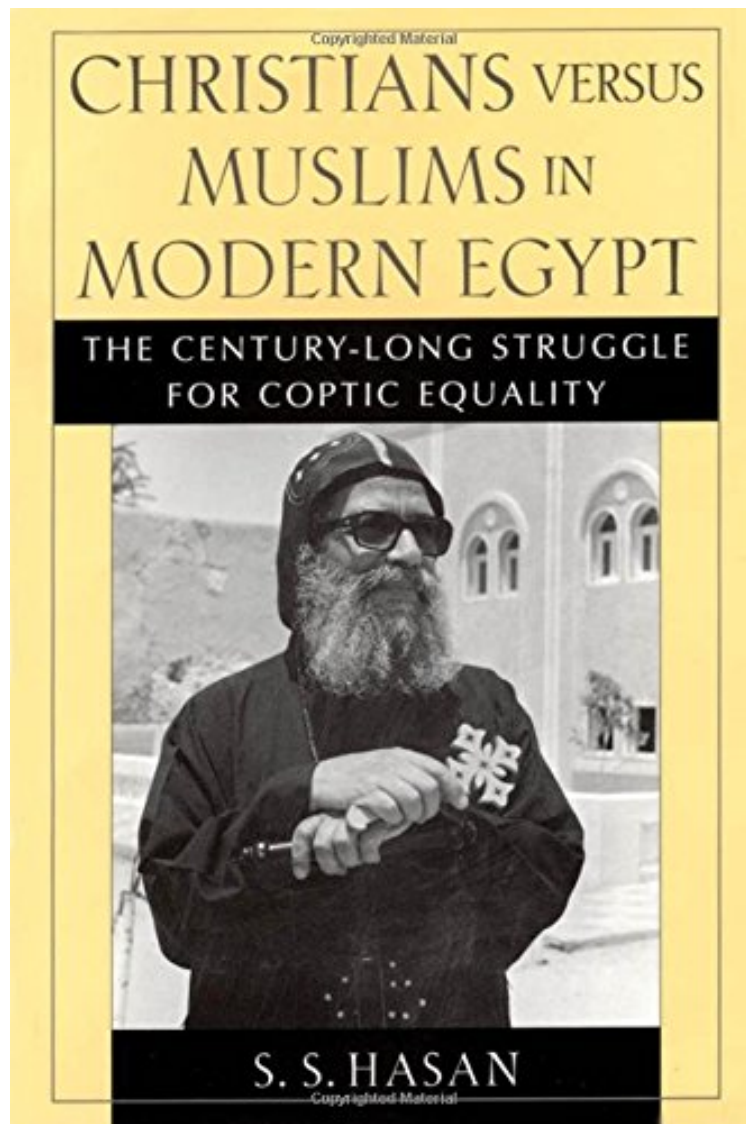


[Download ebook] Christians versus Muslims in Modern Egypt: The Century-Long Struggle for Coptic Equality

## Christians versus Muslims in Modern Egypt: The Century-Long Struggle for Coptic Equality

*S. S. Hasan*

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**S. S. Hasan : Christians versus Muslims in Modern Egypt: The Century-Long Struggle for Coptic Equality** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Christians versus Muslims in Modern Egypt: The Century-Long Struggle for Coptic Equality:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Sana Hasan intelligently observes and describes how on-the-ground

