NEW EGYPT
NEW ERA

Members of the AUC community share insights and experiences as the country embarks on a new beginning.
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— President Lisa Anderson, The American University in Cairo

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Editor’s Notes

An Unexpected Turn of Events

A few weeks before the January 25th Revolution, the magazine was set to carry entirely different stories. However, as the revolution broke out and gained momentum — even before the toppling of the Mubarak regime — we knew that the magazine content had to be overhauled to reflect current events.

Redoing a magazine after it was almost ready to go to print is normally frustrating, but in this case, it was an enjoyable experience — an unexpected yet welcome turn of events. Working on different stories under the theme of New Egypt, New Era was exceptionally pleasing because we were given the chance to not only write about the revolution and the dawn of a new beginning for Egypt, but also the contributions of AUC community members to the uprising that changed Egyptian history. From AUC’s Board of Trustees to students and alumni to faculty and staff to security guards, all were — and still are — involved in shaping this country’s future.

In this issue, you will read faculty insights about the revolution and the way forward for Egypt (pages 10 - 15), alumni in the heart of events (pages 18 - 21, 26 - 27), alumni in the media (pages 30 - 34), students and their involvement in post-revolutionary clean-ups in Tahrir and elsewhere (pages 28 - 29), a mother’s diary to her son during the revolution (pages 38 - 39), the experiences of international students who stayed in Egypt during the uprising (page 22), new courses that have been introduced at AUC to reflect the change in Egypt (page 23), the bravery of security guards at AUC Tahrir Square (page 36), the dreams of a Tunisian alum for the Arab world (page 48) and lots more.

The revolution and the profound change it has brought onto Egypt has undoubtedly made us all proud. What adds to this sense of pride is that it is the youth who instigated such change — youth who were commonly accused of being passive and politically inactive. Tragically, many have lost their lives, and numerous others were severely injured — all for the sake of Egypt seeing the light. And it did

*Tahya Masr* (Long live Egypt)!
I am writing in response to your article in your latest issue, “Modeling Success.” I am the secretary-general of Cairo International Model United Nations (CIMUN) for the year 2010 - 2011. Your article came to us as a truly pleasant surprise. If you are interested in detailing your published article, I would love the opportunity to further illustrate many aspects of CIMUN 23 years later. CIMUN has now expanded to seven councils and an organizing committee of more than 100 members. Other than CIMUN, we also organize Junior CIMUN for high school students, and this year, it was the largest junior conference on campus and in CIMUN history.

Finally, I would like to thank you once again for placing our organization in the spotlight the way you did. It was a needed reminder of how much we have accomplished and how far we have come.

Nouren Ramzy, Egypt
Secretary-General of the Cairo International Model United Nations

In your recent article on CIMUN in the recent edition of your magazine, there is an omission. In the section on the Nadia Younes Memorial Fund, you mention all the guest lecturers that have spoken at this event save one. The 2008 guest lecturer was Sir Jeremy Greenstock.

Nahed (Younes) Fouad, Egypt

Ed — Apologies for this oversight. Sir Jeremy Greenstock is former British ambassador to the United Nations and special envoy for Iraq from 2003 to 2004. His lecture, titled “Lessons from Iraq,” coincided with the official inauguration of the Nadia Younes Conference Room at AUC New Cairo.

President David Arnold is a leader of excellence in every sense of the word. He is a presidential leader who will always be remembered by alumni at AUC, and in many parts of the world, for his determination, for being the know-how communicator, and for his intelligence in understanding the culture and needs of the region, thus creating an important world educational institution. How can we forget the following?
1) The president’s exceptional ability in the transition of AUC to the new campus
2) The president’s efforts in uniting and involving alumni with their alma mater, creating a big AUCian family all over the world. Being an alumna living in Geneva with my husband, who represents his country at the United Nations, I will never forget the president’s sincerity, impressive personality and kindness in our alumni gatherings. Many of us felt like crying aloud, “I am an AUCian.”
3) Last, but by no means least, the president’s wife, Sherry, the adorable and warm partner who shared all the responsibility, silently and successfully. Her warmth and commitment crowned her the queen of our hearts.

