

***Multidimensional aspects of Coptic Identity against the background of
undergoing transformations in Egypt in 20th and 21st centuries***

The Copts of Egypt constitute a religious minority that descends from the indigenous inhabitants of Ancient Egypt. Between 4th and the first half of 7th century, the term “Copt” was used to describe both Christians, as well as pagans who inhabited Egypt in those days. At present, however, this term is used to label Egyptian Christians.

The Coptic language is being considered to be the last stage in the evolution of ancient Egyptian language. It uses alphabetical script derived from Greek. Long, rich and complex history of Egypt, as well as the undergoing transformations that take place at present in this country, have forced and still compel the Copts to take stiff alternatives concerning both their affiliation, as well as their identity. Thus, this identity is complex and multidimensional in her nature, as this community is quite often perceived as “insiders-outsiders” by Muslim majority of Egypt.

The aim of this paper is to present aspects associated with Coptic Identity based on the examples of how it is constantly “negotiated” due to the changing circumstances of undergoing transformations in Egypt in 20th and 21st centuries.