How do Islamic movements in the 19th and 20th centuries in Egypt help define Islamic modernity?

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ABSTRACT

This research article explores the concept of multiple "modernities" as a counter to Western modernity, with a specific focus on the modernization of Islam. The paper provides a historical context to the modernization of Islam by examining 18th, 19th, and 20th-century Islamic reforms and their impact on the religion while staying true to its core principles. It also examines the influence of globalization on Islamic nations, using Egypt as an example. The article challenges the Western-centric narrative of modernity by emphasizing that modernity is not confined to Europe and can emerge under different conditions in diverse regions. The study highlights the Tajdid movement, the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Salafat movement as examples of Islamic modernization efforts. The research demonstrates how these movements aimed to reform Islam while addressing global political, social, and economic changes. The article concludes that Islamic modernity is a dynamic and multifaceted phenomenon that combines traditional Islamic teachings with contemporary contexts.

Introduction

This paper introduces novel perspectives on Islamic modernity by exploring the nuanced interplay between Islamic movements and modernization within the unique socio-political context of Egypt. Unlike existing studies that often view Islamic responses to modernity as a uniform or monolithic process, this study delves into the diverse and dynamic ways in which specific Islamic groups in Egypt have engaged with and shaped modernity. This approach not only broadens the academic discourse on Islamic modernity but also highlights the potential for multiple modernities that challenge the Western-centric narrative of modern development. In this paper, the concept of multiple modernities will be explained to counter Western modernity with a focus on the modernization of Islam. To fully understand Islamic modernity, this paper will first contextualize modernity building to the 18th, 19th, and 20th-century Islamic reforms highlighting

the changes that took place with time and how Islam became modern while staying true to its roots – the Quran and Sunnah. The second half of the paper will then look at globalization in Islam through the example of Egypt to demonstrate how Islamic nations incorporated worldly cultures for their progress.

Modernity, as believed by Western historians, is a phenomenon that originated in the West after the 16th-century industrial revolution. The revolution brought about technological innovations that empowered Europeans with the notion of "modernity," enabling them to establish and rule colonies worldwide. This power imbalance shaped the economic and political structures of colonized and colonizing nations, placing the former in submissive and "traditional" roles while the latter assumed positions of authority. Western narratives often depict Europe as the sole site of technological advancement, neglecting the contributions of Asia, Africa, and other colonies. However, the industrial revolution revolutionized work globally, revealing the historical significance of technology and its roots in Africa and Asia (Arnold, 2005). Dipesh Chakrabarty argues for the importance of provincializing Europe, shifting the focus away from Europe as the center and acknowledging that every aspect of modernity cannot be confined to or credited solely to Europe. Challenging the European notion of contemporaneity, Chakrabarty highlights cleverness and emphasizes that Indians, for example, exist within the same time structure as Europeans (Chakrabarty, 2008).

As a result, while modernity is frequently identified with its origins in Europe, it is a concept that emerges within the distinct conditions of diverse regions. Scholars contend that modernity originates through the abolition of "pre-modern institutions" such as feudalism and slavery. However, because "pre-modern" institutions vary from area to region, the structure of modernity will be as different as the "pre-modern" institutions themselves. Furthermore, modernity modifies "pre-modern" practices, incorporating new aspects into existing systems of religion, governance, education, and art. According to Sudipta Kaviraj's paper, "An Outline of a Revisionist Theory of Modernity," new practices are built on pre-existing practices, preserving remnants of earlier habits and meanings. Thus, modernity is not a single, uniform process but a collection of distinct characteristics that may be identified and analyzed (Kaviraj, 2005). Such modifications to pre-existing practices and institutions can be seen in Islamic modernization movements such as the *Tajdid* movement, the Muslim Brotherhood, and the *Salafat* movement.

18th-century reform

The anxiety regarding the modernization of Islam lies in the fact that many Muslims believe that to be modern means to become "liberal" and "Western." That, in the view of many, means moving away from the teachings of Islam. Before analyzing the contemporary movements of the late 19th and 20th centuries, it is to be noted that Islamic revival took place in the 18th and early

19th centuries as well. Therefore, it is important to view the Islamic modernization of the 20th century with reference to the 18th-century industrial revolution and how the Muslim empires had started to breakdown due to the "economic and colonial intrusions of Europe" (Lapidus, 1997), but attempted to revive by reforming the Islamic thought and practice into legal, economic, and political systems. *Tajdid,* or renewal, is an 18th-century Islamic reform movement that emerged as a response to global political and economic changes. Lapidus writes, "They (*Tajdid*) arose in the context of global political and economic changes, and however diverse in their specific teachings held, as do the contemporary Islamic revival movements, certain common religious and ideological views" (Lapidus, 1997).