I would say au revoir to our dear President Arnold and Sherry. You are leaving us physically, but you are always with us with millions of memories. And we will meet again.

Samira Hussein Dabbagh, Switzerland

I opened the Summer 2010 issue of AUCToday and read with amazement one of the claims made in AUscenes. You mention that for the first time in AUC history, a visually impaired student was granted an MA degree in TEFL [Teaching English as a Foreign Language] from AUC.

This is not the case at all.

I taught in the MA TEF program from 1977 to 1979 and proudly taught a completely visually impaired student who graduated in 1979 with an MA, completing his thesis. This was before the days of computers. He had to struggle mightily to grasp the visual nature of the linguistic aspects of the course work. He also had to navigate the busy streets of downtown Cairo to walk to campus from his residence. Proudly, he went on to Stanford University in California, where I believe he earned a PhD.

Unfortunately, I don’t remember his name, but I do remember he was from Palestine.

Please correct this oversight and grant him the honor he is due.

Geogette Ioup, United States

Ed — Apologies for this mistake. AUCToday checked with the University’s TEF program. The student’s name is Azim Sidky Abdel Khalek (MA ’80).
Lisa Anderson (CASA ’76), who has served as the University’s provost since 2008, has assumed the position of AUC president since January 2011. Prior to joining AUC as its chief academic officer, Anderson served as the James T. Shotwell Professor of International Relations at Columbia University, as well as the former dean of the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia. Prior to that, she served as chair of Columbia's political science department and director of the Middle East Institute there. Before joining Columbia, she was assistant professor of government and social studies at Harvard University.

Richard A. Bartlett, chair of the University’s Board of Trustees, noted that Anderson is uniquely suited for this position. “Dr. Anderson is a renowned scholar, recognized internationally for her research and scholarship on politics in the Middle East and North Africa,” Bartlett said. “In addition, she is a highly skilled administrator and leader who has made significant contributions to the University since being appointed provost, including the creation of the University's first PhD program, the establishment of three new schools and building the size and quality of the faculty.”

Bartlett pointed out that Anderson has become the University’s 11th president at a critical time in its history. “The University,” he said, “has completed its move to the new campus and is now turning its attention to ensuring that it utilizes both of its campuses — AUC New Cairo and AUC Tahrir Square — to provide our students with the highest quality education from leading international faculty.”

Anderson noted, “I am honored by the confidence the Board of Trustees has extended to me in making this appointment, and I look forward to working with them closely as we make AUC the center of excellence in higher education in the Middle East.” She also thanked her predecessor for the contributions he has made to the University. “As we all look to AUC’s future, it is with deep appreciation for the contributions President Arnold has made to this University.”

Anderson is the author of Pursuing Truth, Exercising Power: Social Science and Public Policy in the Twenty-first Century (Columbia University Press, 2003) and The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya, 1830 - 1980 (Princeton University Press, 1986); editor of Transitions to Democracy (Columbia University Press, 1999); and coeditor of The Origins of Arab Nationalism (Columbia 1991). She is the past president of the Middle East Studies Association, chair of the board of directors of the Social Science Research Council, as well as former member of the Council of the American Political Science Association and AUC’s Board of Trustees. In addition, Anderson serves on the board of the Carnegie Council on Ethics in International Affairs; is a member emerita of the board of Human Rights Watch, where she served as co-chair of Human Rights Watch/Middle East; and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Anderson holds a BA from Sarah Lawrence College, an MA in law and diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University and a PhD in political science from Columbia University, 1981, where she also received a certificate from the Middle East Institute. Anderson, a graduate of AUC’s Center for Arabic Study Abroad, was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws from Monmouth University in 2002.
The newly launched quarterly journal, *The Cairo Review of Global Affairs*, is the latest ambitious endeavor by the School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP).

Ambassador Nabil Fahmy ’74, ’77, GAPP dean and chair of the editorial board of *The Cairo Review*, said that the journal is intended to bring the insights of global policymakers, academics, public officials, journalists and others into the Middle East. “We also want it to be an interactive platform that gives perspectives from the region a greater voice in international policy conversations and debates,” said Fahmy.

