

Chapter 1 : Culture of Egypt - history, people, clothing, traditions, women, beliefs, food, customs, family

Unnoticed by the Western press, Muslim women are leading their own revival of Islam, a mix of social activism and Islamic values, nurtured by their own study of the Qur'an, the Sharia and the fiqh.

Sidewalks are peppered with chairs, men in gallabiyas tunic-like garment reaching the ankles chatting, drinking tea or smoking the hookah. Women in hijabs threading the traffic, children in tow. Shops bustle; vendors call. Normal life -- but there is something in the air. What is it I wondered. What is going on in Egypt? It is profound and it is complex, but a conversation at the Cheops pyramid with a young student worked as a single snapshot. His first question after, "Where are you from? He asked with eagerness; he asked with pride, there was a confidence in his voice. He explained, straining for the English vocabulary that the regime had controlled how Egyptians thought about themselves. Now we think about ourselves differently. It became the title of his book, "Karama," dignity. What is the role of Islam in this new identity and what does Islam mean for Arab women? The new youth are not looking toward the West for answers. They imagine a distinctly Egyptian democracy rooted in Islamic values. More women are wearing the hijab, as more men are wearing the gallabiya the comfortable robe of traditional Egyptian outerwear. In fact, the young women are wearing the hijab quite fashionably, wearing it in multiple colors, along with stylish jeans, skirts and close fitting t-shirts, expressing a confidence in their sexual identity. What are the current meanings of the hijab? What are the roots of this new self-confidence? Muslim feminists are proud of their Islamic heritage. Early Islam prohibited infanticide, provided women rights to inheritance and ownership of property; divorce and remarriage; to testify in court and polygamy limited to four wives. Men and women are created equal, share equally in moral responsibility before God and have the same responsibility for keeping the precepts of Islam. The rebellion itself is called an error zalla , not a fundamental change in human nature. In the traditional Christian interpretation of the Genesis story: As the story proceeds in Genesis 3, Eve is given primary responsibility for the fall that introduces original sin into human nature. Consequently women are considered morally weak and the cause of the sin and the reason for the corruption of human nature. Nonetheless as with Christianity, Islamic cultures are also patriarchal, incorporating seamlessly into Islam their patriarchal practices. Later Islamic oral tradition reflects this process of assimilation. For them, social activism is an outgrowth of their new learning. Their outreach to impoverished women is rooted in an Islamic ethics that condemns poverty.

Chapter 2 : A. Chris Eccel (Author of Egypt, Islam And Social Change)

Note: Citations are based on reference standards. However, formatting rules can vary widely between applications and fields of interest or study. The specific requirements or preferences of your reviewing publisher, classroom teacher, institution or organization should be applied.

Al-Banna was a schoolteacher, to promote implementing traditional, religious, Islamic sharia law into government and a social regression based on an Islamic ethos of altruism and civic duty, in opposition to what he saw as political and social injustice and to British imperial rule. The organisation initially focused on educational and charitable work, but quickly grew to become a major political force as well, by championing the cause of disenfranchised classes, playing a prominent role in the Egyptian nationalist movement, and promoting a conception of Islam that attempted to restore broken links between tradition and modernity. In , members of the Muslim Brotherhood are accused of taking part in arson that destroyed some " buildings" in downtown Cairo " mainly night clubs, theatres, hotels, and restaurants frequented by British and other foreigners " "that marked the end of the liberal, progressive, cosmopolitan" Egypt. Nasser then abolished the Brotherhood and imprisoned and punished thousands of its members. In there was a minor thaw when writer Sayyid Qutb was released from prison only to be arrested again along with his brother Muhammad in August, when he was accused of being part of a plot to overthrow the state "to assassinate the President and other Egyptian officials and personalities [12] "and subjected to what some consider a show trial. He argued that Muslim society was no longer Islamic and must be transformed by an Islamic vanguard through violent revolution. To restore Islam from modern jahiliyya, Muslim states must be overthrown. The organisation was tolerated to an extent, but remained technically illegal and subject to periodic crackdowns. Eventually the Brotherhood was key in the assassination of Anwar Sadat. In the s, a large student Islamic activist movement took shape, independently from the Brotherhood. Sadat himself became the enemy of the Brotherhood and other Islamist groups after signing a peace agreement with Israel in , and was assassinated by a violent Islamist group Tanzim al-Jihad on October 6, The Brotherhood dominated the professional and student associations of Egypt and was famous for its network of social services in neighborhoods and villages. Over the next ten years the Brotherhood made repeated calls for a more democratic political system. This is necessary because when a Christian country attacks the Muslim country and the army has Christian elements, they can facilitate our defeat by the enemy. A book detailing the record of the MB deputies in the Egyptian parliament The Brothers in the Parliament found its parliamentary leader Hamdy Hassan working vigorously to fight cultural expression the Brotherhood felt was unIslamic and blasphemous, from literature to beauty contests. Another Brotherhood MP Gamal Heshmat took credit for forcing culture minister Hosni to ban the publication of three novels on the ground they promoted blasphemy and unacceptable sexual practices. Meanwhile, the legally approved opposition parties won only 14 seats. Brotherhood leaders also accused the government of changing the final count to lead to a victory for the ruling party candidate in seven districts, a concern echoed by independent monitors. More than Egyptian judges signed a statement condemning "aggression and acts of thuggery by supporters of the ruling party against the judges while It also arrested thousands of its members, many of whom were tried in military courts. The MB boycotted the election. The government incarcerated thousands of rank-and-file MB members in a wave of arrests and military trials, the harshest such security clampdown on the Brotherhood "in decades. The reaction of a Muslim Brotherhood spokesman to the election was: Timeline of the Egyptian revolution under Mohamed Morsi July"October Following the Egyptian Revolution of that overthrew Hosni Mubarak, the Brotherhood was legalized [5] and emerged as "the most powerful group" [30] and the "most cohesive political movement" in Egypt with "an unparalleled ability to mobilize its followers". Its newly formed political party "the Freedom and Justice Party " won almost half the seats in the "12 parliamentary election [31] far more than any other party, and its presidential candidate Mohammed Morsi won the presidential election. However within a year there were mass protests against his rule [32] [33] and he was overthrown by the military. On 30 April it launched a new party called the Freedom and Justice Party. In the first couple of years after the revolution, there was both cooperation and tension

