that they have a voice and that this voice can be heard. Women are more active to get their rights after the revolution. Some groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafi's want to limit women's space and there are still women who have to live strict to the traditions and the Egyptian culture, but these women know that they are not alone, they have seen the people in Tahrir, and they know that if they work together they can complete goals they firstly could not imagine. Egypt does not need a change in women only but a change in all Egyptians to further enlarge women's space.

1 Introduction

In this general introduction I will discuss the project framework, the objective of this project, the type of research that I have used, the research-model, which serves as a structural base to set up and carry out this project, and finally the research questions.

1.1 project framework

In this research I wanted to look at the position of women before, during and after the revolution of 2011 in Egypt. I wanted to study to what extent women's space has changed by this revolution. To investigate this, I first had to know how the situation and the place of women before the revolution was. Then I had to know what the place of women during the revolution is and what gave women a voice on Tahrirsquare. I also had to look at spatiality and what women think would be their expected place in the future of Egypt. I chose to study this case on the national scale of Egypt. The problem I will treat in this thesis is a problem in practice, an action problem. And for this problem in practice I had to go to Egypt.

I researched in practice through speaking (in-depth interviews) with Egyptians and experts about my research questions and organised a woman discussion group, a focus group with four people. Besides this practical research I studied literature, news items and other documents.

With this research I wanted to make a contribution to an already existing situation, namely the situation that exists in Egypt today. Women in Egypt are inferior to men, they are often (sexual) abused and the last months men and women were out in the streets of Egypt to demonstrate for the resignation of Mubarak.

Through clearing the position and place of the woman before, during and (the expected place) after the revolution I wanted to contribute to a solution for the problems that these women have in Egypt. I cannot divide my attention to all aspects of the situation of women in Egypt so I focused on the situation in the streets, at home (traditional sphere) and in the new administration. In Egypt there are different religions: Muslim (mostly Sunni) 90%, Coptic 9%, other Christian 1%. (Factbook, 2011) I wanted to involve Muslims in my research because this is the biggest religious group, but I also wanted to pay attention to minority groups.

The most important acting party in the role that women take in Egypt are the Egyptian people themselves. Through these people (men and women) is women's space already created a long time before the revolution began. The revolution is born through these people and women played a significant part in this revolution.

1.2 Objective

The purpose of this study is to get an overview of the women's space and the changes of this women's space in Egypt by doing semi structured in-depth qualitative interviews and a literature and (news) documents study.

The first thing to do is to look at the place of woman in Egypt before the revolution then I will look at the place of woman during the revolution and finally I will look at the expected position/place of woman in Egypt. By doing this I can see the possible changes in the women's space, this makes my research useful. The feasibility of this research also fits in my planning. I can do literature research in the Netherlands and for my practical research I went to Egypt for two weeks, to get a good overall picture of the situation and to do my interviews and observations there. At the beginning of this research I had a clear idea in which direction I wanted to continue my research, therefore, the information content in the area I wanted to explore is sufficient.

1.3 Type of research

I will not perform a problem analytic research because it is clear to all that Egypt finds itself in a problematic situation at this time, therefore I will perform a diagnostic research. Thereby I will try to get an insight to the problematic situation by looking at backgrounds, causes and relations. I will perform a cause research through studying literature about Egypt. Also an opinion research will help me to understand the opinions of the people through interviewing and observing citizens and experts. A diagnostic research is meant to help preparing my design-oriented research.

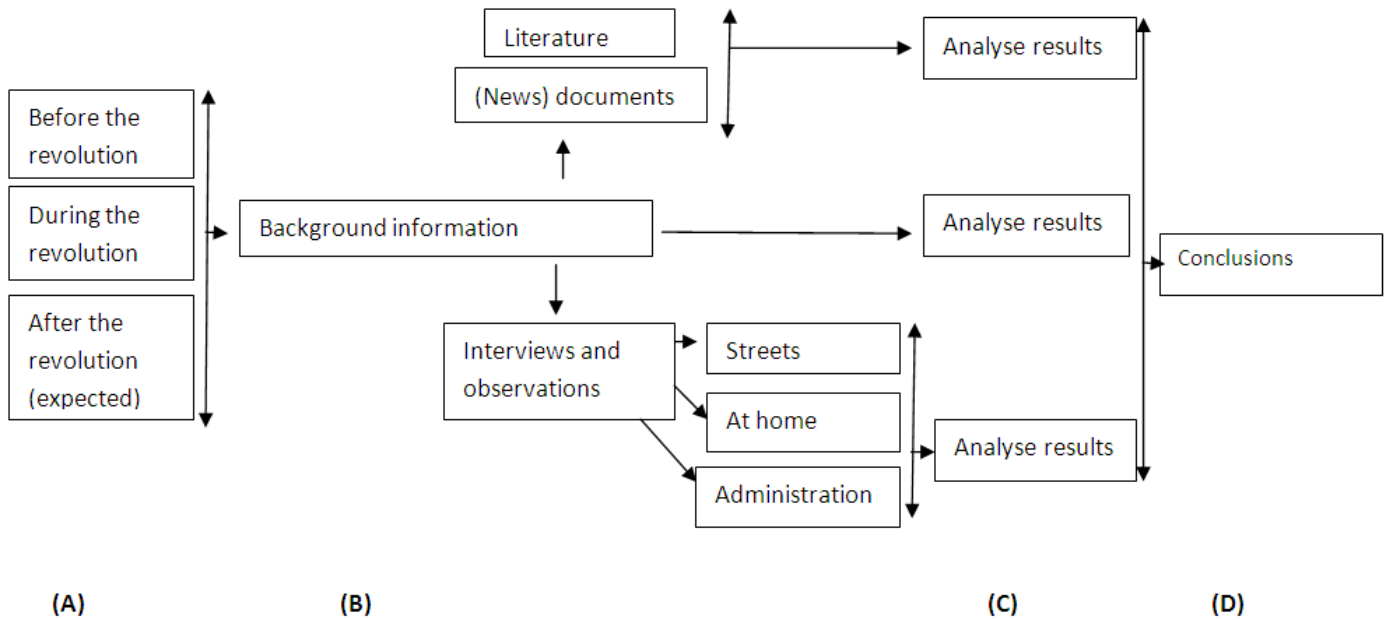
Time will tell if my future scenario of my last sub question is correct. In a few years after the formation of new governance it is possible to perform a change directed or focused evaluation research.

1.4 Relevance

The revolution in Egypt is for the Egyptian people a life changing phenomenon. It does affect the lives of all the Egyptians. Egypt has a man oriented culture and women are often disadvantaged. Everyone in Egypt notices the inequality between men and women in some parts of society and in some sectors is this inequality a real problem. The societal relevance of my thesis subject lies in researching the change in women's space caused by the January 25th revolution of 2011 in Egypt.

The study of women's space in Egypt is relevant to the geographical field and feminist geographical field because it is related to the sense of space women have, it is a form of spatiality. Furthermore studying women's space is scientifically relevant because this phenomenon is understudied. Earlier studies of women in Egypt have their focus on harassment or human rights but not on the spatiality. According to Lefebvre (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 39) is social space produced. Women's space in Egypt is produced by men and women living in Egypt. Women's space is formed by those men and women. Feminist agree with Lefebvre, according to them the body is not a passive and fixed 'fact' onto which social relations are mapped nor can physical experiences of the body simply be accepted as 'facts'. (Butler, Bowlby, 1997, in Moss, 2006). My research does not aspire to develop a conclusive theory on women's space but by doing empirical research and studying literature, can this study show the proces of making and remaking, and bordering and rebordering women's space.

1.5 Research model



- (A) Studying the background information, orientation to the principle concepts of Egypt, the revolution and feminism in Egypt.
- (B) Based on the background information search for new literature and do interviews and observations.
- (C) A comparison and assemblage of the results.
- (D) My conclusions

1.6 Research questions

Main question:

To what extend has women's space changed by the revolution of 2011 in Egypt?

Sub questions:

1. How did women's space before the revolution of 2011 in Egypt look like?
 - a. At home in the traditional sphere?
 - b. On the streets of Egypt?
 - c. In the new administration?
2. To what extend is there women's space during the revolution of 2011 in Egypt?
 - a. What gave women suddenly a voice at the Tahrirsquare?
 - b. Is there a claim of rights to the streets and the city?
3. What will be the expected women's space after the revolution in Egypt?
 - a. At home in the traditional sphere?
 - b. On the streets of Egypt?
 - c. In the new administration?

I chose to ask these questions because I want to know if there is any change in women's space. These sub questions can help me to answer the main question. They produce the information that I need for the different time perspectives of before, during and after, so I have an overall view in my conclusion and can get a proper answer to my main question. Chapter 4 will give a short introduction on feminism and women's space in Egyptian history. My first sub question will be answered in chapter 5, an answer to the second sub question will be given in chapter 6 and the last sub question will be answered in chapter 7. Chapter 8 contains my conclusion.

2 Theory

The theory I used in this project can be subdivided into a theoretical framework and a conceptual model with operationalization.

2.1 Theoretical framework

In this theoretical framework I wrote an overview of the theory I used in this research and how I linked this theory to my empirical chapters.

In this research I worked with to the Actor – Structure line of research, we are free actors and can make the world or we are caught by structures. So to what extend are women free actors in Egypt, are they bound to structures and is there any change in these structures during time?

This makes feminist geography and the concept women's space the heart of this thesis. First, to get a better understanding of the subject space, I quote Lefebvre:

'If indeed spatial codes have existed, each characterizing a particular spatial/social practice, and if these codifications have been *produced* along with the space corresponding to them, then the job of theory is to elucidate their rise, their role and their demise'. (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 17)

'The act, the creation is, in fact, a *process*'. (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 34)

By saying this Lefebvre means that space and the situation in which we live is produced by ourselves, it doesn't overcome us. Lefebvre says that space is a crucial category in the process of social production in society, in his book *the Production of Space* he talks about different sorts of space, namely the material space, social relations and the mental space. This means for my research that women's space of the women living in Egypt also is produced space. The men and women in Egypt made this space. This is the 'representational space' in the words of Lefebvre. This is the social space where people live together and the active experiences people have. This is the space of the inhabitants and 'users'. (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 39)

Feminist agree with Lefebvre about the production of space, they have been theorizing the social significance of space: '... treating the experience of the body as the outcome of a reflexive relationship between bodily materiality and social process. The body is not a passive and fixed 'fact' onto which social relations are mapped, nor can what seem to be physical experiences of the body simply be accepted as 'facts' which are prior to or determinative of social relations'. (Butler, Bowlby, 1997, in Moss, 2006)

According to Rose there is an exclusion of women from the geographical thought in certain understanding of masculine geography. (Rose, 1993, p.62) The main goal of feminist geography is the improvement of women's lives. Feminist geography does this by understanding the sources, the spatiality of women's oppression and documenting strategies of resistance. Their research has transformed into every day social activities for example households. Feminist geography knows three main lines of doing research. The first main line is gender as a difference. Feminist mean by this an analysis of the spatial dimensions of the different experiences in life from men and women in different areas such as the cultural, political, economical and environmental area . (Aitken & Valentine, 2006)

In Egypt, women and men have different role patterns according to their culture and religion. Also in politics and economics does gender make a difference, women struggle to get good jobs and to get the same rights as men. The second main line is gender as a social relation; this main line is about the understanding of different social relations. These relations link men and women in complex ways. (Aitken & Valentine, 2006) In this research I look at these different relations and see the links between men and women and the possible changes in these links. The last main line is gender as a social construction. This last main line shows that also forms of identification, phenomena, landshapes and nationstates are gendered als masculine and feminine. (Aitken & Valentine, 2006) Egypt is a masculine country . Hofstede's dimension of the masculinity index explains that 'while women in the Arab World are limited in their rights, it may be due more too Muslim religion rather than be a cultural paradigm'. (Hofstede, 2009)

The next's issues I will talk about arise from these main lines.

Hutchinson said that the inequality between men and women begins with the growth of little boys and girls. According to him, a boy turns away from his mother; he will see his mother as an object. This process becomes an expression of opposition to a negotiation of 'mother', this happens because the boy wants to look like his father. Hutchinson says that girls go to another process; they identify more with their mothers and with interrelating. (Hutchinson, 1984 in Rose, 1993, p.64) Also Fuss talks about the biological differences between men and women. 'Although in political theory since Plato, the existence of a distinct sphere of private , family life, seperated from the realm of public life, leads to the exaggeration of women's biological differences from men, to the perception of women as primarily suited to fulfill special "female" functions within the home and consequently to the justification of the monopoly of men of the whole outside world'. (Fuss, 1989, in Rose, 1993, p.35)

'The everyday geography of kitchens and bedrooms – and streets and workplaces and neighborhoods – is the geography of manny womens spatiallity, and of feminist too.' (Rose, 1993, p.142) In the chapters before, during and after the revolution I will link these everyday geographies to the situation of women in Egypt.

In the Book *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf tells about the fact that women are treated unequal. According to Woolf this is why they have less impressive works of writing than men. To clarify her vision Woolf creates a woman named Judith Shakespeare (the imaginary twin sister of William Shakespeare) She does this to prove that a women as talented as Shakespeare could never have achieved such success. (Woolf, 1967) The book *feminist and geography* discribed that the limits on the structure of women's everyday activities are arise by surtain expectations of the society. (Rose, 1993, p.17)

To not only look from a Eurocentric point of view to feminism I will give more information about feminism in the Middle East and specifically about feminism in Egypt.

There has always been a connection between Feminism and nationalism in the Middle East. Struggles feminist sometimes have with transnational cultural and economical forces seek a non-Eurocentric framework, Arab women search for identities within their society. (Saliba, 2000)

The words of Omid Safi (2003) show a connection between feminism and jihadist. 'Interpreting women are "gender jihadists" or strugglers in the cause of gender justice that includes promoting the practice of full equality, it is not sufficient to come up with a more luminous theology of Islam, but [that] it is imperative for us to work on transforming the various societies around us'. The term jihad is used to the battle against "infidels" by Islamists. (Safi, 2003, in Badran, 2005, p.16)

Badran tells in an article in the *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* about feminism in the Middle East that there are two sorts of feminism. Secular (from the late 19th century) and Islamic (from the late 20th century) feminism. These feminisms appeared in Muslim majority societies and they were evolved in historical contexts. In these contexts new subjects and identities were being refashioned out of shifting combinations of religious, class, ethnic, and national affiliation. Secular feminism is made by multiple discourses. These discourses include secular nationalist, Islamic modernist, humanitarian/human rights, and democratic views. (Badran, 2005, p.6) Secular feminism is the same as Egyptian feminism. (Badran, 2005, p.12)

Islamic feminism is expressed as a religiously grounded discourse and uses the Qur'an as its central text. (Badran, 2005, p.6) 'Feminism needed a new edge, and Islamic feminism provided it. Islamic feminism offered new thinking and new tools. Islamic feminism took from secular feminism its Islamic modernist strand and made progressive religious discourse its paramount discourse' (Badran, 2005, p.13) These feminist discourses started both with the critique that they were held back from benefits and modernities as freely as their men enjoyed them. Secular feminism was created together with two other phenomena namely the arrival of the printing press and the spread of literacy among women (middle and upper strata women). (Badran, 2005, p.7) These two feminisms have never been hermetic entities. (Badran, 2009, p.2) By the arrival of these two phenomena, female writing and reading began. (Badran, 2005, p.7) Islamic feminism appeared in a period of late postcoloniality and a disaffection over the inability to deliver democracy. (Badran, 2005, p.8) 'For women in different parts of the Middle East who had long enjoyed access to employment in the public sphere and for their families who counted on their material contributions, the call for retreat to the home in the name of Islam was decidedly disquieting'. (Badran, 2005, p.9)



Islamic feminism

Secular feminism has always been action-oriented and has been organized rather in a national then religious framework on the local scale in Egypt. Islamic feminism takes place on the global scene. (Badran, 2009, p.3) It can take place in the global scene because of the freedom that cyberspace offers. (Badran, 2009, p.308)

Feminist Muslim women have created a feminism of their own, religion has been integral in this feminism right from the start. (Badran, 2009, p. 2) The feminism of the Middle East was born and had grown in the home soil. Different sorts of feminisms speaks to each other in agreement and disagreement. Badran says the following about Middle East and western feminism: 'I make these assertive declarations in the context of perennial moves to discredit Middle Eastern feminisms and feminisms more generally among Muslims by de-legitimizing them as clones of "western feminism" (whatever that is) and colonialist intrusions into "authentic" Middle Eastern and Islamic culture (whatever that is), which are more insidious than a computer virus'. (Badran, 2005, p.13)

Margot Badran noticed that in her talks with women, feminist expressed their difficulties with the confining feminism label, this because feminist is branded as Western. Badran saw women with layered identities and only one of these identities was feminist. (Badran, 2009, p.146-147) I noticed the opposite in my talks with feminist women. Women were proud of being a feminist, they were proud of their points of view and were willing to fight for their rights. They wanted to tell people they are a feminist and have discussions to convince people about their point of view.