The decline of Muslim empires can be attributed to both internal factors and external influences. While the Muslims debated what an "authentic Islam is," the growing control of Europe over global trade had a significant impact on the economic productivity, trading profits, and revenue base of Muslim empires (Lapidus, 1997). This economic shift led to inflationary changes, weakened the Muslim empires' economic foundations, and created internal political conflicts to control domestic economies in Muslim regions. Therefore, while *Tajdid* aimed to "modernize" the Islamic teachings and, ultimately, the Islamic states, they aimed to diversify their specific teaching while sharing common religious views. *Tajdid* movements would use the reaffirmations or the teachings of the Sunni-Shari'a- Sufi synthesis. They believed that combining the Islamic legal teachings and mysticism taught in Tasawuff within Sunni Islam would make this reform easier for people to accept. Moreover, while emphasizing the Quran and the Hadith – the teachings of the Prophet – as primary sources of Islam as well as the Sufi teachings by Al–Ghazal – a school of thoughts of the Sufis, the *Tajdid* movements aimed to provide a "correct" legal practice that balances reason and faith (Lapidus, 1997).

The rise of the *Tajdid* movements led to a rise of alternative Islamic beliefs. Shi'ism – sect in Islam began to gain popularity due to the rise in Sufi beliefs and customs, and a "magical" form of Islam became more prevalent in the Indian Ocean basin, "As the Safavids made Shi'ism the official religion of Iran, Sufism also gained ever wider acceptance amongst Muslims" (Lapidus, 1997). However, these revival movements were met with resistance from Islamic circles, who regarded the imitation of the Prophet and his life as the ideal model for behavior and government. The people were not ready to accept the changing times and wanted a *genuine Islamic community*. "The internal struggle within Muslim societies to define the correct beliefs and practices of Muslims came to be closely tied to the "modernization" processes, the global political and economic transformation, of that era" (Lapidus, 1997). Globalization brought with it Western ideologies, technologies, and institutions that posed challenges to traditional Muslim societies. One such instance where Muslims could not keep up with globalization was when the British tax system was

introduced.

The British implemented a system where zamindars, previously revenue collectors, became hereditary proprietors subjected to fixed payments. They also disregarded the customary rights of landowners without formal legal documents. These changes disproportionately favored wealthy Hindu merchants and moneylenders allied with the British East India Company and British settlers. At the same time, they marginalized Muslim zamindars, peasant landowners, and sharecroppers (Lapidus, 1997). Moreover, the Tajidid movements then had to face the conservative scholars who were against the advancement of Shi'ism and the practice of Tasawuff. Therefore, the Islamic regimes were heading toward decline due to the influence of the elite scholars or *ulemas* against "Shia Islam" spreading. Due to the uneasiness of Shia Islam spreading, the Safavid dynasty in Iran and the Ottoman Empire faced decline and collapse during the 18th century (Lapidus, 1997).

Furthermore, while the *Tajdid* movement aimed to reform Islamic practices keeping in mind the changing political, social, and economic contexts of the time, the desire of the elite class to adhere to the "authentic" teachings of Islam led to this movement to ultimately meet its end. However, The *Tajdid* movement contributed to Islamic revival and modernity in several ways. Firstly, its ideology was well-suited for network formation, integration of diverse populations, and political mobilization. In fragmented societies, where divisions existed along family, tribal, regional, and ethnic lines, *Tajdid* offered a more universalistic and international form of Islam. It appealed to the Qur'an and Sunnah, emphasizing common principles rather than local or particularistic religious practices. This helped foster a sense of commitment to a shared cause and worked towards transcending social fragmentation in favor of religious and ideological unity. In commercializing societies, the reform movements served multiple purposes. They played a role in forming new communities based on Islamic solidarity among mobile individuals. These communities sought a standardized form of Islam to provide a basis of trust in commerce and political solidarity (Lapidus, 1997). Finally, *Tajdid* promoted a different orientation, emphasizing the importance of knowledge, ethical discipline, and adherence to broader religious principles. This orientation facilitated political mobilization by providing a more structured and organized framework for collective action. The *Tajdid* movement is an example of how "pre-modern" institutes differ in different regions and how this Islamic movement took the "pre-modern" Sufi movement and its teachings combined with the Quran and Sunnah to enlighten and help its followers catch up with modern times.

