

**Egyptian woman between two revolutions**

A paper submitted by

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**Introduction** ,,,,,,,,,,,,

Woman's participation in political life Will remain is a major problem has no solution, either with the decision-maker or to civil society, or even woman herself.

We know the problem, its causes and perhaps the treatment‘methods, but we do not know the reason why woman's participation in political life remains intractable crisis to solute it.

No one deny that the woman is partner in human life, she has main role in the revolutions of January and June, and her role in the referendum and the presidential election, not only that, but also throughout the ages .... she was and still is a partner in the human and political life

The balanced and equitable representation in the political life is a moral demand, it is based upon the theory of democracy, and not just a means to achieve a temporary political or partisan goal. Thus, the equality between man and woman in public positions serve as the implied implementation of equality among citizens**.** Whatmakes lack of respect these rights some sort of violation of the constitutional foundations of the democratic system.

The deprivation of any social class from balanced participation opportunity in the development process (political sense, who bears burdens and get returns from economic activity?) Because of the quality characteristics (gender, religion, or color ..) it threatens the fairness of the development strategy and deprives society from important elements, and makes category subsidiary to another.

 **Woman between the two revolutions ... winning card in the election is waiting equity**

The woman in the Egyptian revolution expresses on all the meanings of courage in the organization ,rhetoric and cheering in various fields and revolutionary squares. She bore all varieties of death, torture and oppression of rubber ,live bullets , gas and beaten with sticks, also woman bore what does not happen to men when their symptoms violated through some security attacks when break up protests ,she was beaten severely.

Despite the significant role of woman in moving Revolutionary scene since the beginning, but she had encountered a lot of marginalization. Woman has been active in the demonstrations, and perhaps the scenes when ladies cheer with revolutionary slogans and men repeat those, sometimes it indicates the leadership role of women in the demonstrations. But since the transitional period which following the deposed former President Hosni Mubarak from rule of Egypt, woman was strongly excluded from political decision-making process.

Some institutions of civil society have been busy with more important issues than the woman's rights issue at those distinguishing historical stage.

**In the 30 June revolution 2013**,the main cause of the eruption was the women's fear from rule of the extremist Muslim Brotherhood, which shows the opposition of women to talks of a large number of senior leaders of political Islam in Egypt and the most notably is Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafis. The most notably of these leaders told that women must stay at home and her voice is forbidden. It turns out, for example, when the lady of the Nour Party nominated in the parliamentary elections , the party put flower image instead of a picture of lady on the electoral propaganda leaflets. all these and much more have raised fears of a large number of Egyptian women to make the revolution.

But the basic dilemma after the two revolutions is that woman of the lower categories, who got its rights, she did not get the proper gains for her participation in the revolution. on the contrary, incidents of physical and moral violence increased against woman ,it is appeared in increasing of sexual harassment‘s incidents and sometimes sexual abuse collective.

A primary challenge to Egyptian woman - as well as a woman in countries where the Arab Spring‘s revolutions broke out - is to break the stage of public participation in the revolutions to institutional‘s work .woman still suffers from lack of good representation in parties and in Parliament.

Is there a possibility to transform the political participation of woman from the Revolutionary area to political participation within the competent institutions of political decision-making?

Women get 8 seats out of 498 seats in the Egyptian parliament of 2012 (which resolved after that) four of them from Freedom and Justice Party, the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood movement, in addition to , appointed three deputies, so representation of woman Decreased in parliament after the revolution from 12 to 2 percent, and the quota was cancelled for women under the previous regime, which was 64 seats.

In the presidential election of 2012, 13 candidates competed, without nominate any lady, but as voter, participation of woman has dramatically increased, rising by 64% following the 25January Revolution, also woman participated as voter in the presidential election by 83%. on the other hand, when the Egyptian constitution was put, it does not much different in the committee of preparing the 2012 Constitution or the Committee of the 2013 Constitution, a few number of ladies were selected to the membership of the hundred Committee for a 2012constitution .

At the fifty committee of the 2013Constitution, also a few of the ladies was chosen are: Mervat Tallawy, Azza Mohamed Said Ashmawy, Mona Zulfikar, Huda Repulse, Abla Mohi elddin Abdul Latif.

**Egyptian woman among the three constitutions (1971- 2012-2014)**

The provisions of 1971 Constitution was included four articles related to woman and her rights , these articles in the constitution which was put under a restricted political climate and incomplete economic system, and In the prior period to the signing and ratification of Egypt on the international conventions of human rights, as well as a sterile philosophy of the 1971 Constitution , which is summarized in grants constitutional right by hand, and usurps by the other hand, which leads to empty the constitutional text from its content .

**Constitution of 2012**

**Constitutional rights of woman in the era of the Muslim Brotherhood .... wasted rights**

It became clear from the first moment of announcement about the formation of a constituent assembly for a 2012constitution, that Egyptian woman waits a lot of hard work to defend her constitutional‘s rights and faces serious cultural variable, such a look of the stream of political conservatism which belong to the Muslim Brotherhood, to the statue and role of Egyptian woman and it commensurate with the great role was played by woman in the success of the Egyptian 25 January revolution From the base of equality struggle and rights.