The feminists in the Middle East had higher stakes in rethinking gender, religion, and culture than men. Women were expected to mark culture and have a religiously prescribed morality in their daily lives. Secular and Islamic feminist in the Middle east have tried to re-read Islam from the late nineteenth century to this very day. (Badran, 2005, p.16) Secular feminist fought to gain admission for women in secular professions in the early and middle decades of the twentieth century. (Badran, 2005, p.21)

According to Badran, 'Islamic feminists have built upon and extended the Islamic modernist thinking that has been an integral component of Muslims' secular feminism and moved it into a whole new space'. (Badran, 2009, p.11) About the intentions of both kinds of feminism says Badran that Islamic feminism was more radical than secular feminism by affirming the equality of all human beings, this was grounded to new readings of the Qur'an. Secular feminist wanted full equality of men and women in the public sphere but accepted a model of gender complementarities in the traditional sphere. Islamic feminist do not accept this and think that social justice cannot be achieved in the absence of full gender equality. (Badran, 2009, p.308)

Badran said in her book: *Feminism and Islam* that secular and Islamic feminist now works more together than they ever did. They work side by side in productive synergy in a highly volatile environment. (Badran, 2009, p.12)

According to Golley were the heroes of the 20th century Egyptian revolution the little bourgeoisie of both divisions who were more nationalistic. This transformation had an impact on the social structure for women. Within this new capitalistic system there was a lot more competition and women lost their jobs. These women were forced to go back home. Golley says that 'keeping women at home was also a practical expression of emphasizing Islamic or Arabic, or even Egyptian, identity against the threat of the expanding influence of European Culture. Thus, new economic and social conflicts can be argued to have played a major role in bringing about the feminist revolts in 19th century Egypt. No wonder, then, that the women who revolted against their situation, at first verbally, were the women who were most secluded from public life and were more likely to be eloquent and equipped for such a struggle, namely upper class, educated women'. (Golley, 2004, p.53)

Moghadam says in his article that by the rise of Islamic fundamentalism there are more women in the Muslim world who strive for the definition and expansion of women's rights. He also says that this coincided with the growth of educated middle class women with aspirations of equality, mobility, and empowerment. But he also argues that: 'Still, one may conclude that for women in the Muslim world seeking the expansion of citizenship rights, critical sites and resources are the state, civil society, the transnational public sphere, and transnational feminist networks'. (Moghadam, 2003) This can be a battle for women after the revolution. There is a chance that strict islamic groups such as the Muslimbrotherhood and the Salafi will gain power, according to Moghadam are there at that moment more women who stive for their rights, but I think that it will be a harder battle for women than if more democratic parties gain power in Egypt.

Badran thinks that there will be a new radical feminism in Muslim societies, and that more women will be part of Islamic feminism. She argues that Islam is in the culture of Egypt, only the language of Islamic feminism can reach women in all classes and because Muslim women who practice Islam and feminism need an Islamic feminism. (Badran,2009,p.219) My own opinion about this is that I saw a lot of strictly religious women in Egypt who want to be a feminist and want to profess the faith, from this point of view I can understand the idea of Margot Badran. But I also see something different in post-Mubarak Egypt. This is that people fought for one and the same goal, and when these people achieved that goal, they were very proud of their selves, and of their country. They now that they can achieve great goals as they work together as an Egyptian society. By saying this I think that also the secular feminism will get more supporters and participants. By saying this I see the intermixing of the two kinds of feminists mix and work together as I described earlier.

Secular and Islamic feminist are more and more intermixing and creating common goals. Badran gives the following explanation for this: 'Egyptian women as feminists, pro-feminists, and Islamists all have a stake in retaining their presence in society and in promoting the public presence of other women. They have many common gender interests and common goals, despite the different primary contexts in which they locate their projects. For feminists religion is primarily an individual and personal matter. They do not advocate an Islamic state, and they have a pluralist's attitude toward society. For the more ideological concerned Islamists, the goal of an Islamic state and society is fundamental. [...] Their differences however, have not precluded feminist, pro-feminist, and Islamist women from engaging in common forms of activism'. (Badran,2009,p.163) Nawal el-Saadawi, whom I quote in my empirical chapters, is calling for a social, economical and cultural revolution, she used certain Islamic arguments but she was not initially articulated within an Islamic framework. (Badran,2009,p.150) So she is an example of the mixing and cooperation of both feminisms in Egypt. Tahani al-Jibali the first female judge in Egypt says in a book of Badran that the combination of secular and religious arguments from feminists had won in the long battle for women to become a judge. (Badran, 2009, p.315) Badran describes the cooperation between the two feminisms as follow: 'Secular feminist and Islamic feminist are now coming together more and more in the Middle East to complete women's collective, unfinished business. Together they are breaking down boundaries and binaries. Secular feminist rooted in national soil and Islamic feminist universalism and global character together are recovering a holistic Islam in which secular and religious dissolve back into each other. The two feminisms are producing Islam's gender revolution – indeed, Islam's revolution in the Middle East, and beyond'. She argues that feminists were often in uncomfortable challenges to masculine scrambles to control the construction of modernity. Men controlled space, power and privileges. She said that it has often been argued that women had to constitute or preserve "the traditional" at moments when customary ways were in danger of disappearing. (Badran,2009,p.215) The question for after the revolution is if women have to deal with this again, if they again let men control the space, and keep themselves by the traditional things a women has to do, or that she knows she can make a difference now after the revolution.

2.2 Conceptual model and operationalization

The conceptual model described below can be defined as the link between the theoretical framework and the detailed elements put into operation. Parts from the theoretical framework are here linked to the women living in Egypt.

Firstly I want to define women's space. My notion of women's space is a combination between the work of feminist and Lefebvre. By women's space I understand a produced and representational space that can change by acts over time in a process. This space is formed by men and women, they can reduce or enlarge this space. It is a form for women to product socially in society, a space were women can life and experience within form as gender as a difference, a social relation, a construction and the actual space for women within the traditional sphere (home), the outgoing sphere (street), their work, politics and rights.

Different generations of women have different feelings about their women's space. Older women in Egypt said that they just lived it, they lived the difference and lived in the inequality. Feminist and women who participated during the revolution gave more attention to women's space. These women created women's space to use their voice. They know their rights and fight for these rights and so they create a space to live in. Women can change these women's space by working in groups (can be related to feminism), to know their rights, change laws and if they know and fight for rules in their workplace. Because of the high rate of sexual harassment in Egypt can women change women's space by knowing international laws and women's rights. They can fight for other and better rights for women so they get a better position in society. Also education plays a huge role in the change of women's space. Educated women are more aware of their rights and will protect their rights better than uneducated women.

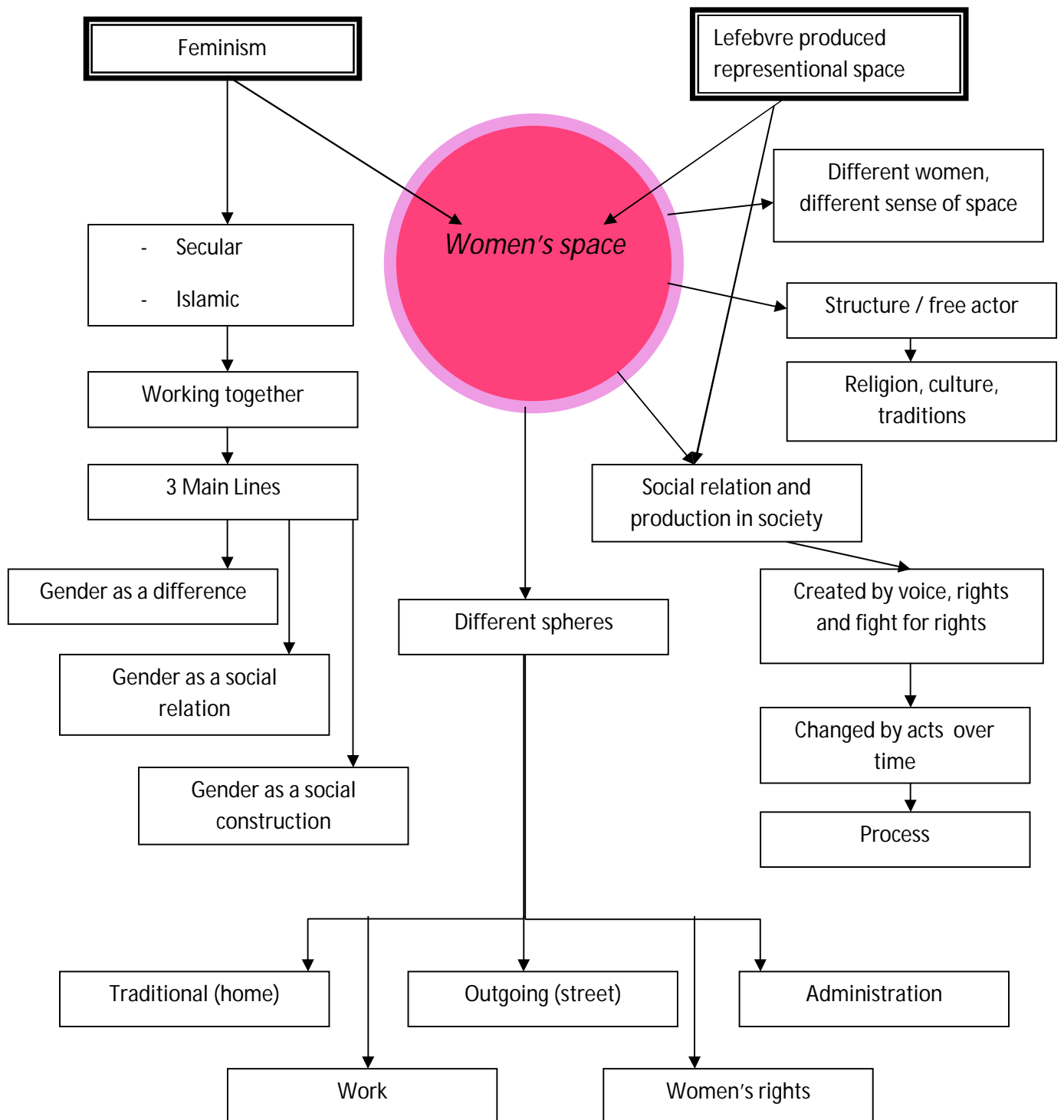
Women in Egypt are bounded to curtain structures. These structures exist in their religion, culture and traditions. If women know their rights they will be more free actors. Richer and higher educated women are freer actors than poor and uneducated women in society.

According to Lefebvre is space produced not passive and fixed. In Egypt it is hard for people to not be passive and fixed because people are created this way through their culture, religion and traditions, but also these people produce a space that fits this culture, religion and traditions. During the revolution of 1919 women produced women's space, and during the January 25th revolution they again produced space. Feminism wants to approve people's lives to let them know their rights. They want to give women a voice, so they can fight for improvement in lots of things. For example on topics as the social space, cultural space, economical space, a better health (no more circumcision for women) and in the administrational space.

Because of the difference between men and women, prefer people to have baby boys over girls. Especially the poor people prefer this, so the boys can work and earn money for the family. Women are set in a special place. A lot of poor women have to stay at home and do the household and men have to go to work and earn money. From the example I mentioned (in the theoretical framework) of *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf noticed that women writers still feel the pressure. Before the revolution they were banned or censored, they could not say what they wanted and had no rights.

Religion and feminism goes together in Egypt. Women living under Muslim laws but they still want their rights as women. For example in the Qur'an stands that women should dress proper, wearing a veil is part of this but they do not need to cover their whole face. In the chapters, history, before, during and after I wrote stories of the daily lives of women and women's place.

2.3 Schematic overview:



3 Research methods

In this chapter attention is given to the research methods I used during my research. I will explain the different decisions I made and the strategy I used.

The purpose of the research I did is well defined in the book: *Feminist Geographies*, (Women and Geography study Group, 1997, p.99):

‘Research on, by and for women’

In my research I also wanted to use feminist research methods. Firstly I want to give an explanation of these feminist research methods and comment on the way I worked with this methods.

In human geography are the research practices of feminist about epistemology, methodology and politics and not so much about inventing new research methods. The feminist research methods understand that research has to be produced in a world that is already interpreted by people, including the researcher. (Aitken,Valentine, 2006, p.287)

Feminist methodology is about the oppressive aspects of socially constructed gender relations between men and women. ‘Feminist methodology aims for mutual understanding of learning about the meaningful differences between the researcher and the people who are the subject of research with respect to structures of domination’. (Katz, 1994 in Women and Geography study Group, 1997, p.87) Feminist methods are in conjunction with feminist goals. These methods can include qualitative or/and quantitative methods. ‘The theoretical orientation guides the conceptual framing of the research, the questions asked, the application of methods and the interpretation of results that create feminist enquiry’. (Dyck, 1993 in Women and Geography study Group, 1997, p.87) Feminists never consider research methodologies as abstract. What gives careful consideration in an effort to construct research are the social identities and power relations in which research is embedded. This will contribute to the feminist project of diversity. (Women and Geography study Group, 1997, p.89)

According to Aitken and Valentine, is the researcher in face-to-face fieldwork not passive but they are ‘knowledgeable agents accept as ‘experts’ of their own experience’. Feminist search for interaction between the researcher and the interviewee. The focus for a feminist is the interviewees own understanding of the social structures and the circumstances they live in. This means in practice to talk about what the interviewee wants or where he can talk about. The purpose is thus to minimize the hierarchical relationship between interviewer and interviewee. (Aitken,Valentine, 2006, p. 288)

‘By feminist theorizing is it now common for all human geographers to locate themselves socially, politically and intellectually within their research’. ‘To be critically about epistemologies, methodologies and methods, feminist geographers have already created richer, more complex human geographies; and feminist meditations on the research process have transformed the way human geography is practiced, produced and taught’. The feminist view has also changed our understandings and ways of knowing and seeing the world. (Aitken,Valentine, 2006, p. 294)

3.1 Research strategy

In this paragraph I will explain which research strategy I used and how this research strategy fits my research.

During this research I have chosen for a field work, I really wanted to get away behind the desk and go to Egypt to speak with people about their situation. So I went for 16 days to Cairo to speak to people and to interview people there. This because the revolution is a current topic and I cannot find enough information about this topic in books or on the internet. I wanted to meet the real people behind this revolution and the real women who were part of this revolution.

