Faith in Civil Society
Religious Actors as Drivers of Change

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Religion, civil society and women: Reflections from the the Middle East and North Africa

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On faith and politics

“Please, please don’t say anything negative or critical about Islam. It is your faith!”

Such were the words of my late mother, as I decided to embark upon the journey of studying the tensions in my part of the world – the Middle East – between religion, governance and human rights for my Doctorate. These three issues were structuring the dynamics of our lives, whether in terms of local and international politics, social issues or even economics. Whether it was in our micro family or within the entire region, religion, in this case Islam, was it. Having worked on and with non-governmental organizations, dealing with the extremely tricky subject of human rights for several years, I felt it was inevitable that at one stage, I had to critically examine why it was that religious arguments seemed to be the ones that all protagonists – whether those governing or those in opposition – were bandying about, and why it was that women were so symbolic a terrain of contention between all these – largely – males.

I also came across some academics, particularly Western ones, who were far more comfortable when dealing with the Middle East, to lump people and ways of thinking together into certain simplistic categories, such as ‘fundamentalism’ (eg ‘Islamic fundamentalism’ as part of religious fundamentalism). Some of my activist colleagues, on the other hand, were equally attracted by this simple process of categorization – or naming – which made ‘the enemy’ easier to label and distinguish. The resulting
thought process goes thus: religious fundamentalism is anti-democratic and anti-women; thus, religious fundamentalists are enemies of democracy and women’s rights; thus, anyone arguing about/for religion is against democracy and women’s rights. So the solution is to not engage with religion, at all. Such people, as ‘non-democrats,’ cannot be engaged in the struggle for democracy. The solution to all the world’s ills was: if you must have religion, then keep it personal.

At the same time, politics is part of everyday life. Who says that the higher price of flour, or a loaf of bread, determined because global markets were allowed by legislators/policy makers to become greedy without any limits, is not a political issue? So when it came to faith, why was that ‘just’ personal? Those who speak in the name of religion do not do so ‘personally’; they create entire agendas of governance, economics, culture, and social interaction, based on their understanding of what is religious. Millions are swayed by these agendas; indeed, millions vote on the basis of such ‘religious agendas.’ Surely, voting is an act of democracy, so how can one afford not to actively own this agenda?

Studying the work of women of faith, representing different religious traditions (see for example Karam 2000 and Apawo Phiri et al 2000), and working with communities of faith, teaches you a number of important lessons. Not only are women of faith the bulwark of faith-based services – forming, in some instances, over 90 percent of basic service providers in religious communities – but whether Traditional African or Chinese, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, or Baha’i, these women of faith see a huge difference between the spirit of their faith and the practices done in the name of their religion.

Many of these women, through their remarkable intellectual endeavors and activism in both public and private domains, seek to reclaim their religious heritage. They reinterpret the understandings of religion, such that faith becomes central to practice, rather than as in the current paradigm, where the religious institution is the focus of practice and its sole interpreter. Part of the significance of this work is the affirmation of the fact that far from being solely a tool of women’s oppression, religion is a fundamental aspect of the struggle for human emancipation, and with it, for women’s rights. There is no way that this process of reclaiming the
religious can take place by ignoring religion and castigating or alienating those who would speak in its name, or indeed, assuming that only the religious institutions represent the ‘religious.’

Events in the Middle East continue to inspire us and are indicative of the fact that to be a believer in human rights, in democracy and in feminism, one has to appreciate how the religious character is as much a part of the struggle to understand one’s self, and the identity of being religious *per se*, as religion is part of the social, economic and political fabric of our societies. That is an understanding that no politician, caught in the web of fighting for political power, in the midst of conflicting ideals, would be able to explain.

In addition, there is an increasing body of literature pointing towards the realization that one can be a person of faith, and a feminist, at the same time. Religious feminism, including feminist theology, is a lived reality, borne of the struggles of women of faith for their rights – with their faith as a constructive part of that struggle.