between the Brotherhood and secular oriented military. The Brotherhood supported the constitutional referendum in March which was also supported by the Egyptian army and opposed by Egyptian liberals, [38] causing some Egyptians to speculate about deal between the military and the MB. The Brotherhood, led by the old and the hardliners, has managed to alienate its revolutionary and democratic partners and to scare important segments of society, especially women and Christians. Neither the Brotherhood nor the generals showed willingness to share power and both were keen on marginalising the revolutionary and democratic forces. It is as if they were clearing the stage for their eventual showdown. Mohammed Morsi defeated Ahmed Shafiq , a former military officer and prime minister of Mubarak, in the run off. During the one year Morsi served as president serious public opposition developed within months. He also put a draft constitution to a referendum that opponents complained was "an Islamist coup. On 29 June, it announced it had collected more than 22 million signatures. Violence escalated rapidly lasting several days and led to the deaths of people€” civilians and 43 police officers. Some were injured. On that day Supreme Leader Mohammed Badie was arrested, [68] crossing a "red line", as even Hosni Mubarak had never arrested him. On 23 September, a court ordered the group outlawed and its assets seized.

The Egyptian Revolution: Women, Islam And Social Change By Karen Torjesen By Karen Torjesen on October 31, 2016
(1) The following is a guest post written by Karen Torjesen, Ph.D., Margo L. Goldsmith Professor of Women's Studies in Religion at Claremont Graduate University where she has helped establish graduate programs in Women's.

He thinks that one such area of tension was a consequence of what he sees as the egalitarian nature of Islamic doctrine. Islam from the first denounced aristocratic privilege, rejected hierarchy, and adopted a formula of the career open to the talents. Lewis however notes that the equality in Islam was restricted to free adult male Muslims, but even that "represented a very considerable advance on the practice of both the Greco-Roman and the ancient Iranian world". To the pagan peoples of western Arabia he had brought a new religion which, with its monotheism and its ethical doctrines, stood on an incomparably higher level than the paganism it replaced. He had provided that religion with a revelation which was to become in the centuries to follow the guide to thought and count of countless millions of Believers. It constituted a formal agreement between Muhammad and all of the significant tribes and families of Yathrib later known as Medina , including Muslims, Jews , and pagans. To this effect it instituted a number of rights and responsibilities for the Muslim, Jewish, and pagan communities of Medina bringing them within the fold of one community-the Ummah. Practices[edit] John Esposito sees Muhammad as a reformer who condemned practices of the pagan Arabs such as female infanticide , exploitation of the poor, usury , murder , false contracts , fornication , adultery , and theft. Muhammad proclaimed a sweeping program of religious and social reform that affected religious belief and practices, business contracts and practices, male-female and family relations". The true prevalence of gendercide in this time period is uncertain. An inscription in Yemen forbidding the practice, dating to approximately BC, is the sole mention of it in pre-Islamic records. He asserts that Muhammad created a "new system of social security and a new family structure, both of which were a vast improvement on what went before. By taking what was best in the morality of the nomad and adapting it for settled communities, he established a religious and social framework for the life of many races of men. Islamic views on slavery A slave market in Islamic Yemen. Lewis states that Islam brought two major changes to ancient slavery which were to have far-reaching consequences. The position of the Arabian slave was "enormously improved": Similarly, the practice of freeing slaves in atonement for certain sins[which? Women in Islam To evaluate the effect of Islam on the status of women, many writers have discussed the status of women in pre-Islamic Arabia, and their findings have been mixed. Legally controlled polygamy was an important advance on the various loosely defined arrangements which had previously been both possible and current; it was only by this provision backed up by severe punishment for adultery , that the family, the core of any sedentary society could be placed on a firm footing. The essential elements of the marriage contract were now an offer by the man, an acceptance by the woman, and the performance of such conditions as the payment of dowry. Furthermore, the offer and acceptance had to be made in the presence of at least two witnesses. If they do that, then abandon their beds and beat them with a beating that is not harmful. And if they obey you then you have no cause against them. Indeed you have rights over your women, and your women have rights over you. As for your rights over your women, then they must not allow anyone whom you dislike to treat on your bedding furniture , nor to admit anyone in your home that you dislike. And their rights over you are that you treat them well in clothing them and feeding them. She notes that the concept of women inheriting wealth may have been more notable in an agricultural communities like Medina. According to The Oxford Dictionary of Islam, women were also granted the right to live in the matrimonial home and receive financial maintenance during marriage and a waiting period following the death and divorce. Growing prosperity caused by a shifting of trade routes was accompanied by a growth in individualism. Haddad and Esposito state that "although Islam is often criticized for the low status it has ascribed to women, many scholars believe that it was primarily the interpretation of jurists, local traditions, and social trends which brought about a decline in the status of Muslim women. The economics of these early Muslim societies were not favorable to comfortable life for women. Adoption was viewed "as a lie, as an artificial tie between adults and children, devoid of any real

