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978-0-521-74934-3 - Political Ideology in the Arab World: Accommodation and Transformation

Michaëlle L. Browsers

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Political Ideology in the Arab World

Arab nationalism and Islamism have been the two most potent ideological forces in the Arab region across the twentieth century. Over the last two decades, however, an accommodation of sorts has been developing between liberals, socialists, and Islamists, to protest unpopular foreign and domestic policies, such as those aimed at cooperation with Israel or the war in Iraq. By examining the writings of Arab nationalist, socialist, and Islamist intellectuals, and through numerous interviews with political participants from different persuasions, Michaëlle Browsers traces these developments from the “Arab age of ideology,” as it has been called, through an “age of ideological transformation,” demonstrating clearly how the recent flow of ideas from one group to another have their roots in the past. *Political Ideology in the Arab World* assesses the impact of ideological changes on Egypt’s Kifaya! [Enough!] movement and Yemen’s Joint Meeting Parties.

MICHAËLLE L. BROWERS is Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at Wake Forest University. Her recent publications include *Democracy and Civil Society in Arab Political Thought: Transcultural Possibilities* (2006) and *An Islamic Reformation?* (with Charles Kurzman, 2004).

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Acknowledgments

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Glossary

- ahl al-dhimma*: protected peoples, non-Muslim subjects of Islamic governments
- asala*: authenticity
- azma*: crisis
- da'wa*: calling or inviting to Islam
- fiqh*: Islamic jurisprudence
- hadatha*: modernity
- ijtihad*: independent reasoning, particularly in regard to interpreting religious texts
- 'ilmaniyya*: secularism, from *'ilm* (science); also rendered *'almaniyya*, from *'alam* (world)
- jahiliyya*: ignorance or barbarism; usually used in reference to the pre-Islamic era, though in modern times it has come to be used in reference to individuals, systems and societies not following Islam; also known as the “age of ignorance”
- kafir*, plural *kuffar*: unbeliever, one who rejects Islam
- khuruj*: literally, coming out or rising; Zaydi principle of rising up against an unjust ruler
- kifaya*: enough; slogan of and nickname for the Egyptian Movement for Change
- mu'asira*: contemporaneity
- muwatin*: citizen
- Nahda*: awakening or renaissance; name given to the period of intellectual creativity and reform from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries; often seen as the Arab and Islamic counterpart to the European Enlightenment
- qawmiyya*: nationalism, usually referring to pan-Arab nationalism, as opposed to *wataniyya*
- salafiyya*: movement claiming to follow in the way of the righteous ancestors (*salaf*); used to describe traditionalist and puritanical Islamic movements in various parts of the world

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shari'a: body of Islamic law; literally, the way or path

shura: consultation, used by some Islamic thinkers as a synonym for democracy

turath: heritage

umma: community

wasatiyya: an intellectual trend characterized or claiming characterization as centrist or moderate (*wasti*), or said to occupy the middle (*wasat*) between extremist alternatives

watan: homeland, nation

wataniyya: nationalism, usually referring to state-based nationalism, as opposed to *qawmiyya*