Ten to twenty years ago, the confluence of religion and mainstream political activism was deemed by many scholars and politicians alike to be at best, a ‘lack of awareness of secular realities.’ Today, religion and politics are the stuff of many a graduate course in almost all universities, not to mention how they adorn the headlines of plenty of books and publications. Religion and politics, the sacred and the political, and several other variations of the same theme, is definitely ‘in’ (see especially Rubenstein 1987; Benavides and Daly 1989; Berger 1999; Norris and Inglehart 2004). And for good reason. With the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union came a near eclipse of the grand political meta-narratives of communism and socialism. Left alone as supposedly the victor, liberalism eventually found itself stranded on the murkier shores of globalisation. The latter are awash with hypocritical and morally corrupt political regimes, serious global economic disparities, global warming and debilitating effects on the environment, armed civil conflicts, and with transnational acts of terrorism as only icing on the cake.

Ringing in the collective global ears are the mantras of charismatic religious personas, and the ethos of religio-political parties working simultaneously, it would seem, on the mind (providing new mobilising
ideologies), and the body (serving many people’s economic welfare in the form of education, health services and even pension plans in some countries). Whether it is the Christian Coalition of the US playing a strong role in the election (and governance decisions) of the Bush Administration, the Hindu BJP Party in India ruling for many years and now in opposition, or the ongoing influence of Iranian religious clerics in the political decision-making, the fact is, religion and politics are today’s most well-known bed fellows.

Where the United States boasts the Christian Coalition (see eg Eck 2001; Danforth 2006), mainland European countries in the 1990s and first years of the 21st century hosted a re-emergence of rightist political thought – the kind championed by French Le Pen, and Dutch Pim Fortyn. Even where the star of the respective figureheads faded, much of their political rhetoric, which appealed to some of their economically disgruntled populations, was incorporated into mainstream political discourse. The present-day campaigning discourse of Nicolas Sarkozy attests precisely to these dynamics.

Martin Marty (2005, pp 161-162) sums up the relationship in the following lines:

That division of life into spheres worked better when religion was more credibly viewed as a private affair. Today, while it certainly has not lost its personal and private appeal, religion is highly public. It is evident in the prosecution of war and peace, in violence and reconciliation. One confronts its images in the arts and entertainment world. In any case, it certainly is no stranger to politicians in a world where “faith-based” enterprises are not confined to the United States.

So where does this leave us? Clearly with a need to re-evaluate the ways in which religion is understood, the varied protagonists thereof, and the actions that need to be undertaken to deal with terror. But to concretise what is being argued for here, let us use political Islam, or Islamism, as an example.
Political Islam/Islamism – an Arab case study

Islamism’s emergence in the 1980s in the Arab world appeared to grab Western headlines, with events such as the assassination of the Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat, and variations of kidnappings, bombings, and armed conflict in Lebanon, Egypt and Algeria – to name but a few. Almost since the 1980s then, political Islam was perceived in the Western public consciousness as synonymous with violence. This impression has almost been stamped by a searing rod in Western collective consciousness by unfolding events in the Arab world, together with ongoing bombings and attacks elsewhere (ie the Paris subway bombings, US Embassy attacks in Nairobi and Dar es Salam, World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, followed by Bali, Madrid, London, Glasgow, and so on). Needless to say, the conflict between the two Palestinian factions of Hamas and Fateh, as it unfolded in the occupied Palestinian territories, has done nothing to enhance the image of political Islam.

Islamism is an extremely diverse stream of political thinking, which in and of itself is only one of the many political ideologies within the Muslim world. In fact, this is but a fraction of the different forms of social and political mobilization for social change that take place among Muslims in general – and certainly amongst Muslim communities in the Western hemisphere.3

Various authors have analysed political Islam (Kepel, Roy, Esposito, Piscatori, Halliday, Marty and Appleby, Abdel Malek, Norton, Tibi, Voll, Hunter, and Sivan, to mention but a few). Often, terms such as Islamic fundamentalism, salafism, jihadi, and Islamic radicalism have been used to explain the roots and objectives of all of these movements. Much debate took place, particularly in the late 1980s and 90s, about appropriate nomenclature. For the context of this paper, suffice it here to say that the term Islamism is considered more appropriate to describe a continuum of movements, which have a quintessentially political agenda, revolving around Islamising (rendering more Islamic) the structures of governance and those of the overall society. Shari‘a, or the compendium which is Islamic laws, are considered by many Islamists to be a key way of bringing about this Islamization as a tool for social change.
For many Islamists, Islamisation as a political agenda is a means to bring about justice – politically, economically and socially. To be an Islamist, it is by no means enough to be a Muslim, nor is it even sufficient to be devout in your private life. Rather, an Islamist must be committed to active public engagement in the quest for a more Islamic (read: just) society. All Islamists will share this ultimate aim.4

But what constitutes an ‘Islamic’ (or just) society, or Islamic governance? And what methods should be used to achieve this aim? These are amongst the most important questions around which Islamists will differ (often radically and, as we see in present day Afghanistan and Iraq, often violently) from each other. There is no homogenous Islamist entity. Thus, not all Islamists are alike, and there is a serious misrepresentation when they are all lumped together as either ‘fundamentalists,’ ‘fanatics,’ or ‘terrorists.’ The latter obscures the significant differences within Islamist political thought and praxis.