19th and 20th Century Islamic Modernization

While the *Tajdid* movement ultimately failed to fully achieve its aims, it paved the way for 19th and 20th-century Islamic modernization. This part of the paper will focus on modernizing Islam

through the efforts of various individuals during the 20th century, as explained by John O. Hefner in *Muslims and Modernity Culture and Society since 1800*. While several changes occurred during this period, this part will focus on the Muslim Brotherhood and the *Salafi* movement that took place in the interwar period (the time between the two world wars) (Hefner, 2010). The definition of modernity evolved during this time, with Muslim thinkers and activists striving to create distinct versions of modernity compatible with Islam. The debates shifted from proving the compatibility of Islam with Western modernity to defining an authentic Islamic modernity as seen with the Muslim Brotherhood and those that followed. Therefore, Islamic Modernity differed from the Eurocentric discourses through its religious communities and the paradoxes in this system. "Yet another aspect was religious community as a marker of identity and solidarity when conflicts arose along sectarian lines. Conflicts and struggles were aimed at replacing one faction, one prince, or one dynasty with another rather than at the reform or transformation of the political system itself (Masud et al., 2009).

Pre- Interwar Period

The Muslim Brotherhood, Al Ikhwān al Muslimīn, was started by Hasan al Banna, an Egyptian student who believed that the imperial occupation and materialism after the first world war is what led to the weakening of Islam and also resulted in the emergence of atheism in Egypt (Voll, 2011). The purpose of this Muslim organization was similar to the *Tajdid* movement – to reform Islam to solve the economic and global changes while also practicing Islamic teachings. Looking at Al-Banna's writings, he aimed to eliminate the religious ignorance that characterized Egypt in the early 20th century (Al-Banna 2013: 83, 91). Al-Banna, along with his followers, created a small school, "School of Moral Discipline (*madrasas al-tahzīb*)," where they would spend their evenings memorizing Islamic traditions and looking at different but acceptable forms of worship to develop a program of religious and practical teachings to improve the moral conditions of the Egyptian Muslim society (Jung & Zalaf, 2019). This statement explains how a modern individual Muslim self was able to grow through the Muslim Brotherhood and all that it had to offer. What started as a small group for moral improvement formed a layout on how to interpret Islamic law – the Shariʿa through the lens of changing times. This solved the problem of the "authentic" version of Islam as Al- Banna managed to educate his Brotherhood about the social and political changes through already accepted Islamic teachings, which the Egyptian Muslims had forgotten.

Therefore, the emergence of Islamic modernism in the late 19th century was a movement seeking religious and political reforms. The Muslim Brotherhood incorporated the already present systems in modern processes as modernity in politics has involved a conception of systemic transformations specified in terms of political theory and ideology. Similarly, the Muslim Brotherhood was an organization of Muslim activists hoping to revive Islam by organizing sectors

of the "common believers" for political ends. What once was an allegiance to a Caliph now changed to being a member of the Brotherhood.

Moreover, the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood can be traced back, to a significant extent, to the ideas of this Islamic reform movement. Al-Banna's teachings were accepted by the members of the Brotherhood because he followed and was familiar with the Sunni Islamic schools of law. As described by himself in his book, Hasan Al-Banna grew up in the house of a man who taught him about Islamic tradition by also keeping in mind the emergence of capitalism and the identity of the bourgeois (Al-Banna 2013: 40–42). By forwarding the teachings of the "dominant" Islamic school of thought, Al-Banna met with little resistance compared to the *Tajdid* movement. This changed with time as Al-Banna also began to embrace the Sufi teachings (Al-Banna 2013: 44) of not having a rigid Islamic system, and the once popular Muslim Brotherhood had to now answer the surfacing objections. However, Al-Banna could incorporate modern teachings because instead of going to an Islamic school like his father, Al-Banna diverged from his father's path. At the age of twelve, he went against his father's wishes and replaced the traditional kutāb (Islamic school) with a modern Egyptian primary school (Al-Banna 2013: 14–16). He further pursued his education by attending a primary teacher training school. Eventually, he joined Dar al-Ulum in Cairo, a renowned institution that combined religious and non-religious subjects for teacher training. Throughout his education, al-Banna followed the trend of professionalization in education and lived in an urban environment (Jung & Zalaf, 2019).