The journal features essays by prominent international commentators, interviews with world leaders and a section called *Midan* that discusses global affairs topics related to AUC. There is also a section where policy experts review recently published books.

The printed journal is supplemented by a Web site (www.thecairoreview.com) that includes specific online articles, op-ed pieces, bloggers and video content to be produced by students in AUC’s journalism and mass communication department. The journal and Web site will place an emphasis on featuring Middle Eastern writers. “Other parts of the world should have their way of presenting the debates,” explained Scott Macleod, the journal’s managing editor, professor of practice at AUC’s journalism and mass communication department, and former Middle East correspondent for *TIME* Magazine.

“Given AUC’s unique position at the crossroads, we want to use this position to be a platform to present and write about global issues with a Middle Eastern accent.”
Medhat Haroun Serves as AUC Provost

Former dean of the School of Sciences and Engineering (SSE), Medhat Haroun has recently been named AUC provost. An accomplished engineer, Haroun is clear about the goals he has established for his position: increased collaboration between AUC’s six schools, optimizing the academic experience at the University and extending AUC’s reach as a global partner in higher education and research.

“First,” he noted, “I want to improve collaboration between the schools and identify means of streamlining and simplifying University bureaucracy in schools, departments and programs. Second, I want to build upon the excellent education offered at AUC by emphasizing research to further engage the faculty and secure greater funding for their research endeavors. Finally, I want to increase collaboration with our sister Universities in Egypt, the region and internationally.”

Having served as SSE dean since 2005, Haroun succeeded in generating significant external funding for the school, including multi-million dollar grants from the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology to fund scholarships and research. He is also responsible for establishing new degree programs at SSE, including undergraduate majors in architectural, computer and petroleum engineering, and master’s degrees in biotechnology, nanotechnology and food chemistry. In addition, Haroun is credited with launching AUC’s first PhD program in applied sciences and engineering, and has acquired corresponding funding for fellowships and research. An advocate of interdisciplinary study, he has also established academic collaborations within AUC and beyond, particularly with the School of Business and School of Global Affairs and Public Policy.

Haroun is the recipient of the Walter Huber Civil Engineering Research Prize and the Martin Duke Award for his research in earthquake engineering. Most recently, he accepted the 2010 Excellence in Academic Achievement Award from AUC.

Ezzat Fahmy Appointed Dean of Sciences and Engineering

For Ezzat Fahmy, new dean of the School of Sciences and Engineering, laying out a vision for his tenure is easy. “As dean, my main focus will be to continue the success that SSE has enjoyed and to assess the new programs, in particular the PhD programs,” said Fahmy, who brings considerable administrative experience to the position. Fahmy previously served as associate dean for undergraduate studies at the School of Sciences and Engineering, where he is professor of structural engineering.

Since joining AUC in 1989, Fahmy played a key role in the establishment and accreditation of the construction engineering program. He served as the construction engineering unit head and chair of the Department of Engineering in the 1990s before becoming director of interdisciplinary engineering programs in 2001. Before joining AUC, he taught at McMaster University in Ontario, Canada and at the University of Qatar. He has published widely and has consulted on projects as varied as restoration of Islamic monuments and new residential developments in Egypt and abroad.

Fahmy’s proudest moments at AUC have been in helping to guide the successful integration of the science and engineering departments. “To convince the Board of Trustees to approve the PhD programs means we have successfully proven that we have the facilities, faculty and interested students necessary to make this program into the focal point that it should be,” he said, adding that he anticipates the creation of other new degree programs and hopes to increase research funding.
AUC Offers New Master’s Degrees in Different Specializations

As part of its commitment to enhancing educational opportunities, AUC has launched new master's degrees in international and comparative education, nanotechnology and Egyptology/Coptology.

After a successful inaugural year, AUC's Graduate School of Education is offering a new master's degree program in international and comparative education, drawing more than 26 students in its first semester. “The new MA represents a milestone for the University, since it is the first graduate education degree at AUC,” said Samiha Peterson, distinguished professor and interim dean of the school. “This is a very significant contribution to Egypt's educational reform priorities.”