‘Moderate’ Islamists5 maintain that change will come about only through long-term education, social and economic engagement, constituency building and advocacy, whereby increasing numbers of people become ‘followers’ and eventually espouse the political ideology cum social action package. Moderates will generally advocate for and participate in elections, and in several majority Muslim countries and societies, where this is permitted,6 they will register as political parties and organize themselves as such. One notable difference between Islamist – and even other Christian socio-political movements – and other political entities is that the moderates tend to have relatively well-defined social agenda(s), often exemplified by their provision of important social services (eg schools and clinics) in their respective communities. The latter lends them credibility and support among the various social classes (particularly the larger poorer ones) and thus constitutes an important factor in their political outreach and popularity. Moderate Islamists will generally not condone violence as a means to an end. However, depending on the situation (eg the Palestinian struggle for self-determination), they may well refrain from outright condemnation of suicide bombings with the proviso that
the targets should be military and not civilian, and the act is considered as self-defense.

‘Radical’ Islamists, or religio-political movements, are often referred to as such precisely because to many of them, the Machiavellian ‘the ends justify the means,’ is a popular refrain. Violence thus becomes a means to what they perceive as a ‘necessary’ or even ‘holy’ end. Nevertheless, some ‘radicals’ may veer towards the moderate end of the continuum on specific issues, or during certain times. An example of the latter is the Lebanese Hizbullah (Party of Allah), which has a history of anti-Israeli struggle and became particularly notorious during the 1980s for the kidnapping of Westerners in Beirut. In the 1990s, Hizbullah formed itself into a legitimately recognized political party, ran for elections and won seats in the Lebanese parliament. Their decision to participate in electoral politics was certainly based on realpolitik,7 but it was also a choice for a relatively moderate strategy – selectively applied. Such a shift has implications for whether or not (and how) shari`a8 should be applied.

On women – the Litmus test

Assessing where various parties stand on the ‘question of women in the Muslim world’ provides an important insight into their ‘ideological foundations.’ The parliamentary elections in Egypt at the beginning of 2006, together with the success of Hamas in the Palestinian legislative elections also in 2006, witnessed a significant rise in the Muslim Brotherhood presence in Parliament in Egypt. This, together with the parliamentary elections in Egypt in 2011, have been attributed – among many things – to the activism of women members in these parties.

Although the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood does not have women in its shura (consultative) council (its main decision-making body), women are nevertheless a key part of its outreach as well as its constituency. The same applies to Hamas, which boasts a wide popularity among women as well as their representation in the newly formed Palestinian Assembly. Both as articulators and disseminators of the ideology, and as voters, women have provided the edge to the ascent of the Islamist parties in these two countries. In fact, elsewhere I have noted how it took one woman
and her team of women, to ‘rescue’ the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood from annihilation by the Nasserist regime in the 1960s (see Karam 1998).

All of these dynamics have repercussions on the extent to which these parties formulate their policies on a range of critical social issues, and will undoubtedly play a role in the interaction these parties have with those in the Western world who are calling for an active concern for women’s well-being as part of the ‘smart power’ of US foreign policy interventions (see Verveer 2012).

The decision-making and activist roles attributed to and played by women in these parties can also act as yet another significant marker in distinguishing between diverse religiously inspired political activists. Moderate Islamists for instance, have women members active in the various echelons of the party structure (and different parties have differing numbers of women in various positions within the hierarchy). These women are not hidden from view, but on the contrary, play visible and public roles (eg the AK party’s wives of the President and Prime Minister). Radical Islamists however, as a rule, rarely have women in their decision-making structures (and if they do, it would be anything but publicly done). Radical Islamists have not shied away from recruiting women to carry out acts associated with violence, whether to carry and deliver arms, or even as suicide bombers. The distinction becomes far less clear-cut, however, in the complex Palestinian context, where Hamas too has been alleged to recruit women suicide bombers (see Victor 2003).