emotional relationship, as a cause of confusion where lineage was concerned and thus a possible source of problems regarding marriage between members of the same family and regarding inheritance. But a child that was not born into a family can still be raised by a foster family but the child must retain his identity, such as his last name and lineage. The prophet has stated that a person who assists and aids an orphan, is on the same footing in heaven to the prophet himself. Bellah Beyond Belief argues that Islam in its 7th-century origins was, for its time and place, "remarkably modern This because, he argues, that Islam emphasized on the equality of all Muslims. Leadership positions were open to all. However, there were restraints on the early Muslim community that kept it from exemplifying these principles, primarily from the "stagnant localisms" of tribe and kinship. Dale Eickelman writes that Bellah suggests "the early Islamic community placed a particular value on individuals, as opposed to collective or group responsibility". Islamic ethics Muslims believe that Muhammad, like other prophets in Islam , was sent by God to remind human beings of their moral responsibility , and challenge those ideas in society which opposed submission to God. According to Kelsay, this challenge was directed against these main characteristics of pre-Islamic Arabia: This categorization was confronted by the ideal of a unified community based upon taqwa Islamic piety , an "ummah;" The acceptance of the worship of a multitude of deities besides Allah - a view challenged by strict Tawhid Islamic monotheism , which dictates that Allah has no partner in worship nor any equal; The focus on achieving fame or establishing a legacy, which was replaced by the concept that mankind would be called to account before God on the Qiyamah day of resurrection ; The reverence of and compliance with ancestral traditions, a practice challenged by Islam " which instead assigned primacy to submitting to God and following revelation. These changes lay in the reorientation of society as regards to identity, world view, and the hierarchy of values. From the viewpoint of subsequent generations, this caused a great transformation in the society and moral order of life in the Arabian Peninsula. For Muhammad, although pre-Islamic Arabia exemplified "heedlessness", it was not entirely without merit. However, these values would be re-ordered in importance and placed in the context of strict monotheism. This "economy of poverty" prevailed in Islamic theory and practice up until the 13th and 14th centuries. At its heart was a notion of property circulated and purified, in part, through charity, which illustrates a distinctively Islamic way of conceptualizing charity , generosity, and poverty markedly different from "the Christian notion of perennial reciprocity between rich and poor and the ideal of charity as an expression of community love. Most common is the triad of kinsfolk, poor, and travelers. Many scholars, such as Charles C. Muslim tradition both hadith and historiography maintains that Muhammad did not permit the construction of any buildings in the market of Medina other than mere tents; nor did he permit any tax or rent to be taken there. This expression of a " free market "involving the circulation of goods within a single space without payment of fees, taxes, or rent, without the construction of permanent buildings, and without any profiting on the part of the caliphal authority indeed, of the Caliph himself "was rooted in the term sadaqa , "voluntary alms". Upon his hijra to Medina, Muhammad found only one well to be used. The Muslims bought that well, and consequently it was used by the general public. During the Caliphate, the Muslims repaired many of the aging wells in the lands they conquered. While some canals were excluded for the use of monks such as a spring purchased by Talhah and the needy, most canals were open to general public use. Some canals were constructed between settlements, such as the Saad canal that provided water to Anbar , and the Abi Musa Canal to providing water to Basra. The purpose of the canal was to facilitate the transport of grain to Arabia through a sea-route, hitherto transported only by land.

Chapter 4 : Early social changes under Islam - Wikipedia

*Egypt, Islam, and social change: Al-Azhar in conflict and accommodation (Islamkundliche Untersuchungen) [A. Chris Eccel] on racedaydvl.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers.*

Arab Republic of Egypt Previously: The United Arab Republic. The Egyptian Kingdom Orientation Identification. Egypt is the internationally used name but not the name used by the people of the country. It derives from the Greek Aegyptos, which in turn probably comes from ancient Egyptian words referring to the land Hut-ka-ptah, or "house of the essence [ka] of Ptah," a local god. Western names derive from this, as does the word "Copt" in Arabic, qibt. In Arabic, the name is Misr. This name is older than the Muslim conquest, but is attested to in the Koran. It can refer to either the whole country or the capital city. The name itself is an icon, spoken, written, or sung. The population of Egypt is relatively homogeneous. The overwhelming majority over 90 percent are Arabic-speaking Sunni Muslims. About 6 percent are Christians, who are indistinguishable in other respects from the Muslims. Most of the Christians belong to the Coptic Orthodox Church, the historic church of Egypt, but minorities within the minority are Catholic or Protestant, or derive from the churches of the Levant Maronite, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic. There are a few small linguistic minorities, of which the largest is the Nubians, who speak two Nubian languages Kenuz and Mahas related to the Nilo-Saharan languages of the Sudan. Other linguistic minorities include a few thousand Berber speakers in Siwa oasis, the easternmost outpost of Berber speech, and the small population of Beja Ababda and Bisharin in the eastern desert east of Aswan. All these groups are Muslim. There are also urban linguistic enclaves of Armenians, Greeks, Italians, and others. Another urban enclave was the Jews, now largely emigrated, who spoke either Arabic or various European languages. The urban minorities were much larger before the middle of the twentieth century. Egypt has an area of , square miles 1., square kilometers. The country is separated from its neighbors by either ocean or sparsely populated desert. To the north is the Mediterranean Sea, and to the east the Red Sea. Egypt is separated from Libya and North Africa by the western desert, from Palestine and Israel by the desert of the Sinai Peninsula, and from the centers of population in the Sudan by desert except along the narrow Nile River. The highest point is Mount Catherine in the Sinai, at 8, feet 2, meters. Egypt is the gift of the Nile. Rainfall is not adequate to sustain agriculture or a settled population, and water instead comes from the Nile. After the dam, the Nile continues to flow north in a single channel paralleled by irrigation canals until it reaches Cairo, miles kilometers away. North of Cairo, the Nile Delta begins. The Nile breaks into two main channels, the western Rosetta branch and the eastern Damietta branch, for the final miles kilometers before the water reaches the Mediterranean. The Nile receives about 85 percent of its water from the Ethiopian highlands. Egyptians then practiced a form of recession agriculture, planting winter crops in the mud left behind by the receding river. In the twentieth century, people have increased their control of the river. Control of the Nile has made it possible to cultivate year round. On average, there are two crops a year. The rest of the country is desert. This includes the scrub desert along the Mediterranean coast between the Nile Delta and Libya, and along the north coast of the Sinai Peninsula; the mountainous desert between the Nile Valley and the Red Sea; and the western desert west of the Nile Valley. Rainfall in these areas is rare to nonexistent. Only the Mediterranean coast has rain that is reliable enough to support marginal human activity, with some agriculture and animal husbandry. There are smaller oases in the Sinai peninsula Firan , and even in the arid Eastern desert there are occasional springs, two of which provide water to Christian monasteries. It is an article of faith in contemporary Egypt that agriculture and settled life should spread beyond the confines of the Nile Valley. Major efforts have been made to "reclaim" land on the fringes of the Nile Valley, particularly east and west of the Delta. Over a million acres have been reclaimed since the middle of the twentieth century. Recent discovery of fossil underground water in the extreme southwest corner of Egypt is leading to the development of irrigated agriculture in that area. At the end of , the total population of Egypt was 65,, of whom about 1,, were considered to be living abroad temporarily, presumably mostly in the oil countries of the Arab Gulf but also including some in the West. The population represented a The annual growth rate was calculated at 2. The lower growth rate was also reflected in the

