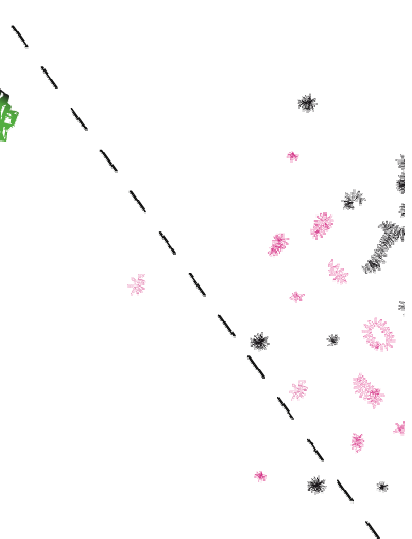




# Bachelor Thesis



The discourse on facebook in the scope of the Egyptian revolution in 2011, how it relates to human rights and what this implies for the European Union

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## **Abstract**

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2011 a protest wave in Egypt started which resulted in the demission of President Mubarak only 18 days later. In the scope of this revolution internet platforms such as facebook played a central role. But what has been the discourse on such platform within the revolution?

This thesis analysis the discourse that has taken place in the scope of the revolution on the biggest social network on the internet: facebook. Social networking is regarded to have an influence on political and social activism. Therefore the discourse on facebook is displaying the central issues of the people in the scope of the Egyptian revolution.

Within the discourse analysis special attention is given on the concept of human rights according the UN. Human rights play a central role in the overall demand of the people which is: "Mubarak to step down". Besides corruption all other main demands, which have been found on facebook, relate to human rights in different ways. Based on these findings the revolution in Egypt is classified as a human rights revolution.

Although the EU demanded the respect for human rights since the beginning of the diplomatic cooperation between the EU and Egypt the uprising of the people was required to see substantial changes.

## 1. Introduction

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2011 thousands of people in Egypt began to protest against the regime of President Mubarak who has ruled the country for over 30 years. During the demonstrations several hundred people have been killed and about a few thousand have been injured. 18 days later on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2011 President Mubarak declared his demission due to massive protests of the Egyptian people.

Before the demission of Mubarak the Egyptian government and the European Union (EU) established a diplomatic relationship which began in 1966. In 2004 this relationship was strengthened by an EU-Egypt Association Agreement which has been followed by a joint EU-Egypt Action Plan in 2007 (see EEAS 2010a: 3). Besides economic cooperation the EU tried to promote democratic and social reform (see EEAS 2010a: 3) in Egypt which received special attention in the latest Action Plan for the years 2011 – 2013. The three main goals of this plan have been: "I. Supporting Egypt's reforms in the areas of democracy, human rights, good governance and justice. II. Developing the competitiveness and productivity of the Egyptian economy. III. Ensuring the sustainability of the development process with effective social, economic and environmental policies and better management of natural resources." (EEAS 2010b: 5). As indicated in the main goals an important aspect of enhanced cooperation in the scope of the European Neighborhood Policy is the respect for human rights. If this played a role within the discourse on facebook in the scope of the Egyptian revolution will be analysed in this paper.

In general one can state that the internet played an integral part within the revolution. On the one hand it served as a platform for communication and for mobilisation of the Egyptian people and on the other hand it helped to inform the rest of the world of what was going on in Egypt. Even Mubarak, the former Egyptian President, feared the effects of a well organised internet communication which made him block certain pages on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2011<sup>1</sup>. By doing this he showed that he was unable to control the effects of well organised demonstrations which go in line with the information of the rest of the world. As an example for this kind of communication facebook postings will stand at the heart of the analysis.

But what have been the discussions on facebook? Which topics did the users stress? What is the essence of these discussions and how can they be interpreted in the overall context?

In order to answer these questions the author will make use of a discourse analysis whereas discourse and its analysis are defined in the following way: " Discourse Analysis has an analytical commitment to studying discourses as texts and talks in social practices. That is, the focus is not

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<sup>1</sup> see for example: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jan/26/egypt-blocks-social-media-websites>

language as an abstract entity such as a lexicon and set of grammatical rules (in linguistics), a system of differences (in structuralism), a set of rules for transforming statements (in Foucauldian genealogies). Instead it is the medium for interaction; analysis of discourse becomes, then, analysis of what people do” (Potter 1997: 146). Potter describes discourse as something that is reflecting the way people act and hence discourse analysis serves as an adequate basis to understand the linkage between the discussions on facebook and the protests that take place on the streets.

While analysing the discourse on facebook special emphasis will be given to the issue of human rights as the author wants to find an answer to the following research question: “To what extent is a human rights discourse perceptible within the overall discourse that has taken place on facebook about the Egyptian revolution within the time of the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2011 until the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2011?”.

Based on this research question the reader will be introduced to human rights as outlined by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in chapter three of this paper. Besides the issue of human rights the public debate about human rights that took place in Egypt before the protests started will be outlined in order to see if there are differences to the discourse on facebook.

Chapter four will then show in detail how the discourse analysis is set up and which steps will be taken during the analysis. The main part of this paper forms chapter five which will analyse the different facebook postings in the first instance with regard to which topics people refer to and in the second instance which underlying meaning they carry. The last part will then sum up the findings in order to give an answer to the overall research question.

## **2. Research Question**

As already stated in the introduction the main focus of the thesis at hand is going to be the revolution that took place in Egypt in the spring of 2011. The core aim of the research is to answer the question “To what extent is a human rights discourse perceptible within the overall discourse that has taken place on facebook about the Egyptian revolution within the time of the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2011 until the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2011?” which is done by analysing the case of Egypt in detail.

In order to fully understand which aspects of the discourse have something to do with human rights and what this implies for the uprising itself the following questions need to be answered:

1. Which topics do users on facebook refer to in the scope of the discourse that is taking place on facebook?

2. What are the topics that have been referred to most frequently?
3. What do the postings in the different topics signify?
4. What is the underlying meaning of the different topics?
5. Where do ambivalences pop up with regard to how the people perceive the protests?
6. Which aspects of the discourse typify as a discourse on human rights?

These sub-questions on the one hand analysis the discourse on facebook in general and, on the other hand, look more specifically at which stages human rights played a role. By answering these questions the author seeks to reveal which aspects have been important in the scope of the discourse on facebook in order to understand if human rights played a certain role. Hence the first two questions are focussing at finding out which topics played a role in general whereas the questions three to five are searching for deeper, underlying messages in order to show if human rights played a role (question six). The answers for the questions will be found by analysing which discussions have taken place on facebook in certain groups.

This research question is of descriptive nature as it tries to explain the behaviour of the people in Egypt. Moreover it does not follow a certain hypothesis but tries to understand the underlying meaning of a real world phenomenon.

### **3. Theory**

This part of the paper will outline what the underlying concepts and theories are that are necessary to answer the research questions.

At first the potential role of social media, in this case facebook, will be outlined in order to show where such platforms might have impact on social life and hence on the uprising in Egypt. Moreover the concept of human rights according to the United Nations (UN) will be outlined in order to show which topics classify as related to human rights.

Thirdly, the current debate on human rights in Egypt, which has taken place before the uprising, will be displayed to show which topics have been stressed in this scope.

#### **3.1 The role of social media**

Social media, such as facebook and twitter, give users the opportunity to communicate (with each other), to exchange point of views and to have online relationships. In short one can say that social media offers the opportunity of social networking which already existed before the age of the

internet (see Coyle & Vaugh 2008:13). In general it is to state that there is no consensus on the definition of social networking. Coyle and Vaugh describe it as “the use of a specific type of Web site focused on the creation and growth of online social networks which allows users to interact.” (Coyle & Vaugh 2008: 13).

The effect of this networking for people is that interaction among people, as well as expressing one’s own opinion, becomes simplified (see Attia et. al. 2011: 371) which is having an influence on social life. In the case of Egypt facebook has been the most important social media website (see Attia et. al. 2011: 370) where people expressed their opinion. In addition to expressing their opinion it became easier for the Egyptian people to interact within their relationships and to exchange points of view (see Attia et. al. 2011: 372).

This increased interaction among people may function “as a networking tool for civic participation” (Zhang et. al. 2010: 78) whereas civic participation is established by ongoing discussions in which people can freely participate. In the case of Egypt this civic participation lead to political activism (and hence had an influence on social life) (see Attia et. al. 2011: 372). Therefore it is expected that the discussions that took place on facebook had a positive influence on the uprising in Egypt and contain the issues that made the people go on the streets. Hence this paper will analyse the content of those discussions in order to reveal an important part of the people’s motivation to participate in the protests.

To be able to say if human rights and their violations played a role in those discussions, and thus in the people’s motivation to participate, the following part outlines the concept of human rights in order to detect them in the different postings.

### **3.2 Human Rights**

This part of the paper will introduce the reader to the most important human rights as developed by the United Nations (UN). The idea behind this is that the analysis of the facebook postings (chapter 5) is aiming at identifying if human rights or their violations, as outlined in the following, played a role within the discourse.

The preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states that “[w]hereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law” (see preamble Universal Declaration of Human Rights). This thesis does not seek to answer the question whether the Egyptian people rested their protest upon this general statement but if facebook users referred to some or all of the rights outlined in the following.

Article 1 and article 2 of the Declaration of Human Rights state that by birth all human beings no matter where they have been born, which sex they are, which skin colour they have, or which religion they belong to, are entitled to these rights on an equal basis. In addition Art. 18 grants everybody the right to freedom of thought and to freely choose their religion.

Moreover the Universal Declaration of Human Rights grants “the right to life, liberty and security of person” (Art. 3 UDHR) which involves that if a government is oppressing their citizens by the use of violence, for example through torture (which is especially mentioned in Art. 5), it is a breach of this right and hence can be seen as a human right violation. In addition to this it is necessary for every government to guarantee a public and free trial for every person (see Art. 10 UDHR) who is to be recognised as a person before the law everywhere (see Art. 6 UDHR) without any discrimination (see Art. 7 UDHR).

Furthermore Art. 19 UDHR grants everybody the right to freedom of opinion and expression whereas it may be expressed by peaceful assemblies (see Art. 20 UDHR). In addition to this every citizen may have the right to participate in the government of his country, either directly or through chosen representatives (see Art. 21 UDHR) in the form of elections (see Art.21 UDHR).

With regard to development and education the Declaration of Human Rights grants everybody the right to elementary education (see Art. 26 UDHR) and an acceptable standard of living guaranteeing the health and well-being of himself and his family (see. Art. 25 UDHR).

Although the named human rights are not the full extent of what the Declaration of Human Rights entails but the most important ones for the topic at hand have been mentioned. In the following part the public discourse on human rights that took place in Egypt before the beginning of the protests will be outlined.