Today, many spokespersons of political Islam, or Islamism, find themselves, at best, on the defensive (about their diversity and their aspirations) and, at worst, cornered – and fighting. This may often translate into the women protagonists ‘going more underground’ or becoming less visible – while nevertheless working tirelessly to promote the Islamist causes by mobilizing and serving their communities socially and politically. It is this tendency to vilify, or alternatively to attempt to marginalize Islamists, which I would warn against, and state that it requires serious self-reflection and pause on the part of researchers and policymakers alike, as the paragraphs below will also discuss.
Women in war and women building peace

The predominant concern with the nexus of religion, violence and politics is overly dramatized, and it may have resulted in overlooking factors that led to critical sea changes in attitudes and behaviors – eg the Arab revolutions. We need to revise some critical parameters of women taking action. The following outlines the most notable of these parameters – and caveats.

Women are as culpable as men in threatening to commit violent acts, inciting violence, and actually undertaking acts of brutality and violence. They are also leaders of change and builders of communities.

Far from assuming a more ‘nurturing’ nature of women, their experiences in political processes repeatedly indicates that it is the process – which remains largely male-dominated and operates with male norms – which structures the attitudes, responses and acts undertaken by women in positions of decision-making authority. Hence, it is not always to be assumed that women alone change politics, especially not if and when they remain in the minority.

Even when women achieve a critical mass in any political or decision-making context, they do not always rise to support, overtly or covertly, other women, or women’s interests. This is due to several reasons, which vary from tactical calculations to downright disinterest (the latter more rare).

Development experience thus far points to the critical need for women and men to work together, as opposed to in separate interest-related camps. This entails reassessing how challenges are defined in the first place, as well as re-evaluating the methodology of finding solutions, and making important allies across the political and gender-segregated spectrum.

There are current ideological fault-lines between secular women’s organizations and faith-based ones. Each ‘group’ tends to work in isolation from the other. This can and does constitute a fundamental stumbling block when it comes to much needed strategic alliances.

It remains overly simplistic to assume that one group of women (or men) from the Western world, will be able to ‘help’ others in the non-Western world, to overcome its challenges. The perspective of the West extending ‘a helping hand,’ whether in the name of ‘noblesse oblige’
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(otherwise known as the “White man’s burden”), or ‘freedom,’ has already created centuries of resentment and failures measured in human lives.

Preventing misunderstandings, or even anticipating positive social change requires, as a basis, that women ally themselves with men, and with their counter-parts in the faith-based movement, to challenge stereotypes, and create critical ‘spaces of communication.’ The creation of such strategic alliances requires clarity and distinctions to be made as to the precise nature of the terrorism in question (what specific tactics), and the reasons behind its emergence, as well as whom the protagonists are. Moreover, these strategic alliances have to be built on a level playing field, and not, as can be evidenced in some literature on providing handouts.

Reflecting on the unfolding revolutions in the Arab region

Remarkably, even though we are now increasingly lamenting population increases in many debates about climate change and diminishing planetary resources, it has been possible to overlook the fact that part of this demography was a youth bulge – which many saw as a predominant cause for concern only. This concern was articulated variedly, but mostly in terms of the following (oversimplified) equation:

Unemployed youth + poverty + a healthy dose of sense of indignity and injustice = higher potential for terrorism, drugs and violence.

We failed to grasp the possibility of a radically different (and equally simplified) modern-day equation:

60 percent of the population (youth – with a large majority of girls and women among them) + access to social media and cell phones + a healthy dose of a sense of indignity and injustice long shaped by an active agenda for social change which is religiously inspired or touched in some way = revolution.

These revolutions are spearheaded by the young, who used social media to ignite the revolution. Yet, there was a time, when some of the regimes in the desperate throes of survival, shut off the Internet and cell phones. Still the revolution continued, and grew beyond the national borders. How? Because the 24/7 satellite news coverage, combined with the courage and creativity of young demonstrators – male and female – risking their futures and sacrificing their lives, as well as the anticipation of further degradation resulting from poverty and austerity measures
announced by despised regimes, in different ways, propelled remaining generations to revolt.