figure for those under 15 years of age, which was 35 percent of the overall population in as against According to the Egyptian Human Development Report , life expectancy at birth in Egypt was Infant mortality was 29 per 1, live births in The total fertility rate was 3. Just over one-third of the population was below a poverty line based on consumption needs, calculated by the Egyptian government. Egypt is part of a broad band of countries, extending east to Korea, where there are "missing women. The level of education is increasing; those over the age of ten who were literate increased from Figures for graduates from different levels of education also grewâ€”those holding a higher education degree increased from 4. The rural population was 57 percent in , compared to 56 percent in , but this includes some people living in settlements of 20, or more. A settlement is defined as urban according to its administrative function. Egypt is part of the Arabic speech community of about million people, spread from Morocco to Oman. Arabic is a branch of the Semitic languages, which in turn belongs to the Afro-Asiatic language family together with Berber, Ancient Egyptian, Chadic, and Cushitic. Egypt became Arabic-speaking as a result of the Muslim conquest in the seventh century, though the full replacement of the earlier languages took several centuries. In Egypt, as elsewhere in the Arab world, the Arabic language is characterized by diglossia. That is, there is a substantial difference between the written language, influenced by the Koran, and the spoken language. There are some regional dialects in Egypt, notably the speech of Upper Egypt, but nothing that prevents understanding. Radio and television impose the Cairo-spoken language as the standard dialect of Egypt. Egyptian cultural influence is transmitted to the rest of the Arabic-speaking world in the Cairo dialect. English is the most common foreign language spoken in Egypt, followed by French. The three Giza pyramids sometimes together with the Great Sphinx represent the most important and obvious visual symbol of the Egyptian nation. It is the most widespread "postcard" image, and also the title of the major daily newspaper Al-Ahram with the three pyramids on the top of the front page. The symbol of Egypt Air, the national airline, is Horus, a figure from ancient Egyptian religion represented as a falcon. The nineteenth-century Mohammed Ali mosque built on top of a medieval citadel is visible from different parts of Cairo. Of more architectural significance are the Ibn Tulun and Sultan Hassan mosques in Cairo and the Qaitbey mausoleum and school in the northern cemetery. It is associated with immortality, romance, or glory the construction of the high dam. In recent years, Nile cruises have become a favored tourist attraction, and "cleaning up the Nile" has become an environmental slogan. The flag is an abstract tricolor, with black standing for the past of oppression, red for sacrifice, and white for the future. A centerpiece of a falcon completes the design. Reflecting a sense of Arab unity, the flags of several other Arab countries have the same colors. The current national anthem is the music of the song "Biladi" meaning "My Country" , a patriotic song that was popular during the uprising against the British occupation. History and Ethnic Relations Emergence of the Nation. The land of Egypt has a distinctiveness within the region because of the development of major civilizations in the Nile Valley, sometimes phrased as seven thousand years of civilization. For several centuries Egypt was essentially a Christian country. The Muslim conquest in the seventh century C. In the sixteenth century, Egypt became part of the Ottoman Empire, ruled from Constantinople now Istanbul. On the eve of modernization, Napoleon and the French army conquered Egypt in , and remained through Many writers identify this period of three years as a major turning point in Egyptian cultural history, while others argue that the process began earlier and lasted longer. In , in the aftermath of World War I, unrest aiming at Egyptian independence began. The main nationalist political party, the Wafd, was created that year. Egypt was the scene of major battles in World War II, and the country formally joined the war in its last year, A year later the monarchy was abolished and a republic established. Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser emerged as the strongman of the new regime, and he became president in The new regime initiated many new social policies in Egypt. This was a genuine revolution that shared power and wealth more equally with all elements of the population and encouraged education for the masses. From a cultural point of view, the new regime released Egyptians from the feeling of oppression due to foreign rule, and allowed for the flowering of an unencumbered Egyptian identity, making it possible to be both modern and Egyptian. This was also the period of maximum Egyptian involvement in warfare. The most devastating moment came with the defeat of A pile of pottery water jugs in Luxor Village along the Nile River. Irrigation is central to Egyptian agriculture and water is supplied by the government. Anwar el-Sadat became president

after Nasser died in 1970. After the fourth war against Israel in 1973, Sadat moved to make peace and to recover the Sinai. Under Sadat, too, many of the social reforms of the Nasser period were frozen or reversed. Sadat was assassinated in 1981 and was succeeded by his vice president, Hosni Mubarak, who was elected for a fourth six-year term in September 1981.

Chapter 5 : Religious Practices of Egyptian Muslim Women | Religious Studies Center

