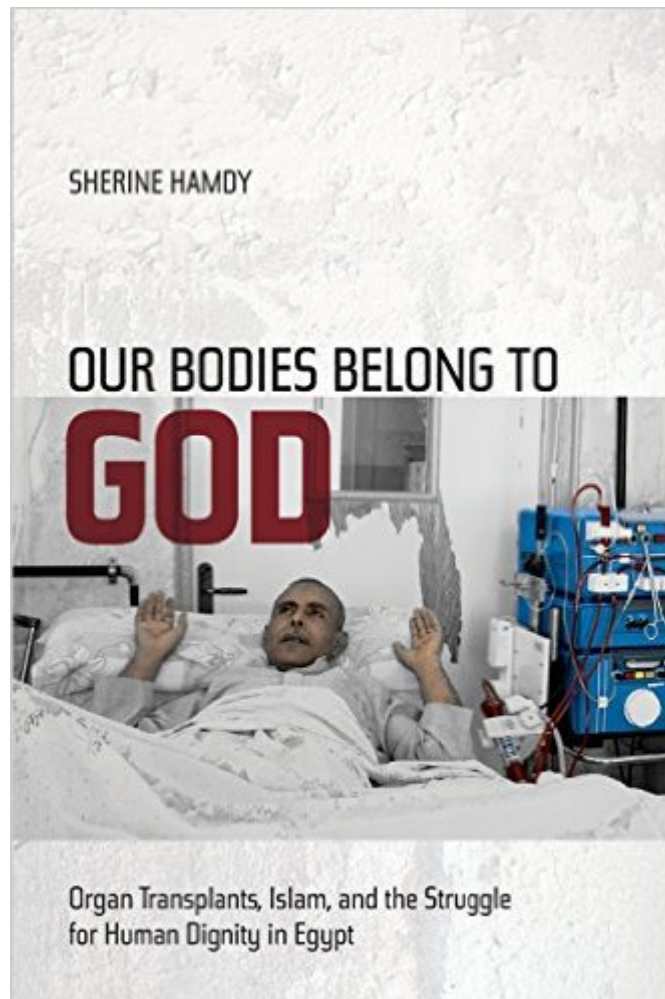


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# Our Bodies Belong To God: Organ Transplants, Islam, And The Struggle For Human Dignity In Egypt



## Synopsis

Why has Egypt, a pioneer of organ transplantation, been reluctant to pass a national organ transplant law for more than three decades? This book analyzes the national debate over organ transplantation in Egypt as it has unfolded during a time of major social and political transformation—including mounting dissent against a brutal regime, the privatization of health care, advances in science, the growing gap between rich and poor, and the Islamic revival. Sherine Hamdy recasts bioethics as a necessarily political project as she traces the moral positions of patients in need of new tissues and organs, doctors uncertain about whether transplantation is a ‘good’—medical or religious practice, and Islamic scholars. Her richly narrated study delves into topics including current definitions of brain death, the authority of Islamic fatwas, reports about the mismanagement of toxic waste predisposing the poor to organ failure, the Egyptian black market in organs, and more. Incorporating insights from a range of disciplines, *Our Bodies Belong to God* sheds new light on contemporary Islamic thought, while challenging the presumed divide between religion and science, and between ethics and politics.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I have been waiting several months for this book to be published. When it finally became available this week, I wasn't disappointed. This is a unique book covering such a wide array of concepts that to call it multi-disciplinary would do it an injustice. It is a definitive piece of work that has clearly taken many years to construct, and the final result is that of a masterpiece. The book takes the reader on a journey of discovery through the complexities of transplantation, faith and nationhood in

a country emerging from a tumultuous recent history. This refreshing book comes at a time when much of the literature in the field of transplantation ethics has become stagnant, with the same issues being debated with little progress. Therefore this ground-breaking work is most timely and presents the transplant community with a unique opportunity to look closely at itself and consider deeper issues that are little discussed. Hamdy shows no fear as she delves into topics other authors have considered taboo. I am particularly impressed that Hamdy has actually spent considerable time in dialysis units in Egypt gathering her data. She is truly an active anthropologist, as opposed to the "armchair" variety whose work we are often obliged to consume. This gives the work serious credibility and relevance to dialysis patients, who often rightly criticize work produced at a distance. Hamdy has been there and felt the pain alongside her participants. Individuals considering donating (or vending) a kidney would be wise to read Hamdy's work before making the critical decision to proceed.

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