AUC has also launched this fall a Master of Science in nanotechnology, which prepares its graduates with the skills necessary to compete and excel in the ever-expanding world of nanotechnology. The program is distinguished by top-notch faculty with extensive expertise in nanosciences and nanotechnology; state-of-the-art facilities, including equipment and software packages necessary for synthesis of nanomaterials, design and modeling of nanostructured bulk products processing technologies; as well as fabrication and characterization of micro and nanosensors and devices, which are housed in the Yousef Jameel Science and Technology Research Center and various AUC departments.

“The program, being one of the first nanotechnology programs offered locally and in the Middle East, will act as an incubator for highly qualified scientists, engineers and researchers serving locally and regionally in the various institutes, research centers and industries in the 21st-century fields of nanosciences and nanotechnology,” said Hanadi Salem '83, '87, professor of mechanical engineering and director of the nanotechnology program.

The University is also launching in September 2011 a new master's program in Egyptology/Coptology, which will follow international guidelines for similar degrees at accredited institutions in the United States. Candidates for the program may pursue one of three tracks: Egyptology with a concentration in art, archeology and history; Egyptology with a concentration in language study and written documentation relating to religion, sciences, literature or economics; and Coptology, the study of ancient Egypt's native Christian society, particularly during the early history of Christianity and its interaction with, and legacy to, the world in Late Antiquity and Early Medieval ages.

“Although Universities based in the Western world offer very good programs and many fieldwork opportunities, none match what AUC offers in terms of sustained exposure to the legacy of ancient Egyptian civilizations,” explained Salima Ikram, professor of Egyptology at AUC. “Studying daily against the backdrop of the pyramids and other monuments makes for a learning experience that cannot be replicated outside of Egypt.”

AUC Earns National and International Accreditation

Aspiring to the highest standards of education both nationally and internationally, AUC has received accreditation from Egypt's National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAEE). In doing so, AUC has become the first University in Egypt to acquire such accreditation from NAQAEE, a body created by the government in 2007 to establish quality standards for its educational institutions.

In addition, the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) has awarded AUC’s School of Continuing Education full accreditation, making it the first accredited school in Egypt. IACET is the only standard-setting organization approved by the American National Standards Institute for continuing education and training to offer IACET Continuing Education Units.
With the onset of the January 25th Revolution, members of the AUC community actively participated in the historic change taking place in Egypt. From the University’s Board of Trustees to alumni, students and faculty to security guards at AUC Tahrir Square, each played — and continues to play — a role in the formation of a new Egypt — one based on the ideals of democratization and engaged citizenship.

Khaled Fahmy ’85, ’88, professor and chair of the history department at AUC, has been selected to head the Committee for Documenting the Revolution, launched by the Egyptian National Library and Archives. The goal of the committee is to gather and preserve all documentary evidence of the revolution, including photos, videos, audio recordings, local and international press coverage, testimonies of people who planned for and participated in the revolution, as well as different Web sites and video clips that played a role in the uprising.

The committee consists of six volunteer members including Fahmy, history and political science professors from Helwan and Cairo universities, as well as the director of the National Archives. An oral history center will be established to collect oral testimonies from people who participated in the revolution. This center will be directed by Hania Sholkamy, an anthropologist and associate research professor at AUC’s Social Research Center.

Fahmy noted that the committee’s job is not to produce a narrative about the revolution, but rather, to collect material for people who want to write a narrative. “For this reason, we want to be as transparent, accurate, consistent and exhaustive as possible,” he said.

In addition, Hafez Al Mirazi, director of the Kamal Adham Center for Journalism Training and Research and professor of practice at AUC, is serving as the moderator and media coordinator of Egypt’s National Dialogue initiative, under the auspices of the Egyptian Prime Minister Essam Sharaf and chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister Yehia El Gamal. Participants include political figures of different backgrounds and affiliations, as well as candidates for the presidency such as the Arab League Secretary-General Amre Moussa and Judge Hisham Bastawisi.