I also chose to do a qualitative research. This because in this way I will get more in depth information and I have the possibility to ask further and in depth questions. I also had the possibility to change my questions between different interviews. As I noticed that I got a lot of response to the first question and not to the second, I asked more sub questions about the first question and I removed the second question from my list. Because people have lived through the revolution, and women lived their lives in Egypt, I will have more advantage to ask about the experiences and views of people than to collect data and numbers for a quantitative research. Qualitative research is about the question of 'why?' and seeks to broader meanings behind a social process. The technique I will use for my qualitative research are interviews, more information can be found under 3.2.

There are multiple feminist geographies, and there are competing visions in these geographies. The centre of feminist geographies consist analyses of power, privileges, oppression and representation, with gender as the primary social relation. Power relations are exposed in past and contemporary constructions of gender. The first task for female geographers was to make women's live visible and 'mapping' gender inequalities. 'Qualitative methods, especially interactive interviews, were generally considered best suited to the goals and politics of feminist analyses. (Aitken,Valentine, 2006, p.286)

Feminist Geography knows four main characteristics in its methodology. Not only feminist use these characteristics and the characteristics overlap and interlink with each other. (Women and Geography study Group, 1997, p.100) This feminist research is an iterative process and because I want to use feminist research methods I will discuss each characteristic based on my own research.

The first characteristic: Ways of knowing; This knowledge is experiential and interpretative. Different women have different experiences and the 'field' place of the research is not a natural place, it has his own political, social, economical and cultural contexts which will change over time. The knowledge we get is determined by our identity positions. The 'field' we create from the identity position is partial and situated. (Women and Geography study Group, 1997, p.101) I am aware of my own position and identity and I know that this identity does not match with the identity of women in Egypt. I interviewed different sorts of people in Egypt to get an overview of the different women and their different experiences regarding to their position as a women, and their experiences with the revolution. Because of the traditions, culture and events such as the revolution is the place of my research not a natural place, for this reason I interviewed different sorts of women, namely women from rich to poor and unskilled to highly educated.

The second characteristic: Ways of asking; 'The way we 'ask' and what we 'ask' is bound up within relations of power'. (Women and Geography study Group, 1997, p.103) 'In a research context, reflexivity means the self-conscious, analytical scrutiny of one's self as a researcher. Within feminist methodologies, reflexivity extends to a consideration of power and its consequences within the research relationship'. Reflexivity can make us more aware of power relations but it does not remove these relations. (Aitken, Valentine, 2006, p. 289) I had to ask my research questions as a 21 year old woman from The Netherlands. Some topics such as sexual harassment are sensitive topics to talk about, I acted careful with this questions and answers. At some point you have to know what you can ask an interviewee and what not, where she wants to talk about and what she rather not wants to tell. This is why I chose for semi-structured interviews so that I could decide where to talk about and the interviewees could also say what they wanted to tell, so she could give their own twist to the interview.

The third characteristic: Ways of interpreting: This means the way we are interpreting the knowledge we have acquired through asking and the legitimating that is given to subjective knowledge. 'We need to think about our assumptions, our part in the research process and the ethical considerations we make during the research processes. (Dyck, 1993 in Women and Geography study Group, 1997, p.106). Because of the fact that my identity and culture differ from the women I interviewed I had to ask sometimes for more explanation to an answer they gave upon one of my questions. This because I wanted to interpret it in the correct way. Before I went to Egypt I read a lot about the culture and the people but I knew that misunderstandings are still possible. This is another reason wherefore I chose for qualitative interviews so I got the chance to know people a little better, so that people know they could trust me and that I better could interpret what they were talking about.

The fourth and last characteristic: Ways of writing: By this they mean that the positionality of the author will be acknowledged in the writing of the research, this needs to be treated with sensitivity in a political world. You will have to consider the cultural, political, social and economical contexts in which the 'written' form of the research is received. (Women and Geography study Group, 1997, p.107) During my empirical research and my interviews I carried a voice recorder so I could record the interviews and discussions I made. By doing this the previous characteristic, the interpretation of things went better, but it also helped me with the writing of this thesis. I wrote basic information from the people I interviewed down, so I knew their names, date of birth, family situation and jobs. When I was back in the Netherlands I transcribed these interviews so I could see similarities and differences in the answers of different people. I think that this was the best way for me to write this thesis.

In the analysis of feminist geographers there are different streams. Some feminist say that gender is the most important category of the analysis, they see women as one group. Others say that gender is related to things as class, race and sexuality. Yet other feminist geographers argue that gender and social differences are so complex that people need to start thinking about difference in new kinds of ways. (Women and Geography study Group, 1997, p.89) I have considered these arguments in the decision I made about which methods and methodological approaches I will use in this research. Firstly I saw the women of Egypt as one group, but when I interviewed people I saw them more as individuals related to a different class and education level. This because there is a big difference between the rich and the poor people in Egypt. The small group of rich people, have had a good education, speak English and have jobs to earn money. The large group of poor people do not have an education, speak only Arabic, and have no job, a low paid job or work as street vendors. These women are different in their needs and thoughts but together they form the women population of Egypt and in my opinion they have to stick together to get more rights for women in the future of this country.

3.2 Collection of data

The most important actors in this research are Egyptian women. In this research I get to know if there is any change in the position of women before, during and after the January 25th revolution. So I spoke with women who participated in this revolution but also to women who stayed at home and followed the revolution from their television screens. I chose to conduct semi- structured in-depth interviews. I talked to young women and old women, to educated and uneducated women.

I conducted individual interviews to speak with women (and some men) alone about their situation, this so they would have more trust in me and would tell me more personal information. I also conducted a group interview with four people, this because in this way the interviewees could interact with each other and they could comment on each other's views and positions. What I also did was that I went with a professor (I interviewed her earlier that week) to her university and I asked a classroom full of students about their opinion of the revolution and of the position of women in Egypt, this was also very helpful for my research. By doing this I had a quick overview of lot perspectives in that classroom.

A second method for me to collect data was a literary research. I read literature about feminism, and the situation of women before the revolution. About their situation during and their possible situation after the revolution I read news articles in newspapers and on the internet. I also watched YouTube movies and television broadcasts with interviews and protests movies. This will make the findings from my interviews for this research stronger and more reliable.

After doing this interviews and read a lot of literature I collected a large amount of data. Not all of the data I collected was useful for my research. I had to make an analysis to transform this big amount of data into useful information. I have analyzed the content of the different interviews, by making transcriptions of these interviews and compare them with each other and with the literature I found. Thereby I could write this thesis.

4 History

Firstly I want to discuss in short the history of Feminism and women movements in Egypt. We will see that this history led to the position of feminism and the position of women before the revolution.

Egypt knows a long history of powerful women, during the ancient times some of these women were pharaohs such as Nitocris, Cleopatra and Hatshepsut. Many years later Hoda Shaarawi the first woman who went unveiled and shocked the country, she was also the founder of the first feminist group, her Egyptian Feminist Union was founded in 1923. Rawya Attiya (army officer) was the first female Arab parliamentarian. (C.Alexander, M.Fam, 2011)

Badran made a distinction between three stages in women's assumption of agency. During the first stage (the later decades of the nineteenth century) women got a more feminist consciousness, this through poems and essays they wrote and published. During the second stage (the first few decades of the twentieth century) women made their first steps into everyday society and everyday feminist activism. From the third stage (early 1920s) women engaged in visible organized feminism and created the Egyptian Feminist Union. (Badran, 1995, p.3)



A statue sculpted by Mahmud Mukhtar, called *Nahdat Misr (the Awakening of Egypt)* shows a peasant woman lifting up her veil and placing her arm on the back of a sphinx. This sculpture represents Egypt as a woman but by the ceremony of revealing this statue no women were allowed. (Baron, 2005, p.1) On page 32 of her book Baron describes that this suggests that women were favored as a symbol rather than as a political actor. According to her, the more women appeared in the visual culture as representations of the nation, the less they appeared in the public arena, but the statue of *The Awakening of Egypt* became a symbol of women's rights in Egypt. (p.215)

In a Book of Beth Baron (Baron, 2005, p.5) she says that Egyptian women were called the mothers of the nation, they were biologically and culturally reproducing the nation. By doing this they claimed entry into the public arena. She also says that women and men debated about issues as female education and work, veiling and marriage and divorce, these debates are directly linked to the British occupation of Egypt. (Baron, 2005, p.32) According to Baron started women nationalists together with the common goal to end the British occupation. (Baron, Egypt as a Woman, Nationalism, Gender, and Politics, 2005, p.218) About this nationalist movement Baron says that they ended the British occupation but they did not make women full citizens of Egypt. (Baron, 2005, p.220) Egyptian women thought that when independence of the British occupation came they had the full right of citizenship. A constitution made in 1923 confirmed their assumption, but three weeks after this constitution was made, an electoral law was passed that restricting the right to vote and to be elected to men. This law swept away all the rights that women had received. (Badran, 1995, p.208) After this women suffered to get their rights.

According to Badran got women in the 19th century a more feminist consciousness. Women were more aware of the fact that if you are born as women you have to lead a very different life than men from the similar classes and grow up under the same circumstances. Men had accorded to themselves a lot of power and imposed rules on women to keep them subordinate. There were ideas expressed in groups or by individuals about being women and about gender and power. (Badran, 1995, p.3) By doing this they created feminism in Egypt.

During the revolution of 1919 Elite women played a role during the 'Ladies demonstration' of March 1919. (Baron, Egypt as a Woman, Nationalism, Gender, and Politics, 2005, p.107) These elite women also observed European women when they began to travel to Europe. In Europe they saw the different style of dressing and saw a different way in acting between husband and wife in public. (Badran, 1995, p.8) Middle-class women changed their lives by expanding formal education. (Badran, 1995, p. 9) People feared the mixing of sexes when women started to enter the public arena , especially the work office. (Badran, 1995, p.58) The old notion was that women space was in the home, but new roles both social, economical and political were also outside these homes. (Badran, 1995, p.64)

Feminist women legitimized their own discourse by saying that the Egyptian feminism has an Islamic and nationalist dimension. (Badran, 1995, p.4) Women who adopted the feminist identity still had their religious identity as well. They thought that their life as a feminist improved their life as a Muslim. (Badran, 1995, p.11) Under the Mubarak regime, female representation has decreased. (Alexander, Fam, 2011)

5 Women's space before the revolution

If I want to see if there is any change in the position of women in the Egyptian society than I have to know what the situation of these women was before the January 25th revolution. To find this out I look at different situations and different places such as the traditional sphere (the home situation), the situation in the streets and at work, the situation of women in the administration and the role of a famous women in the past 30 years of the Mubarak regime, Susan Mubarak. In this chapter the situation of women before the January 25th revolution will be discussed. By saying this I mean about the last 10 years before this revolution, a further review back in history can be found under 4 History.

5.1 Women's space in the traditional home sphere

First I want to introduce the traditional sphere or home situation of women in Egypt. The home is the basis of peoples lives and in that homesituation starts in Egypt the inequality between men and women. This source of inequality starts in the homes by the birth of baby girls and boys. People prefer boys, because a girl's life in Egypt is difficult. It is difficult for a girl to life with their family and the life of a girl will be different than the life of a men. Women get no assurance of being happy in their marriage. The main purpuse in a women's life is to marry and to have children. (Atiya, 1982) Also family honor is very important in Egypt. (Baron, 2005, p.53)

A lot of people saw discrimination of women in the traditional sphere before the revolution. Mister Hani Labib tells that there was a great discrimination of women before the revolution. He also says that the Egyptian community is firstly a man community, the man has more power. In the Egyptian society are women mainly the property of men, whatever the man is a father a husband or a brother. (Labib, interview, april 13th,2011) Also Ghazal Shashaa a student in Cairo notices a big difference between men and women. She says that wherever you go, you will always feel a difference. For example is it for a men exapted to come late at home, a women can not do this. The men could go out with a friend and drink this would be complete fine. However if she decided she wants to drink that is not fine, people would look different at her if she would do that. (Shashaa, interview, april 19th, 2011)

Ebtesam Kamel from Caritas Cairo (Catholic organization) leader of women affairs, sees a difference between men and women in the traditional sphere. She says that there is a high percentage of domestic violence in Egypt. This occurs in Christian and Muslim homes, but you will find it more in the Muslim homes. It is also possible for the husbands of Muslim women to marry other women. The women with the biggest problem according to Ebtesam are the low status women. (Kamel, interview, april 18th, 2011) Editor in chief of Coptic newspaper 'Watani' thinks that uneducated people face the problem of inequality and abuse more than educated people. In Christianity in Egypt the uneducated husbands would say that they are the head of the family and that they have to be obeyed. But people would always have in mind that in a Christian marriage when you once stepped with your bride into the church a part of the bible says that you will love your wife as Jesus loves the church. If you preside over your wife in your family that would be in the context of Jesus presiding over the church. Giving him to the church. So it is in this understanding that they say that a man is the head of the family and has not to be a dictator in his home. (Sidhom,interview, april 14th, 2011)

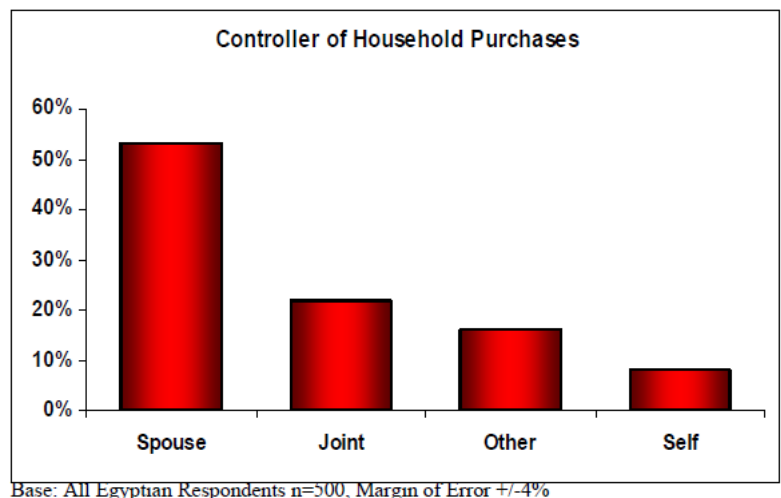
Saegart and Winkel think that women and men have different feelings about their home. The meaning of the home is for women more a sense of belonging, it is a place to care about and to share emotions. Men think more about belongings, and they have the feeling that this place belongs to them, he feels like he is the owner. (Saegart, Winkel, 1996 in Moss, 2006, p. 53)

Also a tradition and abuse of women is genital mutilation. Numbers by the United Nations say that more than 80 percent of women have undergone genital mutilation. People do this because this must protect their chastity. (Alexander, Fam, 2011)

Another issue of subordinate is the household money. From the 52% of the Egyptian women who have savings or household money, only 15% of the women save the money themselves.

Also most of the purchases are done by the husbands. Just 10% of the women spend money by herself. (Courtney, Feld, Shanks, 2007)

From the stories I have heard about the situation at home, I can conclude that most of the women have not a lot space of their own, their women's space is limited. Only high educated women have have a bigger space in their homesituation.



5.2 Women's space on the streets of Egypt

In Cairo most of the Muslim women in the streets are veiled (hidjab) or wearing a niqab. They are wearing long skirts and sweaters or shirts with long sleeves. The majority of the women who are not veiled are Christian. If Muslim women are not veiled they are in an awkward situation. A big problem in the streets of Egypt is the harassment of women. According to a survey by the Egyptian Center for Women's rights (2008) 83% of the Egyptian women have been sexually harassed. (Rogers, 2011) Women are often afraid to report this, they are fearing for stigmatization of themselves and their families. Only 62% of the Egyptian men admit that they harass women. (Ali, 2011) In the shops you will find short skirts and tops therefore it is hard to find proper clothes for women who are not veiled.