### **3.3 The Human Rights Debate in Egypt**

This part of the paper will not outline in detail if and where there are human rights violations happening in Egypt but how the human rights debate is perceived officially. The aim of this part is to describe the public discourse on human rights as it has taken place before the protests started in order to be able to see if this discourse is shaped similarly or differently within the scope of the protests on facebook.



As outlined by Abdelrahman (2007) the human rights debate is highly politicised in Egypt. The main argument in this sense is that the human rights debate as it is brought to Egypt by Western nations is seen as an attempt by the West to dominate the culture and politics that are prevailing in Egypt and hence is aimed at destroying the national identity (see Abdelrahman 2007: 288, 286). Nevertheless the Egyptian government signed the universal Declaration of Human Rights with the constraint that if human rights are a breach of the Sharia law they do not need to be respected (see Abdelrahman 2007: 291).

This constraint is regularly used to justify its incompliance with international human rights conventions like free elections or the equality of men and women (see Abdelrahman 2007: 291). But there has been some effort, or at least the signal to, respect human rights. This is shown by the establishment of different national conventions that deal with topics like children's rights, women's rights and political rights (see Abdelrahman 2007: 292). Abdelrahman regards these as the regime that is pretending to display itself as a human rights protector (see Abdelrahman 2007: 296).

The debate itself on human rights in Egypt is characterised by what has already been said above: human rights are seen as a tool of the West to overcome the national identity (see Abdelrahman 2007: 296). Sahid Yassin puts it a bit different in Dwyer's book "Arab Voices" (1991) when saying that the human rights debate in Egypt is characterised by "three visions of the world" (Dwyer 1991: 59). He differentiates between the liberal, the conservative and the radical point of view with regards to human rights. The liberal view is represented by the Wafd and the Nationalist parties and mainly focusing on political rights whereas the radical camp focuses on economic and social rights. Differently the conservative movement, which is represented by the Muslim groups, is highlighting what Abdelrahman already pointed at: Egypt is a Muslim society and the Muslim concept of human rights is differing to the Western concept of human rights which makes them decline the idea of adopting a Western concept of human rights. (See Dwyer 1991: 59)

Intellectuals in Egypt support the official government position by regarding human rights and especially human rights organisations in Egypt as "part of the US strategy to dominate Egypt and the Arab world" (Abdelrahman 2007: 293).

Due to the fact that the official position of the former Egyptian government, which is supported by the Egyptian intellectuals, is contrary to what Western officials see in the respect of human rights this paper seeks to analyse the discourse about human rights with regard to Egypt that is taking place on Facebook. The aim is to see if the debate on human rights on Facebook is closer to the concept of human rights as outlined by the UN or is in line with the public discourse that took place in Egypt.

After showing in which sense the interaction on facebook influenced the revolution in Egypt on a theoretical basis the following chapters will analyse what has been the content of such interactions. As a conclusion for this chapter one can say that, due to the fact that the interactions on facebook have an impact on social life (as outlined in part 3.1), they somehow display the people's motivation to participate in the protests. By adding the concept of human rights (as outlined in part 3.2) the author seeks to find an answer to the question if human rights or their violations played a role within the discourse. If human rights played a central role in the discourse on facebook their violations are expected to have motivated the people to go on the streets. If this is the case one can speak of a human rights revolution<sup>2</sup>.

The following chapter will outline which methodology will be used to understand the discourse that is going on.

#### **4. Methodology**

This chapter outlines how the author sees a discourse analysis and why this methodology is appropriate for the study at hand. Moreover emphasize is given on which steps characterize the analysis in chapter 5 and how they are going to be taken.

##### **4.1 Research Design**

A discourse analysis stands at the heart of the study. A discourse analysis involves the analysis and interpretation of certain forms of communication (e.g. texts, essays, scientific articles, newspaper articles, pictures, movies, etc.) whereas the discourse that is to be analysed is communicated by certain media (see Keller 2011: 71).

In this case the media that is the platform of communication is the internet. Discourse analysis is in general of a qualitative nature whereas it may be enhanced by adding quantitative aspects which is especially important when having large amounts of texts (see Keller 2011: 78) which is the reason for doing a quantitative analysis as the first phase of the whole analysis.

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<sup>2</sup> Due to the limited size of this paper and the fact that the concept of revolution is among the most discussed in political and social science as well as among historians the following definition will be used: A revolution describes a "rapid, fundamental transformations of a society's socio-economic and political structures" (Liebmann 1992: 1672). For more information on this please see for example: Kramnick 1972: "Reflections on Revolutions: Definition and Explanation in recent Scholarship" or Stone 1966 "Theories of Revolution".

The units of observation with regard to the thesis at hand are certain messages that have been posted on facebook. How these are going to be selected is outlined in the following sections. In general a discourse analysis is not dealing with one single text or movie but with several single documents (see Keller 2011: 87) whose meanings need to be seen in relation to each other (see Keller 2011: 78). Therefore, in order to have a substantial basis for the analysis itself, it is necessary to pick the units of observation as heterogeneous as possible (see Keller 2011: 88). In this case the analysis wants to say something about the discourse of the Egyptian revolution on facebook. Therefore the author has decided to use two different groups on the platform in question.

Facebook is a social network whereas the communication within groups is at the heart and the messages are normally relatively short. Due to the fact that the considered discourse is shaped by regular internet users' opinions, posted newspapers articles, scientific writings, interviews and the like are not going to be taken into account.

In the following parts it will be outlined which groups have been chosen and why. Moreover it will describe how the postings have been selected and how they are going to be analysed in chapter 5 of this paper.

#### **4.2 Facebook groups as a source for texts**

Facebook is the biggest social network on the internet. During the revolution in Egypt it served as a platform for mobilising people and for communication among the participants. There are two big facebook groups that will serve as a source for messages that are going to be analysed in the scope of the discourse analysis. These groups are named: "Egypt revolution" and "We are all Khaled Said". The author found the first named group by searching facebook for: "Egypt revolution". It has been chosen due to the fact that it is the group the most people "liked"<sup>3</sup> with regard to the Egyptian revolution and therefore is able to reach a lot of people which means that it is having a significant influence on the discourse about the revolution. The second group has been found by searching facebook for "Khaled Said". Khaled Said is a social activist who has been killed by policemen in Egypt and therefore has become a martyr and a sign for supporting the protests. Moreover this group is available in English and Arabic which makes it represent a lot of opinions on the discourse and therefore serves the concept of a heterogeneous sample. Moreover only English speaking comments will be respected which is due to two reasons: Firstly, it is expected that Egyptian people that

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<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that the use of the word "like" is referring to a special functionality of facebook. It is possible to click the "like" button which shall show other users that one is supporting or has visited or just wants to spread the message of the group. Hence "like" does not want to say something about feelings in this case.

searched to inform the rest of the world did write their comments in English. Secondly, it is due to the fact that the author of this text does not speak Arabic.

With regard to the groups itself a few important aspects have to be noted: The size of both groups varies significantly. With regard to the amount of postings this means that the much bigger group “we are all Khaled Said” will receive more attention than the group “Egypt Revolution” which is due to the fact that all postings are weighted equally no matter within which group they have been posted.

### **4.3 Sampling**

The analysis of the messages posted on the named groups will be done according to a certain method which will be delineated in this part. In general all postings that have been done in the groups may be part of the analysis whereas it has to be mentioned that both groups will analysed individually.

But as the authors wants to say something about the discourse on the internet that is shaped by the Egyptian users the first selection process is leaving out all messages that obviously have been posted by users from outside of Egypt. The author is aware of the fact that one cannot be absolutely sure if the user is really coming from Egypt but it is impossible to overcome this problem when working with internet publications.

Moreover messages will be left out which are solely for the purpose of organizing demonstrations. Whereas it is necessary to note that messages which include a deeper meaning while communicating important information for the protesters itself will be included.

After collecting all the other messages they will be further limited by the introduction of a coding system due to the fact that the amount of postings to be analysed would still be too high. The coding system was developed while doing the research in order to make sure not to exclude possibly important messages from the beginning on as well as to reduce the threat of researcher’s expectancies.

The idea of the coding system is to assign certain categories to the postings whereas one posting can be represented in several categories. The categories emerge from the topics the internet users are referring to. When for example a posting is referring to the emergency law which has been present in Egypt for nearly 30 years this posting will be coded with the category “emergency law”. But when the same post is for example referring to human rights violations as well it is represented in the category “human rights” too. Which categories there are depends on the postings and is not done in advance and hence may change during the analysis.

#### **4.4 Analytical steps**

After reading all posts and assigning them to categories the quantitative, first phase of the analysis starts. This involves the identification of the most important discourses that go on facebook. It is expected that different topics play a major role which are seen as smaller discourses within the broader discourse. These smaller discourses will be identified by looking at how frequently topics have been mentioned. The topics that have been mentioned most often will be analysed further by an analysis of the particular discourse with regard to the topic identified. This analysis is an in depth analysis of what the discourse is about and how this can be interpreted within the framework where it is taking place. Within this scope it is possible that postings occur in different discourses at the same time. Hence these postings are seen within different frameworks which is seen as enhancing the reliability of the analysis (see Wood & Kroger 2001: 107). In order to be able to conduct these steps the computer program MAXQDA 10 will be used to code the postings.

Based on this the following steps will be taken to do the analysis:

1. A quantitative analysis of the topics that take place in both groups separately
2. A qualitative in-depth analysis of the postings within the different topics that have been identified according to step one
3. The conclusion will summarise the main findings of the second step and answer the overall research question

The following part will be the analysis and is starting with the identification of the most important topics as described above. It is followed by an analysis of the smaller discourses.

#### **5. Analysis**

This part of the paper is structured according to the different groups in the first place. At first an analysis will be done of the group “We are all Khaled Said” followed by an analysis of the group “Egypt Revolution”. The subparagraphs are structured according to the analysis. The first subparagraph of each group’s analysis will outline the identification of the most important topics as described in part four. This part is mainly aiming at giving answers to the following sub-research-questions:

1. Which topics do users on facebook refer to in the scope of the discourse that is taking place on facebook?

2. What are the topics that have been referred to most frequently?
3. What do the postings in the different topics signify?

These parts will be followed by an in-depth analysis of the most important discourses that are going on within the broader discourse whereas the second analysing step focuses on giving answers to the following questions:

1. What is the underlying meaning of the different topics?
2. Where do ambivalences pop up with regard to how the people perceive the protests?
3. Which aspects of the discourse typify as a discourse on human rights?

## **5.1 Analysis “We are all Khaled Said”**

### **5.1.1 “We are all Khaled Said” – Quantitative analysis**

This part of the paper is basically addressing the sub-research questions “Which topics do users on facebook refer to in the scope of the discourse that is taking place on facebook?” and “what are the topics that have been referred to most frequently?”.

At first it is to be said that in total 703 postings of the facebook group “We are all Khaled Said” have been taken into account after identifying those that are relevant for the first phase of this analysis (how these have been selected is described in part 4.3).