One of the most frustrating aspects of the largely Western discourses about the unfolding revolutions has been the constant articulation of the fear that now that the (autocratic) regimes are toppled, the Islamists (read: terrorists) are bound to take over and create Islamic/shari’a-run states – ie the Iranian revolution revisited. The reason this is frustrating is because it continues to see developments in the Arab region through the same prisms, which were used to sustain autocracy in the first place. Moreover, this perspective also turns a blind eye to the revolution in consciousness which has effectively taken place.

It is important to be concerned about which forms of political systems, actors, or even policies evolve. But more important is that the revolution has already resulted in the single most important contemporary change in Arab consciousness: retrieving a sense of dignity. Fashioned by the young, this dignity is successfully conducting other revolutions. This sense of dignity is powerful in its multi-faceted components: continuity with a historic identity, a novel manner of articulation, and its birth out of successful transformations from oppression to freedom.

This dignity also entails a revival of the sense of responsibility and solidarity towards each other – something that had almost become extinct. There has been organization and solidarity manifested within the one country, among the different political currents (secular and religious, left and right wing) and socio-economic strata (rich, middle class and poor; rural and urban; tribal and non-tribal). This solidarity meant a continuous demonstration of popular revolt, which simultaneously served to provide security for the various neighborhoods, villages, towns and cities; organized food, medicine, sanitation and even recreation services for those participating in the demonstrations (including the elderly, children and disabled), as well as for those who remained in their homes; and withstood the most violent assaults – all the while remaining non-violent.

Since the struggles for independence in the mid 20th century, dignity is inclusive of both genders. The oft asked question is: will the women go back to their homes after these revolutions? No chance. For three reasons: because those that came out to revolt were already in the public spaces;
because since the end of the 1970s, with the rise of Islamist ideology, the boundary between ‘public’ and ‘private’ has become mythical, as women’s personal attire became political statements (see Karam 1998b); and because the very same social media which started and continues to manage the revolutions neither recognizes nor enables gender distinctions.

These are the features which we must bear witness to within the Arab region. These are the elements of a new consciousness of the Arab *demos*, which in turn, will shape whatever political institutions to emerge.

**Moving forward with agendas of research and action on religion and civil society**

The following points highlight elements of a plan of action, all of which amount to a key verb, or action, needed: transform.

Transform our own cultures of development. It is unrealistic to assume that we know it all and are usually right. But it is a grave error of Voltairean proportions – as in his infamous quote that “if we believe in absurdities, we will commit atrocities” – to assume that all development actors are culturally competent, or even culturally literate – let alone ‘savvy.’ We are not. And the cultural literacy we do have, varies widely. Many of us are mired in attempts to extricate ourselves from the clutches of a dominant secular development culture, which accuses any effort to appreciate, let alone engage with, faith and faith-inspired knowledge, as an insidious act to relativize violence and human rights abuse. Being a touch more culturally inquisitive about indigenous praxis, which is congruous to secular human rights values, would be an important step in the direction of broadening alliances for more peaceful transformations, and a creative attempt to redress some stubborn development inequities.

Revisit the rationale behind existing alliance-building practice. To date, a great deal of political strategies and economic outreach is done on the North-South (or West-East) axis, the implication being that knowledge and experience apparently goes one way only. Yet, countries in the South have a great deal to learn from each other, particularly where there are shared contexts and success stories. The latest revolutionary transitions, for instance, show that the experiences of the Tunisians for the Egyptians, and of both for the Bahrainis and Libyans and other Arabs, are extremely
important. Also, rather than looking only at the revolutionary trajectory in Eastern Europe or Latin America, the Turkish experiment in post-revolutionary alliance-building for women may be just as instructive.

*Appreciate the role that social media plays, but do not overdraw those reserves.* Traditional means of communication and exchange of experiences are not altogether redundant, by far. In fact, one of the interesting experiences in Egypt and Libya points to using the oldest ways of calling people to activism (literally walking the streets and shouting) – once the Internet was cut off.

*Nuance the manner in which varied forms of research about ‘the other’ are carried out.* Even those of us from the regions or countries are not impervious to missing realities unfolding under our very noses. Many of my generation had no anticipation of what the youth were up to – nor could we have imagined what they are capable of.