It has become clear from the first moment that the formation of the Constituent Assembly, which will put the Constitution did not include only 7 women, who belong to the stream of political Islam from the total 100 members. In all cases the Constitution of 2012 was released and it has many of the provisions which woman considered a retreat from her gains and encroachment on the one of the most important woman's rights, is equal rights and duties with man.

**Woman‘s marginalization in the Constitution of 2012**

one of the main criticisms of the Constitution of 2012, was the articles that deal with woman‘s position in it, so the Constitution of 2012 did not achieve any achievement to woman's rights and it did not deal with her as a partner in the community and in the revolution. on the contrary, members of the Constitution‘s founding committee tried to restrict the rights of woman and they refused the recognition of rights which endorsed by the international treaties and conventions signed by Egypt.

The debate has evolved in this regard with the insistence of Islamic parties to put words "without conflict with the Islamic Sharia‘s law in the articles relating to woman", and they object to the article, which recognizes the equality between man and woman even led to the cancellation. In the end, the Constitution was released with one article concerning with woman.

**Constitution of 2014 and the Egyptian woman**

The current constitution which was adopted since the days of the 14 , 15 Jan included some lost constitutional rights for Egyptian woman and it responded to a large number of the demands of women's forces in Egypt . and perhaps the presidency of the Woman‘s Committee in the fifty committee by human rights activist Dr. Huda Elsda led to the great satisfaction among feminist forces on the one hand, and their satisfaction as well as the new constitutional provisions of 2014constitution, which include and reflect the true role of Egyptian woman, and the Preamble of 2014Constitution included the role of Egyptian woman and, as follows:

The preamble of the Constitution states that

  "This is our Constitution that we are citizens and we are the Egyptian people ,this is our will and this is Constitution of our revolution."

Egyptian woman proud because of the Existence of her rights in the chapter of the state and underlying determinants, and this in itself is an important development emphasizes the importance and role of woman in the state and society. It also confirms that the issue of woman is the issue of community and doesn't leave its , woman is not one of a category of the society, but she is half the society and the basis of the family.

**Constitution includes more than 20 or more articles related to woman or she can benefit its.**

Constitution in Article 11 confirmed the following:-: -

* The State shall ensure the achievement of equality between woman and man in all civil and political, economic, social and cultural rights, according to the provisions of the Constitution.
* Create the Commission to eliminate all Forms of Discrimination against Woman.
* Give woman 11, 000 council seats.
* Give woman 56 parliamentary seats.
* The state guarantees the right of woman to take over functions of public offices and the senior management of the state and the appointment to the competent judicial bodies without discrimination against her.
* State is committed to protect woman against all forms of violence and to ensure the reconciliation between her duties in the family and work requirements.
* State is obliged to adjust the care and protection of motherhood, childhood, supporter, the older woman and women most in need.
* Egyptian nationality is a right for those who are born to an Egyptian father and an Egyptian mother and this means the end of woman‘s suffering to grant the nationality for her sons). Article 6
* State's commitment to achieve social justice and provide social solidarity in order to ensure a decent life for all citizens, men and women and this is a benefit to woman ... (because she is the most need). Article 8
* equal opportunities for all citizens without discrimination, also this is in favor of woman (over the years where there was discrimination against her ) Article 9
* State's keenness on family cohesion and stability is important to the woman in the first place (because she is the backbone of this family) Article 10.
* Set a national plan to address the slums in order to improve the quality of life, as poor woman also is one of the slum population , so she will be the first beneficiaries of these (Article 18)
* Child Protection and consideration his interest is the most important, and to identify the age of the child by 11 years ,this is prevents the underage marriage and children labor (this is what woman interests it in the first place) Article 81.
* Attention to disability, as well as the elderly) Articles 80 and 82 ( the older and disabled woman suffers a lot especially when she is poor, this making life difficult to her,the two articles give her some rights, thereby ensuring a decent life.
* criminalize all forms of slavery and human trafficking ,such as the marriage of underage girls) Article 98
* Commitment to international conventions on human rights which was ratified by Egypt (all of which include rights for woman) Article 92
* Considerate the national councils like the National Council for Women are one of the state bodies have personal legal and technical, financial and administrative independence and have the right to inform the authorities about any violation of the its area of work. This means stability of the National Council for Women as a governmental institution and it is part of the executive branch cannot be changed or affiliation with any one (Article 302)

**2014 Parliament.....The most equitable for woman**

At present, in the People's Assembly election law can say that woman's participation in legislation and monitoring the government has much progress compared to the previous legislations in the light of the contents of the law where the law states to be:

**The way of lists formation**: each list includes (15) seats have at least numbers and attributes are:

3 candidates of Christians.

1 of the workers and peasants.

2 of youth.

1 candidate of persons with disabilities

1 candidate of Egyptians living abroad the least.