98% of the foreign women have been sexually harassed. (Rogers, 2011) I have never been in Egypt myself before the revolution, but from a lot of tourist who travel through Egypt you often hear complaints about the obtrusiveness of men that they are calling you names, grabbing you by your hand or trying to touch you. Noha Wagih sees these great numbers of harassment in daily life: 'Before the revolution there was a lot of abuse, in Egypt we have a real male culture'. (Wagih, interview, April 13th, 2011)

Ebtesam Hashim is a female activist and doctor in Cairo and she experienced the harassment herself. She told me that it was horrible to walk as women down the streets a couple of weeks before the revolution. It was humiliating for her and by that time any guy could just imagine that she was a hooker by just waving to someone's car, because she is a woman even though she has a normal attitude. Ebtesam Hashim avoids certain streets. She tells me that there are a lot of videos of women being hit or being harassed. She was harassed herself at a police station when she had to fill in some papers and the policemen kept looking at her, they were checking her up. The one who had to make the fingerprints, lay his hand down on her hand, the other colleague was looking at him and they were laughing because she had nothing to do. At this time she had no one to complain to. It was horrible at a police station for women. (Hashim, interview, April 21th, 2011) So the size of women's space is literally small on the streets because women avoided certain streets. Women's space is also imaginary small because women are afraid.

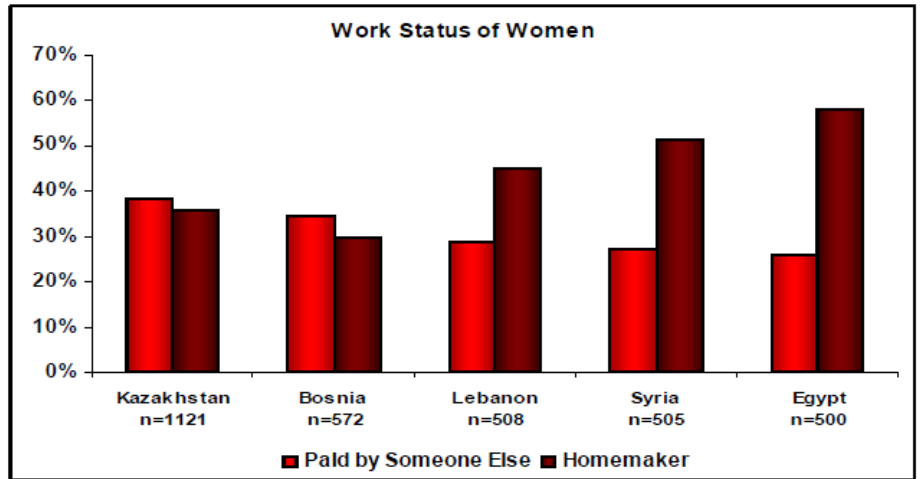
According to Mona Eltahawy there is no law criminalizing sexual harassment in Egypt. Also the Police often refuse to report women's complaints. When the policemen themselves are harassing women then safety for women is clearly not a priority in Egypt. She thinks that the biggest problem is that women do not have the ability to talk or feel ashamed or afraid to talk. (Eltahawy in Mayton & Ammar, 2008)

'Sexual harassment warns women every day that their bodies are not meant to be in certain places, and racist and homophobic violence delimits the spaces of black, lesbian and gay communities'. According to Rose many feminists looked at women's unease in and fear of public spaces. For many women a sense of insecurity is formed because they believe that public space is not their own place (Rose, 1993, p.34) Rose also thinks that 'The construction of public space is an arena in which neither women's bodies were legitimized nor women's voices were heard'. (Rose, 1993, p.144) Rose argues that women sense space not as their own and she noticed that the treatment of being seen and evaluated is an objective process. Because we see each other as objects we see ourselves as located space. 'because our bodies are an object to us, we see ourselves as positioned in a space not our own.' (Rose, 1993, p.146) Domosh says that 'A space surrounds us in imagination that we are not free to move beyond: the space available to our movement is a constricted one' (Domosh, 1991, in Rose, 1993, p.144)

5.3 Women's space in the work field

The unemployment rate for women is almost three times higher than for men in the same age. In Egypt are 32% of the women unemployed between the ages of 15 and 29. (Julian, 2010)

A research of the WIMC (women in Muslim Countries) shows that 58% of the Egyptian women of all ages are homemakers. 26% of the women are employed and work outside the house or are paid by someone else. (Courtney, Feld, Shanks, 2007)



A recent Egyptian Labor Market Survey showed that 23% of the women living in the city are illiterate, this number is more than double for women who are living in villages and rural areas. A study of the Washington, D.C.-based Pew Research Center shows that: '75 percent of Egyptian respondents believe that: When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job. Nine out of ten of all male respondents in Egypt agreed with the statement, compared with 58 percent of Egyptian women'. (Julian, 2010)

Especially in the lower social classes where more women are illiterate we find women who stay at home. 20% Egyptian people live below the poverty line. (Factbook, 2011) Mohammed, a seller of notes, told me that his wife is not working because of a tradition. His daughter has a diploma but she stays also at home. If his daughters want to work than it is up to them, but because of the tradition Mohammed likes to see them taking care of their house. (Mohammed, interview, april 19th 2011) Also a women who sells flays of Egypt in the streets tells me that there are a lot of women who do not work or are not allowed to work because of their husbands. She has to work otherwise they can not eat, and she wants to help the women who do not go to work by giving them some of here earned money. (Street Vendor,interview, april 19th, 2011)

A lot of the middle and higher class women work outside the house, they have their jobs. But when they go to work, they have to do also the household. The men do not help in the household or for example do the cooking. It is the main role for the women to do the household. Financially, women suffer a lot. She has to do everything; it is here responsibility to arrange the home or the houses issues with a little money or even without money. Christians share their money with their husbands but Muslims do not share. (Kamel, interview, april 18th, 2011)

If women work, than there is in most of the cases inequality at work. A man gets a better position than women and there are no career opportunities for women. Anwaar Abdalla, a professor at Cairo university says that people do not trust a female gynecologist and they would go to a men because a man is better to go to. The same thing is remarkable for the dentist, you do not go to women dentists, and you go to a men. This is because you would think the men are stronger and better in their work. Anwaar Abdalla felt a terrible difference between man and women, she felt oppression, even in work. There are men who dislike that women would be the boss for example. There were men in her life that refused her to work because she is a woman. (Abdalla, interview, april 17th, 2011) Hani Labib tells that in some cases the manager in a work, harasses women to give her a higher position, there is many verbal abuse and maybe some indications in words. (Labib, interview, april 13th,2011)

Also journalist had a hard time to speak free in the media. Nawal El-Saadawi is an Egyptian gynecologist, Muslim feminist and a writer. Her work is mostly about violence against women, human rights and feminism. During the Mubarak regime she was censured and sometimes banned out of the Egyptian media. 'Mubarak let the journalist speak for himself and not for the people'. (el-Saadawi, 2011)

Also in the workfield you see only a small women's space. There is big inequality, people do not work because of a tradition or have inferior jobs compaired to men.

5.4 Women's space in the administration

In 1957 was Egypt the first Arab country that elected women in to the parliament. Only four women won a position in 2005. (Alexander, Fam, 2011) Ebtesam Kamel's argument about the situation of the administration before the revolution is that in Egypt were a high percentage of women participating in the administration so this is in her eyes not a problem. But she says that we do not talk about numbers we talk about efficiency. It is not as the Egyptian people wish. Women get no chances to train, no chances to go abroad, women have to just work in her place and have no improvement. Women have always lower salaries than men, even if the women are in a higher position. Women in the administration work as cooperators or secretaries, they do not have a real role in the administration. Even if the women was a director or a chief, she has to go to the men director and she cannot do anything without his permission (Kamel, interview, april 18th, 2011)

One of the well known women in Egypt is Susan Mubarak, she is the wife of Hosni Mubarak and was First lady of Egypt from 1981 until 2011. Susan Mubarak has currently been in jail and is under investigation for the mass corruption under the Mubarak regime. Mister Hani Labib tells that a lot of the women's role before the revolution came from the first lady. She is the one who did the national council for women, she is the one who appoint many of the women in big position in the government. She is also the one who arranged a place for women in the past parliamentary election, 64 women went in to the parliament through that. (Labib, interview, april 13th, 2011) Also Anwaar Abdalla thinks that Susan Mubarak might be in jail, but she says that the lady tried. This lady already built tools for free in the countryside for the poor women. (Abdalla, interview, april 17th, 2011)

Youssef Sidhom agrees with this. According to him were Mrs. Mubarak and Mrs. Sadat very important for the role of women in Egypt. His point of view is that under the rule of president Sadat, also Mrs. Sadat was able to push towards reformist legislation in favor of equality towards women and in favor of awakening women to politically participate in elections. She also created many useful services for women. Under Islam women are marginalized, and this reflects upon the rights of mothers to have custody of their babies if the marriage is split, the Muslim man has all the rights versus the Muslim women being denied the rights as a mother. What applies to Muslim mothers, applies to Christian mothers in court if the marriage is split. Well these achievements which Mrs. Sadat achieved, after Sadat was assassinated, and before Mrs. Mubarak started to get a strong foothold in serving women. Mrs. Mubarak, with her power as first lady has achieved certain legislation, helping women in giving them rights and this is not constitutional and this is not Islam. (Sidhom, interview, april 14th, 2011)

Professor Anwaar Abdalla says about the women council of Mrs. Mubarak the following: 'If we have a council for women rights it means that women rights are not really okay. It was better for women to live as the ancient Egyptians because women were equal to man. I cannot tell you we are equal'. (Abdalla, interview, april 17th, 2011)

5.5 The overall position of women's space:

On the one hand professor Anwaar Abdalla sees the overall position of women very negatively:

'Here the majority of man has a problem, they think you cannot park a car and you are less intelligent, this is the most insulting thing'. (Abdalla, interview, april 17th, 2011)

On the other hand professor Azza Heikal sees the position of women in a very different way:

'I think that before the revolution, the status of women and the position of women and the role of women was very positive and women were very active and we were developing and moving forward'. (Heikal, interview, april 17th, 2011)

Most of the women I interviewed agree with Anwaar Abdalla. They see a huge difference between men and women. Women have less place then men to move, say anything, have ambitions, work and live their lives. According to Ahmed Sheriennegm were people before the revolution scared to say anything. (Sheriennegm, interview, april 19th, 2011) And if their were saying what they thought women were depressed that there voice was not heard. (Mohammed, interview, april 19th 2011) Also Hani Labib sees a lot of inequality and discrimination against women, examples he calls are discrimination in the family sphere, discrimination regarding some laws, discrimination in personal relationship and also discrimination because of religion. (H. Labib, interview, april 13th,2011)

Eman Hashim says that men think that women are not qualified to take decisions. A woman is not qualified to have an argument, so if she has an argument to one of her neighbors about for example plumbing, he just tells her that he want to speak to her husband or her brother, and that he is not going to talk with here about this. Eman Hashim thinks that they say this because this is their culture. This is something that grows in men, when they are growing up. A women is not like a men she is not an equal, she is an object. Her point of view is that this is not a form of protection from the men, it is showing power. 'Because if I am a responsible adult I would say when I need help, you don't need to mark my safety zone for me'. (Hashim,interview, april 21th, 2011)

Professor Anwaar Abdalla sees the problem that women have in a different way. She says that the most important thing for women is education. But in the society, 50% of the women in Egypt cannot read or write (23% of this 50% are women living in the villages), 10 years ago 70% of the women in this country could not read or write. The main problem is the village. Women in the village give birth and they will have 15 children, they do not believe in birth control, the only happiness for them is to have more and more children. People there feel proud that they have more children than their neighbors. If there is a baby girl born than this is still a shame. Most of her students at the university are girls, because they are the one who are interested in social studies. Anwaar Abdalla just tells them to not allow anybody to impose things on you, we are all worthy and do not feel as inferior to others even if people try to manipulate you. Another problem women facing is the law. The law does not automatically give the custody to the mother; they have to find a man from the family. (Abdalla, interview, april 17th, 2011) Many Egyptians hold traditional conservative views. Women also have often problems with divorce, if a woman is in her 30's and she is not married she will be seen as a spinster and will feel the pressure from society to get married. (Alexander, Fam, 2011)

The last inequality I want to point at is the inequality in health care. 58% of the Egyptian women feel that they did not get the health care they needed, because they were discriminated by their gender. (Courtney, Feld, Shanks, 2007)

There were before the revolution (and some are after the revolution) organizations that would try to improve the situation of women in Egypt. Some examples of organizations with the goal to improve the lives of women are: Regional Network on Arab Women Social Research Centre, The National Council for Women, Egyptian Women Association, The Egyptian centre of woman rights and Caritas. I had the opportunity to talk with the leader of women affairs of Caritas. This is a Christian organization. Caritas employs women through micro finance programs, through literacy programs, healthcare programs about everything in life, how to live to be strait and how to live with others. They also arrange kindergarten and awareness programs. (Kamel, interview, april 18th, 2011) They are on their way to help more and more women.

5.6 Summary

In this summary I want to give a short overview of women's space before the revolution. Biological difference, parenting, role models, discrimination, domestic violence, wealth, education level, work situation, religion, culture, traditions, the role of women's organizations, a lot of inequality and their sense of space created the situation of women's space before the revolution.

This space was produced by men and women before the revolution. Some acts of feminist organizations or a change in laws could change and enlarge this women's space. But for women in Egypt it was still a very limited space. Women lived under the previous mentioned conditions and experienced gender as a difference by the inequality on cultural, political, economical and environmental area with men. They experienced gender as a social relation and interactions between these patterns by the role patterns of men and women. And gender as a social construction was expressed by the masculinity of Egypt.

6 Women's space during the revolution

Anwaar Abdalla said that before January all Egyptians, were losing all hope and they had no faith in anything. We sensed that things are going really bad. There had to be a change. (Abdalla, interview, april 17th, 2011) The real revolution began in Egypt on January 17th with a 50-year-old Egyptian who burned himself in front of the Egyptian parliament. It was the first of five self-immolations, following the self-immolation in mid-December that led to the resign of the President of Tunisia. Demonstrations against the Egyptian government started at January 25. (Elsevier, 2011)

According to Anwaar Abdala is the 25th of January the day of the police. It is a Symbolic day and the choice of the day itself is very significant. Because the police, the state government is the symbol of oppression. (Abdalla, interview, april 17th, 2011)

On this 25th of January there were thousands of people on the streets. People were encouraged to demonstrate on the streets through social media such as Facebook. On January 28 after the Friday prayers followed massive demonstrations, 62 people were killed during battles with the police. Nobel Prize winner Mohammed ElBaradei joins the protesters and Mubarak sets a curfew and sends the army into the streets. The headquarters of Mubarak's party were set on fire and burned down.

In the days that followed people ignored the curfew and there were in battles with riot police at least 33 people were killed. Shops in Cairo were looted and Mubarak announced the resignation of the government and appoints Omar Suleiman as his first vice president. On January 30 Thousands of prisoners escaped from their cells and on January 31th the Army announced that they will not use violence against the demonstrators. On the first day of February at least one million people joined a march through Cairo and at the same time there were also marches in Alexandria and other cities in Egypt. As a response to the demonstrations and the marches Mubarak announces that he will not be re-elected. On February 3th again people were killed. This time it concerned ten deaths, killed in clashes between supporters and opponents of Mubarak in Cairo.

On the fourth of February, hundreds of thousands of people were again demonstrating against the government. On the days that followed, opposition groups including the banned Muslim Brotherhood talked with the government and reported little progress in consultation with the regime. On February 8th again people amassed on the streets to demand the presidents resign. Mubarak speaks again on February 10th, the general expectation was that he would resign, but he did not. He partially carried the power to Suleiman, but he will stay on as head of the state. Finally on February 11th Vice President Suleiman announced that president Mubarak will resign. People were happy and partied in the streets of Cairo. (Elsevier, 2011)

On the 13th of February, the Higher Council of Armed Forces, the current ruler in Egypt, dissolved the parliament and declared the Constitution invalid. By doing this, the military responds to protesters who still want more democracy. On February 14th the Egyptian army requests the protesters to go back to work after three weeks of protest. Despite this request thousands of protesters were again on the Tahrirsquare because they want higher wages and permanent jobs. The council stays in power for the next half year until the first free elections in September this year. With these new measures the army hopes to bring the order back in Egypt. The army command has announced that the protesters have to go home and have to go back to work.

