

MERVAT HATEM, Egyptian discourses on Gender & Political Liberalization: do secularist & Islamist views really differ?

The writer argues that it is not true that secular-liberal regimes, are generally favorable to women, as most analysts do believe. On the contrary, the secularist & Islamist discourses share centrality of domesticity as part of their definitions of femininity. Both secular state & the Islamists, accept qualified rights of women in the public arena when the interests of the state(& the family) required it, & because of the economic crisis, both discourses shared the demand that women return to the home. There are no radical differences between the two, & there is a similarity between the options offered by both of them.

She uses the Marxian & Freudian (economic & psychological) paradigms of analysis in analyzing women's conditions in the M.E. & Egypt especially, as well as using the Western feminists theories assumptions.

She views women in both East & West in a same common context, & a one that is separable from the rest of the society (which is obvious in her analysis of the influences of political & economic liberation on women).

She views religion as an ideology, & argues that it determines gender roles & the division of labor.