Participants in the first round of the dialogue aim to reach an agreement on the agenda to begin the formal national dialogue, which is scheduled to be held from May to June 2011. The ultimate aim is to reach a new social contract that serves as a national accord and frame of reference for the Constitutional Assembly, which will be nominated by the new parliament to draft a new constitution for Egypt.
Furthermore, serving on the 30-member Council of Wise Men were two AUC trustees, Ambassador Nabil El Araby, Egypt’s foreign minister and a former judge on the International Court of Justice; and Nobel laureate Ahmed Zewail, the Linus Pauling Chair professor of chemistry and professor of physics at the California Institute of Technology; as well as Ambassador Nabil Fahmy ’74, ’77, dean of AUC’s School of Global Affairs and Public Policy and former Egyptian ambassador to the United States and Japan. The council was made up of high-profile, non-partisan, public Egyptian figures including businessmen, lawyers, academics, diplomats, former ministers, journalists and political activists who engaged in talks between the protesters and the former Egyptian government during the revolution to find solutions to the pending situation and an orderly transition of power.

Following are examples of various constituents of the AUC community, the contributions they made and their vision for a better Egypt.

*All information included in this issue is based on the current state of affairs when the magazine was sent to print.*
Upholding Journalistic Integrity

During my coverage of the Egyptian Revolution, my son called me up from Washington to tell me how lucky I have been as a journalist — being in the right place at the right time. Working as the Washington bureau chief of Al Jazeera helped me in covering 9/11, and today — after 24 years of living in the United States — working in Egypt for Al Arabiya, I was given the opportunity to cover the 2011 Egyptian Revolution as it happened.

During the revolution, I was also able to highlight some taboo practices in the Arab media when I felt that the principles of fair and comprehensive coverage were being compromised. Working as a professor at AUC, I was able, most importantly, to take my journalistic experience to the classroom, knowing that AUC would respect my integrity and right to speak up.

Coverage of the January 25th Revolution, of course, differed from one channel to the other. Government-owned media in Egypt intimidated balanced and fair journalists, who were viewed as enemies of the state. This reminded me of George Bush’s infamous statement during the so-called war on terror, “You’re either with us or against us.” State media also intimidated private TV stations owned by Egyptian businessmen who supported the regime. All were asked to exhibit Egyptian flags and “No to Sabotage” images on the screen, relaying a subtle message that those who support the revolution are saboteurs. By the same token, I’m dissatisfied with the current rush to glorify everything about the revolution, not speaking for the silent majority who think that the revolutionaries might have gone too far on some fronts or that there could have been another way of doing things. This idea of applauding those in power is against proper journalistic practice. As journalists, our job is to tell the truth and not favor one political faction over the other. TV stations and other media outlets should not propagate any political agenda. You can’t be a journalist and a political activist at the same time, nor can you be a member of parliament and an editor in chief. Journalists are like members of a jury: disinterested yet interested. Their primary duty is telling the truth and presenting both sides of the story, and then letting the audience formulate its opinion.

In order for Egyptian media to thrive, we need to listen to people from different democratic countries on media structure and ownership, be exposed to various media models, and pick and choose what suits us best. New rules need to be established within a proper system, where all are held accountable to a people’s parliament and an elected government, not to a certain political party. We also need to dismantle government ownership of the media, not just by getting rid of the Ministry of Information, but by empowering local media and local politics.

At the Kamal Adham center, we are trying to do just that. The Egyptian Civil Society Project seeks to empower and support civil society. The center also plans to hold a conference, inviting directors of radio and TV stations in all governorates to give their views on what we need to do to reform local media. Building a new system with new institutions in place is the path to reform, and no matter where the road takes us, a journalist’s integrity is the one thing that can never be compromised.

Hafez Al Mirazi is professor of practice at AUC and director of the Kamal Adham Center for Journalism Training and Research.