Hussein Tantawi, Minister of Defense under Mubarak remains interim president. After eighteen days of demonstrating the people achieved that President Hosni Mubarak has left and democratic reforms are announced. The military council that governs Egypt, has formed a new Cabinet where several opposition groups can participate. The radical Islamic Muslim Brotherhood has not been asked for a position in the parliament. The new cabinet should lead Egypt peacefully to the elections in September. The Muslim Brotherhood was banned under the regime of President Hosni Mubarak, but is viewed as the best organized opposition group. The Brotherhood wants to introduce the shari'a Islamic law in Egypt and abolish the blockade of the Gaza Strip. (Elsevier, 2011)



Tahrirsquare during the revolution

6.1 Women's space on Tahrir square:

Professor Anwaar Abdalla tells that at least 25% of the demonstrators in Tahrir Square were women. There were not only young and rich women but also old women and very poor women from the village who came and stayed 18 days. These women were determined because they were so poor and there was no hope for them to change the Egyptian society. (Abdalla, interview, april 17th, 2011) The evident new thing in Tahrir was that all strata and all age groups went and participated. Christian women and also veiled and nikab wearing Muslim women. According to Hannan Fiky all these women went to Tahrir and they had nothing against intermixing. (Fikry, interview, april 14th, 2011) Eman Hashim said that especially the old women gave a pulse on Friday, the angry Friday; they were jelling at the police officers and giving them bad names. The policeman would never react to old women or hit her. (Hashim, interview, april 21th, 2011)

'A lot of people say that this is the revolution of the young people but this is unfair, they say this is the lotus revolution this is the youth revolution but what about the women? They matter!' (Abdalla, interview, april 17th, 2011)

Ebtesam Kamel saw also women of the NGO's in the square, youth and young ladies. These women were ready to and had the ability to go and to raise their voice, to know what they want. Women in NGO's know their rights, no other organization gives this opportunity to let people know their rights. (Kamel, interview, april 18th, 2011) Women have had a role at the forefront during the demonstrations at Tahrirsquare and other places, and this happened in a society where women normally and from their tradition have taken a back seat. (Mekay, 2011)

In an interview on internet tells Mona Russel (history professor) that the amount of women on Tahrirsquare during the revolution may come as a surprise too many but really shouldn't. According to Russel were women at the forefront of the 1919 revolution in Egypt. That was right before Egypt got its independence of the British. Women In Egypt have always been involved in many protests and were as well involved at the time of the French occupation. This is not something new. (Lindsey, 2011) The real participation of women in this revolution started with the meanwhile famous video on YouTube from Asmaa Mahfouz, 26 year old Egyptian women. In the video, Mahfouz said: "I, a girl, am going down to Tahrir Square. Come down with us and demand your rights." (Mahfouz, Meet Asmaa Mahfouz and the vlog that Helped Spark the Revolution, 2011) Asmaa Mahfouz was called during the revolution: "The leader of the Egyptian revolution", "The girl who crushed Mubarak" and "A woman worth 100 men". (Mekay, 2011)

The experiences of Gihan Hammad were that during the first few days of the revolution there was a special place for women on the square, because men wanted to protect women. Men were making a chain by holding hands as a protection for the women inside this chain. At the entrance there was a line for men and a line for women. People wanted to search others for weapons to make sure nobody hurts anyone. The women officers would search women and man officers would search man. This because it would make women more comfortable. There were some women who were veiled and some women who do not like to be touched, they do not even shake hands with man, because this is part of their own believe. These women were very segregated. So even when you were passing and you were the only women and had to go through a lot of men they would make way for you to pass. So it was very respectable. (Hammad, Interview, april 17th 2011)



Men were protecting women on the square.

Eman Hashim saw that part of the women stayed in the mosques around Tahrirsquare. When she started marching she saw area with mostly man and area with mostly women. (Hashim,interview, april 21th, 2011)

Ebtesam Kamel, was also in the square, she did not see the specific place for women, but she heard of it. She says that this is a good thing. This because it is a mark that men want women to be there, if this was not the case they would refuse her to share in the demonstration. (Kamel, interview, april 18th, 2011)

Everyone I talked with said that men and women slept next to each other during this revolution. Only mister Baligh from the Muslim brotherhood disagrees with this. According to him women did not sleep not next to men. He literally said: 'Women slept in separate areas. We slept on the street and women slept in the tents'. (Baligh, interview, april 19th, 2011)

After these first few and most violence days, there was no specific place for women. People then would make chains together to hold the opponents. Women were also participating in these chains. There was no more separate area for women on the square and women were participating with everything. There were also women who were throwing rocks. Men and women were sleeping next to each other on the ground of the square at night and at this moment there was no difference between men and women. (Wagih,interview, april 13th, 2011)

Only the Muslim Brotherhood tried to separate men and women on the square after the first few days. Eman Hashim experienced this. She said that before the 28th January the Muslim brotherhood didn't participate in the revolution and they said they were not going to participate. However after the 28th they participated on the square. They tried to separate men and women and they started to make tents for women only. People were telling Eman Hashim: 'Why are you here, don't you feel unsafe as a women? You are not supposed to be here and if you want to feel more comfortable there is a women only tent' only at prayer time the women were still separated from the men. (Hashim, interview, april 21th, 2011)

Gihan Hammad confirms that the first few days on Tahrirsquare were insane. After all of the clashes between the officers and the protesters, after all of that is complete it was very quiet, it became more a festival instead of a protest. She saw people waving flags, sing and dance and give speeches and people were clapping. This was very peaceful. The kids were all wearing masks. Hammad compared it to a party when the national team wins a match. The best part about this, she says that random people you don't know would come up to you and joke around with you and they say sarcastic comments, this makes her laugh. 'People had been sleeping there for over one week and they were very optimistic and were all smiling'. (Hammad, Interview, april 17th 2011) Because people fought for the same goal, women's space enlarged during the revolution. Men were happy that women were at the square and that they could demonstrate together.

Mohammed, the nuts seller said to me that men and women were very oppressed before the revolution. They were finally free to speak out on Tahrirsquare. People were extremely happy with the step down of Mubarak, they were happier than with Ramadan or with the sacrificial feast with the sheep. Mohammed was the whole revolution on the square exempt for the first four days, at that time he was to scar to go there. When he came to the square he felt a lot joy and pride, he was very proud of the change the Egyptian people could make. Mohammed's own opinion is that women do not belong in a place like Tahrirsquare during the revolution, his wife and daughters stayed because of that statement at home. Yet, Mohammed saw a lot of women on the square; they were doing the best they could to help and to protest. Women were making meals, working in the field hospital and everyone was doing the best way they could in that situation. (Mohammed, interview, april 19th 2011)

'The Egyptian revolution's slogans were "dignity, equality, justice." (el-Saadawi, 2011)

Eman Hashim stayed the whole revolution in the square, she has been through a lot at the square, and I would like to share some of her experiences during the days on Tahrir. During the first few days Hashim was scared to get arrested by the state police. She said she preferred to get murdered than get arrested by them. 'The State police are not state security, they are horrible. They humiliate you they do what breaks you; they just get a videotape with me naked just to brake me'. Hashim said that they have the joy of it and that they torture and electrify, but with women they will just do what will make them happy, what will make them enjoy their power. Hashim experienced that the 28th after 7 pm, when they started the light bullets, it got really dangerous and women started to be less and less and less. After 10pm she was there with a friend and every now and then someone told to her friend: 'Make here go home, things now go nasty, make here go home, this is serious, and this is real'. Hashim: 'And during the 28th it was the first and the last time that I felt the feeling that I would really love, that I have been fighting for all my life, I felt for the first time that I am a human not a women. We were all human an equal, we were holding hands with strangers, fighting and saying: 'one hand, one hand, one demand, one hand'. We were all equal, all humans and all Egyptian. I was so happy!' In the normal situation in Egypt people will always see you as women not a human. This happened on the 28th of the beginning of the day, some men told Hashim: 'This is the women's area, stay to this'. (Hashim,interview, april 21th, 2011)

She felt for the first time that the poorest people and the people who came from the lowest social standards appreciated her, because they thanked her for coming to the square. Because they know that lots of women mean more protection that this means that the square is standing on a strong ground. Also guys came to Eman Hashim with their telephones and they dialed the number of their wife's or their mothers. These guys wanted her to speak to these women on the phone, so they would hear a women's voice, saying that everything is alright and then they would calm down. She felt like she had to take care of men at this moment. (Hashim,interview, april 21th, 2011)

'During the night when things are really nasty, I saw it in men's faces and eyes, when women were being hit and falling and running from the teargas and bullets. This gave us a great sense of power. This was also with the kids, when I see an eleven year old kid that is saying: 'come on, we are not gone leave them''. (Hashim,interview, april 21th, 2011)

Hashim tells that later, after the first week when things were really calm, they wanted to do a segregation of men and women in the sleeping places, but the people on the square refused that. Men and women slept near each other and they had to use each other because it was freezing. 'The day Mubarak left (February 11th) I wanted to kiss this floor (Tahrirsquare). I was so happy, it will always be a memory that I slept on this floor. The first time in Egypt that women stayed out of the house over night into the streets with men. It was amazing; some people didn't even believe this'. Hashim does not remember to be ever harassed during the revolution, until February 12th. On this day when she went cleaning the streets she was walking and a man just said something about her outfit, so she turned back to him and said: 'what did you just say?' And then the man told her he was sorry. At that moment she felt they have a deal, they are going to be nice people now. (Hashim,interview, april 21th, 2011)



At the day of the camel attack most of the participants in the demonstration on the square were men.

Eman Hashim did not participate in the camel attack. Because she knew that that was a big one, and that she was burdened from her male friends so she did not participate. (Hashim, interview, april 21th, 2011)

“The revolution is not only taking place in Tahrir, it is taking place in every Egyptian house. It is the revolution of fighting the patriarch.” (Emam in Alexander, Fam 2011)

During the demonstrations there were some people who stayed at home and did not go to Tahrirsquare. People had different reasons for staying home. They were scared or sick and could or would not leave the house and some people had to stay at home to protect the houses because there were no policemen in the streets during the protests.

Eman Hashim notices that the people who stayed at home also had a role in the revolution. These people namely gave a lot of water and food. During the 18 days of demonstration she never gave one penny for food or drinks. According to Hashim, some people were feeling guilty that they were not in Tahrirsquare so they wanted to help, by feeding people and giving them blankets to stay warm. (Hashim, interview, april 21th, 2011)

6.2 Why women were at Tahrirsquare

Firstly women were at Tahrirsquare as a symbol, tells Mister Hani Labib, the second thing is that there were a lot of young women. They were the one who were presented, they were talking, and they had a political voice. The voice of these young women came as a representative of the discrimination she suffered and the feeling she has she can represent the country. Labib thinks that this is a very positive thing. Women used to demonstrate before the 25th revolution, but then a period came where there was an attention in the main streams. What came back in the revolution was that women participated in demonstrations and that they could say their opinion. Labib was at the square to demonstrate because he wanted a civil state. (Labib, interview, april 13th, 2011) the poor people also went to the square to earn some money. The Lady who sells the flags on the street told me that she went every Friday to the square to sell things so she could buy food for her family. (Street Vendor, interview, april 19th, 2011)

One woman told Eman Hashim during the revolution that she could not even eat kushari (traditional Egyptian national dish). This women had nothing to lose. Hashim saw also people on the square from the age of 17 to 23, they have no education and no job and they have also nothing to lose Hashim says that these people, when things get nasty, they were the ones who actually made the Molotov and they throw it because they hated the ministry. They broke their identity they broke their price over and over, they had no hope, they had no job, they had no money, they had no pride, they had nothing, this is according to Hashim why people were participating. (Hashim, interview, april 21th, 2011)

Azza Heikal is an opponent of the revolution. She did not go to Tahrirsquare because she was not sure of what was going on and she did not believe so much in violence and the idea of insistance. At the moment of the revolution she was against the idea of destroying this state itself. 'It is not the idea that you are going to destroy a system or a regime. But you are destroying the whole system of the whole state' she said. And she was against this. Because we could have destroyed the regime but not destroyed everything related to the state so this is very difficult because the idea of destroying the police, the security system is not right. It is also the idea of trying to destroy and judge everyone who worked one day with the old regime, this is also not right. Because this will cause a kind of energy in the society, namely chaos. She said that also the media plays a very important role in this, a negative role because it insinuated people to be against the whole state not against the regime. So people are not respecting the state they are not respecting any kind or authority, they rejecting anything related to the idea of the system in general. 'So we are facing a real problem, it is not an easy revolution. It is not a pinkish revolution'. (Heikal, interview, april 17th, 2011)

Ebtesam Kamel thinks that is a movement to a revolution, not the real revolution. People would like to follow the example of Tunisia but in her opinion were the Egyptian people not raised to do this. 'The last 30 years killed our ambitious and they killed our vision', she said. We had nothing but to live and to fight to gain our salary and to keep our place and our position. 'But, as Egyptians if we want to do something, we do it. We are determined'. (Kamel, interview, april 18th, 2011)

Women were at Tahrir because they felt needed, wanted to speak out and be part of the revolution. Women felt that they also had the right to be on the square and to demonstrate together with men. There was a claim of rights in the streets and at the square from all Egyptian people who wanted the step down of Mubarak.

6.3 Summary

During the revolution women's space changed. Equality, intermixing of men and women, women who lead the protests, the ability people had to speak, the joy and pride people felt, people had the feeling to be human and fought together for the same purpose, the fact that people were helping each other and that there was no harassment formed a women's space for women who were together with men on Tahrirsquare.

There were also women who experienced women's space during the revolution in a different way. They had to stay at home because of their culture and traditions, or were on the square but were staying in a special space for women. These women had a more limited space than the women I mentioned before.

The produced and representational space has thus changed over time in the process that took place on the square. Men and women made this happen together; they enlarged the women's space during the revolution. Women produced more socially in society and experienced gender in a different way. The feeling of gender as a difference was greatly reduced; women on the square felt like human and citizens and not like women. Gender as a social relation also changed, people approached each other in a very different way than before the revolution and there was no more harassment of women. In gender as a social construction the masculine country changed to a country for all Egyptians, against one, all people had the same goal.

'One hand, one hand, one demand, one hand'. (Hashim,interview, april 21th, 2011)

7 Women's space after the revolution

7.1 Women's space in the streets of Egypt

When I was sitting outside in Cairo there walked a women through the streets, she was screaming and complaining about her life. The women tried to sell some flags of Egypt and kids toys to earn some money. I talked with this lady to hear her point of view and to hear about her situation after the revolution. The women cried when she talked to me. She said that she earns 20 Egyptian pounds (€2, 33) every day. From this money she has to buy food for six people, but this is not enough money so she has to buy cat food to eat. She tells me that before the revolution things were expensive in Egypt but life after the revolution is even more expensive. It is hard for the poor people to survive now. Some of her female neighbors can or may not come outside their house to work and she knows many women whose husband has work for only one day. Although she has not much money, she wants to help her neighbors, because the poor people are like a big family, especially after the revolution. She thinks that the good thing about the revolution is that she can sell a lot more things, now she gets new ideas to sell to people, like the Egyptian flags. People are in a good mood after the revolution; therefore she can sell more and sometimes get some extra money from people. (Street Vendor, interview, april 19th, 2011) For poor people (men and women) it is hard to get some space of their own. This is because life is hard and people have to work long and do havey to get some money. With this money people trei to survive and make a space of one's own. This women treis hard to make a space of her own, and for het family and neighbors.