While al-Banna's education was influenced by professionalization and urbanization, he also distanced himself from the introverted lifestyle associated with the classical bourgeoisie. During his time in Mahmudiyya, he actively participated in religious associations focused on moral education and combating societal vice (Al-Banna 2013: 44). Al-Banna advocated organized activism to improve social morals, opposing the influence of Christian missionaries and their educational institutions. His Islamic call for reform was successful as it combined modern social activism with religious principles. "Al-Banna's modern Muslim was also a subject of knowledge, disciplined work, and organization" (Jung & Zalaf, 2019). Furthermore, Al-Banna and his Muslim Brotherhood helped understand the compatibility of Islamic teachings with the Western modernity formats before the interwar period. Moreover, it helped the people of Egypt to not be looked at as outsiders as they adopted "modern" Western ways of peer–group oriented management skills while staying true to their religion (Jung & Zalaf, 2019). Therefore, it can be said that the Muslim Brotherhood was a transnational Islamic movement that emerged as a response to colonialism and wanted to promote Islam through a system of social justice. Moreover, in this anti-colonial struggle to revive Islam once again, the Muslim Brotherhood advocated for the independence of Egypt from the imperial powers.

As Hasan Al-Banna emphasized the promise of Islamic solidarity, he also incorporated elements of anti-imperialism and anti-racism in the Brotherhood's ideology. The Brotherhood was against the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel and believed that "Palestine is an Islamic Question," and condemned the "normalization" of relations between Egypt and Israel (van der Krogt, 2015). "The ideological worldview of Hasan al-Banna provides us with an Islamic version of what Peter Wagner defined as organized modernity" (Jung & Zalaf, 2019). Using Wagner's definition, we can examine the Muslim Brotherhood via a modern lens. In his study of the social history of modernity, Peter Wagner strives to comprehend the evolution of modern social conceptions. He differentiates three sorts of modernity, each emphasizing social order. For starters, there was the 19th-century order of limited liberalism. This was followed by a highly structured mass society in the early twentieth century and, ultimately, towards the end of the twentieth century, a more diverse version of mass society with increasing liberties. According to Wagner, the deterioration of late-nineteenth-century bourgeois society, which was highly liberal but socially repressive, gave rise to several rigidly organized mass societies, including Fordist, nationalist, socialist, and fascist groups. The Muslim Brotherhood movement had a role in ending the hegemonic rule of restricted liberalism in the context of this universal social reconstruction. Wagner's three consecutive phases of modernity may be seen in Islamic history, beginning with the elitist yet comparatively liberal 19th-century Islamic reform movement intimately linked with Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) in Egypt. This was followed by the rise of organized Islamist mass movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood (1928) and, eventually, contemporary Islamic networks and organizations that played a crucial part in the Arab Spring events (Jung & Zalaf, 2019).

Interwar Period – The *Salafat* Movement

Before understanding the *Salafat* movement, it is important to analyze the Caliphate system of Islam. The caliph, or the Al-Khalifa, was the state head whom the Muslims would nominate to rule and guide them. Khalifa means successor of the Prophet (Voll, 2011), and while the system proved useful after the Prophet's death in 632 AD, by the 19th century, the Caliphate system had begun to collapse as it served little purpose now. The Ottomans argued for their right to the title due to their economic and political power; however, when the Ottoman Empire was defeated, Muslims began to fear what the end of such a long political system meant for them (Voll, 2011). The *Salafat* movement in Egypt aimed to revive this formerly collapsed system. Salafists mean the "predecessors"; these Muslim predecessors or ancestors wanted to explore Islamic teachings within modern urban society (El-Sherif, 2015). However, by the second half of the twentieth century, the *Salafat* movement, unlike the movements before, wanted to follow a certain Islamic ideology. They began to call themselves Ahl al-Hadith or Ahl al-Sunnat (El-Sherif, 2015), which

meant they were the followers of the Prophet, and their purpose was to revive Islam by spreading the word of Islam and the Prophet's teachings. Unlike the *Tajdid* movement or the Muslim Brotherhood, the Salafists wanted to define their purpose and did not promote free reasoning as taught in the Sufi schools. For them, free-reasoning was *Bidah*, teachings that do not stem from Sunnah or the Prophet's life but were brought by the other Caliphs under the Caliphate system (El-Sherif, 2015). Therefore, for the Salafists modernizing Islam meant thinking about the legal system and the social tradition within the Ahl al-Hadith teachings while also incorporating culture and education to mend according to these teachings.