Hafez Al Mirazi
Old and New Reasons for Optimism

Weeks before January 25, I received a phone call from a senior medical school student in one of the Egyptian Universities, saying she wants to invite me to a panel discussion at her University to speak about the current state of affairs in Egypt. She wanted me to particularly address the problem of Egyptian youth becoming increasingly adamant about leaving Egypt upon graduation and how hopeless they’ve become about finding a job or a decent living in their country. I gladly accepted the invitation.

Using the Internet and phone calls to invite fellow classmates, that student — who turned out to be from Al Minya governorate — managed to arrange the panel discussion at a bookstore in Heliopolis, after security personnel at her University informed her that I am not allowed to come and that she may not advertise for the event on campus, even if it won’t be held on University grounds. I must say, I admired her persistence and strong character. I was even more impressed when I met her personally and her fellow classmates at the panel. They were confident, eloquent and good listeners. This gave me a strong feeling of optimism about Egypt’s future.

One of the questions posed to me during the discussion was whether I am optimistic or pessimistic about the future of Egypt and, without hesitation, I replied that I’m optimistic for the following reasons:

1) The situation in Egypt has become so bad that it couldn’t get any worse. It could only get better.
2) Egypt’s history throughout the past 200 years has been characterized by ups and downs, moving forward and then taking steps backwards. Every progressive phase began at a better starting point than the preceding phase. The recent downhill period, which extended for 30, and some may say 40, years had to come to an end.
3) The four years between the defeat of the Egyptian and Arab armies in the 1948 Palestine war and the 1952 Egyptian Revolution were characterized by corruption and political turmoil, which increased people’s sense of hopelessness. These feelings were swiftly transformed into happiness and optimism with the breakout of the revolution in 1952. We should not underestimate the psychological change that could take place overnight with the onset of positive changes in the Egyptian ruling system.
4) Even though there are difficulties, we must acknowledge the positive changes that have taken place and that pave the way for remarkable things to happen. These changes include the spread of education (even if it’s not of a good standard), women going out to work and playing a much bigger role in Egyptian social life, and the increased interaction of Egyptian youth with the outside world.

Everything that happened from January 25 to February 11 showed me that I was justified in my optimism and made this optimism even stronger. Slogans of “Hold Your Head Up High; You’re an Egyptian” resonated throughout the country. We saw Egyptian youth of all social classes cleaning up the streets and washing statues, marking the beginning of a new era in Egyptian history.

Galal Amin is professor emeritus at AUC. This is a summary and translation of an Arabic article written by Amin and published in Al Shorouk newspaper on February 18, 2011.
The process that unraveled in Egypt starting January 25 of this year took everyone, including activists and scholars, by storm. No one thought that what started as a call to dismiss the minister of interior would end up ousting the president, especially that such demonstrations have been called for regularly and never managed to gather more than a few hundred protestors at best. The unexpected turnout and the outcome that followed prompted euphoria, but also misleading analysis of where this “revolution,” or more accurately “uprising,” came from. The idea that this is a “Facebook Youth Revolution” is not only naïve and misleading, but, more importantly, dangerous for how we understand the prospects for future mobilization and change.

While the telecommunication revolution from cell phones to social media networks, such as Facebook and Twitter, has compressed time, space and cost of mobilization, these tools have existed and have been used for political purposes long before the 25th. Moreover, in Egypt, with more than 40 percent of the population living under the poverty line and more than 30 percent of adults being illiterate, it is difficult to assume that the majority of protestors even use Facebook. Rather, any student or close observer of Egypt can easily understand that what happened since the 25th was a culmination of different forms of mobilization over the past several years: the cumulative effect of protest movements against the war on Iraq in 2003 and Gaza in 2008, the rise of the prodemocracy movement with Kefaya in 2004 - 2005, the labor protests that started in Mahalla in 2006 and spread throughout Egypt to include more than 1.7 million participants since then, and finally the anti-sectarian protests that peaked after the church bombing in Alexandria early this year.