Ahmed Sheriennegm says that it was okay for women to go out, like his sister. But now, after the revolution, families are so worried about the girls that they would not allow them to go outside without being escorted by the guys from the family. (Sheriennegm, interview, april 19th, 2011) About the harassment that happened a lot before the revolution Mona Eltahawy says the following: "The problem is that women did not have the ability to talk," she argued, "and they feel the shame and were afraid to talk, but now they are more free to talk and they know that they are not alone and this is not their fault." (Eltahawy in Mayton & Ammar, 2008) Especially by this revolution, women learned that they have to talk, and they know now that they have a voice tha can be heard.

7.2 Women and International Women's day 2011

March 9th was international women's day and women in Egypt went to demonstrate for women's rights in the streets of Cairo. What was supposed to be a march of thousands of women became only a march of hundreds.

Eman Hashim was against the march on international women's day. She tells that a lot of women activist were angry of her because they expected her to be with them. But Hashim says that there were a lot of troubles everywhere and that this is not the time for her to just separate herself from being an Egyptian. 'I am an Egyptian; I am not a woman now'. (Hashim, interview, april 21th, 2011)

This protest with the goals of equal rights and the end of sexual harassment, turned violent because men disturbed the protest and abused the female demonstrators. The men told them that they had to go home, to the place where they belong. (Ali, 2011)

At least 18 women were held in military detention after these protests. Women told to Amnesty International that they were beaten by the military, given electric shocks, were subjected to strip searches while being photographed by male soldiers, then forced to submit to 'virginity checks' and threatened with prostitution charges. 'Virginity tests' are a form of torture when they are forced or coerced. The army officers humiliated the women even more to make these photographs public. 'Women and girls must be able to express their views on the future of Egypt and protest against the government without being detained, tortured, or subjected to profoundly degrading and discriminatory treatment', said Amnesty International. (Amnesty International, 2011) Because of this incident women's space was for the first time after the revolution smaller than during the revolution.

7.3 Women's space in the new administration

Hani Labib argues that Egyptian people do not know if the system that allowed 64 seats for women in the parliament before the revolution will be applied in the next's parliament. If it is not applied Labib thinks that they need to weed awareness for women to be represented, like the men in consequences. (Labib, interview, april 13th, 2011) According to Azza Heikal is there at this moment no mentioning of women to be nominated for presidential elections and is there no mentioning of the percentage of women, for example that there should be 50% of women presented in the parliament or in the council. But she argues that there is no mentioning of this rule at all. (Heikal, interview, april 17th, 2011) Because of the constantly changing situation and information from Egypt is this contribution from Azza Heikal no longer relevant. The first female president candidate on this moment is Bothaina Kamel.

Hanan Fikry sees a great incensement in women activist after the revolution. She said to me that before the revolution women had part in whatever took place on the political level, but there was a certain identified category of girls and women who were activist and were known but this was a small circle. After the revolution all girls and women came from everywhere in Egypt without being an activist, without being a member of any political party, just emerged in Tahrir to take part. (Fikry, interview, april 14th, 2011)

Eman Kamel says that by the resign of Susan Mubarak from the political stage there will be less done in the country for women. (Kamel, interview, april 18th, 2011) Feminist activist El- Sadaawi says that those women had no character they were the image of their husbands, they applied the policy of their husband of their dictator. Also killed those women especially Susan Mubarak the women movement, she killed the feminist movement in Egypt, she banned the association of El-Sadaawi and they tried several times to establish the Egyptian women union, because unity is power. Without unity between women, people cannot have their rights. According to El- Sadaawi, Susan Mubarak established a governmental organisation. This was her national women council, which did nothing to women according to El-Sadaawi. El-Sadaawi is starting again to reestablish the Egyptian women union. She wants to have political power so she can protect women's rights. Even insight the revolution they know that in history women's rights were ignored and that after the revolution is finished women rights are still ignored. This is why El-Sadaawi is rebuilding the Egyptian women union to have the political, economic, cultural and social power to protect women's rights. (el-Saadawi, 2011)

Hanan Fikry also saw that there is less for women after the resign of Susan Mubarak, but she doesn't think that it is a real threat to Egyptian women. She said that Egyptian women and girls coming out of the revolution will not permit being dragged backwards. She looks at the omission of women quota in a positive way, because she believes that shouldn't be affirmative discrimination in favor of women. She believes that the coming atmosphere enables women to go and participate. And whatever they can achieve wouldn't be through affirmative action. She counts upon the strong participation of women in the administration. That they will be able to force themselves under the umbrella of political parties regardless of the fact that women are still under social pressure. Hanan believes that due to the revolution, the door is wide open to political participation and that the future depends upon how women can be active and enforce themselves. (Fikry, interview, april 14th, 2011)

The spokesman for the U.S. State Department Foreign Affairs, Philip Crowley, thinks that the women in Egypt have been demonstrating for change, and it is worrisome that women are excluded from the committee that must ensure that all rights. (ANP, 2011)

A recent research (2010) of the Egyptian Centre for women's rights showed that the culture of Egypt is not the main factor of women's weak representation by elections. 63.2% of the participants affirmed that they would vote for female candidates. The reason for a weak representation of women is their political, social and legal position. This research advises to allocate a percentage of women on the lists of political parties. (Abul-Qomsan, 2011)

7.4 Women's space and the Muslim brotherhood

In Europe a lot of people are afraid for the influence of the Muslim brotherhood in countries as Egypt. In this section I will look at the view of the Egyptian people towards the Muslim brotherhood and to their opinion and position.

Hani Labib thinks that whenever the Muslim brotherhood makes a statement, most of the time someone will come up and say that they did not mean it. He said that this happens obviously in their treatment against, cobs, women and democracy. If these are among them, they say that they did not mean it that way. (Labib, interview, april 13th, 2011)

According to Anwaar Abdalla are some women concerned that the Muslim brotherhood would come to power. She tells that the Muslim brotherhood said that women are not supposed to go out, women are supposed to stay at home and they are supposed to be at disposal at the service of their husbands and raising their kids. Anwaar Abdalla said to me that there is not one single word in the Koran that says this. 'The Koran said clearly that women should look decent. Don't show parts of their body so that they won't be harmed and they said about the looks of man that you can have the first look but not the second because you will harm the people especially women if you look at them in a long way, this is prohibited, you should not be doing this. So the address from god came from both of them not only women'. (Abdalla, interview, april 17th, 2011)

Ebtesam Kamel is a women who is afraid for the power of the Muslim brothers because Islamic voices are now very high and they want women to go back home, so they have nothing to do but to raise children and look after her husband. 'We are afraid to lose all what we gained'. (Kamel, interview, april 18th, 2011) Also Ghazal Shashaa is worried about the fact that there is now a place for the Muslim brotherhood to re appear. She is worried that they might oppress women and that they might stop them from working certain jobs or doing certain things. (Shashaa, interview, april 19th, 2011) A lot of Egyptian women are afraid to lose women's space if the Muslim Brotherhood of the Salafi will gain power.

On the other hand show Egyptian polls that 64% of the Egyptians welcome the Muslim brotherhood. By the manipulated elections in 2005 were 20% of the Seats taken of people of the Muslim Brotherhood. Expectations for free elections are that the Muslim Brotherhood will get 40% of the seats in parliament. The Muslim Brotherhood does not join the presidential elections, but only the parliament elections. They think that the western world will not accept them. (Naftaniel, 2011)

To know the point of view from the Muslim brothers and their intentions for Egypt I spoke with two of them. One of the men from the Muslim brotherhood told me that they do not want to change Christians into Muslims but that all of the Muslims have the same goal and this is to follow Allah, they believe they are created for this purpose as Muslim. Muslims are created to accept others with different backgrounds. According to the men of the Muslim brotherhood are Salafi more extreme in their views. Baligh said that Islam is more flexible than this, they are very strict and this is the main problem.

Baligh told me the five goals of the Muslim brothers to understand their point of view. The five goals he mentioned are:

1. Built a Muslim person
2. Built a Muslim family
3. Built a Muslim society
4. Built a Muslim country
5. Built a union of the Islamic countries

Their main goal is to connect Muslim countries, not to convince non-Muslims to be Muslims. Baligh compares the Islam with the European Union; the Islam is also one union. According to Baligh is there a rule in Islam that a Christian person cannot rule a majority of Islam people. (Baligh, interview, april 19th, 2011)

The men of the Muslim brotherhood thought about the role of women in the following way. I asked him if women can become the president of Egypt in the future. Baligh answered that if he would be really honest; this is about law in Islam. In Islam women cannot be the president of a country. That is not because they humiliate the women, but because women are more emotionally motivated. According to Baligh is a women more connected to her feelings. And that is why women cannot be the president of Egypt.

Baligh said that you do not shake hands with women if you are a Muslim men. His explanation for this is that you cannot shake hands with the queen of England either. No one can shake hands with the queen exempt for, several people around here only the people with a special position in the country. 'So in Islam we think that every woman is a queen. And you can only shake hands with the queen, that persons who can only shake hands with this queen are her husband, her son, her uncle, her brother and not everybody can shake hands with this queen'. By saying this Baligh thinks that this is why he respects women more. According to Baligh this is the same thing with the veil Muslim women are wearing. He says: 'When you have a candy and a raped candy, which one would you take? And it is more like that Islam wants to protect as much as possible. And that is what Islam thinks about a veil.' He also said that the women who cover up so you can only see their eyes is like an extra thing; they are going the extra mile to get closer to god. Baligh thinks that the golden rule in Islam is to tell others about the real Islam. He cannot force me to put a veil on, for example. According to him is that the real Islam and is that the right Islam. The last thing Baligh told about the position of women in Islam is a sentence Prophet Mohammed said namely: 'Women are like glasses, so you have to be careful with the glasses not to be touched'. (Baligh, interview, april 19th, 2011)

Different people interpreter Islam in a different way. For Yasmeen Mustafa, who hellept translating the conversation with the Muslim Brotherhood, some things came as a suprice. She did not though Muslimbrothers were thinking this way. Personally I think they were real extreme in their statements. From my own point of view can Islam combine with a form of democracy, however for democracy people need equality, and this equality as we are used in the West can the Muslimbrothers not accieve with the statements they have at this moment.

7.5 Women's overall space after the revolution

El-Saadawi says in a television interview that all that what was achieved during the revolution was achieved for and by women and men. She tells that all the differences between Egyptians evaporated because of the revolution, Christians and Muslims were together, men and women were together, there was equality between all. El-Saadawi trusts the power of the millions who obliged Mubarak to fall. She said: 'that is democracy we don't need one man or one woman to govern us we will have a collective revolutionary leadership, you know that is the mentality that is the patriotic capitalist mentality that we should have one person leading the country, leading the revolution. But we will have a radical change that we will have collective leadership, man and women equal, Christians and Muslims, all Egyptians would be represented in the leadership as well as in every government as well as in every comity, in everything'. So in fact she is saying that this revolution changes lives. El-Saadawi thinks that the Egyptian revolution is an inspiration for the world, even for American people, for people in Europe and people in the Arab world. All the people from the other revolutions are inspired by the Tunisian revolution and by the Egyptian revolution. (el-Saadawi, 2011)

Azza Heikal thinks that before the revolution, the status, position and role of women was very positive and women were very active and were developing and moving forward but she thinks that they are facing the real problem after the revolution. She says that this is a very critical problem because of certain issues certain obstacles, According to her are there tree main obstacles that women are facing now. Number one because the military state or the military system itself is mainly man oriented, they do not believe in the role of women because there is no women part of the military system in Egypt. Number two, because of the Islamic movement they agree upon one thing that women have only one job and their job is to be a women, a wife, a sister, a mother and the role in the family is primarily to please here family, to please her husband, to have children and even if she works outside the house here work has to be very limited she can only do certain jobs like teaching, nursing being a doctor and working in some offices but not in the decision making. Number three she mentioned is that before the revolution everything related to women was also related to the first lady, Susan Mubarak, this is a mental picture or a physiological barrier that will correlate women movement and women right with the idea of authority, the idea of dictatorship and the idea of the interference of the first lady in every aspect of life. According To Azza Heikal is this why the common people are rejecting the empowerment of women and can we find the echo of this in what is happening now. Professor Azza Heikal thinks that women have to play and to pay more effort, being more active and be as conscious that they are facing a real problem, so they have to fight for it, they have to fight to find a real place in the changing society otherwise things would go worse for them. She thinks that women can do this in every act of life. Firstly she thinks trough NGO's, the associations of women, through lobbying, through the media and writing. She says that maybe through this they should assert themselves in every factor of life and every phase of life and in every field they are working in. They have to call for their rights and not wait until things come to them; they have to change people's attitude and people's culture towards the main society that is prevailing now. (Heikal, interview, april 17th, 2011) So the main thing Azza Heikal thinks is that women now have to fight for more women's space, that this is the right time to do this.

Ghazal Shashaa says that the main thing in Egypt is the tradition, so change has according to her nothing to do with law, politics or the government. (Shashaa, interview, april 19th, 2011)

Mohammed, the nut vendor, sees that women are more optimistic, he sees it in their eyes, women are not afraid at this moment and they are willing to do anything. He also tells that the needs of women are different, this depends on their situation. Mohammed saw a lady in a television program, this lady worked for the government and she earned less than five dollars every month, now after the revolution she is complaining about this, but before the revolution she never complained, she was just happy to have a job. Mohammed feels a change, not only a change in the position of women but a change in all Egyptians. Before the revolution it felt for him like a dream to talk about all sorts of things, now after the revolution this dream came true. He thinks that women can change in the future with the help of men. Before the revolution there was oppression. This oppression disappeared now so change is possible at this time. Mohammed said that a whole generation of people experienced this revolution, these people are reborn, they never could go back to where they were before, and this energy can never leave this people. He thinks that Egypt cannot change in one second to the best country of the world, but as Egypt becomes a safer and stable place than everyone would be happy. (Mohammed, interview, april 19th 2011)

Eman Hashim thinks that part of women's problem, for most of the time is how women see themselves. 'When you underestimate yourself, you give the body language and you give the vibe that you are not important. Now I feel that I own Tahrir square, now I feel that it is mine. But this is how things are now; I feel that I'm part of this country as much as you are. The men who participated knew that if women go back to their position before the revolution, it would not be as strong as it always was, you know, they need us'. (Hashim, interview, april 21th, 2011)

Feminist Eman Hashim also mentioned that there is a change in the day to day treatment of people but not in what matters. Eman believes that she is a citizen and not only women at this moment. 'This presidential election is not for proving that women can participate, but when will it be ever? Will it ever be like this? Will the day come that human tell us women, well it is okay now, participate, run for president. My guess is no. So there has to come a time where I can fight for it'. Eman thinks that every presidential election is important and that women will get a lot of the liberal voices if she is joining. (Hashim, interview, april 21th, 2011) Eman Hashim sees a huge enlargement of women's space for the future of Egypt.