For Muslim leaders, the modernization of Islam meant reviving Islamic practices in changing times by looking at early scriptures and values of Muslim ancestors and leaders and projecting them on their ongoing reality. Just like Al-Banna led the Muslim Brotherhood, the *Salafat* movement also had a leader. While more controversial than Al-Banna, Rashid Rida became an important figure for the Salafists. Rida argued against the blind following of Islam and argued that all texts should be studied and their sources must be found before believing the "ulemas" that emphasize certain teachings without actually studying them (Heffelfinger, 2007). Therefore, in 1897, he started his magazine, al-Manar, where he would take primary sources about Islam and interpret them and the Quran to spread the "correct" Islamic values (Voll, 2011). However, despite all his efforts, he was seen as a controversial figure as, along with Islam, he also promoted certain Western teachings. His support of Darwin's theory of evolution was an instance where the Muslim followers were enraged. "To justify Darwinism, Rida considered it permissible to "interpret certain stories of the Qur'an in an allegorical manner, as, for example, the story of Adam.". He also believed that the origin of the human race from Adam is a history derived from the Hebrews and that Muslims are not obliged to believe in this account" (Heffelfinger, 2007). Therefore, it can be argued that reforms and social transformations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw the retreat of religious institutions and personnel from many political, social, and cultural spheres, including law and education (Masud et al., 2009).

Rida as a leader, then emphasized that the Muslim society's lack of acceptance of Western colonialism and their ways is a reason behind their slow progress. Moreover, he also believed the acceptance of traditions without prior research of primary sources and the adaptation of Sufi "extremes" led the Muslims to not advance in science and technology. He argued that the Muslims had no ambitions of progress of their own but were keen to just become blind followers of their religion. Therefore, the Salafi movement was meant to "enlighten" the Muslims and make them aware of the colonizing powers and their influence over the Muslims through the teachings of Islam. They wanted the Muslims to achieve an independent Islamic nation built on "real" Islamic principles. The Salafists thought of themselves as pure, and this then became the "Wahabi" sect of

Islam (El-Sherif, 2015). Like the previous movements described, The *Salafat* movement also relied on "pre-modern" teachings to help guide them toward modernity. The *Salafat* movement used their Ahl al-Hadith identity to create a common alliance among the people. "Membership is typically based on ideological conversion and common interest rather than allegiance to a kin group or a master patron. These "pre-modern" forms have, of course, persisted into modernity in many parts of the world and exist side by side with political modernity in various combinations (Masud et al., 2009). The second half of the paper will now look at a globalized Egypt while defining the changes that took place in the country's economic conditions by adopting "modernized" conditions of the Western world.

Islam in a Globalized Egypt

Before understanding globalization in the Islamic context, it is important to study how globalization is defined. Globalization refers to the exchange of political, economic, and social ideas and how they spread and connect with different ideas of cultural advancement worldwide. It allows the existence of multicultural dimensions or different cultures in a nation. As analyzed in the first half, Islam's cultural and political ideas changed with changing times. While still using the Quran and Sunnah as ideological guidelines, Islamic nations have managed to adapt to *globalized* changes. This can be seen from the different schooling systems present now that have changed from solely being *madrasas* (schools for Islamic teaching) to secular teaching, which incorporate both Islam and worldwide teachings, to the adaptation of Western clothing in several Islamic nations. In a globalized Egypt, the way Islam is practiced also underwent certain modifications. A prime example to explain this claim would be how music was perceived in Egypt before the introduction of recorded music. Music in Islam is already a tricky narrative, with extremists believing it is not suitable and that Muslims should only listen to *naats* and *hamds,* which describe and appreciate the Prophet and God. Music in Egypt would first be in the form of oral traditions or *ajzal,* where words were spoken without melody (Lepp, 2015). However, this live performance would be a leisure that only the upper and elite classes could enjoy while vocal performers, known as *al-mashāyikh*, would be trained in the Sufi order to poetically recite Quranic verses from a Sufi worldview (Lepp, 2015).