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This article shows that these instead of fearing it. Whereas recent studies of Christian or- religious engagement is about fostering He has become the catalyst for a much organizations and movements challenge the collective good as well as about self- broader trend, facilitated by the Inter- this rather one-dimensional under-empowerment. The authors conclude by net and satellite TV, and showing in the standing of religion, it still seems to be discussing whether these movements growing number of preachers with a the dominant approach in studies of are conducive to political action, hinder similar style and message, as well as in Muslim collective action. Muslim organ- formal political participation, or should the establishment of several youth organizations and movements are frequently be viewed as constituting a new form organizations based on his ideas. Social change plays an explicit role in point of view, seeing collective action the discourses of this new movement. Islam is about changing and improving yourself and or are frustrated over being excluded from Western modernity. Muslim collective action is seen primarily as a compensatory reaction The overall goal is not only a stronger Muslim individual, but a stronger to structural changes rather than a potential force for change in itself. Muslim society, a renaissance of the Muslim world. As such, two equally While structural strains naturally play a role in the actions of most important strategies of the movement are community engagement and people, this perspective runs the risk of overlooking other important individual empowerment, both motivated and shaped by the Muslim factors in Muslim collective action. For instance, in their focus on un- faith. We argue that a munity: Thousands of young peo- of the relations between Islam, collec- ple participated, and in the following tive action, and social change. Yes, peo- months, volunteer work among young ple might participate in Muslim organi- people increased. This call for par- zations and movements because they ticipation in society is articulated as a P h o t o b y S a r a h L e i S p a r r e , 2 0 0 7 are frustrated, poor, or unemployed. A good Muslim is an But they also participate because they active Muslim. They see social welfare activi- A new movement of Muslim youth ties as logical solutions to these prob- organizations, emerging from Egypt lems. In a Muslim context, this focus but spreading to other Middle Eastern on poverty and social welfare is noth- countries, presents particularly interesting insights on the topic. The duty to give to the poor, zakat, is one of the five pillars upper middle-class young people constitute the backbone of this new in Islam. Likewise, activities such as taking care of orphans and poor movement. The majority is in their 20s, and most have been to univer- families range high in the extensive system for rewarding good deeds, sity. However, the duty to help the poor has often manifested itself and social change, we have to turn towards the Egyptian account- in rather traditional charity activities. Few organizations have engaged ant-turned-preacher Amr Khaled. Amr Khaled started preaching in in more long-term development activities seeking to empower people mosques and private clubs in the early s, and today, his shows are to break out of their poverty. This is of millions of young Muslims all over the world. As one lecturer emphasized: When I say that you have to attend three in traditional charity activities. They distribute food-bags and blankets, out of four lectures to pass, if you only attend two, you have failed. This is what it takes to be a days. But they seem to be very aware of the limi- Muslim professional. As a young man put it: You need to change the minds of gaged in these organizations. The kind of religion people. All Islam is the underlying motivation and what change must start with the individual. As such, in- provides the general guidelines for the modern dividual empowerment is a key component in the useful to his nation. What the life or daily interaction with friends, family, and poor need is not just money and material goods; colleagues. Through education, training, and conver- her goals and become an active participant in sations, the young seek to convey their ideas of society. As a leader in one organization told me: Our purpose is to help people grow stronger. The Prophet was a phasize the importance of education, hard work, and good morals. Perspectives Almost everybody says that their engagement in this work had strength- It is obvious that participants in the

new Muslim youth organizations need their skills in areas such as project planning, management, and articulate an intimate relation between Islam and change. The young do not just interpret these benefits as com- needs change, individuals need change, and Islam is the tool to obtain common consequences of involvement in any kind of community work. Problems such as poverty, unemployment, and apathy are Rather, they see them as the consequences of a specific Muslim ap- seen as moral and social problems, whose solutions must be sought in approach to community work, emphasizing efficiency, organization, and the individual and in the community. With their faith as motivation and strategic thinking as important qualities in any good Muslim. To be a good Muslim is to do something engagement and individual empowerment, and with the stated goal of for others. But, combined with secular development ideas, religion is contributing to the renaissance of the Muslim nation. Poverty is not fought through the random distribution of zakat, and what they do to implement this change. Another thing is what but through individual empowerment, including education, vocational consequences this will have on a structural level. In other words, and training, and moral strengthening. An interesting question in makes them keep doing something for others. Given the novelty of Muslim Social welfare activities are not the only concern of the youth or- youth organizations, such questions cannot be answered definitively ganizations. Many also engage in so-called human and career develop- at this point, and there is a need for more long-term studies. Whereas the engagement in social welfare activities is based on our own very preliminary observations, we propose three motivated by a wish to fight poverty in general, young people engage possible answers. Obviously these Successful managers in multinational companies and university profes- organizations strengthen skills that can be characterized as essential to sors teach courses in topics such as time management, presentation political engagementâ€™skills such as argumentation techniques, team- skills, leadership, business and ethics, offered to university students for work, and critical thinking. However, in their current form they are char- free or at a very low price since both organizers and lecturers work as acterised by an explicit lack of formal political engagement. On the more general level, the organi- litical channels to gain influence. This could lead one to conclude that zations wish to create a more effective and responsible generation of such organizations can end up hindering formal political participation youth, able to participate in society, and thereby contributing to the by diverting potential actors from the political scene, luring them into renaissance of the Muslim nation. Thus, the courses become yet an- harmless social activities. Finally, a third perspective might see these other concrete manifestation of the relation between social change social activities neither as harmless activities nor as run-ups to formal and individual empowerment: If you want to change society, you have political participation but rather as expressions of a whole new kind of to start with the individual. You have to start political engagement, challenging the often corrupt and dysfunctional with yourself. But regardless of whichâ€™if anyâ€™of these answers will turn out theories, Islam plays a significant role in both practices and discourses. A Muslim professional is someone who dresses properly, works efficiently, and has high moral standards. Sara Lei Sparre and Marie Juul Petersen are employed at the Danish Institute for International The youth organizations are managed after the model of multinational Studies in Copenhagen where they are engaged in a one-year project on Muslim civil society companies, but in the tight schedule, there is time for religious lectures organizations in Jordan and Egypt. In fact, religious commitment and practice is expected of Email: The lecturers and organizers act as role Email:

Chapter 6 : The Egyptian Revolution: Women, Islam And Social Change | HuffPost

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For ten years she served as Dean of the School of Religion, partnering with religious communities to create programs in comparative religion. She has published extensively on women, gender and sexuality within Christianity. Originally posted at Huffington Post: Women in hijabs threading the traffic, children in tow. Shops bustle; vendors call. Normal life “but there is something in the air. What is it I wondered. What is going on in Egypt? It is profound and it is complex, but a conversation at the Cheops pyramid with a young student worked as a single snapshot. He asked with eagerness; he asked with pride, there was a confidence in his voice. He explained, straining for the English vocabulary that the regime had controlled how Egyptians thought about themselves. Now we think about ourselves differently. What is the role of Islam in this new identity and what does Islam mean for Arab women? The new youth are not looking toward the West for answers. They imagine a distinctly Egyptian democracy rooted in Islamic values. In fact, the young women are wearing the hijab quite fashionably, wearing it in multiple colors, along with stylish jeans, skirts and close fitting t-shirts, expressing a confidence in their sexual identity. What are the current meanings of the hijab? What are the roots of this new self-confidence? Muslim feminists are proud of their Islamic heritage. Early Islam prohibited infanticide, provided women rights to inheritance and ownership of property; divorce and remarriage; to testify in court and polygamy limited to four wives. Men and women are created equal, share equally in moral responsibility before God and have the same responsibility for keeping the precepts of Islam. The rebellion itself is called an error zalla , not a fundamental change in human nature. In the traditional Christian interpretation of the Genesis story: As the story proceeds in Genesis 3, Eve is given primary responsibility for the fall that introduces original sin into human nature. Consequently women are considered morally weak and the cause of the sin and the reason for the corruption of human nature. Nonetheless as with Christianity, Islamic cultures are also patriarchal, incorporating seamlessly into Islam their patriarchal practices. Later Islamic oral tradition reflects this process of assimilation. For them, social activism is an outgrowth of their new learning. Their outreach to impoverished women is rooted in an Islamic ethics that condemns poverty.