The topics people are referring to in their postings represent the categories which are assigned to the postings. The following categories emerge out of this: democracy, Egyptian government, human rights, freedom, religion, movement/ protests, justice, economic prosperity, USA, Europe, discussion about Mubarak replacement, poverty”.

These topics have been derived from reading all relevant posts several times whereas it is important to note that the named categories partly consist of sub-categories. All categories have been developed due to obvious mentioning of certain topics like: “We want freedom” (Anonymous 1 2011) which is referring to the category freedom. After coding all postings with certain topics the researcher merged categories together which are strongly interrelated to each other. Table 5.1 displays an overview of the topics that people referred to most frequently.

In the first place the researcher ruled out the following topics for further analysis (which does not mean that postings represented in one of these categories are totally left out in the analysis as they

may appear in other categories as well): “economic prosperity, discussion about Mubarak replacement, religion, USA, Europe and poverty”. They have been ruled out due to the fact that these topics have been addressed more rarely compared to the other topics. “Religion” and “economic prosperity” has been referred to only once, whereas “poverty” has been referred to seven times. Discussions about a possible Mubarak replacement have achieved little attention as well with only 17 mentions in total. The USA has been referred to in 19 posts whereas the European nations have been named 14 times.

Overall Category	Sub-category 1	Sub-category 2		
Egyptian Government	Mubarak	Mubarak to step down		
		Mubarak to get killed		
		Mubarak to be brought to court		
		Mubarak stealing from the Egyptian people		
	Whole regime to step down	Government Actions	Accusing the government of oppressing the protests	
				Police Violence
				Corruption
				Emergency Law
	Government Actions	Government Actions	Government manipulating the media	
			Europe	
			USA and Europe	
			Europe	
Government Actions	Government Actions	USA and Europe		
		Europe		
		USA and Europe		
		USA and Europe		
Freedom				
Protest	Against the protests			
	Violent protests			
	Peaceful protests			
	Motivating the people to go on protesting			
Human rights	Torture			
	Imprisonment without trial			
	Freedom of speech			
	Freedom of press			
	Human rights in general			
	Freedom of press			
Democracy	Democracy directly mentioned			
	Free and fair elections			
Justice				

Table 5. 1 Displaying categories and associated sub-categories

Differently to the topics that have been ruled out other categories have been given much more attention in the scope of the discourse. The biggest topic in terms of numbers represents the

nominations of the Egyptian government or topics that are closely related to the government or the actions they are tacking. As it can be seen in Table 5.1 this category has several sub-categories. Namely these are: “Mubarak, Whole regime to step down, Police Violence, Corruption, Emergency Law and Government Actions.” They have been included into this category as they all represent either demands of the users to the present government (i.e. the regime to step down or Mubarak to leave) or actions that the government is taking (i.e. corruption or the instalment of the emergency law). A further division is made for the nomination of topics regarding “Mubarak” and “Government Actions” because different things have been mentioned in the discourse with regard to these two.

As one can see in table 5.2 the code government has been assigned 298 times to the different postings. Whereas issues regarding the President Mubarak are the most frequent ones with 135 entries. Although the other categories have not been mentioned as often they are regarded as playing an important role in the discourse as the actions taken by the Egyptian government or Mubarak seem to be crucial issues for the Egyptian internet users on facebook.

Overall Category	Mentions	Sub-category 1	Mentions	Sub-category 2	Mentions
Egyptian Government	298	Mubarak	135	Mubarak to step down	82
				Mubarak to get killed	8
				Mubarak to be brought to court	20
				Mubarak stealing from the Egyptian people	8
				Mubarak seen as dictator	17
		Whole regime to step down	24		
		Police Violence	43		
		Corruption	13		
		Emergency Law	20		
		Government Actions	63	Killings by the government	12
				Accusing the government of oppressing the protests	45
Government manipulating the media	6				

Table 5. 2 Displaying amount of mentions of the category “Egyptian Government”



Another topic that has received a lot of attention is the topic of human rights. The subcategories to this are: “torture, imprisonment without trial, freedom of speech, freedom of press and human rights in general”. The most frequently mentioned one here is “torture” with 48 mentions followed by the notion of “human rights in general” which have been addressed 32 times. Table 5.3 displays all mentions with regard to this topic as well as an answer to the firstly mentioned sub-research-question of which topics have been referred to most frequently. Although “freedom of press” and “freedom of speech” have only received little attention they form a part of the bigger topic of human rights which legitimates these posts to be subject for further analysis which will be done in part 5.1.2.7 of this paper.

Category	Mentions	Sub-category	Mentions
Human rights	105	Torture	48
		Imprisonment without trial	18
		Freedom of speech	7
		Human rights in general	32

Table 5. 3 Displaying amount of mentions of the category “Human Rights”

The third most frequently mentioned category is “freedom” with being addressed 95 times in total. There are no sub-categories to this category as the posts do all directly refer to freedom. What this entails in detail will be analysed in section 5.1.2.10 of this paper.

Moreover the subject of democracy has been raised several times, in numbers 50 times, in the discourse of the group “We are all Khaled Said”. One subcategory here is “democracy directly mentioned” representing postings that directly refer to democracy like “I never tasted freedom and democracy” (Anonymous 2 2011). Although this posting refers to freedom as well it will be represented in this category because it is possible that postings occur in different categories when they refer to more than one issue. In total the category “direct democracy” could have been identified 24 times whereas “free and fair elections” received 26 mentions. The category of “free and fair elections” has been included as this is an essential aspect of a democratic system.

Another discourse that was going on within the broader discourse is about the protests itself. This is represented by the category “protest” and has been mentioned in 48 posts in total. The subcategories to this code are: “Against the protests, Violent protests, peaceful protests and motivating the people to go on protesting”. These highly differing categories represent the different views that different users have on the ongoing protests. The sub-category “motivating people to go on” can be seen in 21 postings whereas mentions of “peaceful protest” took place 14 times. Blaming the protests to be violent happened four times and the appeal to stop the protests in total could be

seen in nine times. What this discourse is about and what the arguments of the different positions are will be analysed in part 5.1.2.11 of this paper.

The last topic that is going to be part of further analysis is the issue of “justice”. Postings in this category reflect notions of justice like: “FREEDOM AND JUSTICE FOR EGYPT” (Anonymous 3 2011). In total this subject has been raised 30 times with regard to all postings.

The following parts of the paper will in detail analyse what the postings in the different categories are about and how the discourse is shaped.

### **5.1.2 Qualitative analysis “we are all Khaled Said”**

After analysing in how many posts a certain topic has been reflected this part of the paper seeks to find an answer to the following sub-research-questions:

1. What is the underlying meaning of the different topics?
2. Where do ambivalences pop up with regard to how the people perceive the protests?
3. Which aspects of the discourse typify as a discourse on human rights?

This is done by an in-depth analysis of the most important postings in the different categories that have been identified in the first step of the analysis.

#### **5.1.2.1 Discourse on the change of government**

The majority of postings in the category “Mubarak to step down” are solely stating that the Egyptian people want Mubarak to get out of office. Examples postings are: “EGYPT is BETTER without MUBARAK” (Anonymous 4 2011) or “DOWN Mubarak DOWN” (Anonymous 5 2011). Due to the fact that these mentions are directly referring, and mostly only, to the fact that the people want Mubarak to step down there is no deeper interpretation necessary.

Nevertheless one can see differences among the postings that solely state that Mubarak needs to resign. On the one hand people are using harsh language like “MOBARK GO TO HELL” (Anonymous 6 2011) which shows some degree aggressiveness and the potential to become violent when demanding Mubarak to step down in reality. On the other hand there are postings using no aggressive language like “We want him [Mubarak] to leave with dignity as we do not trust him” (Anonymous 1a). This posting mentions as well that the user wants to see Mubarak resign from his position but it is more a friendly demand rather than an aggressive request. This difference in the use of language displays the different feelings people are having when dealing with their situation whereas these feelings influence the way people are acting. Hence one can say that these postings

reflect on the one hand the potential of the protests to become violent and aggressive and on the other hand the more peaceful way of participating in the revolution.

Besides the differences in the use of language there are differences with regard to the content. As already mentioned there are certain postings that only state that the people want Mubarak to resign whereas other postings seem to be aimed at motivating the protesters to go on. An example of such a posting is: "We did not stop when they were shooting at us, we will not stop when we're stronger than ever, no to Mubarak and his entourage to the bitter end!" (Anonymous 7 2011). There can be found more posting which do motivate the people to go on protesting in a similar manner. This shows that people are seeking and giving each other the support they need to unify the people in Egypt to step up against the government in order to have a successful revolution.

Besides the issue of motivating people to go on this posting shows another important aspect of the overall discourse. In general one can state that the prevailing issue is that the people want a change of government because, as already mentioned above it is the topic most of the people are referring to, and it is the topic that always pops up again within the scope of every other bigger topic that is playing a role (this will be outlined in detail in the following parts). But there are differences with regard to whom the people are referring. On the one hand there is always the issue that people want to see Mubarak out of office. On the other hand, as one can see in the lastly stated posting, it is not solely Mubarak who is being referred but the whole regime that has ruled Egypt for over 30 years.

Hence one can see that President Mubarak is often seen as the source of the evil but many people are aware of the fact that it is not one single person that is producing that many problems but a whole government. Therefore it is to question if people are solely referring to Mubarak when blaming him or are referring to the whole government but are aiming their critics at Mubarak due to the fact that he is the most public and representative figure of the whole government.

Besides these postings that are in general referring to Mubarak, 24 postings could have been identified in the category "government" that are demanding the whole regime to step down. Besides this general demand which is often articulated in forms of "Regime change" (Anonymous 1b 2011) or "People. Want. Regime Fall" (Anonymous 8 2011) more specific demands have been identified that make a distinction between the whole government and Mubarak.

out of the 24 postings do not only demand either Mubarak or the regime to step down but refer to both. "[I]t is about this man and his regime go out" (Anonymous 9 2011) is an example for such a posting. Hence the above mentioned hypothesis, that people are referring to the whole regime while only mentioning Mubarak, is to be questioned as a clear distinction is made within other postings. Moreover there are two postings stating that "our demands are not just Mubarak to step down remember we want the whole regime down the whole NDP down[.] Mubarak is just one man after

all” (Anonymous 10 2011). Hence one can say that there is enough evidence to reject the hypothesis that Mubarak is used as a synonym for the whole regime.

With regard to the topic of human rights it is to be noted that no clear mentions of the rights that have been referred to in chapter 3 have been found. Hence one can say that the discussions about the change of government are not directly shaped by the topic of human rights.

### **5.1.2.2 Discourse on Mubarak**

Besides those postings that directly referred to a change of government several postings made statements with regard to Mubarak. Mubarak played a central part within the discourse on facebook. Therefore several categories have been identified that somehow relate to him.