The introduction of recorded technologies in the late 19th century changed the world of music for the Egyptians. Music now was not a commodity that only the elite could enjoy but appealed to the masses as well. As the phonograph became an accessible device for the middle class, what was being recorded changed according to the "monetary profit." Sooner than later, the Egyptian capitalist market under American and European influence started the marketization of the theatre, literature, and the different forms of music (Lepp, 2015). The marketization of music thus removed the aura of the once-recorded *ajzal* as producers and singers jumped on the Western

trends to sell more records through recorded mediums (Lepp, 2015). Therefore, instead of creating music that only the upper classes would enjoy, producers began to focus on what sort of music will sell to the mass audience. This meant that the Sufi music market grew smaller as lyrics reflecting Egyptian daily life were preferred over the non-melodious recitations of Quranic verses (Lepp, 2015). However, the Islamic idea of a national and collective identity and the Brotherhood remained a central theme in songs, reflecting Egyptian political expression (Lepp, 2015). Therefore, while the content and format of the music changed, Islamic practices and ideas were still being promoted through Egyptian music. Popular music transcended ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and geographic boundaries, unifying a previously divided population through shared emotions, history, and purpose. The listeners formed a national community, envisioning themselves as a limited and sovereign entity (Lepp, 2015). Moreover, it can be argued that by adopting this Western trend, the Egyptians still managed to keep their separate identity and use music to protest against the British colonial powers by promoting a united front by using nationalism and Brotherhood as themes in their songs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the concept of Islamic modernity challenges the Eurocentric discourse of modernity by highlighting the distinct nature of multiple modernities. Islamic modernity does not simply imitate Western models but instead seeks to reconcile Islamic teachings with the changing political, social, and economic contexts of the 19th and 20th centuries. The Tajdid movement of the 18th century laid the foundation for Islamic revival and modernization by emphasizing the combination of Islamic legal teachings and Sufi mysticism. This movement aimed to provide a "correct" legal practice that balanced reason and faith while fostering a sense of religious and ideological unity. In the 19th and 20th centuries, movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafi movement further contributed to Islamic modernization by creating distinct versions of modernity compatible with Islam. These movements sought to define an authentic Islamic modernity and addressed the challenges of Western ideologies and globalization. Islamic modernity is characterized by its emphasis on religious community as a marker of identity and solidarity, its integration of diverse populations, and its orientation towards knowledge, ethical discipline, and adherence to religious principles. By incorporating "pre-modern" practices and institutions into the modernization process, Islamic modernity offers a unique perspective on modernity that challenges the Eurocentric narrative and fosters a deeper understanding of the complexities of global history.

Islamic modernity, therefore, represents a dynamic and multifaceted process of engaging with the modern world while maintaining a strong connection to Islamic heritage and values.

Therefore, the classification of the *Tajdid* movement, the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Salafi movement as examples of Islamic modernization rather than fundamentalism is grounded in their historical and ideological frameworks. These movements have actively engaged in reforming Islamic thought and practice in response to evolving social, economic, and political challenges. Contrary to being mere fundamentalist regressions, they sought to integrate Islamic principles with modern exigencies, thus embodying a form of modernization. For instance, their efforts in educational reform, legal restructuring, and social activism reflect a deliberate adaptation to modernity. This perspective is crucial in understanding their roles not as static or purely reactionary, but as dynamic forces within the broader discourse of Islamic engagement with modernity. Moreover, Islamic modernity can be understood as a dynamic process of adaptation and transformation within the context of globalization. While maintaining the Quran and Sunnah as ideological foundations, Islamic nations have embraced globalized changes in various aspects of their societies. This includes the evolution of schooling systems to incorporate Islamic and secular teachings and the adoption of Western clothing in some Islamic countries. The introduction of recorded music revolutionized the music industry in Egypt, making it accessible to the masses and influencing its content. Despite these changes, Islamic values and themes continued to be promoted through popular music, fostering a sense of national identity and serving as a platform for political expression and resistance against colonial powers. Islamic modernity, therefore, represents a complex interaction between global influences and the preservation of Islamic traditions and values.

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