Chapter 7 : The Egyptian Revolution: Women, Islam And Social Change By Karen Torjesen

A comparative analysis of key Islamic authority platforms and their debates. At the turn of the twenty-first century, scholarship and policy debate on Islam and Muslim societies has come to focus primarily on Islam's ability to make young Muslims gravitate towards anti-modernity movements.

The social system of Ancient Egypt is, of ancient civilisations, that of which the most is known. The ancient history of other countries is, as a rule, a record of wars, famines, conquests, invasions and other outstanding events. Records of how people lived and how society was governed and conducted are often matters of deduction rather than of knowledge. This is not the case with Ancient Egypt. Egyptologists are able to give us a minute and detailed picture of social life in Egypt three and even four thousand years ago. Municipal life, which comes closer to the lives of the people than is possible for a central administration, was known in Ancient Egypt. Each city had its prefect, a sort of mayor whose business it was to provide what was necessary for the civic needs of the inhabitants. The prefect, whose scarlet robes were emblematic of his office, was assisted by a judge and by a scribe. One of his functions was to regulate labour and employment. Craftsmen and artisans were strictly prohibited from changing over from one trade to another. Skilled handwork does not appear to have enjoyed an open market. Most craftsmen were attached in a more or less permanent capacity to the establishments of nobles or high officials. It follows, therefore, that there cannot have been a large or independent middle class in Ancient Egypt. There was the official or ruling class, the class of the priests and, below these, the masses employed in work of every kind. But since members of what are now known as the learned professions were mostly members of the priesthood there was apparently no transitional or middle class such as we know it today. Not until the Middle Kingdom did the ever-swelling numbers of bureaucrats constitute a class which, without owning land and without performing manual labour, nevertheless worked for its living and became a "purchasing class". Excavations of the Twelfth Dynasty town Kahun have shown about small houses in crowded streets. The largest of these has only seven rooms. Next to these come a dozen great mansions of about sixty rooms each. There is nothing in between. But by the Eighteenth Dynasty we find at Amarna that most of the houses stood in their own grounds and consisted of about a dozen rooms. Labour conditions in Ancient Egypt are described by Herodotus in his account, derived from earlier authorities, of the building of the Great Pyramid. He states that, men were engaged in moving the stones during three months at a time, that they were ten years making the great causeway and preparing the site, and that the building itself occupied twenty years. But the basis of social life is of course, the family, and in this sphere the life of Ancient Egypt had peculiarities of its own. In no written record is there any reference to obligations to brothers or cousins. On the other hand the position of women and the care for children reached a very high standard. The earliest marriage contract known in Egypt is as recent as B. It states that the bride brought a dowry of six ounces of silver and fifty measures of corn. The bridegroom declares that should the marriage be dissolved "either from dislike or because he prefers another he will return the dowry and a share of property for the Children who may be born. Even in the noble families who have left sculptured monuments it is seldom that mention is made of more than one wife. Priests were limited to one wife and such was the usual practice among the labouring classes. Divorce was permitted but like polygamy, it does not seem to have been very prevalent. In questions of descent the female line was considered the more important. In Ancient Egyptian genealogies the name of the father may sometimes be omitted. Indeed, it is rare to meet with an unbroken line of male descent. In regard to property, succession and inheritance were almost invariably through the female line and a curious result of this -it is mentioned as surprising by Greek historians -was that the duty of supporting aged parents devolved upon the daughters and not upon the sons. Housekeeping in Ancient Egypt must, in the case of large establishments, have been anything but a sinecure. The household of Prince Amenemhat at Beni Hassan has been recorded as follows: On his farm were employed five Directors of Farm Produce, a Director of Cattle Herds, four herdsmen, and a number of keepers for cattle, donkeys, and gazelles; three Directors of Fisheries, two Directors of Goats, a Director of the Estate Office, as well as a number of carpenters, weavers and gardeners. Slave labour was little used. There were serfs in Ancient Egypt but they

were attached to the land at their own homes and could not be sold. Serfdom, which continued for many centuries, was a comparatively mild form of subjection and it does not appear to have weighed very heavily on the people. There was, however, a curious form of slavery in Ancient Egypt. The debtor would sometimes make over to his creditor not only any property he might possess but also his labour for the rest of his life. Several of these "Contracts of Servitude" have been found. We are apt to look upon clubs and guilds as modern institutions. It is therefore interesting to note that local clubs, of a social rather than political nature, were a feature of provincial life in Ptolemaic times. In his fascinating book "The Ptolemies of Egypt", Col. The meeting was between one Hermias and his friends, "possibly coachmen and head grooms" who were accustomed to meet in a corn loft or the harness room of some stables. A periodical subscription was levied and the expenses of a meeting divided among members and guests. The expenses included wines, a flautist and a dancer. Moreover the social system of Ancient Egypt was so highly developed that subsequent centuries could bring but a very gradual change. Throughout the period which followed the Arab conquest of Egypt much remained unchanged in the lives of the Egyptian people. Perhaps the greatest change was a new conception of family ties. Whereas, as already mentioned, these were not very strong in Ancient Egypt except where husband, wife and children were concerned, Islamic Egypt developed a sense of family feeling which remains unaltered to the present day. It is probably due to this factor, to the mutual aid and support which all members of a family feel bound to extend to each other, that the social problems of modern Egypt are less acute than in many other countries. As regards social life, the seclusion of women exercised, no doubt inevitably, a restrictive influence. It was not until the nineteenth century that social life in Egypt began to assume its modern aspect. Under Mohammed Aly more particularly under Ismail the Magnificent, new elements of culture and of social contact were introduced. Among these may be mentioned foreign travel, foreign languages and access to the literature and learning of other nations, operas, theatres and Exhibitions. It was however the twentieth century and the reign of King Fuad that were to bring about a real change in the social life of Egypt. To the peasant in the village the cinema and the radio have brought a world hitherto beyond his ken; to the growing child education is opening wider horizons. These influences must and do affect the lives of the people. Meanwhile, higher up in the social scale, it may be said that social life in Modern Egypt is on a par with that of any other enlightened country. The amenities of an advanced civilisation are available; social restrictions which might limit their enjoyment are rapidly dying out; while the Egyptian tradition of courtesy and hospitality adds, to the social life of the present day, a grace and a charm of its own.