The category “Mubarak to get killed” has been identified 8 times. The mentions in this category are straightforward and in general seem more aggressive than most of the other postings. Reaching from “DEATH TO MUBARAK” (Anonymous 11 2011) and going to “Kill them all, Egypt must do like China, kill any corrupted person starting by Mubarak and his family, ahmed ezz and company, kill them all, and nationalized their companies. WE MUST KILL THEM” (Anonymous 12 2011). The first posting is already using a very clear and direct language to what the user thinks is the best way of going on with the protests. Whereas the second posting is more aggressive and really emphasizing the need to kill the people in charge. Besides this rough language the posting is carrying two other important aspects. Firstly, there is again the difference that the first one is referring solely to Mubarak whereas the other one is referring to the whole regime. This observation will be made several times again during this analysis and hence shows an important aspect of who is to be blamed for the social problems that exist in Egypt.

Secondly, this posting can be regarded as carrying a certain degree of communism which can be derived from two aspects. On the one hand the user refers to the Chinese Revolution, which is seen as a positive example in this scope, when saying that “Egypt must do it like China” (Anonymous 12 2011). On the other hand he is in favour of nationalizing all the companies which is another important aspect of the economy in a communist country. Hence one can say that this posting is special in the sense that it is not only referring to the collapse of the current regime but to the demand of a total system change.

Besides the demands to kill Mubarak 20 postings have been identified that request Mubarak to be punished for what he has done to the Egyptian people. Hence these postings request Mubarak to be brought to court.

Two bigger groups within this discourse have been identified. On the one hand there are people stating that Mubarak needs to be arrested and brought to court. This group represents the general demand, without referring to special crimes or reason why these people want to see him in a trial. An example of such a post is: "NOW TIME TO GET him Arrested & stand on trial, THIS IS OUR DEMAND" (Anonymous 13 2011). Although these people are not clearly stating which crimes Mubarak committed the regular mentioning of this shows that the people participating in this discourse see Mubarak as having committed certain crimes which results in distrust and denegation of the President which is a potential source of a revolution.

On the other hand there is another broader topic within this scope that has been identified where people clearly state that Mubarak has committed crimes against humanity. This is the first time that the issue of Human Rights is playing a role in the sense that certain violations of those rights, as outlined in chapter three of this paper, need to take place in order to accuse somebody of committing crimes against humanity, although the majority of the postings in this category do not mention human rights violations directly. Nevertheless there is one posting that is clearly aiming at human rights violations stating that: "Mubarak now is arresting the human rights activists the united nations should prevent that he is still committing crimes against huminity everyday every moment in Egypt" (Anonymous 14 2011). This user is clearly stating that the human rights violations are playing a major role for him while it has to be stated that it is again only Mubarak that is blamed in this scope for committing these crimes. Differently there is another posting stating: "[...] I am with to sue Mubarak not just him all his regime they committed crimes against humanity they to be punished for what they did" (Anonymous 15 2011). Again one can see that there is an ambivalence among the users who is to be blamed. But this time, this post is clearly aiming at the difference between punishing Mubarak only or the whole regime by saying "not just him" (Anonymous 15 2011) which is another indicator for rejecting the above mentioned hypothesis.

Another thing that could be observed regularly within postings that are referring to Mubarak is that he is taking money from the Egyptian people. In the scope of the revolution it has become public that the Mubarak family's financial assets are estimated at about 40\$ billion. Due to this fact the facebook users are blaming Mubarak for stealing from the Egyptian people. But besides blaming him for stealing from the people it is the huge difference in access to financial assets that has played its part in putting the revolution forward. "Mubarak's family has \$40 billion, billions more by his corrupt businessmen & government officials elite, while 40% of Egyptians live on \$2 dollars a day" (Anonymous 16 2011). Although this posting might not be referring to the exact numbers it clearly outlines the potential of conflict and revolution in Egypt by highlighting the huge differences among the rich and the poor. Although, if counted in numbers, this topic did not receive as much attention

as other topics did it is regarded as having an influence on the revolution. This huge difference in assets people have access to is regarded to produce displeasure among the people especially when it comes to the leaders of a country which is regarded to make a revolution more likely. Therefore, although it is not directly referred to in the above mentioned posting, the differences among the rich and the poor in Egypt did play a role in the discourse and hence is regarded to have influenced the protests.

Moreover this group again contains postings dealing with either Mubarak or the regime whereas it has to be said that the dimension of Mubarak's family has entered the discourse. It will become obvious that Mubarak's family is only mentioned explicitly in this scope which may be due to the fact that they are among the direct beneficiaries of Mubarak's money. But it is not possible to proof this hypothesis. With regard to what people are referring to there is again a more clear distinction among postings that refer to Mubarak only or the regime as it could be observed within the discourse about Mubarak's trial. Hence there is another evidence to neglect the hypothesis that people are in general saying something about the whole regime when saying something about Mubarak.

With regard to the topic of human rights it is similar to what has been found in the discourse on the change of government. There are no postings that directly refer to human rights or human right violations.

Concluding one can state that there is distrust and misunderstanding among the Egyptian facebook users when looking at the discourse about Mubarak. Not a single positive mentioning of him could be found within the timeframe of the protests. Moreover one can see that people are united when looking at the issue of a change of government. Nevertheless there are some discrepancies among the users. On the one hand there is the overall issue of blaming only one person or a whole regime which cannot be clarified in detail at this moment of the analysis. On the other hand there is totally missing a discussion about where Egypt is heading. The discourse is aiming at the need to get Mubarak out of office and making him suffer for what he has done to the Egyptian people but not at what the people want for their future. Due to the fact that the overall issue is the demand of the people to change the government the following discourses, which all aim at certain living circumstances or governmental behaviour, are seen as a discourse about why people want to have a change of government.

### **5.1.2.3 Discourse on government actions**

Within the discourse on facebook in the scope of the Egyptian revolution government actions played an important role as well. In general the following topics have been referred with regard to the

actions of the government: killings by the government, government manipulating the media and government oppressing the protests.

When looking at the discourse on the killings by the government one can distinguish between two groups. Firstly, there are postings relating to killings within the scope of the protests and secondly, there are postings that refer to killings before the protests have started.

When looking at those postings referring to killings outside the scope of the protests it stands out that the users want to see those people that have been killed to be kept in mind. “[W]e must remember all those who died and were tortured before all of this started” (Anonymous 19 2011) is an example for such a posting. Moreover it shows that killings are not the only thing people are connecting to the government when blaming their actions. This case accuses the government not only of killing people but of torturing them as well which can be found in four other postings the like. Besides the issue of torture the issues of injustice, corruption and rigged elections pop up within these postings the like. This fact shows that, although killings are among the most crucial crimes, other topics seem equally important in the discourse on facebook. Hence those governmental killings are as well seen as another motivation for the people to step up against their government and stop them from ruling the country, which seems to be the overall issue of the whole discourse.

With regard to those postings corresponding to killings in the scope of the protests it is important to note that the majority of the postings are mainly aiming at informing other people of what is happening and how the government is reacting to the protests. Nevertheless these postings form a part of the discourse in the sense that it is again the issue of Mubarak that is popping up. “After all these murders, torture & humiliation by Mubarak & his thugs, he still wants to stay president for 8 more months. He has to leave NOW” (Anonymous 20 2011) is a posting representing the general essence of most of the other postings within this category. It is corresponding to Mubarak, and his thugs which is very likely referring to the rest of the government. But besides this posting there are as well other postings that solely relate to Mubarak but not to his government which again shows the main ambivalence in the discourse which is: people are either blaming Mubarak and, or the whole government for their bad living circumstances.

By denouncing these killings one can for the first time observe the dimension of human rights in the broader sense. As outlined in chapter 3 of this paper Art.3 of the UDHR grants everybody the right to life and security of person. Although the postings do not directly mention the UDHR directly or Art.3 one can see that the people are demanding to stop such killings as they want to live in security. Hence without mentioning their right directly people are demanding to stop violations of their rights in the form of denouncing the killings of people by the government.

The category “government manipulating the media” is represented in six postings and is dealing with the accusation to the government of controlling what the media, in this case the Television, is broadcasting. “Egyptian state TV is the biggest lying bastards on earth how to they stomach all these lies” (Anonymous 16 2011) is one posting in this group which shows, by the use of the aggressive language, that there is a certain degree of anger with regard to the information via the television. Besides this harsh posting there are other postings that want to reveal in which way the government is manipulating the media. An example for such a posting is: “The girl who went on National TV and claimed that all leaders of protesters were trained in USA, Israel & Qatar has admitted that she fabricated the whole thing.”(Anonymous 1e 2011). This posting is referring to a girl who said on national TV that she has the information that the protests in Egypt were made up by foreign countries. By attaching an Al-Jazeera article to this posting the user wants to enhance the reliability of this posting. Although it cannot be clarified if these postings tell the truth they reveal the demand of the people to have a state independent media that is providing the people with uncensored information. Again this is seen as another proof that the people do not just want another person as a President but what to see substantial changes on how politics are made in Egypt.

The last category that received a lot of attention with respect to the government actions is the issue of how the government reacted to the protests. Similarly to the postings in the category “killings by the government”, that are referring to killings in the scope of the protests, nearly all postings are aimed at informing the people of how the government is reacting to the protests. The majority of the postings in this category are dealing with accusing the government of paying people to attack the protesters. These paid people are regularly named “thugs”. “Welcome to Mubarak’s transition period: Moments after Mubarak finished his speech. Hundreds of government thugs carrying knives & weapons are attacking protesters in Cairo, Alexandria and Portsaid so far” (Anonymous 22 2011) is an example posting from this category that matches with most of the other postings. The language people use is not as harsh as in other categories although one can again find a few postings that use harsh language and hence display the frustration people need to deal with when participating in the protests.

Keeping this in mind, and taking into account that the majority of people want to protest peacefully (this will be further discussed in part 5.1.2.11), one can again see a human right violation that is denounced by the people. Art. 20 grants everybody the right to peaceful assembly. But by oppressing and reacting to demonstrations in such a way the government is somehow denying this right to their people. Hence, simply by referring to it so regularly, one can observe the demand of the people to be able to protests which can be interpreted as the demand for the respect of another human right to be respected.



#### **5.1.2.4 Discourse on Corruption**

Besides the already named issues corruption played a role in the discourse as well. In general one can state that people are blaming the government for being corrupt which has an effect on the above mentioned difference between the rich and the poor in Egypt in the sense that it is contributing to increasing the gap between these two groups. Moreover this fact seems to contribute to the overall demand to the government to step down as there is not a single post that is solely referring to corruption but to other things like torture and the emergency law as well. Hence this category rather forms arguments or motivations for the people to ask the government to resign from their positions rather than forming a discourse that can be seen on its own.