In an article from Smet he says that the revolution has straightened this emancipator trend from the bottom up, because men and women were together on Tahrir. He thinks that there is a risk that Egyptian women will not have the benefits from a democratic revolution were women were part in. A lot of women protested together with men against politics and social injustice, but they were protesting as a citizen or a student and rarely as a woman, a subject that is fighting against patriarchal structures and prejudices. (Smet, 2011)

'According to Christianity, according to me and according to Watani, extreme equality should prevail between man and women'. (Sidhom, interview, april 14th, 2011)

7.6 Possible change in the position of women's space

Sharaf-el Din says in an article of Atassi that what they want to do in today's rallies is to remind the government that women are half of Egypt, that they have to be part of the decision-making processes and that they cannot go back to the situation before the revolution. 'Essam Sharaf, Egypt's new prime minister has instead announced the creation of a committee that deals with the advancement of women, formed under the supervision of the cabinet'. Women were at the forefront of the street protests, but for most of the time they kept quiet about their rights as women, they did not want to achieve one group's rights over another. In the days after the revolution on Tahrir feel many women rights activist left alone and left out. Joost Hiltermann says in this article that usually women play an active role during the revolution or during a crisis, but when the revolution is over women will return to their role before the revolution. Hala Kamal's argument in this article is that people should look to the revolution in 1919; this revolution was distinctive because of the participation of women. This revolution led to the formation of the Egyptian Women Union. Hala Kamal is very optimistic that this revolution will include progress for women's rights organizations. According to her, the participation of women changing the future of Egypt has already started. She says that the Muslim Brotherhood is talking about allowing women in their consultative council. Nevine Ebeid says in the same article the following: 'If we do not push hard for our rights and lobby for our representation, our situation may regress to even [worse] than it was before the revolution'. (Atassi, 2011)

Nawal El-Saadawi said in a television interview that there is a great possibility for women to become president in Egypt at this moment. She presented her name in the presidential elections in 2005, she wanted to run the elections symbolically, just to say that women can do it against Mubarak, but the police was running after her and prevented her from any meeting. The regime prevented her from explaining her program. She is sure she met young wonderful men and women in Tahrirsquare and one of these men or women can be the next's president. She will suggest the name of some of the women who she met in Tahrirsquare to be president. 'This is the revolution of the young mature, efficient educated men and women in Egypt and one of them should be the president'. According to El-Saadawi will change in the regime have affect on the culture of the country because this revolution is political, cultural, social, economical, it will change the basis of the patriarchic class system and it will change culture and people change morality. (el-Saadawi, 2011)

The Egyptian Social Democratic Party is a liberal and secular party and they want to keep women's rights on the agenda of post-Mubarak Egypt. In an article of Lindsey, the only female judge in Egypt, Tahani El-Gebali commented that she is not afraid for deterioration for the position of women after the revolution. She says that it is natural that after decades of oppression all sorts of forces rise to the surface. Tahani El-Gebali thinks that the best way to defend women's rights is to be active and have a leading role in public life. According to her is the problem that women are always waiting for someone to invite them to get involved, but this will never happen. 'Before we talk about rights, let's practice them'. (Lindsey, 2011) Power sees this same waiting process of women back in history. 'History has told us that women wait, wait, wait — and then our rights will never become a priority issue.' (Power, 2011) Lindsey says that after the full participation of women in the protest they know now that they do not have to wait for anyone's approval to become full citizens. (Lindsey, 2011) Ahmed Sheriennegm agrees with this, he believes that there is going to be less differences between men and women because everybody would be brave to say and do whatever they want. (A.Sheriennegm, interview, april 19th, 2011) The last comment on this topic is from Noha Wagih. She believes that if women do not feel submissive anymore, and if there would so much talked about the subservience of women, then the position of women would improve. (Wagih,interview, april 13th, 2011)

7.7 Can a change in women and women's space change the future of Egypt?

Azza Heikal thinks that women are able to change the future of Egypt and that they have already changed the future. Because they were working in every place in every field, they were taking part in the political life, they were fighting for rights and the younger generation was part of Tahrirsquare. (Heikal, interview, April 17th, 2011)

During the interview with Gihan Hammad I asked her if women get treated as respectful after as during the revolution. Her opinion was that the situation is up to the women themselves. Many women choose to stay home and live under the radar after they get married and have children which is alright in her own opinion. But it would be better when these women come out and write articles, work and make something out of them. The most important change she wants to see is the reduction of sexual harassment inside homes. Men in Egypt are frustrated because premarital sex is prohibited and marriage has now become more difficult because the family of the bride wants a house and money from the groom. With minimal wages a man cannot always afford a house. That is why some men do not marry until they are in the late 40's. (Hammad, Interview, April 17th 2011) According to Ebtesam Kamel can women not change the future. The inequality between men and women will still remain. Kamel says that women still have to struggle to keep what they had before the revolution. A lot of parents are afraid at this moment so they do not leave their girls alone out on the streets. (Kamel, interview, April 18th, 2011)

'Well let me tell you that deep inside. Deep down I am extremely confident that giving a wider margin to women would carry our society to another future. That is what we see. Men have dragged our society to whatever desperate situation we are in. I would love to see a female minister of education in Egypt, which we fail until now' said Youssef Sidhom. (Sidhom, interview, April 14th, 2011)

According to Kasinof and Bruce is the challenge Egypt faces now, to make sure that women can participate in the nation in the same way men do and that the contribution of women during the revolution will not be forgotten. (Kasinof & Bruce, 2011) Professor of women studies at Duke University Frances Hasso thinks that we need to keep in mind that there is a broad category of women in the Middle East and that these different women want different things. She knows that a lot of revolutions leave people behind when the actual revolution is over. She says that you have to think: 'freedom for whom? social justice for who? People know that if you are going to make this kind of calls, you have to include everybody. You have to be careful because they could be defined in a very distractive way that actually does exclude people and we know that women have been excluded by secular, communists and Islamic political movements in various ways. Different women want different sorts of things'. (Hasso, 2011)

The view of Hani Labib is that the Egyptians did not interact yet to know if there is a change after the revolution. Some people visit seminars but it is not yet a big thing or a big change. (Labib, interview, April 13th, 2011) According to Anwar Abdalla is change not just changing the regime. People have to look at their selves, respect the timing, and people have to start also judging themselves before we point fingers to others. Otherwise Egypt doesn't really deserve this revolution. (Abdalla, interview, April 17th, 2011)

In my opinion is Anwaar Abdalla right, there has to come a new administration and women have to get more rights but women also have to search for the change in their selves, if they still act submissive than they will be treated this way. If this change actually happens than am I convinced that the future will look different for Egypt and that there will be more women's space for Egyptian women.

7.8 The birth of a new kind of feminism/ Tahrir el mar'aa

During my interviews I asked women if they thought there was a new kind of feminism born by this revolution. Professor Azza Heikal hopes that this is happening and she thinks that there would be a new kind of feminism. The feminism of rejection maybe feminism of insistence, maybe the younger generation of women would assert their identity, she said, but she is not sure of this. (Heikal, interview, april 17th, 2011)

Ebtesam Kamel thinks that they cannot have a new kind of feminism from one day to another. According to Ebtesam Kamel: 'They will go on simply and calmly, step by step, not as they used to do when Susan was at the regime'. She also says that all NGO's and all of the society will work for democracy because of this they will not be able to have a special spotlight for women issues now. 'Democracy, freedom, elections, and after it will be settled we will give an eye to women issues. Democracy, elections and these issues belong more to men, than to women. This is the problem I think about, and I have no aspect ions, all that we can do. The empowered women were belonging to the regime and when the regime felled they followed it so no one can aspect something from them now'. (Kamel, interview, april 18th, 2011) Eman Hashim also says that the women in Egypt have to take it step by step. She thinks that there is a new kind of feminism born for her, but that other people still have a lot of work to do. She hopes that women are treated some day in the same way as men. She cannot say when and how but she can work on it. Some women activist of her friends are telling her that she not have to think this way that she have to start from day one. Eman Hashim compares this with the following: 'If Egypt is reborn as a baby, why do you want to wait for the baby to walk? And then you want to teach him? Why do you want to wait? Why don't we have university presidents who are women, this is a first step. Is it okay for women to be a leader? We still struggle for this. Can a country that does not have women lawyers have a women president? Does that make sense? Maybe we are just in a hurry. I think this is a bad thing of the revolution that we are so in a hurry that we want to see all the results now. We are not patient enough. Step by step, it will take a lot of time'. (Hashim,interview, april 21th, 2011) Anwaar Abdalla agrees with the view of Eman Hashim. Abdalla says that it is lake an awakening, it is like a re-birth of Egypt. 'We need to keep this child, you need to care about a baby, but don't give him an overdose of anything, of anger of over enthusiasm, we need to have balance. This is what we as women are all facing'. She also said that how people see life is very different now after the revolution. (Abdalla, interview, april 17th, 2011)

There are also radical feminist in Egypt, El-Saadawi calls herself a radical feminist in a television interview. Following El-Saadawi do Arab people not use the word feminist but they say 'Tahrir el mar'aa' which means liberation of women. She also says that there is not one kind of feminism, there are many feminisms all over the world. For example there is capitalist feminism, social feminism, there are women who are fighting against class patriarchy, colonialism, imperialism and there are women who are just fighting to change the family court alone. El- Saadawi says that the feminism in Egypt and in the Arab world wants to change everything that is why she calls herself radical. She wants to change the constitution so that it becomes secular and all Egyptians are equal, to change the family court so that men and women are equal in all rights, to change economy so that all Egyptians are equal and to change the culture. She wants that there are no multimillionaires because a lot Egyptians live under the poverty line. 'So our feminism is broader, it is political it is economic it is social it is cultural and it is also against American neocolonialism. So our feminism is very broad'. (el-Saadawi, 2011)

7.9 Women's wishes for women's space in the future of Egypt

The future of Egypt is a book that needs to be written yet. But a lot of people see that they need a change. I asked different people to tell me about their wishes for the future of Egypt and the kind of change that they would like to see in the Egypt and women's space to-be.

Anwaar Abdalla hopes for a new law about custody, that with his revolution, if the husband passes away the mother gets the custody of her children. (A.Abdalla, interview, april 17th, 2011) The woman who was jelling in the streets tells me that there is a new system in Egypt to rent apartments. Apartments are now more expensive, her son cannot get married because he has no apartment. Here dream scenario for the future of Egypt is to get an apartment for her son and to get an extra bed in her own room, so her children can sleep in a bed. (Street Vendor, interview, april 19th, 2011) Hani Labib wants a civil state for the future of Egypt and he wants to insure the rights of the people. The second thing he wants is that people who were involved in corruption got encounter fairly and that people in the streets try to be fair. So people have convince that they were trailed fair and got their punishments or if they are innocent they got innocent. However he says that these wishes will be followed after a state of chaos. (Labib, interview, april 13th, 2011)

Gihan Hammad would like to see the future of Egypt safer. She says that if Egypt will change they first have to be in a safer position, because without safety there is no change. She also wants the protests to end, she thinks that the protests now are useless, the president is removed and they are changing the government. 'People are always shouting; we want democracy, we want freedom of speech, but their concept is very different, their view of freedom is that their opinion is right and anyone else's is not. So that is the same opinion that the government had, when I am saying what is right then you should follow it, this is the exact same thing. That is not democracy that is not fair. Change comes from you, it doesn't come from an event were the president is removed from a country'. (Hammad, Interview, april 17th 2011) Anwaar Abdalla (her mother) thinks that a lot of people say that because they spend 30 years unable to say anything that everything is coming out at them the same time. Her replay is always that if they wait for 30 years they can wait for another year. (Abdalla, interview, april 17th, 2011)

The dream scenario of Ebtesam Kamel is freedom in everything. Especially in converting to whatever you want. Because it is a big problem in Egypt. She would like to see that people are hired because of a qualification not because of gender. She dreams to see some customs and habits changed. She dreams to see the freedom of equality and their salaries because she said that they suffer and there is a big gap between high and low salaries. She also dreams to see Egypt clean. People are used to see garbage everywhere. She wants that people can see what Egypt has to offer, all the treasures from ancient Egypt, when tourist come they feel that it is their own country. She also wants a better education system because this is the main issue to raise generations and to have a good country. The last thing, but definitely not the less important thing is that she wants to see people change from inside; 'we need a real revolution in ourselves not outside on the streets, because what is the benefit of having revolution, changing the system, regime, governors and other people but not ourselves, nothing. It is fake'. (Kamel, interview, april 18th, 2011)

7.10 Summary

After the revolution there are three main opinions of people which can be distinguished

The first small group of people thinks that with this revolution the situation of women will be worse than before the revolution that women's space shrinks. They think that there is a risk that women will not benefit from this revolution and if women do not strive for their rights now the situation will get worse. The Muslim brothers want to limit women's space. Some people also think that by the resign of Susan Mubarak less will be done for women. Families are now more worried about their girls, prices of food are higher and Amnesty reported about abuse of women on international women's day.

The second group thinks that women's space will be the same as before the revolution. People feel that they are Egyptian now, not women; according to them first other things have to be arranged, after this they can work on the position of women. There are also people who say that the traditions and the culture of Egypt would not change and that women firstly have to change the view of their selves.

The last and largest group sees an improvement in the situation of women. There will be less harassment, there is a change in the day to day treatment and women are not afraid to talk. There is a mentioning of a female president and there are more women activists in Egypt than ever before. Other women organizations have a chance now to improve women's lives and some people say that the door is open now for political women participation. There is not only a change in women but in all Egyptians, women now feel that they own Tahrirsquare.

So people have difference ideas for women's space in post-Mubarak Egypt and have different feelings about gender as a difference, gender as a social relation and gender as a construction.

8 Conclusion

The objective of this project is to get an overview of the women's space and the changes of this women's space in Egypt by doing semi structured, in-depth qualitative interviews and a literature and (news) documents study.

My main question for this research is: *To what extend has women's space changed by the revolution of 2011 in Egypt?*

8.1 A memory refreshment

As a refreshment of our minds I will give a short overview of the theory and the methodology I used in my research.

First I want to start with my theory. My theory chapter showed that I used the actor-structure line of research. I wanted to look to what extend people, and in my particular case, women were free actors or bounded to structures. These freedom or structure creates for women their own space: Women's space. My notion of women's space is a combination between the work of feminist and Lefebvre.

I will repeat the definition of women's space I used again: A produced and representational space that can change by acts over time in a process. This space is formed by men and women; they can reduce or enlarge this space. It is a form for women to product socially in society, a space were women can life and experience within form as gender as a difference, a social relation, a construction and the actual space for women within the traditional sphere (home), the outgoing sphere (street), their work, politics and rights.

According to Lefebvre is space produced and representational. Feminist agree with this and they say that the body is not passive in a social contexts. The feminist goal is to improve women's lives. The main lines in feminism are gender as a difference, as a social relation and as a social construction. In my research I looked at these spaces from the everyday geographies of women's lives.

Feminism in the Middle East is divided into two groups, secular and Islamic feminism. Secular feminism is the Egyptian feminism based on multiple discourses; Islamic feminism is based on the Qur'an. Culture and religion have a great impact on daily lives of feminist in Egypt. In the twenty first century you can see a growth in the number of feminists in Egypt. Secular and Islamic feminist are now working together.

In the methodology chapter can be found that I used feminist research methods. According to these feminist research methods is the world already interpreted by people, including the researcher, there are existing social constructed gender relations. So there is a consideration necessary of the social and power relations.

For this research I went to Cairo, Egypt, for sixteen days to complete my qualitative research. This qualitative research seeks the meaning behind social processes. I used semi-structured in depth interviews, with individuals and groups, my focus was on the interviewees own understanding of the social structures in their lives. Because of the interaction between interviewer and interviewee it became an iterative process. I saw the women during these interviews as individuals related to a certain class and education level.

Besides these interviews I got a lot of information literature, newspapers and YouTube movies. I also used the four main characteristics of female geography; ways of knowing, asking, interpreting and writing.

8.2 Women's space before the revolution

Before the revolution the general idea about women at home is that parents prefer a boy over a girl, women are discriminated and the property of men. There is a lot of domestic violence and genital mutilation against women. Most husbands control finance and are polygamous. Women have higher unemployment numbers and a lot of them are homemakers. There are also women who are uneducated and illiterate. These differences are greater among uneducated and lower class women than among educated and upper class women. 20% of the people lives under the poverty line. In this lower class are still a lot of women who do not work because of a tradition.