Chapter 8 : social change - IslamiCity

"Islam, Mobilization, and Social Change" Conference The Arab Uprisings that started in 2011 and the rapidly evolving political fortunes of Islamic political actors that followed in their wake have prompted a renewed interest in questions relating to religion and social mobilization in the Muslim world.

Spiritual Foundations and Modern Manifestations, ed. Smith At the time of the symposium, Jane I. Smith was associate dean of academic affairs and lecturer in comparative religion at Harvard University. A graduate of Michigan State University in social science, she received a B. Professor Smith published and lectured extensively on religious themes relation to Islam and particularly on women in Islam. Most writing about women in Muslim societies focuses on the roles assigned to them by the religious and social structure of Islam and on the opportunities afforded or denied to them in the present sociopolitical circumstance in various countries. I would like to discuss the activities of Egyptian Muslim women in the religious sphere, looking at what they do, and why, in the context of the familial and societal structure in which they must operate. Specifically, I will consider how, given the traditional ascription of authority to males and the continuing exercise of that authority, women act to assure some degree of power in their own circumstances. Just as it is extremely difficult to generalize about Islamic women in the global context although one notes frequent attempts to do so it is also difficult to treat women in any given country as a unit. Egyptian Muslim women operate out of a variety of socioeconomic and cultural circumstances [1] and represent very different modes of response to the fact of being Muslim. As they differ, so do their religious practices. Some of these practices are what one might call borderline Muslim, on the fringes of what orthodoxy considers acceptable, while others are centrally and totally religious. Still others are only peripherally religious but are primarily social or cultural. As a whole they constitute the variety of ways that these women have found to be religious, to relate to that which is beyond the ordinary, and to attempt to exercise some degree of control over their own circumstances. Egyptian religious practices as a whole as can perhaps be said about most of the Muslim world are in many cases determined by social and economic factors and thus are part of a class phenomenon in which both men and women participate. It is only since , for example, that Egyptian women have been allowed to attend Friday prayers. As a result of these restrictions, women not surprisingly have emphasized those elements of formal Islam that have remained open to them. The structure of the month of fasting provides the occasion for social interaction and a playing out of the feminine role in preparation of the meals which break the fast. Part of the social service aspect of Islam traditionally provided for by the paying of the zakat tax usually by males middle- and upper-class women for some decades in Egypt have organized and participated in Muslim associations for social service and change. In addition to these sorts of activities provided for by the structure of Islam, Muslim women have developed a range of religious practices that are more clearly characterized as their own. That which on the one hand represents a means of controlling forces in the world of the unseen, at the same time gives many women a means of coping with the material world and securing their own place in it. Divination and healing, for example, are almost exclusively female activities. Securing a price from the mother, they tie up their long skirts, wade into the water, and immerse the child three times in the Nile. It is interesting to note that this is done for three consecutive weeks precisely at the time of the Friday prayer, the traditional male time to worship in the mosque. If the child is healed, his or her clothing is thrown into the Nile. It is mainly among women that one finds such practices as the wearing of sacred or magic rings supposed to contain certain kinds of occult powers. Common in Egypt as in most Middle Eastern cultures is the belief in the power of the evil eye, warded off by the wearing of charms and blue beads which women often tie on the necks or beds of their children. Again, it is most often women who engage in such Islamically suspect activities as palm reading and divination. Zar refers both to the belief that one can be possessed by a spirit and to the ceremony in which exorcism is believed to take place. In general, men disavow the efficacy of the zar ceremony and even deny the possibility that their wives or female relatives might thus be controlled by supernatural spirits or beings. It is also clear that the afflicted women derive a number of benefits from this whole process. The symptoms are real and include swelling of the legs