Moreover it is again the case that people are either referring to the whole regime by saying “the only thing I knew Mubarak’s regime with is Corruption, torture, Dictatorship [...]” (Anonymous 17 2011) or solely to Mubarak (see Anonymous 1c 2011). What becomes obvious from these two example postings, and is represented in other postings as well, is the fact that people are not solely blaming Mubarak for being corrupt but seeing him as the main engine behind the corrupt system people want to end. Hence there is again the emphasis on Mubarak rather than on the whole regime.

With regard to human rights it is to be stated that no special attention has been given to topics that relate to them or their violations. Hence the discourse on corruption seems not to aim at human rights either directly or indirectly.

Additionally it seems as if corruption is playing only a minor part in the people’s motivation to protests against the regime because it is not mentioned solely in one post but every time goes in line with other demands.

#### **5.1.2.5 Discourse on Emergency law**

Besides the issue of corruption the 30year lasting emergency law that has been in charge in Egypt could have been observed as being an issue in the scope of the discourse on facebook. In total 20 posts could have been identified that are referring to this topic.

Within this discourse two major groups can be identified. Firstly, there are the postings relating to the effects of the emergency law and secondly there are the postings demanding the end of the emergency law.

When speaking about the effects of the emergency law one can see a relation to human rights violations again which is due to the fact what people are blaming when talking about it. There are

postings referring to (systematic) torture (see Anonymous 18 2011) and the imprisonment of people without trial (see Anonymous 1d 2011) which are seen as violations of human rights as such actions are prohibited according to Art. 5 and Art. 6 of the declaration of Human Rights. Hence, although these postings do not directly mention human rights violations as their concern, they are seen to refer to human rights violations as the blamed actions satisfy as such.

Besides the issue of the effects of the emergency law people are demanding the end of it. Similarly to the topic of corruption there are only two postings that solely demand the end of the emergency law and are not demanding other things as well. Hence the demand of the end of the emergency law is seen more as an argument to overthrow the government rather than a central concern of the protesters.

This is supported by the fact that there are again four postings that directly refer to Mubarak as well while denouncing the effects of the emergency law. Moreover it is solely Mubarak that is referred to at this point which shows that the people are linking the emergency law directly to him as a single person rather than to a whole governmental system.

Thus one can see that human rights violations do play a role in the discourse at several stages whereas it is to be said that the dominating topic is the demand of a change of government.

#### **5.1.2.6 Discourse on Police Violence**

The discourse on police violence has been incorporated into the overall discourse on the government as the police is seen as acting in the name of the government. Similarly as in the other discourses one can further group the postings within this category in two different groups which are: police violence within the protests and police violence out of the scope of the protests.

The firstly mentioned group represents far more posts than the other group and is again shaped by the information character. Users want to make public that the police is attacking the protesters with tear gas, live ammunition and water cannons (see Anonymous 23 2011 & Anonymous 24 2011). In general the discourse on such actions is shaped by people that are complaining about how aggressive and violent the police is reacting to their protests.

Moreover one can again observe that the users are blaming Mubarak and the regime for the actions of the government. "30 years of killings, torture and abuse by the Egyptian police under direct orders from Mubarak the dictator and the dictatorship to protest his regime" (Anonymous 25 2011). This example posting shows different things. Firstly, the actions of the police are directly related to Mubarak and his regime. But by clearly saying that it is Mubarak, the dictator, and his regime it becomes obvious that the user is blaming Mubarak in the first place for what is happening in Egypt

although he is aware of the fact that not a single person is to be blamed for everything. Besides this posting that is referring to Mubarak and his regime some others postings have been identified that on the one hand blame the police for their brutality and on the other hand say that they are acting under Mubarak's command (without mentioning the rest of the regime). Hence one can see again that all issue relate to Mubarak and, or the government whereas some users solely blame Mubarak for what is happening while others do criticize the whole regime which is led by Mubarak.

In addition these postings that all relate to police actions during the protests a few postings have been identified that refer to occurrences that took place before the protests have started. Within this group two different topics can be identified. Firstly, torture is playing a role and secondly, imprisonment without trial.

Torture is in general an issue in the scope of the discourse which is represented in the category human rights due to the fact that the declaration of human rights is prohibiting the use of torture as outlined in chapter 3 of this paper. Nevertheless these postings are represented in this category as well as the police is directly blamed for torturing people. Due to the fact that more postings about torture are represented in the human rights category their underlying meaning will be analysed in part 5.3.7 of this paper.

Besides the issue of torture another human rights related issue comes up in the discourse about the police. Imprisonment without trial is prohibited by Art. 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Due to the fact that this issue is playing a bigger role in the scope of the discourse on human rights they will be in detail analysed in part 5.1.2.7 Nevertheless one can see that by blaming the police while directly referring to human rights issue the people are demanding their human rights to be respected and protected by the police. Moreover it shows that the people are blaming the political system and their acts (in this case in form of the police) for the disrespect of their rights.

After analysing all government related issues one can conclude that the overall and prevailing issue is who is to be blamed for the living circumstances, the social problems, the disrespect of human rights and the misbehaviour of the police. The main difference here is that some postings are blaming solely Mubarak while others blame Mubarak and the rest of the people in charge.

Besides the issue of who is to be blamed in the first place all other issues somehow relate to the overall demand. They relate to Mubarak and the government in the way that everything that is talked about is seen as being initiated or influenced by the state and hence makes the people feel oppressed by their government.

### 5.1.2.7 Discourse on Human Rights

The discourse that is going on about human rights contains several categories. Besides the issue of torture postings have been identified that refer to imprisonment without a trial, freedom of speech freedom of expression and human rights issues in general.

The issue that received most attention is the issue of torture. In total 48 postings have been identified dealing with this topic which is entitled to the discourse about human rights as Art.5 of the UDHR is prohibiting such actions as outlined in chapter 2 . A few postings within this category solely correspond to the demand of ending torture by saying: "No more TORTURE" (Anonymous 1e 2011). These postings have the specialty that they deal only with the demand of ending torture which shows that this is a major concern within the discourse. Other demands, as already said above, have mostly been put forward while referring to several topics but the fact that we can see the single demand of ending torture in several postings shows the emphasize on this topic. Nevertheless there are as well postings that do not solely deal with torture but with torture and other topics. These postings refer to torture and the emergency law, corruption, faked elections, poverty and injustice (see Anonymous 26 2011 & Anonymous 27 2011).

When looking at the aspect of injustice in this scope it is important to note that the feeling of injustice is related to human rights as well. The idea of human rights contains that these rights apply to everyone and hence try to treat every human being with justice. Therefore when demanding the end of torture or other human rights while demanding justice shows that the discourse is stressing the need that these rights apply to everyone without limitations. This hypothesis is support by another posting in the category torture which says: "Even if you are right and it was actually Mubarak thugs who were being tortured by electrocution, this is not acceptable. NO ONE should be tortured even if they were killers. I know for a fact that Mubarak thugs killed many of the peaceful protesters, but still I would not accept them being tortured but taken to a fair trial." (Anonymous 28 2011). This posting shows that the idea that human rights apply to everyone is supported in the scope of the discourse on facebook.

Besides these mentions several posting within the category torture refer to Mubarak and the regime as well. This fact shows that the discourse is blaming the government as being responsible for all the things people criticize and hence is regarded as the most important aspect of the discourse.

Besides the issue of torture human rights in general play a role in the discourse that is going on. Within this category several issues can be identified. In the first instance people are demanding their rights to be respected while directly referring to the issue of human rights. The most outstanding posting in this scope says that: "30 years running emergency law in Egypt allowed the president and the ruling "National (Un)Democratic Party" to prevent Egyptians from standing up peacefully for their

basic human rights.” (Anonymous 29 2011). This posting reflects on the one hand all the other postings in the sense that people are demanding their basic human rights to be respected. On the other hand it shows that the user is blaming the emergency law for making it possible that human rights violations have been taken place in Egypt. It is one of the rare postings that is not directly blaming Mubarak or the regime for the living circumstances but the emergency law which has been hold up by the government. Moreover this posting reveals another demand and accusation. By entitling the “National Democratic Party” as the undemocratic party he shows that on the one hand he does not regard the party in charge as a democratic party for reasons that cannot be derived from this posting. But on the other hand he is demanding democracy and the respect of basic human rights for Egyptians in the sense that he is criticizing the non-existence of democracy.

Besides demanding the respect for human rights 8 postings have been identified that denunciate human right violations in Egypt. Besides concrete mentions of for example “10 thousand imprisoned without charge in jails” (Anonymous 30 2011) some other postings do relate to human rights in general e.g. by saying: “that there is no human rights in Egypt” (Anonymous 31 2011). This denunciations show that people want to see their rights respected. But who is to be entailed to these rights and where are the restrictions?

These questions can be answered by looking at the other postings of this category. Similarly to the example posting from the category of torture which already shows that the respect of human rights needs to apply for everybody several other postings can be found that support this demand. “Security, justice, equal rights, transparency in telling facts, our minds respects are common rights to every human “(Anonymous 32 2011) is one example displaying the demand that rights need to apply to everybody on the one hand but on the other hand that the demand for the respect of human rights is not the sole demand people in Egypt have. Besides this posting there are three other postings that claim the respect for human rights for everyone as well while highlighting the need that these rights need to apply to women as well. The most important of these postings is demanding several things. Besides the claim for freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and the right to strike he is demanding “Equal Rights for women” (Anonymous 33 2011) while demanding the Mubarak regime to step down. Although none of these postings refers to the rights of homosexuals or the freedom to choose one’s own religion the postings within this category show a high degree of solidarity and the need for general rights that apply to everybody. Moreover one can again observe that Mubarak and the regime are being blamed for the disrespect of human rights although it is more a focus on the regime in this scope rather than on Mubarak.

Imprisonment without trial is another human right violation according to the UDHR that is claimed by the users on facebook. With regard to this group of postings it is to say that the majority of the

postings refer to imprisonments within the scope of the protests. These postings are characterized by informing others by stating things like: “240 protesters have been arrested last night are jammed in AlSalam Military Prison” (Anonymous 34 2011). Like this posting most of the others that classify for this group are neutral in their tone and mainly aiming at informing others. Nevertheless due to the fact that people want to inform other Egyptians and the rest of the world one can see that they are interested in making aware of such human rights violations that take place in Egypt. Hence this issue is important to them and they want to set an end to it.

Besides these postings there are three other postings that deal with the topic of imprisonments without trial outside the scope of the protests. “We have been living in this nightmare for 30 years under emergency law with many of us born into Mubarak’s dictatorship & never saw any president other than him ruling Egypt. Being thrown into jail for 4 or 5 years without a trial destroys your life & many of your family members lives “(Anonymous 35 2011). This posting represents the essence of the other three postings as well. Mubarak is being blamed for making such human rights violations possible while the people are trying to express what such violations of basic rights bring to you. In this case the author refers to the fact that these violations do not only effect the person in question but the family as well which destabilizes the overall solidarity among society and may lead to helplessness to change things or the potential to rise up against a system making things like this possible.