(9of the total 15 seats ... and remain a 6 seats leave freedom of configuration in them)

To be among the owners of these qualities or others at least 7 women.

And list must include (45) seats have at least numbers and attributes:

:

9 candidates of Christians

6 candidates of the workers and peasants

6 candidates of youth

6candidates of persons with disabilities

3 candidates from Egyptians living abroad

)27of the total 45 seats ... and remain 18 seats leave freedom of configuration in them)

To be among the owners of these qualities or others at least21 women.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Quality** | **Number** | **The percentage of total members(540member**) |
| **Woman** | 56 | 10,4% |
| **Youth** | 16 | 3% |
| **Christian** | 24 | 4,4% |
| **Workers and peasants** | 16 | 3% |
| **Egyptians living abroad** | 8 | 1,5% |
| **Persons with disabilities** | 8 | 1,5% |

This means that she gets a 7 seats in list .Total women seats under the division of Constituencies‘s list for 8 segments is 56 seats of the total 120 seats reserved for lists.

**Recommendations to activate the participation of women in political life**

Woman's political participation has two main dimensions: first, respect of the constitutional and legal framework, and the second related to the political climate and the cultural and social dimension. The Egyptian Constitution stipulates that citizens "equal before the law, they are equal in rights and public duties, without discrimination on grounds of gender, origin, language or creed." This means that the constitution is the most advanced in this area.

There is a great responsibility lies on the political parties, the question is: to what extent the parties adopt the issues of the women‘s participation, wether within the party, especially in leadership positions in or outside the party through its candidacy her on its electoral lists.

Despite the fact that woman's political participation is an issue which the cultural and educated elite only concern it, so encouraging her on political participation is essential condition for the success of any effort to achieve gender equality.

Woman's access to decision-making positions is a necessary condition but not sufficient ,as the decisive criterion here is not the absolute number of women participating in the decision-making process, but the quality of these women ,their awareness and commitment to equal relations of the gender in society. However, this does not automatically mean that those women who have attained such positions may make efforts for the liberation and empowerment of women in these syndicates, or increase the number of women in decision-making positions.

Civil society includes many organizational forms in which independence from both the state and the private sector and this is a condition to make it a part of civil society (professional syndicates ,labors unions and NGOs ..), all of these affect the political participation of women. In Arab countries, which allow the composition of the professional syndicates commensurate the women‘s membership with their number in the profession, which is a prerequisite for practice. the presence of women in leadership positions where she can participate in the decision-making subject for many other considerations , including ideological thought which controls of the syndicate and the extent the awareness of and strength of women members in the syndicate.

For example, women have reached the post of Secretary General of the Journalists' Syndicate, and two female lawyers reached to membership of the Bar Council, one of them has stepped up to the membership of the Permanent Bureau of the Arab Lawyers Union. The women membership in labor unions also remain in membership of fundamental committees‘s level , and a few of women may reach to leadership positions, but the effect of working woman in making decisions of labor arrangements is still imperceptible. The state government's control over labor arrangements is the same in some Arab countries, become women‘s appointment by the government in order to preserve the shape while ensuring their subordination of government agenda.

**the main recommendations:**

1. The need to liberate restrictive regulatory environment for the public and voluntary work in Egypt for men and women alike.

2. The claim of political parties to push woman towards leadership positions inside and prepare her to enter the legislative elections by increasing her friction and expertise through local council elections.

3. Political parties should adopt the idea of female school staff to prepare qualified female cadres to take over leadership positions within NGOs

4. Liberalization social work from all administrative restrictions that prevent the active participation of woman.

5. The need for coordination among civil institutions which working in the field of woman and women's associations in order to create a peaceful pressure groups among themselves to push the various provisions of women's issues.

6. The education of young people from an early age on the positive participation, the rejection of patriarchal concepts and availability of children's right to freedom of opinion and expression will have a deep impact in changing hostile cultural concepts to women's participation in public work.

7. The institutions of society should call widen campaign to adopt an developmental project grown confidence in the abilities of woman, as well as confidence in the possibility of change.

8. state's role in the activation of political participation

 the state should develop a strategy for woman's participation in political life through:

9. media's role is clear and specific

 media plays a key and pivotal role in process of political promotion and in shaping public opinion, so that the necessity to make enough effort towards the media and within a clear plan of action to amend the media image of women that look a stereotyped.

10. Strengthen the relationship with the political forces, professional and labor syndicates

It is clear that woman's participation in political and public life is low, and this is in one part her avoiding a partisan , political and public work for long time , and in the other part of it was caused by discriminatory policies toward woman by institutions , professional and labor syndicates.

11- Socialization:

The socialization is the process which set of values, beliefs, standards, laws and customs transform from one generation to another. And children learn appropriate behavior in the culture to which they belong through it. Implantation and promotion of socialization process by daily practice and friction, so that cannot be easily changed, and if change occurred , it would not be - certainly - over one generation (Giddens, 1991 Jddens.