

Between Marriage and the Market: Intimate Politics and Survival in Cairo

By Homa Hoodfar

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Homa Hoodfar's richly detailed ethnography provides a rare glimpse into the daily life of Arab Muslim families. Focusing on the impact of economic liberalization policies from 1983 to 1993, she shows the crucial role of the household in survival strategies among low-income Egyptians. Hoodfar, an Iranian Muslim by birth, presents research that undermines many of the stereotypes associated with traditional Muslim women. Their apparent conservatism, she says, is based on rational calculation of the costs and benefits of working within formal and informal labor markets to secure household power. She posits that increasing adherence to Islam and taking up the veil on the part of women has been partially motivated by women's desire to protect and promote their interests both within and beyond households.

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"There is a great need for material on the Middle East that . . . makes sense of how ordinary men and women weigh their choices, bargain, and decide what is best for themselves and their families. Hoodfar presents fascinating and original material that suggests new boundaries for what research can be considered 'economic.'"—Christine Eickelman, author of *Women and Community in Oman*

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Homa Hoodfar is Associate Professor of Anthropology at Concordia University.

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