Another issue in the scope of the discourse on human rights is the issue of freedom of speech which has been mentioned 9 times. People directly refer to it by for example demanding the “freedom of speech & Democracy for all” (Anonymous 27b 2011). This posting shows, like four others in this category, that people do not only want freedom of speech but directly connect this concern to democracy showing that people demand to have a word in the political debate. Moreover this posting reveals that people do not feel like they have been living in a democratic system although the government claimed to have a democratic character.

The other postings in this category are characterized by denouncing the disrespect of freedom of speech in Egypt. Besides other things one user refers to “clamp down on freedoms, clamp down on freedom of speech and injustice” (Anonymous 36 2011). Again one can see the denunciation of existing injustice in Egypt which can be seen as a demand for justice as well. As already said above justice in this sense may imply that the people want these rights to be equitably respected which may entail that they apply to everybody.

The last category that accounts to the topic of human rights is freedom of expression. This topic has only been mentioned twice but due to the fact that both postings use the language of human rights

by referring to the term “freedom of expression” it is expected that these people directly refer to the human rights as outlined by the United Nations.

When looking at the overall discourse about human rights several things become obvious. Firstly, there is again the issue that Mubarak and or his regime are seen to be responsible for human right violations in Egypt and hence are blamed for this. Secondly, it is interesting to note that by using terms like “equal rights” (Anonymous 32 2011) and “everyone shall be included” (Anonymous 37 2011) while referring to justice it seems as if people want these rights to apply for everybody. This, and the fact that people are using the language of the United Nations, is an indication that the Egyptian users on facebook want human rights according to the UDHR to be respected in their country although the public debate in Egypt (as outlined in chapter 3.2) blamed these rights to have an imperialistic character on Egypt.

#### **5.1.2.8 Discourse on Justice**

The issue of justice already played a role in the discourse on human rights but received even more attention in the overall discourse. When looking at this discourse it is peculiar that 16 out of the overall 30 postings refer to justice and freedom. The majority of these postings are using the words freedom and justice as their demand by stating things like: “very distressing video showing Mubarak thugs yesterday attacking peaceful protesters who call for freedom & justice” (Anonymous 1g 2011) without indicating in detail what these two terms mean. Due to the fact that the issue of freedom is in general playing a role in the discourse a deeper analysis will be coming up in part 5.3.9 of this paper.

With regard to the mentions of justice in this scope it is worth mentioning that there is not a single post that solely refers to justice. This fact shows that people are on the one hand connecting this demand to other demands and on the other hand that it is not the major concern. Besides these other demands which are: the respect for human rights, the end of the emergency law and the end of torture and the issue of Mubarak played a role as well. A posting that is referring to all of these things sums up well what the other postings in this category represent: “30years of Mubarak’s dictatorship running the country under emergency law. We were tortured, humiliated & lived in injustice & poverty for 30 years despite our enormous resources. Nothing justifies the continuation of this dictator.”(Anonymous 38 2011).

This posting reveals several things with regard to the deeper meaning of justice within this discourse. By referring to Mubarak and the emergency law the author is giving reasons for the denunciations he is making. He blames Mubarak and his use of the emergency during the last 30 years as being

responsible for torturing, humiliation, injustice and poverty. Moreover one can see by the use of justice in relation to the other terms that the user is feeling oppressed by his government. This oppression seems to come from the government actions, in this case the torturing, which leads to feelings such as humiliation.

Moreover the idea of justice is playing an important role with regard to human rights in the sense that the preamble states justice as an essential aspect and necessity of every system that is respecting human rights. Hence, by demanding justice for the Egyptian people the people are again referring to an important aspect of human rights when formulating their demands.

#### **5.1.2.9 Discourse on Democracy**

The discourse on democracy is shaped by the general topic of democracy and the demand of free and fair elections which has been included in this topic as free and fair elections are a central part of a democratic system.

Besides other topics that played a role in the overall discourse this issue is very straightforward and clear. When looking at postings that refer to democracy in general the essence of all postings is that people demand democracy for Egypt. "Mubarak's regime are obviously standing firm against change to freedom and democracy" (Anonymous 43 2011). When looking at this posting in more detail one can see that it is again referring to Mubarak and his regime who are seen to be denying the Egyptians their demand to live in a democratic system. As already mentioned above it shows that although the Egyptian government officially stated that a democratic system is in charge the people do not experience it as such. Moreover it shows that the people want to have a word in the political debate in Egypt.

Hence one can see that people are stressing their demand for Egypt to become a truly democratic country as they want to have their voice in politics. In a way this demand is referring to human rights as well. Art. 21 of the UDHR outlines that everybody can participate in politics either directly or indirectly which is the essence of democratic system. But, due to the fact that the people are demanding a democratic system, such a system is not in charge in Egypt as the people cannot influence their representatives. Therefore this discussion shows an aspect of human rights issues.

When looking at the topic of elections two major groups of posting can be distinguished. On the one hand there are postings that blame the government for rigging elections in the past and on the other hand postings that are demanding free and fair elections for the future.

When looking at the postings that denounce rigged elections in the past the issue of Mubarak is playing a central role. The main claim in this scope is to "dissolve the current fake parliament"



(Anonymous 2011) indicating that the users do not see the people in charge as being elected by the people and hence have no legitimacy to rule the country. This fact makes the people classify Mubarak as “a dictator [who] wasn’t elected” (Anonymous 20a 2011). This again shows the demand of the people to have a word in politics on the one hand and on the other hand that they feel betrayed by the government due to the fact that they have gone to the polls but had no real influence on the outcome of the elections. The conclusion from this fact is similar to the other discourses that have taken place: “The parliament that came via rigged elections must be resolved” (Anonymous 45 2011).

With regard to the postings that demand free and fair elections for the future a similar observation can be made. “Remove all your damn puppets in the Cabinet and WE will elect all of you” (Anonymous 46 2011). This posting shows that the main concern of the people is to really have a government that is supporting and working for the Egyptian people.

In general one can say that there is no underlying meaning with regard to the discourse about democracy as the postings of the users are straightforward and all aim at the same direction: they do not regard the current regime as a legitimate government but want to have a voice when electing their president. Again this aspect shows that all aspects of the discourse on democracy relate to human rights violations or the demand for respect for human rights according to Art.21 UDHR. Hence one can say that although the discussions on facebook do not directly refer to the UDHR several aspects of this declaration play a major role during the discourses.

#### **5.1.2.10 Discourse on freedom**

The term freedom is a frequently used term in the scope of the discourse on facebook. What is special with regard to this term is that it may have a lot of meanings. Moreover a specialty in this discourse is that nearly all postings in this category either say “We want freedom” (Anonymous 39 2011) or just “Freedom” (Anonymous 40 2011) which increases the difficulty of understanding the deeper meaning. Besides these postings there are several postings that demand freedom too but other things like: human rights, justice, the end of torturing and democracy.

Although these demands do not reveal what the term freedom in this case refers to one need to see it in the light of the broader discourse. When looking at all the other issues that popped during the discourse the regime and Mubarak always played a central role. The main demand here was to get rid of Mubarak, although one can observe ambivalence between blaming Mubarak or the whole regime. Nevertheless the people seem to be unified when demanding a change of government.

Hence one could assume that freedom articulates the demand of the people for this change. This hypothesis is supported by several indications.

Firstly, there are several postings in the category freedom that state “fight for freedom” (Anonymous 40 2011) or in another way articulate the need to fight for freedom. This fact shows that the protests (the fight) is for the cause of freedom and due to the analysis of the other discourses it has become obvious that the overall aim of the people is to get rid of their government.

Secondly, there are 8 postings in this category that have come online immediately after Mubarak declared his resign that all state the same thing in a different way. The most concrete one in this scope is: “FINALLY FREEDOM” (Anonymous 41 2011). Similarly to the postings stating the need to fight for freedom these postings show that people feel as if they achieved the freedom they were looking for by getting rid of Mubarak.

Thirdly, there is one posting which is very short but having a central influence to the use of the word freedom. “The freedom movement must continue” (Anonymous 42 2011) is stated by one user which shows again that the cause of the protests (the movement) is freedom and hence, based on the rest of the analysis, represents the demand to get rid of the current regime.

Due to these indications one can say that the term freedom within this discourse is in general referring to the demand of the people to get rid of the government. But what does this mean for the dimension of human rights?

The preamble of the UDHR states freedom as being as important as justice for human rights to be respected. This can be interpreted as the necessity for the inhabitants of a country not to feel oppressed by their government which is the case in Egypt. Hence by putting the freedom of Mubarak as the highest aim one can say that the people in Egypt demand the freedom that is referred to in the preamble of the UDHR.

#### **5.1.2.11 Discourse on Protests**

With regard to the discourse on the protests itself four groups are prevailing. These groups are: stopping the protest, motivating people to go on, protests to be peaceful and protests to become violent. As it already can be seen by these groups there are two pairs stating contradictory meanings.

To start with the analysis of those postings that demand the protests to stop and those postings that demand the people to go on protesting the first thing to say is that only 9 postings refer to stopping the protests whereas 21 postings motivate the people to go on. In the category of stopping the protests an important example is the following: “the demonstrations should be stop!!! Enough

enough!! So many Egyptians are dying. Egypt is under fire. Stop destroying our country. Now people have guns. There s no security more in Egypt” (Anonymous 47 2011). As one can see from this posting the user is begging the people to stop the protests but not because he wants the regime to stay in power but because he is afraid of the damage that may be dealt to the whole of Egypt. Moreover it shows the fear the people have of their government. This assumption is supported by another posting that classify for this category which states: “we can stop the protesting for only one day! They will kill the protesters one after another!! We have to prevent more deaths” (Anonymous 48 2011). Similarly to the firstly stated posting this user is afraid that the government will become even more violent against the protesters which is seen as another sign for the distrust of the people to the government.

The essence of the other postings in this category is very similar to those two that have been stated but there is one posting which is heading to another direction:”Do you know what will happen if you didn’t stop now? do you think that Mubarak is really ready not fulfil what he promised? Do you know any road way exit for the current situation? Do you know any practical proposal if Mubarak left immediately? ... start the countdown for the civil war” (Anonymous 49 2011). Besides the other postings that demanded the people to stop protesting because of the fear of heavy violence this user is emphasizing the non-existence of a plan what comes after Mubarak has left. Moreover he is strengthening the risk of a civil war which might lead to more severe living circumstances compared to those under Mubarak. Nevertheless the user seems not to be in favour of Mubarak which shows that although these people want to see an end of the protests they are not asking for Mubarak to stay in office.