or stomach, a high degree of nervousness, and so forth; and the process of exorcism is often a traumatic one, sending the women into a state of exhaustion. Nonetheless, the benefits are real: Another area of religious response in which women have been primary participants is visiting the tombs of historical and contemporary saints. Many males also do this, of course, but women certainly have found in the practices related to tomb visiting an immediate and acceptable way to meet their social and psychological needs, as well as their devotional ones. Here again, it affords them an opportunity to exert power over their own circumstances, this time by appeal to an outside agency—the saint wali. While supplication of the wali has been historically condemned as heretical and leading to the perversion of the faith, in general it has remained part of the total fabric of Islamic religious response. Orthodox Islam admits the validity of praying through the saints to God, but not of praying to them; in common practice, however, this distinction often gets blurred. Today in Egypt the custom is widespread, and even has the sanction of the Azhar. There are several aspects to the relationship with the saints also called the shaykhs. In some of these, such as the mulid birthday observance for the saint, men and women alike participate. Often women use the ziyara simply to sit in a peaceful place, enjoying a respite from the demands of husbands and family. It has been observed that while men generally come to the tomb and make a quick request of the wali, women often stay for long periods of time. Another way of obtaining power is by asking the direct intervention of the saint in solving a personal problem. It is not surprising that there is such strong emphasis on family and sexual matters. Not only do these roles constitute the total world of many women, but sexuality is the one area where women have final control over men, as it is they who are the source of reproduction. This is undoubtedly one reason why birth control programs have met with great resistance, especially in rural Egypt. When a difficult problem has found some resolution, the nadr is fulfilled. If one goes to a doctor for an ointment, for example, one must pay whether or not relief is forthcoming. With the saint, payment fulfilling of nadr comes only with satisfaction. Respect and devotion are present, but the woman does not hesitate to rebuke her wali if she thinks that he or she is not listening or has been negligent in fulfilling a request. Here again a woman can assume a position of power and control over a male, even though he be a saint! While some conservative male voices insist on assigning women an inferior status and excluding them from the male domain, [14] clearer and more obvious recognition is being given to the necessity of assuring increasing opportunity for women to participate in the religious structure. These several realities have led to an interesting situation with regard to Egyptian Muslim women. On the one hand we see the continuation of practices outside the male structure that assure women control over their circumstances, and which, in fact, give them a kind of power that equal participation would not. On the other hand, particularly in the urban educated middle and upper classes, many women reaffirm their role within the orthodox Islamic structure. To understand the situation of women in Egypt, as in other parts of the Islamic world and this is not even to speak of recent changes in legal circumstances for women, it is necessary to attempt to see things through Muslim as well as through Western eyes. What most Western observers of Islamic practices assume to be clear inequities in the circumstances of men and women—and therefore unjust if not immoral—are not necessarily viewed that way by Egyptian Muslim women. The various forms of liberation Muslim women see advocated in the West are often understood by them as even more insidious forms of bondage. They look at social and political circumstances in the West and see men and women in conflict, rather than functioning complementarily as in the Islamic system. They fear what they see as inevitable loss of male protection and support and reject isolated individualism. Thus we find that certain traditional practices that were historically imposed on women are now being reinterpreted in forms that many Egyptian women not only accept but consciously choose as a means of affirming their allegiance to Islam. One interesting example of this is to be found in the adoption of new forms of dress. As the century wore on, it became increasingly clear to Muslims in many parts of the Middle East that the wholesale adoption of Western ways would have undesirable consequences. The complex elements in increased Islamic consciousness of the last decade cannot be detailed here, but it is clear that many Muslim women have felt the need, with men, to affirm their identity as Muslims and to indicate in the process their disenchantment with many aspects of Western culture. They choose this garb voluntarily as a sign of allegiance to Islam. Not all of the educated women, of course, applaud this change in dress. Some feminists are outraged at what they see as

a return to purdah. Often more interested in improving the status of women than in affirming the principles of Islam, they nonetheless look to possibilities in their own culture rather than to Western models for achieving the equality they desire. Insofar as these reflect the ways in which they are allowed to be Muslim¹ or self-consciously attempt to identify themselves as Muslim² we can call them religious. What is clear is that within the possibilities afforded to them by their respective circumstances social, educational, economic, they have developed an elaborate set of ways in which to exert power in the face of designated male authority. Struggling on many levels to achieve what they believe to be right and fair, they also sagely recognize that the more viable option may lie in maintaining³ often through various kinds of manipulation⁴ a system that works for them. But in context, within the total Islamic system, it is the only viable way. I look at your American system of liberation for women and I see families falling apart and moral structures collapsing. If it is necessary for my husband to have the last word⁵ then let him. And in the end, I can usually get my way by other means. Generally felt to predate Islam, they are also found in Ethiopia, Sudan, and the Arabian peninsula. In the private zar, the possessed woman dresses in her best clothing and is referred to as the bride. Many ceremonies even include the use of animal blood possibly symbolizing the mandatory bleeding accompanying first intercourse on the wedding night. John Wiley and Sons, , ⁶ Associated University Presses, , 61⁷ Syracuse University Press, , 71⁸

Chapter 9 : Social Life in Egypt

Part of the social service aspect of Islamâ€”traditionally provided for by the paying of the zakat tax usually by malesâ€”middle- and upper-class women for some decades in Egypt have organized and participated in Muslim associations for social service and change.

For example, an Alexandria church was bombed on New Years , killing 21 worshippers. That has been the story of the Middle East, where Muslims have overwhelmed Christian communities with violence and demography. One example is Lebanon, where the Christian population was halved in the 20th century, from 84 percent in to 40 percent in . The recent fall of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak brought hope and opportunity to people long oppressed by an unpopular dictator and his subordinates. Coptics joined Muslims in the Tahrir Square protests, but so far the freedoms they desired remain elusive and the minority Christian community is under siege. Paul Marshall, senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, says the actual number of attacks on Copts have increased since Mubarak stepped down. Security guard Magdy Wahib was at the church entrance when services concluded shortly after midnight. Wahib was among nearly Christians injured in the attack. Twenty-three others were killed. They know the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church and will persevere. Fighting the Majority Coptics say they are not treated as equals even though they were the majority in Egypt for more than 1, years. Today, Christians make up only about 13 percent of the population while 86 percent of Egyptians are Muslim. Christians rarely receive government permission to build new churches. Members of a church in Giza, a city near Cairo, told CBN News they obtained a building permit after a lengthy 10 year battle. In November , security police laid siege to their partially constructed building. Two Christians were killed and 20 others were blinded in the attack. Taxi driver Naseer Fakhry Bakheet is now unemployed because he lost sight in his left eye after being hit by a rubber bullet. As if we are not human-only like animals without any rights. As if we are not Egyptians. A new wave of assaults are coming from the Egyptian army. After local police abandoned their station, the monks at St. The army responded by sending soldiers with tanks and light artillery to destroy the wall. Three people were injured, including a monk whose spleen had to be removed because of the attack. Christians say the incident is just another example of why they need protection from a new government. But the Muslim Brotherhood â€” the strongest political group in Egypt right now â€” insists that Islamic Sharia law remain the basis of Egyptian society. The group also opposes democratic changes in the constitution that would grant equal rights and allow Christians and Muslim women to become president. Human rights advocate Monir Bishara spends most of his spare time on Facebook sharing democratic ideas with young people. He says many Egyptians are religious, but will not support a theocratic government similar to the one in Iran. Marshall feels the United Nations and the U. State Department are naive and overly optimistic about the Muslim Brotherhood. They won an election. They fear what may come. Still, many like Father Halmanout will stay no matter what happens. The One who is covering us will save us.