



# **Motherland Lost: The Egyptian and Coptic Quest for Modernity (Herbert and Jane Dwight Working Group on Islamism and the International Order)**

*Samuel Tadros*

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## **Motherland Lost: The Egyptian and Coptic Quest for Modernity (Herbert and Jane Dwight Working Group on Islamism and the International Order) Samuel Tadros**

In *Motherland Lost*, Samuel Tadros provides a clear understanding of the Copts—the native Egyptian Christians—and their crisis of modernity in conjunction with the overall developments in Egypt as it faced its own struggles with modernity. He argues against the dominating narratives that have up to now shaped our understanding of the Coptic predicament--their eternal persecution, from the Roman and Byzantine emperors to the rule of Islam, and the National Unity discourse--asserting rather that it is due to the crisis of modernity.

Linking the Egyptian and Coptic stories, the book argues that the plight of Copts today is inseparable from the crisis of modernity and the answers developed to address that crisis by the Egyptian state and intellectuals, as well as by the Coptic Church and laypeople. The author asserts that the answers developed by Egyptian intellectuals and state modernizers to the challenge modernity poses revolved around the problem of Islam. The Copts, then, although affected, like their fellow Egyptians, by the challenge of modernity, were faced with a separate crisis: a specific challenge to their ancient church and the need for a new orientation and revival to be able to deal with modernity and its discontents. Tadros concludes that the prospects for Copts in Egypt appear bleak and are leading to a massive Coptic exodus from Egypt.

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