When looking at the postings that aim at motivating the people to go on another point of view comes up. In general it is to say that all postings have a similar character whereas one is outstanding among the others: “We once had a dream of free country. A country we own since Jan 25 this dream step by step is becoming true yeah many have died many have fallen but now we are so close we are that close viva liberty” (Anonymous 50 2011). This posting shows that the user is aware of the fact that the demonstrations are dangerous but nevertheless he is demanding everybody to go on. By using the introduction Martin Luther King once used in his famous speech he further shows that this risk needs to be taken similarly to the movement of the black people that took that risk during their movement in the USA. Another user goes a step further by giving “a tribute to every freedom martyr that has fallen to prove that there is still goodness in this country to prove that tomorrow will be better” (Anonymous 20b 2011). By praising the people that died during the protests as martyrs he indicates that he is in the point of view that their deaths are worth the price for a free Egypt. But this

is not the single post that is referring to the dead people as martyrs. It can be observed in four other postings as well.

Hence one can see a clear difference in how people see the protests. On the one hand there is a group of people that are afraid of more killings from the government side and on the other hand there is a group of people that are willing to pay that price. But what is important to note is that both groups, although they have contradictory opinions, stand together in their demand for a change of government.

When looking at the other two groups within this category another ambivalence pops up. Certain postings have been identified that are again showing the potential for the protests to become violent. A very clear statement in this regard which is similar to the other ones is the following: “if there is no violence against the regime he will not feel any threat and he will continue to stay. Throughout history blood has always been the price for freedom” (Anonymous 51 2011). It shows that the people are willing on the one hand to kill and on the other hand to die for their sake.

Differently to these postings there are 14 postings that refer to the need for the protests to stay peacefully. “Freedom & Justice via peaceful means” (Anonymous 52 2011) is the most direct one in this regard whereas other users emphasize the fact that they like to see the protests staying peaceful but say that: “I pray for peaceful change indeed while deep inside me I know it won't be peaceful at all a regime like mubarak's spent 30 years to be built will never fall by peace” (Anonymous 53 2011). This posting shows, similarly to the postings in the category “protests to become violent”, that there is the potential that the Egyptian people fight violently for their sake. These two postings reflect the general discourse that is going on about the peaceful means of the protests as they highlight the contradiction that many people want a peaceful change while being aware of the potential for the protests to become violent.

Within the whole discourse on the protests human rights issues have not been observed either directly or indirectly.

Concluding one can say that simply by the number of postings within the group of peaceful protest that clearly exceeds the amount of postings of the group for the protests to become violent that the majority of the Egyptian facebook users favour a change via peaceful means. Nevertheless there has been a clear potential for violence which could not only have been observed within this category but within other categories as well.

## 5.2 “Egypt Revolution”

### 5.2.1 “Egypt Revolution” - Quantitative Analysis

After analysing and further cutting down the amount of postings with regard to the group “We are all Khaled Said” this part will quantify and code the postings of the group “Egypt Revolution”. In the first place it is to note that the group “Egypt revolution” is different to the other group. This is due to the fact that it has been established on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2011 while the protests have already been taken place. This has several effects. On the one hand the amount of postings is fewer compared to the group “We are all Khaled Said”. On the other hand it may attract people easier by including the words “Revolution” and “Egypt” in the group name. Therefore, although the postings are fewer, the group is regarded as relevant. Moreover it contributes to the heterogeneity of the units of analysis as it has different characteristics than the other group.

In total 49 postings are regarded as relevant for the analysis. Due to the fact that this is a small amount it is not necessary to exclude topics that have not been mentioned as frequently as others. Nevertheless one should take a look at the topics that have been addressed by the users in order to be able to compare this outcome to the outcome of the other group.

The following categories have been identified during the analysis: “Mubarak, freedom, religion, patriotism, rights, democracy, protest, corruption, Egyptian government, economic prosperity and constitutional changes.

Category	Mentions
Mubarak	20
Freedom	18
Religion	7
Protest	5
Patriotism	4
Rights	3
Democracy	3
Egyptian Government	3
Corruption	2

Table 5. 4 Displaying categories and amount of mentions

Table 5.4 gives an overview of these topics and displays the amount of mentions. The code “Mubarak” has been assigned to 20 different postings and hence is the issue that has been referred to most frequently in the group “Egypt revolution”. Postings that are included correspond to different things with regard to Mubarak like: “step down Mubarak” (Anonymous 54 2011) or “he kills people for himself” (Anonymous 55 2011). Nevertheless all posts directly mention Mubarak or his actions.

The second most frequently referred topic is “freedom”. It is represented in 18 postings and relates to direct mentions of freedom. Besides these two broader topics the issue of “religion” has been raised 7 times. This code includes postings that contain naming of God or other topics that are inevitably related to religion like Christianity or Islam.

“Patriotism” has received attention in four postings in the sense that users said that they are “very proud of my country” (Anonymous 56 2011) or “put Egypt first” (Anonymous 57 2011). The protests itself have been mentioned in five postings whereas this category includes postings that encourage people to go on protesting as well as postings that demand people to stop protesting. Which underlying reasoning and meanings this includes will be analysed in part 5.4 of this paper.

Direct mentions of “democracy” could be identified three times while it is important to note that this category includes a posting that is referring to free and fair elections. The category “Rights” is represented in three posts as well but it is not clear which rights the people are referring to and hence will be clarified in further analysis in part 5.4.

The category “Egyptian government” is assigned to postings that refer to government actions or government critics and has been identified in three different postings. “Corruption” is closely linked to this category and has been identified in two postings in total. In the following a deeper, qualitative analysis of all relevant postings will be done in order to frame the whole discourse.

### **5.2.2 “Egypt Revolution” - Qualitative Analysis**

This part of the paper will analyse the postings of the group “Egypt Revolution”. In general it is to state that the issue that received the most attention is the same as in the other group: Mubarak. But what is different to the other group is the fact that only one posting is referring to the regime whereas the other 20 postings of this category solely refer to Mubarak.

The general demand of postings that deal with Mubarak is that he needs to step down. Besides this general demand that is reflected in all postings one can see differences with regard to the use of language. Some postings do use very harsh language by saying “fuck you Mubarak” (Anonymous 58 2011) whereas others seem more cooperative by stating: “Mubarak please step down for freedom sake. Please for the good of your people” (Anonymous 59 2011). Although the people are unified in their demand that Mubarak needs to step down the different use of language shows that some people tend to be more aggressive. This is represented in the use of language as it is expected that somebody who uses violent language is more likely to use force in his doings.

Another aspect that can be derived from the secondly mentioned posting is that the user is equalizing the resignation of Mubarak with gaining freedom by saying that Mubarak needs to step down for the freedom sake.

Additionally to this posting there are 17 other postings that in a way refer to freedom. Similarly to the postings in the group “We are all Khaled Said” the word freedom is used frequently and mentioned as something worth fighting for. A posting representing this is: “the Egyptian people chant, “Freedom is in our hands” Egyptians: never give up, for freedom begins internally.” (Anonymous 60 2011). In addition to this posting other postings demand freedom for Egypt by saying: “Freedom to Egypt and bright future” (Anonymous 61 2011). It is hard to say what the term freedom in this scope refers to but as already mentioned the most important issue is that the people want to see Mubarak resign. Moreover there are three postings that similarly as the firstly mentioned posting equalize the resignation of Mubarak with freedom. Hence freedom is seen to refer to the demand of the people to free themselves from Mubarak. This assumption is supported by another posting that has been made after the resignation of Mubarak which says: “Today is the First day of Freedom in Egypt” (Anonymous 62 2011).

Akin to the use of freedom within the discourse of the group “we are all khaled said”, freedom in this scope refers to human rights as well. As mentioned in the preamble of the UDHR freedom is regarded as a goal for which the respect of human rights is composing a basis.

Besides this issue of Mubarak three other postings have been identified that criticize the whole government rather than only Mubarak while referring to “Poverty – Oppression – Autocracy – Persecution – Dictatorship – Forgery of elections – Ignorance . Isolation from the World – Corruption – Mix between money and power” (Anonymous 62 2011). This posting reflects the content of the other postings as well but what is remarkable that although all these postings pose a lot of critics on the regime they do not directly refer to the need of a change of government.

Other issues that have played a role within the discourse of this group are corruption, human rights, democracy, religion and patriotism. With regard to corruption one can observe that people demand an end of corruption by saying: “Many thanks for all countries which supported us to get rid of corruption” (Anonymous 63 2011). This posting reflects again a more moderate way to express this demand whereas other users are using a harsher language by saying: “Fuck the money and corruption” (Anonymous 64 2011). Again one can see a difference in the use of language displaying different attitudes towards this topic in the sense that the secondly mentioned posting is more aggressive in its tone.

Differently to the discourse in the facebook group “We are all Khaled Said” mentions of patriotism have been observed. By saying “put Egypt first” (Anonymous 57 2011) or “Egypt for the Egyptians”

(Anonymous 65 2011) it becomes obvious that these users demand to regard the development of the country Egypt as the most important thing. Moreover the second posting, whose content has been identified in three other postings, shows that these users do not want other nation states to get involved in the Egyptian uprising by saying that Egypt should be there for Egyptians only (see Anonymous 65 2011).

When looking at the discourse on human rights a similar observation can be made as it has been made in the discourse of the other facebook group. “[I]t’s time to fight for the rights everyone have” and “WE WILL NOT BE SILENCED; WETHER YOU’RE CHRISTIAN; WHETHER YOU ARE MUSLIM; WHETER YOU’RE AN ATHEIST; YOU WILL DEMAND YOUR GODDAMN RIGHTS; AND WE WILL HAVE OUR RIGHTS; ONE WAY OR THE OTHER! WE WILL NOT BE SILENCED” (Anonymous 66 2011). Both postings reflect that the rights those users demand should apply to everyone whereas the second posting contains two specialties. Firstly, by saying that for achieving their demands they will use “one way or the other” (Anonymous 66 2011) he shows that he is willing to use violence when putting forward their demands. Secondly, by clearly including the biggest religious groups (Muslims and Christians) as well as Atheists he shows that the issue of religion is subordinated to the issue of equal rights. Moreover it can be seen as demanding the right to the freely choose once own religion according to Art. 18 UDHR.

As the mentioned postings show religion played a role in the discourse as well. In total 7 postings have been identified that somehow refer to religious things whereas the already mentioned one is eye-catching. The other postings are rather referring to god in general than to the question of different confessions. By stating things like “The voice of the majority is the voice of God” (Anonymous 67 2011) or “god bless Egypt” (Anonymous 58 2011) it becomes clear that the other posting are rather demanding the support of God than doing a proposition about the different confessions. Hence one can say that the essence of the mentions of God are aiming at demanding his help for the cause. Nevertheless there is this one posting which shows that the different confession are unified when it comes to the issue of Mubarak.

Moreover the postings that equalizes the opinion of the majority with the opinion of God display a certain degree of democracy as it seems as if they see the opinion of the majority as important which is an integral aspect of every democratic system. Besides this posting three other postings have been identified that more directly refer to democracy. Two of them are characterized by demanding freedom and democracy by saying: “For freedom, for democracy...”(Anonymous 68 2011). This posting shows that by demanding democracy, although officially Egypt has been a democratic system, the people do not feel as if they were living in a democratic country as they are demanding



it. Here again one can see the relation to human rights as the people are demanding their word in politics which is granted to the by Art. 21 of the UDHR.