beliefsBy Kirolos BarsoumArguably the most well written and insightful book on the topic of Copts in modern Egypt. Sana Hasan intelligently observes and describes how on-the-ground beliefs, ideas, and faith have transformed the Coptic community in Egypt into its current "modern" form. She argues that Coptic modernizers were able to use the Coptic church's traditional authority to carry out their visions to mobilize and empower Copts. Her academic yet colloquial discussion of the differences between the visions of the modernizers highlights strands of thought that will strike anyone who has grown up with Copts as familiar. This book is full of "aha" moments that explain where our priorities, practices, and church culture comes from. I highly recommend this book to any Copt looking to understand the Church and why it behaves in the way it does. Also, as a plus, while at times Hasan does criticize some of the darker aspects of the church, overall, she praises the massive transformation that the church was able to carry out among its parishioners as a herculean effort.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Naim EdwardsIt was great~11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. The Sunday School Movement and Its LegacyBy Tron HontoThe unfortunately acrimonious title of Hasan's work should not detract from the genuinely sound and insightful analysis of the national and church politics of Coptic identity in 20th century Egypt. This is a genuinely unique work that should be read by every serious student of the Mid East.The essential thesis of this rests on the assertion that in Coptic experience, traditional and church hierarchy proved to be dynamic resources for modernizing the community. Such an assertion is highly counter-intuitive, but Hasan demonstrates with seemingly effortless skill just how well this paradigm fits the Coptic experience. For her, Coptic modernity appears as both a competitor with the modernization project of the Egyptian state and an Egyptian manifestation of the turn-of-the-century politicization of ethnic identities.This book almost entirely focuses on the founding generation of the Sunday School Movement, which took the reigns of public church leadership vis--vis the state from the rich, westernized elites whose influence the Free Officer coup destroyed, and how the subsequent generation had to and continues to learn how to negotiate its legacies, rivalries and politics. Here, the perspicacity concerning Church and lay politics becomes demonstrably profound-exhibiting a level of familiarity only made possible by years of experience. Her insights in this regard are perhaps the most valuable.Moreover, controversial topics are addressed with unflinching transparency. Thus, neither does she neglect to address pressing issues of religious discrimination, disenfranchisement and marginalization facing the Copts in an increasingly Islamicized Egypt, nor intra-ecclesiastical problems such as the sometimes intractable authoritarianism of the church clerisy, nor the often immiserated position of women, etc.

The Copts of Egypt are the largest Christian minority in the Middle East. In recent years they have often figured in the news as victims of bloody attacks by Islamic militants.Christians versus Muslims in Modern Egypt is the first study of Christian identity politics in contemporary Egypt. S.S. Hasan begins by looking at how the Coptic generation of the 1940s and 1950s remembered, recovered, and imagined the ancient history of Christianity in Egypt in order to weld the Copts into a unified nation, resistant to the growing encroachments of Islam. She argues that this interpretation of history, in which Egyptian martyrs figure prominently, made possible the rebirth of the Coptic church and community-in much the same way as the preservation of Hebrew and the historical memory of Jewish tribulations served the purpose of national reconstruction of the state of Israel.The bulk of the book focuses on the period beginning with the consecration of Pope Shenuda in 1971. Drawing on extensive interviews with church leaders, clergy, and others Hasan finds that during this period the responsibilities of the church for the welfare of the Coptic community grew immeasurably. Church leaders arrogated to themselves the exclusive right to the political representation of their community and reconceived their role from the narrow care of souls to the promotion of economic and cultural efflorescence of the entire Coptic community. The leaders of this revival, she shows, have nurtured a potent and distinctive religious culture with a sense of communal pride and identity in an environment in which they were increasingly exposed to discrimination and outright hostility.

"Hasan's candid and well-researched work is an important contribution to understanding the church in today's Egypt."-- International Bulletin of Missionary Research"Hasan provides the best possible introduction to the experience of religious minorities in the contemporary Arab world: an insightful and illuminating analysis of the internal politics of the Coptic community in Egypt. The reconstruction of Coptic identity over the last half century, in response to growing Islamic hostility, makes a fascinating story."--Michael Walzer, Professor of Social Science, Institute for Advanced Study"Hasan once again explores the complexities of religion and modernity, this time through a thorough and provocative examination of the twentieth century reform movement within the Egyptian Coptic Church. In simultaneously locating the impulse to reform in an internal dynamic within Coptic history and society and in the wider social change in the largely Muslim society of Egypt, Hasan provides a comprehensive and accessible history of the modern Coptic Church and its role in Egyptian society. In that historical interpretation, Hasan embeds a subtle and intriguing contribution to the larger, more general literature on religion in the modern world--a literature that has too long ignored the experience of the Christian communities of the Middle East. This book deserves a wide audience, not only among readers who want to understand modern Egypt but those who want to comprehend the many ways in which religious beliefs and institutions respond to modernity."--Lisa Anderson, Columbia UniversityAbout

the Author S.S. Hasan is an independent scholar and the author of *Enemy in the Promised Land*. She has reported on Israel and Egypt for *The New York Times*. A graduate of Harvard University, she was later an Associate of Harvard's Center of Middle Eastern Studies, where she completed the writing of this book.