

UC San Diego

MELA Notes

Title

Marr: Egypt at the Crossroads: Domestic Stability and Regional Role

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/43k6n0w9>

Journal

MELA Notes, 96(1)

ISSN

0364-2410

Author

Weiss, Kira

Publication Date

2024-09-13

DOI

10.5070/M7.35410

Copyright Information

This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution License, available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Safi, Ziba Mir-Hosseini, and Mulki Al-Sharmani, have written blurbs for this book, recognizing it as an important work in the field.

"*The Women's Khutbah Book, Contemporary Sermons on Spirituality and Justice from around the world*," is a valuable contribution to Islamic feminism. It goes beyond merely providing a unique collection of khutbahs delivered by Muslim women from around the world; it also broadens its scope by categorizing and analyzing a diverse range of khutbahs delivered by women.

The book imbues each khutbah with a feminine perspective, highlighting the core message of each sermon and demonstrating their connections to Islamic principles and contemporary issues. For scholars focusing on Islamic feminism, this book serves as an excellent reference, offering an original collection of content delivered by Muslim women as *khatibahs*. It represents a commendable effort to provide an analysis from the perspective of Islamic feminism.

SOODEH MANSOURI

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-SANTA BARBARA

Egypt at the Crossroads: Domestic Stability and Regional Role.

Phoebe Marr (ed.). Washington DC: National Defense University Press, 1999. Pp. 253, No bibliography [each chapter has endnotes]. Online access through Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP). 1-5706-022-6

Egypt at the Crossroads: Domestic Stability and Regional Role is the result of a multi-year collaboration between two strategic studies centers: The Institute for National Strategic Studies at the National Defense University (Washington D.C.) and The National Center for Middle East Studies (Cairo). Situated at the crossroads of many fields, the volume's contributors include policymakers, academics, economists, and military professionals from the United States and Egypt.

Egypt at the Crossroads consists of three sections, triangulating U.S.-Egyptian relations in the changing regional security environment

of the post-Cold War period. The first section concerns Egypt's domestic stability, focusing on issues ranging from economic reform and development to political stability. The second section explores Egypt's regional role in terms of economic, political, social, and cultural influence. The final section concerns the future of U.S.-Egyptian relations, combining many of the ideas and arguments presented in the preceding chapters.

Together, the contributors of this volume argue that Egypt is at a critical juncture in terms of domestic policy, regional role, and relations with the United States. The contributors collectively assess Egypt's domestic, regional, and international status, forecast developments, and suggest strategic policies.

A common theme in this volume is Egypt's role as a moderating actor in the region and the mutual interests of Egypt and the United States. Throughout the book, the contributors stress U.S.-Egyptian mutual interest in economic opportunity and regional peace, stability, and security. This focus on moderation and mutual interest remains pervasive in current discourse, particularly in governmental publications such as the Bilateral Relations Fact Sheet published by the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs.

Egypt at the Crossroads provides insight into how Egypt navigated diplomatic relations with the U.S. while seeking to maintain domestic and regional stability at the turn of the twenty-first century. Egypt's geostrategic position, cultural influence, and status as a moderating force in the region continue to be critical to U.S. interests. Similarly, Egypt continues to rely on military and economic support from the United States and has retained its status as a major non-NATO ally (MNNA) with benefits in defense trade and security cooperation.

Multi-vocal and wide-ranging, *Egypt at the Crossroads* captures the dominant discourse of the U.S.-Egyptian security relationship at the time of its publication in 1999. As such, this book may be of interest to scholars researching the history of U.S.-Egyptian diplomatic relations and security interests. Likewise, it may be useful for scholars interested in domestic and regional issues in Egypt at the turn of the twenty-first century.

One of the strengths of this volume is its historical perspective. Almost every chapter begins with an outline of the historical background for contemporary issues and trends. Although these historical sections frequently repeat information from other chapters,

the historical context permits readers to approach each chapter independently.

This volume contains useful charts and statistics, but the endnotes are relatively sparse, and there is no bibliography. Most data are extracted from public sources, including the World Fact Book and World Development Report. Notable exceptions include data from the Ibn Khaldoun Center in Saad Eddin Ibrahim's chapter, "The Changing Face of Egypt's Islamic Activism", and interviews documenting Egyptian perceptions of U.S. regional intentions and policy assumptions.

Egypt at the Crossroads provides an overview of Egypt's domestic and regional stability and relations with the U.S. This volume focuses on domestic issues such as bureaucracy, unemployment, and extremism as well as regional issues such as arms control, relations with Israel, and cultural leadership. In terms of the U.S.-Egyptian partnership, this volume calls for common goals and joint strategies. Overall, this book offers a comprehensive overview of Egypt's domestic, regional, and international issues at a critical historical juncture, focusing on ongoing issues and underlying factors in the pursuit of domestic and regional stability.

KIRA WEISS, PH.D. CANDIDATE

MUSIC DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA
BARBARA

On the Sultan's Service: Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's Memoir of the Ottoman Palace, 1909–1912. By Douglas Scott Brookes. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019. Pp. 255, with bibliography and index. \$33.60 (Paperback). ISBN: 9780253045515

Douglas Scott Brookes' translation and edition of Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's memoirs aims to familiarize the reader with the daily life in the Ottoman chancery. Halid Ziya was the first secretary there for three years, 1909–1912, so his memoirs present a particular point of view, complicated further by his ties to the Committee of Union and