*Support initiatives at the communal and grassroots levels.* Often, programmes that take place at the macro levels (eg by governments, the United Nations, etc) are the ones that receive the most resources. While this is important and will likely remain so for the short term, the reality is that much of the activism and desire for change does not always manifest itself in global statements. The other side of the globalisation coin, ironically, also means that the local and regional levels are becoming important sites of protest, contestation and arbitration. Hence the need to actively and systematically target these levels, and to do so by locating and listening to the youth voices.

*Form conceptual and programmatic bridges* between the secular and the faith-based women’s networks.

*Organize systematically and deliberately to target men around gender equality and equity initiatives.* It should not only be ‘granting permission’ to men on our own terms as feminists, but we must be strong enough to listen to their terms and attempt to reach a shared compromise. We may well surprise ourselves at just how far many men – including religious ones – have come in their gender rights journey, and how willing they are to partake of a shared one.
Rephrase the language of outreach. There should be an implicit and explicit acknowledgement of the importance of religion in people’s lives, and no moral or political judgement on, or prejudice towards, those who wish to have religion as central in their lives. Further, there should also be a clearer respect of the positive role that religion can play.

Monitor progress by being brave enough to invest in a relatively new currency of international development: indicators of social transformation. Politicians, heads of development agencies, and researchers/academics still need to refine existing benchmarks to assess what specific social change is being made, as opposed to only counting which social programs are in place, and how many people benefit from them. Even if now we celebrate that we segregate the data according to sex (but sex only), the presence of social programmes and access thereto is important, but by no means sufficient. As an example of this point, let us ponder this question: if we had the most accurate data about more people with access to more social protection programmes in the Arab countries, would that have prevented the revolutions that are evolving?

I doubt it.

Notes
1. Dr Azza Karam serves as a Senior Advisor at the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). All the opinions expressed in this article belong to the author alone, and are not expressive of the positions or opinions of the United Nations, UN agencies, staff or Member States and/or Executive Boards.

2. This figure is based on my own research after several years of culling information from various religious organizations around the world, and actual field observations from numerous communities in the United States, South and South East Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

3. For more on the transnational connections between Islamist ideology in Muslim countries, Europe and the US, and the variations between Islamist positions on a range of issues, see Karam 2004.

4. This partly explains why the new post-revolutionary formations, in Egypt for example, boast some Christian members.

5. An example of a moderate Islamist party in the Muslim world is the Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin, which came into existence in 1928 in Egypt), and which has branched in different countries since, and is very diverse in its structure and organizational method(s). Today’s Hamas in Palestine is a descendant and branch of the Brotherhood.
6. Lebanon, Jordan, the Palestinian Territories, Algeria, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, to name but a few.

7. An indication that the Israeli withdrawal from the South of Lebanon did in fact lead to a questioning of the longevity of Hizbullah’s claim to legitimacy. Needless to say, with the Lebanese-Israeli events of August 2006, the legitimacy of Hizbullah ceased to be an issue, but it has effectively become an icon to (reinstated) Arab pride after the humiliation of the 1967 war.

8. Commonly translated as Islamic law, it is worth noting that shari`a is not one body of text or interpretation, but rather the sum of various juridical interpretations collated over a certain course of time. Thus, there is no one shari`a law, but a whole set of man-made laws – some of which may differ according to the specific school of interpretation followed. This would also partly explain why certain applications of shari`a differ from one Muslim country to another.

9. Or ‘resisting’ as some, like Hamas’s Ismail Haniye (the Prime Minister in the former Palestinian ruling coalition), would have it. But nowhere was this defensiveness more evident that when Essam El-Eryan, the spokesperson for the Egyptian MB had to clarify in several media interviews, exactly what their position is and would be, pending the Egyptian revolution of January 25, 2011, thereby consistently ‘minimizing’ their role in the revolution.

10. For an overview of women’s ascendance to national legislatures, and their impact within them, see Karam 1998a as well as the 2nd edition of the same book with Jullie Ballington as co-editor (2006).


12. Curt Weeden (2003, pp 215-230) for instance, in a book with a title which itself signifies a problem (How Women Can Beat Terrorism: How Women in the U.S., Europe And Other Developed Nations Can Empower Women in Poor Countries – And Move The World Towards a More Peaceful Tomorrow), mentions 3 steps that women and men can take: “1. Use foreign aid primarily to attack poverty and hopelessness at the grassroots level. 2. Give women and women’s programmes the highest priority when deciding how to allocate foreign aid. 3. Put the brakes on population growth in places where the addition of more people increases the probability of global problems.”

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