

divergences between the Member States are resilient constraints for the attainability of a European 'demos' in the singular. Grewal does not touch upon this important restriction. Lastly, rather than 'othering,' *distinguishability and distinctiveness* is needed even in Habermasian constitutional patriotism. A group must be aware of its distinctiveness, it must be able to differentiate itself from others, even if

such others are not to be perceived as opponents or enemies. In Habermas' recent work, the 'other' or more precisely the distinguishing yardstick appears to be the USA for Europe, both on account of the European social model and Europe's identity as a normative civilian power in the international arena. Grewal does not elaborate on the comparison and contrast of these two entities in detail.

Foreign Policy after Tahrir Revolution: (Re)-Defining the Role of Egypt in the Middle East

By Mehmet Özkan

Saarbrücken: Lap Lambert Academic Publishing, 2011, 144 pages, ISBN 9783845404998.

Reviewed by Muzaffer Şenel

THE CONTINUITIES, changes, ruptures, and transformation of Egyptian foreign policy have been analyzed from different angles. The changes in Egyptian foreign policy, in line with the Arab Spring and its transformative forces, were important for analysts, practitioners, and scholars working on both foreign policy and International Relations theory. Since the end of the Cold War, academia has become more receptive to the issues of the Middle East. However, in the last decade most work on the Middle East have revolved around a limited number of themes: ethnic/religious-based violence, the Arab/Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Iranian nuclear issue, and problems related to Israel. Despite the prolific amount of literature on the foreign policies of Arab Middle Eastern countries, many of these works lack a theoretical analysis of the geostrategic positioning of these countries within the dynamics of international political power. Geostrategic positioning helps measure the possible weight of



a country within the existing international and regional system, which leads to the analysis of what role a country can play in international politics. Mehmet Özkan's book is a timely addition to this literature with its in-depth analytical historical analysis and theoretical angle.

Following the introduction, the book consists of three chapters. The first chapter sets the theoretical framework by focusing on the concept of pivotal middle power and its relations to constructivism. The second chapter provides analytical historical perspectives on Egypt's foreign policy since the 1930s, especially from the prism of Egypt's stance on the Palestinian-Israeli issue. The third chapter focuses on why and how Egypt lost its credibility and attraction in the minds and eyes of the Middle Eastern countries. Özkan explains the factors that have contributed to the limits and opportunities, which have led to the different formulations and transformations of Egyptian foreign pol-

icy over the years. His periodization of Egypt's foreign policy is in line with Cairo's overall role in the Middle East. The author ties it into the Palestinian issue, frames this important issue as a conceptual basis of the book. He defines the concept of pivotal middle power through constructivism and he explores it in a historical context. Özkan gives clear and concise reasons for the "decline" of Egypt by concentrating on the loss of dynamism in intellectual and policy leadership. He also points out the neglected areas of Cairo's foreign policy, i.e., the African dimension. This is a significant contribution to the field of Egypt's foreign policy.

Over the last three decades, Egypt has been confronted with significant challenges stemming from the Palestinian issue, the Arab-Israeli peace process, economic underdevelopment, and close relations with the USA and Israel. As Ozkan states quite bluntly, "the Palestinian issue lays at the heart of complex network of these challenges" (p. 19). The author presents the Palestinian issue and the Arab Spring as the *defining factors* for Egypt's position in regional politics of the Middle East. Furthermore, Egypt's continuing role in the transformation of the Arab World and the region's stability and order beg the following four questions: (1) Whether Egypt is developing its foreign policy objectives in line with the Arab Spring. (2) Is there currently a reformulation of Egyptian foreign policy that will address the region's age-old problems with the challenges and opportunities of the Arab Spring? (3) What kind of foreign policy changes will take place? (4) What impact can Egypt have in changing its international position and what type of role will it have after Tahrir?

Özkan investigates answers to these questions by looking at the impact of the Palestinian issue and the Tahrir revolution on Egyptian foreign policy by using the concept of pivot-

al middle power as a theoretical framework. This is a highly demanding task for a number of reasons. First, the literature of international relations in general and foreign policy specifically are mostly focused on great powers and their relations. Literature on middle power and its relations with actors is quite limited. Second, it is difficult to analyze the very new phenomena and ongoing revolutionary process in Egypt. While Özkan is quite successful in handling theoretical ambiguity and bringing analytical clarity by efficiently using the historical background of Egyptian foreign policy, his attempt to analyze the new situation is inadequate. This is most likely because the situation in Egypt is still in flux. Therefore, this part of the book feels incomplete.

The majority of the book deals with the last 80 years of Egyptian foreign policy and the politics of the Middle East. It generally follows well-known lines. What makes it interesting is it has additional theoretical and analytical insights derived from his experience, as a scholar on Egyptian foreign policy. However, there is a contradiction between the title of the book and the content of the book. There is only one short chapter, which focuses on the foreign policy of Egypt after the Tahrir Revolution and the brief comments about possible future scenarios. When one reads the title of a book, there is an expectation there will be answers to the questions posed, however in this book, they are not comprehensively answered.

Despite these shortcomings, Özkan's attempt to interpret the Tahrir Revolution and its implication for domestic and external relations is acceptable and offers an outsider perspective. As an introduction to the studies on Egypt's foreign policy, this book will be a good start for policy-makers, graduate students, and scholars who are interested in understanding Egypt's challenges and limitations in the region.