Women see space in a different way than men. At home a women has a feeling of belonging, a men feels that he owns the place. In the streets women feel unsafe, uncomfortable and not at home, they do not sense space as their own. Because we see each other as objects we see ourselves as located space.

Egypt has a men culture, the rates of sexual harassment and abuse are very high. Women have to wear clothes that cover their whole body except their face. The men don't help in the household and there is also a lot of inequality at work, women have always lower salaries than men. Feminist had a hard time to speak in the media. A lot of women's role came from Susan Mubarak, but if there is a council for women, this means that the women's rights are not okay.

Most of the people see a big difference and inequality between men and women. The mentality of men is to speak, have discussions and make agreements with other men and a woman is not part of this process. Men show their power by doing this and mark a safety zone for women.

So the answer to my first sub question is that men and women produced space before the revolution. Some acts of feminist organizations or a change in laws could change this women's space. But for women in Egypt was it still a very limited space. Women lived under the previous mentioned conditions and experienced gender as a difference by the inequality on cultural, political, economical and environmental area with men. They experienced gender as a social relation by the role patterns of men and women and interactions between these patterns. Gender as a social construction was expressed by the masculinity of Egypt.

8.3 Women's space during the revolution

All kinds of women, of every age, religion, group and prosperity were participating on Tahrirsquare and women were at the forefront of the demonstrations (such as by the 1919 revolution). There were also a lot of women from NGO's who knew their rights. Because of certain actions of women (YouTube, leading protests and slogans, call with women who were at home) came a lot of women to the square. There were also slogans for more equality and men and women were intermixing, women were a symbol on the square. Besides this, women were making meals and were working in the field hospital, everyone did the best they could.

During the first few days there was a special place for women on the square, men were standing in chains and wanted to protect women, they wanted women to be there but a lot of women did not want this protection of men. Part of the women stayed in the mosque around the square. At the entrance of the square were men searching men for weapons and women were searching women. After these first few days there was no specific place for women on the square, it was very peaceful and people felt joy and pride.

During the nights everyone slept next's to each other (men and women). Only the Muslim brotherhood disagreed with that, they tried to separate men and women but people refused this.

People felt free to speak out on the square. There was no harassment during the revolution and all the people on the square were seen as human, not especially as men or women. People felt that the participation of women and kids gave a great sense of power. Only during the camel attack there were lesser women and children on the square. A lot of people had nothing to lose, so they weren't afraid for the police, the army or to get killed. Women kept quiet for most of the time about women's rights, they did not want to achieve one group's rights over another.

The revolution was also taking place in every Egyptian house, most of the Egyptian people were in favor of the revolution, only one person I interviewed was an opponent of the revolution, she was against destroying the whole state.

The produced and representational space has thus changed over time in the process that took place on the square. Men and women made this happen together; they enlarged women's space during the revolution. Women produced more socially in society and experienced gender in a different way. The feeling of gender as a difference was greatly reduced; women on the square felt like human and citizens and not like women. Gender as a social relation also changed, people approached each other in a very different way than before the revolution and there were no more harassments of women. In gender as a social construction the masculine country changed to a country for all Egyptians, all against one, all people had the same goal. This was what women gave a voice on Tahrirsquare, men wanted women to be there, and they protected women in the special women's places. Because the fact that most of the women in the square felt equal to men they knew that they had a voice, and that they could use this voice in order to demonstrate against the Mubarak regime. The claim of rights in the streets was that people felt like they owned Tahrirsquare, that this place was of their selves, and that they had to protect this place, fight for this place, fight for their own rights and let others hear their voice.

8.4 Women's space after the revolution

Women will not permit being dragged backwards, people are reborn, they have a voice and they know this voice can be heard. People are now brave enough to say whatever they want. A lot of women are more active now to get their rights, they have to call for their rights and not just wait until things come to them. Women now can fight for their rights and for a female president ship, this time is now, otherwise this time won't come. Also the Egyptian Women Union and others have a chance to fight for their rights. There are also people who say that if they don't strive for rights now, the situation of women will even get worse than before the revolution. A lot of people say that extreme equality should prevail between men and women. On the other hand people say that because of the traditions and the Egyptian culture there should not been extreme equality between men and women.

Other people think that Egypt should take this step by step. People were raised to follow orders and this is so different from democracy. Women also have to change the view of their selves. If women do not feel submissive anymore than the position of women would improve. Change is up to the women themselves. Part of the people says that they can give an eye to women's issues after the elections.

Skeptics say that there is a risk that women not have the benefits after the revolution. Some people think that by the resign of Susan Mubarak there will be less done for women. Others say that Susan Mubarak wanted her own women's council to succeed and killed other women's movements before the revolution, now the other movements have a chance.

In Egypt there is a mentioning of one female president. Her name is Bothaina Kamel. There are also many political parties that are getting established every day, most of them are liberal but also the Muslim brotherhood and the Salafi group established their own political party. Some say that the door is open for political women participation. Also research from before the revolution advices to place women on the lists of political parties. Some people want collective leadership after the revolution so that all the religions and all the men and women are represented. This revolution is political, social, cultural and economical so a change in the regime can affect the culture of Egypt. Most of the people hope now that there is a new kind of feminism born by this revolution. Especially by the young women who were participating on the square. Feminism in the Arab world wants to change everything in the economical, cultural, political and social area. We see that after the revolution there are a lot more women activists.

According to the Muslim brotherhood women have to stay at home. A lot of women are afraid for the power of the Muslim brotherhood. The Muslim brothers also think that women cannot become the president of Egypt and that women connect more with their feelings. They see a woman as a queen, so you cannot touch women.

Egypt does not only need a change in women but a change in all Egyptians. People now discuss all sorts of things, before the revolution you could not speak about a lot of things and there is a change in the day to day treatment of people. A lot of people think that women can change the future of Egypt, some think that women can change the future with the help of men. Women who participated on the square feel that they own Tahrirsquare now, that it is theirs.

There are some difficulties after the revolution. Prices of food are higher so it is harder to live for poor women. Families are more worried about girls, so they cannot go alone outside the house. About the harassment men and women made a deal that they don't intimidate women anymore. Women now are not afraid to talk; they know that they are not alone in harassment and that it is not their fault. On the other hand Amnesty International reported of the abuse of women by the army on international women's day.

So people have difference ideas for women's space in the streets, in the traditional sphere and in the new administration of post-Mubarak Egypt. People have different feelings about gender as a difference, gender as a social relation and gender as a construction.

8.5 Overall conclusion: the change in women's space by the revolution of 2011 in Egypt

Under this heading I will give an answer to my main question and I will look back to my objective.

I achieved the objective of my research. In this thesis I gave an overview of women's space. I made this overview with information from in depth qualitative interviews and information from literature, news articles and YouTube movies.

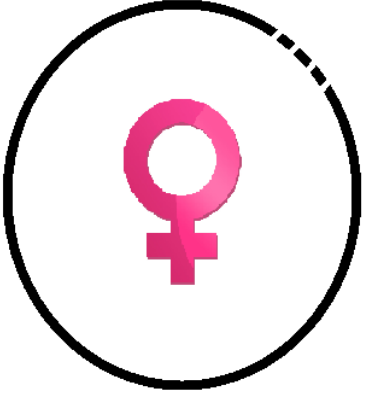
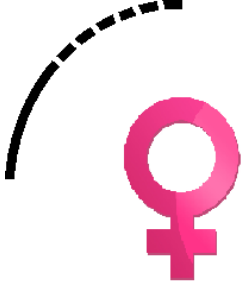
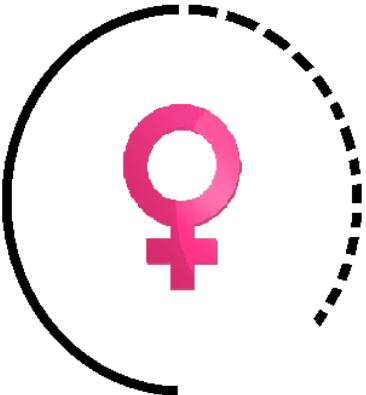
In this overall conclusion I will start with the change in women's space by the comparison of the situation before and during the revolution. In this comparison you can see a huge change in women's space. Before the revolution there was a great inequality between men and women, this inequality was shown in different places and aspects of life. During the revolution men and women were equal. They fought together, one example of a slogan during the revolution is: 'One hand, one hand, one demand, one hand'. People were united and there was no inequality besides the specific women's spaces in the first few days of the revolution and on the day of the camel attack.

In the comparison of the situation during and after the revolution you also see a difference, but this difference is a much smaller difference than in the comparison of before and during. In the comparison of during and after you can see that women were very active during the revolution, and a lot of women are still active after the revolution, there is an enlargement of the number of feminine activists. During the revolution there was no harassment on the streets. After the revolution people feel that they have a deal, that they don't harass women anymore. Not all men adhere to this agreement, but there is some improvement for women on this point. During the revolution women fought for a common goal after the revolution they have to fight for more influence as women. After the revolution there are some groups like the Muslim brotherhood and the Salafi's who want to return and reduce women's space. This Muslim brotherhood tried to separate men and women during the revolution, but people refused that, so the question for after the revolution is in what way people can resist the power of these groups.

The comparison of the situation of before and after the revolution shows also a change in women's space. Before the revolution women's space was very limited, only the rich and well educated women had a larger space of their own. However for most of the women their space was limited. These people had to face a great inequality. After the revolution women still feel this inequality, but now in a different way. A lot of women know now that they have a voice and that this voice can be heard. Women are more active to get their rights after the revolution. As I said earlier there are some groups that want to limit women's space and there are still women who have to live strict to traditions and the Egyptian culture, but these women know now that they are not alone, they have seen the people on Tahrir, and they know that if they work together they can complete goals they first could not even imagine. Under 8.6 I made a schematic overview of this conclusion.

8.6 Schematic overview:

In this schematic overview is the woman (sign) central in the middle of a circle. This circle represents the men who restrict women's freedom. On Tahrirsquare the men were standing literally in a circle (they were making a chain by holding hands (see the pictures on page 31) around women to protect them from danger. These men form sort of a border, with their influence they are bordering women's space. A lot of women fight to get more space of their own; they fight for more equality and to make their own women's space and not to let this space be determined by men. The whole circle represents all the women. The women space is represented by the line (the chain) around the women sign. If there is no chain it means that women are equal to men. An interrupted chain means that women try to get equality and more women's space or want to decide self about this women's space. A closed chain means that men decide the amount of women's space and this means that there is inequality between men and women.

Women's space before the revolution	Women's space during the revolution	Women's space after the revolution
		
There was a lot of inequality between men and women. Women had to deal with discrimination in their home, at work, the streets, in the administration and also had to deal with social harassment and domestic violence. Women stayed at home and had not much to decide because of their tradition, it was a male culture (-----). Some well educated and rich women had good jobs and could break the chain of men, they came close to equality with men but they were still discriminated (- - - -).	Men and women were equal, they slept next's to each other and there were all kinds of women. Women were at the forefront of the protests, and there were slogans were for more equality (). During the first days there was a special place for women, in a chain of men or in the mosques. The Muslim Brotherhood tried to separate men and women. (- - - -). Some women didn't go to the square because they were not allowed to go, it was too dangerous or because of the culture and traditions (-----).	Bothaina Kamel is on the candidates list to become the first female president, there are a lot of feminist activist now (). Women have a voice and they now that this voice can be heard, there are only a few obstacles such as the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafi's. People have to take it step by step. (- - - -). Some people are afraid that women will be forgotten and their lives will not improve, or that their position will get even worse. (-----).

8.7 Critical reflection

This research has given information about women's space and the change of this women's space in different situations. These different situations were before, during and after the January 25th revolution of 2011 in Egypt.

If I look in a critical way to my own work and the output of this work, my bachelor theses, then there are some good points and some points of improvement that I would like to share.

It was really good for my thesis to go to Cairo and to actually speak with the people who created and were part of this revolution. They gave me a lot of knowledge. I went with a concrete idea to Cairo so I could immediately start with my research. I interviewed 24 people, from these 24 interviews I did transcript eleven interviews and used them in my research. I could find enough literature on the situation of women (not especially on the topic women's space) from before the revolution and about my theory. A negative point in this is that I had not enough time to transcript all my interviews. There also was not enough literature available from the situation during and after the revolution so I had to relay for this information for the greatest part on my own interviews and new articles. Other points of improvement are that I wish I had more time to write this thesis. So that I could have spend more time in Egypt, to speak with more people and see the changes during the time from post-revolution to the formation of a new administration. At this moment there are a lot of things happening in Egypt. There are formations of new political parties, and Egyptians are forming their own opinions about these parties and about the future of their beautiful land. When I got back home after my trip to Cairo I tried to stay up to date about the proceedings. This was hard to do because the media do not report about everything, and I would like to hear the views of the Egyptians about these new proceedings. My focus in this thesis was the subject of women's space. However, there are hundreds of interesting subjects to write about within this revolution.

Criticism on my conclusion is that there are still more developments everyday in Egypt and that my conclusion is an overall conclusion, specific information of the different parties and candidates for the presidency can change until the elections of September. I made this conclusion on the base of my different interviews and literary study. Different people have different opinions so I could make my research more reliable by having more interviews. I tried to make my research and conclusion as reliable as possible to connect the interviews with the literature and theory I found.

The recommendation I will make for the women in Egypt is that their time to fight is right now. Men have fresh in their minds what women did during the revolution. I think that if women fight for their rights now and start with improvements on various areas that they could enlarge women's space. Men have to see women now as an equal, as someone they cannot ignore. The sexual harassment has to stop, women have to get a good education so they can chose if they stay at home or go to work. I totally understand that people see the importance of their religion and culture but hopefully people can make a compromise with their culture, religion and with the space women need to have a meaningful, joyful, happy and equal life.

Only time will tell how the future of women's space in Egypt will look like. The determination and desire of a lot of women can only help to improve the level of influence and the overall conditions for women in the future of Egypt.

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Images

FrontPage:

- Women are demonstrating, *Big picture in the middle*:
<http://www.thenational.ae/deployedfiles//Assets/Richmedia/Image/on13-Egypt-Women.jpg>
- Hand with Egyptian nail varnish: http://www.ifastfwd.info/wp-content/plugins/rss-poster/cache/3c6cf_t1larg.egypt.hand.afp.gi.jpg
- Map of Egypt: <http://www.travellerspoint.com/maps/61.gif>
- A women kisses a men: http://blogs.courant.com/susan_campbell/pb-110128-egypt-unrest-kiss-ps.photoblog900.jpg

Rest of the document:

- Islamic feminism, *women sign with Islamic star*:
<http://www.redbubble.com/people/buyart/art/2288489-islamic-feminism>
- Nahdat Misr (the Awakening of Egypt) *statue*:
<http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2008/yilmaz311008.html>
- Work status of women, graph: (J. Courtney, K.Feld, B.Shanks, 2007)
- Controller of household purchases, graph: (J. Courtney, K.Feld, B.Shanks, 2007)
- Tahrirsquare during the revolution, *picture*:
<http://viewfromtheinfield.wordpress.com/2011/02/11/egypt-from-dictator-to-democracy/>
- Men were protecting women on the square, *left picture* :
<http://sabaharabi.com/news/index.php?themon=3&theyear=2011&theday=8>
- Men were protecting women on the square, *right picture* :
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/blog/2011/feb/04/egypt-protests-day-departure-live>
- At the day of the camel attack most of the participants in the demonstration on the square were men, *left picture*: <http://pomed.org/blog/2011/02/photos-injured-protesters.html/>
- At the day of the camel attack most of the participants in the demonstration on the square were men, *right picture*: <http://www.examiner.com/political-buzz-in-national/pro-mubarak-group-rides-on-camels-to-attack-protesters-picture?slide=29143186#slide=29143211>