The last issue that received attention is the topic of the protests itself. Here can observe three postings that aim at motivating the protesters to go on by saying: “Long live revolution” (Anonymous 69 2011) or “Power to the people of Egypt” (Anonymous 70 2011). But there are two other postings which are of a different character. One is demanding the protest to become violent by saying: “why do they [the protesters] not go to the Mubarak Place and get him down by their own hand” (Anonymous 71 2011) which shows that this user sees the need to kill Mubarak in order to have a successful revolution. The last posting of this category is demanding the opposite by saying: “Please everyone, stop this protesting thing. If we carry on, Egypt will go down. ... Egyptians are being killed one by one” (Anonymous 71 2011). This posting shows that the user is demanding to stop the protests because he is afraid of more killings from the government side. Similarly to the postings within the group “We are all Khaled Said” these postings demand the end of the protests not due to the fact that they want Mubarak to stay in office but as they are afraid of more violence from the government side.

Concluding one can say that the majority of the essences from the different discourses do cover each other with regard to democracy, human rights and the demand for Mubarak to step down whereas the main difference is that the discourse in the group “Egypt Revolution” is not differentiating among Mubarak and the regime while this is an important issue in the discourse within the group “We are all Khaled Said”.

This in depth analysis of the different discourses shows that the underlying meanings and essences of the discourses do have several similarities in their demands with regard to human rights, democracy, justice and overall the need for the government to step down. After this analysis the following part will sum up what has been found out in order to give an answer to the overall research question.

## **6. Conclusion**

When looking at the overall discourse that has taken place on facebook in the scope of the Egyptian revolution it becomes obvious that, with regard to both analysed groups, the overall issue is to get Mubarak out of office.

But why do the people demand this? When looking at the other topics that played a role within the discourse on facebook one can say that these issues form the critics of the people to the government. Hence, they can be regarded as the people’s motivation to participate in the protests

which is supported by the hypothesis that the use of social networking on the internet influences civic participation and political activism. The following topics played a role within this scope: corruption, emergency law, governmental killings, the Egyptian government in the scope of the protests, torture, police violence, human rights, democracy, religion, elections, justice and freedom.

When looking closer at the discourse on corruption the underlying essence seems to be the issue of rich versus poor. The Egyptian society is characterised by a huge gap between rich and poor people which is represented by the issue of corruption in this discourse as corruption is regarded to enhance the difference between rich and poor people.

The discourse on the existing emergency law in Egypt is shaped on the one hand by the effects of the emergency law and on the other hand by the demand to end it. When looking at the effects the discourse regards the existing emergency law as paving the way to torture and imprisonments without trial which are human right violations. Hence the demand to end the emergency law can be interpreted as the demand to end human right violations in Egypt.

Another issue within the discourse has been the way the police in Egypt is acting. One can observe that people are in general denouncing the amount of violence the police is using. In more detail the issue of torture, which is a fundamental human right violation, is regularly playing a role. Besides torture another human right related issue is shaping the discussion. Imprisonments without trial seem to frighten several Egyptians and hence play its role in the motivation of the people to participate in the protests as they want to set an end to it.

When looking at the discourse that directly relates to human rights several issue pop up again which already played a role within the scope of other discourses. The end of Imprisonments without trial and torture are again central demands of the people. But what is special with regard to this issue is the fact that people directly use the language of the human rights as outlined by the UN. This shows that these users feel attached to those rights and want to see them respected in their country.

Moreover human rights figure a part in the scope of the discourse on justice as well. The essence of the discourse on justice is that people are feeling to be treated unfair and unequally. Due to the fact that the preamble of the UDHR regards justice as an essential basis for the adherence to human rights this issue is related to human rights as well.

Although the topic of religion played only a minor role one can observe an aspect of human rights as well. The UDHR grants people the right to freely choose their confession which is demanded by the users on facebook as well. Hence, although people do not directly refer to the UDHR, their topics do play a role for the people.

Another topic receiving attention during the discourse is the issue of democracy. By demanding democracy for their country the Egyptians show that they do not regard their political system under Mubarak as a democratic system. Moreover by demanding their word in politics through denouncing rigged elections and claiming free and fair elections for the future the issue of human rights indirectly pops up again as Art. 21 grants the people this possibility of participation.

When looking at government actions that have been subject to the discourse human right violations play a role as well. The government is accused on the one hand of oppressing the protests by using force and on the other hand accused of killing Egyptian people. Both allegations display human right violations according to Art. 6 and Art.10 of the UDHR. Hence the Egyptian people regard their government as a human rights violator.

Another issue in the overall discourse has been “freedom” which is the most frequently mentioned word within all postings. Freedom within the discourse on the Egyptian revolution is regarded to refer to the freedom to get rid of the current government. When looking at the UDHR freedom is referred to as:” Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” (United Nations 2011). Hence one can interpret human rights as building a basis for freedom in the world. But due to the fact that the people blame human right violations frequently within the discourse while demanding freedom the Egyptian people seem not to have the freedom the UN is referring to in the preamble of the UDHR.

Moreover the preamble of the UDHR states that:” Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,”(United Nations 2011). This sentence grants people the right to step up against their government if systematic human rights violations take place. Due to the fact, which is supported by the fact that the government tried to oppress the protests in several ways, that human right violations played a role within almost all critics and demands that have been made to the government, one can say that the Egyptians implicitly made use of this right to rebellion when overcoming their government. Therefore one can classify the revolution in Egypt as a revolution of human rights.

This demand of the people for respect of human rights has as well been an important aim for the EU within their relationship with Egypt (as outlined in the introduction). Besides the issue of human rights good governance and justice played a role for the EU which has been a demand of the people the like. This intersection of demands among the EU and the protesters in Egypt displays several things: On the one hand it shows that the EU was aware of the bad living circumstances in Egypt and therefore tried to have a positive influence on this. On the other hand it shows that a substantial

change within the social living circumstances of a country cannot be imposed on a nation state by a single top-down process but needs to come from the inside as a bottom-up process as well. Promoting the respect for human rights and justice is an important feature of the EU's foreign policy and although it is very unlikely that such promotion leads to substantial changes within nations states (as one can see in the case of Egypt) it may make people aware of their rights so that they stand up for them which may positively influence a change from within. Therefore the EU should further promote the respect for human rights in the scope of their foreign policy.

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2) Job for all - Min wage set by workers councils

3) Free Housing for all

4) Free Health Care for all

5) Free Education for all

6) No religion, no beliefs in political power

7) Abolishment of death penalty; freedom of all political prisoners

8) Equal rights for women

9) Free child care, Highest standard pension

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Anonymous 45 (2011).“ The Parliament that came via rigged elections must be resolved.” Retrived from: <http://www.facebook.com/elshaheed.co.uk> on: 21.06.2011

Anonymous 46 (2011).“Remove all your damn puppets in the Cabinet and WE will elect all of you.” Retrived from: <http://www.facebook.com/elshaheed.co.uk> on: 19.06.2011

Anonymous 47 (2011).“the demonstations should be stop!!!

enough enough!!

so many egyptians are dying

egypt is under fire

stop destroying our country!

NOW PEOPLE HAVE GUNS. THERE IS NO SECURITY MORE IN EGYPT!

IT WILL BE A SECOND IRAQ

STOP STOP STOP.” Retrived from: <http://www.facebook.com/elshaheed.co.uk> on: 24.06.2011

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Anonymous 49 (2011).“Do you know what will happen if you didn't stop now ? do you think that Mubarak is really ready not to fulfill what he promised ? do you know any safe road way exit for the current situation ?do you know any practical proposal if mubarak left immediately ?.. start the countdown for the civil war.” Retrived from: <http://www.facebook.com/elshaheed.co.uk> on: 24.06.2011

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we are that close viva liberty.” Retrived from: <http://www.facebook.com/elshaheed.co.uk> on: 27.06.2011

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Anonymous 59 (2011). "mubarak please step down for freedom sake please for the good of your people ." Retrieved from: <http://www.facebook.com/Revolution.In.Egypt> on:25.06.2011

Anonymous 60 (2011). "The Egyptian people chant, "Freedom is in our hands." Egyptians: Never give up, for freedom begins internally." Retrieved from: <http://www.facebook.com/Revolution.In.Egypt> on:25.06.2011

Anonymous 61 (2011). "FREEDOM TO EGYPT AND BRIGHT FUTURE ....VIVA ." Retrieved from:

<http://www.facebook.com/Revolution.In.Egypt> on:25.06.2011

Anonymous 62 (2011). "Today is the First day of Freedom in Egypt. Thnx god. Really feeling free is like Body with soul. Food with salt . Music with rhyme. I can't my describe my happenies after 30 years full of ( Poverty - Oppression - Autocracy - Persecution- Dictatorism - Forgery of elections - Ignorance - Isolation from the World - Corruption - Mix between money and power - Nepotism ). Today we are in Festival. Tomorrow we will keep up wiz Developed countries . We will change our

regime in to Forward. I am proud to be egyptian.“Retrieved from:

<http://www.facebook.com/Revolution.In.Egypt> on:25.06.2011

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Egypt welcome anyone come egypt at anytime...”Retrieved from:

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Anonymous 64 (2011).” I am sad When i See the arab Brothers Fight....

What is this boolsheat?

Wake up arab peopel.....

Fuck the Money and coruption...

Free arab World.” Retrieved from: <http://www.facebook.com/Revolution.In.Egypt> on:25.06.2011

Anonymous 65 (2011).” Egypt for the Egyptians. Please understand that.”Retrieved from:

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Anonymous 66 (2011).” WE WILL NOT BE SILENCED, WHETHER YOU'RE CHRISTIAN, WHETHER YOU'RE MUSLIM, WHETHER YOU'RE AN ATHIEST, YOU WILL DEMAND YOUR GODDAMN RIGHTS, AND WE WILL HAVE OUR RIGHTS, ONE WAY OR THE OTHER! WE WILL NOT BE SILENCED.”Retrieved from:

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enough.”Retrieved from: <http://www.facebook.com/Revolution.In.Egypt> on:25.06.2011

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Anonymous 69 (2011).” Long live Revolution.....make the way for evolution....”Retrieved from:

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Anonymous 72 (2011).” PLEASE EVERYONE, STOP THIS PROTESTING THING.IF WE CARRY ON, EGYPT WILL GO DOWN.PLEASE TRY AND SEND THIS MESSAGE AROUND, SO EVERY EGYPTIAN NOWS THAT ! NO MORE !!!!! EGYPTIANS ARE BEING KILLED ONE BY ONE !!.”Retrieved from: <http://www.facebook.com/Revolution.In.Egypt> on:25.06.2011