Each of those movements brought us closer to the 25th by bringing people together to break the fear barrier, politicizing them over specific issues that they care most about, re-instating the dynamics of collective resistance and active expression against different forms of abuse (social, political or economic), and exposing the regime’s exploitive policies on all those fronts. This revolution was not only about middle and upper class youth in Tahrir Square who rightfully want another president, but it was also about young and older people in Cairo, Suez, Arish and Beni Soueif who do not want to have to die in lines for bread, water or medical care, or to be abused in police stations, or to have to take their children out of school to earn a living.

Such a clear understanding of the uprising is necessary for it to be a complete revolution. It is important because it allows us to appreciate the continued forms of mobilization and protests, not only in Tahrir, but also in factories, villages and popular neighborhoods, over socioeconomic rights. It is extremely important to help us understand that a democratic transition is not only limited to free, fair and regular elections — which are key — but also includes the issue of citizenship, which comprises socioeconomic and civil rights.

Rabab El Mahdi ’96, ’98 is assistant professor of political science at AUC.
January 25 has already lent itself to the name of the Egyptian Revolution of 2011 that saw the downfall of one of the oldest serving Arab tyrants. Prior to the revolution, the 25th of January was known as Police Day, commemorating a 1952 incident when the British army besieged the Egyptian police station in the city of Ismailia on the Suez Canal in a bloody confrontation that left more than 50 Egyptian policemen dead. When news of the massacre reached Cairo the following day, the city rose in flames, and many British and European businesses were attacked. Six months later, when the Free Officers staged their coup that deposed King Farouk and launched the Egyptian republic, January 25 was declared a national holiday in honor of the heroic stance adopted by the Egyptian police against the foreign occupier.

Fifty nine years later, whatever national credentials the Egyptian police might have had were completely lost. Instead, the Egyptian police became a prime tool for Mubarak to tighten his grip on society, stifle free expression, arraign and torture opposition figures, and suppress political opposition.

The naming of al-Galaa Bridge resembles another irony. This bridge was initially called Kabri al-Ingiliz, the English Bridge, and it acquired its new name (which translates as Evacuation) following the 1954 withdrawal of the last British soldier from Egyptian soil, thus ending a 72-year long occupation. Yet, it was on al-Galaa Bridge that I found myself during the revolution confronting not any foreign occupation force, but the Egyptian police, which was supposed to protect me and my fellow citizens.

Even the name of that now world-famous square, Tahrir, was not devoid of irony. Originally named Ismailia Square after Khedive Ismail who is credited with designing modern Cairo, the square was renamed Tahrir, or Liberation, by the Free Officers regime in 1955 to commemorate the withdrawal of British troops the previous year and to signal the revolutionary regime’s pledge to help with the wider Arab anti-colonial struggle. Yet, it was that same regime which, instead of liberating Palestine as it promised in 1967, ended up losing the entire Sinai Peninsula in a catastrophic defeat. Furthermore, under the Sadat and Mubarak regimes, Egyptians felt far removed from the lofty ideals espoused by that square’s name, as they found themselves humiliated, downtrodden and besieged in their own homeland.

The Egyptian Revolution is still young, and the Arab Spring is still in its early days. The road ahead is bumpy, and the path to democracy will be difficult. Nevertheless, the path to dignity and self-respect that Arab peoples have started to tread is irreversible. The Egyptian Revolution, just like the Tunisian Revolution that inspired it and the numerous Arab uprisings that it now inspires, are all proof that we are witnessing a new Arab awakening.

The tahrir that Egyptians and millions of other Arabs are aspiring to is a liberation not from foreign occupation, but from domestic tyranny; and the galaa they are seeking is not the withdrawal of foreign troops, but the departure of their own domestic despots. The creativity and talent that young Arabs have exhibited in these uprisings are clear signs that the Arab peoples have regained their self-respect and have rediscovered what it means to write their own histories and to chart their own destinies. □

Khaled Fahmy ’85, ’88 is chair of the history department at AUC.
Since events unfolded in Egypt, demonstrations have broken out in Algeria, Libya, Jordan, Bahrain, Yemen, Syria and Iran. No situation is identical to the other, and each has its own reasons and genesis, although they all share a strong yearning for good governance. However, once again political and social trends in Egypt, now calling for greater accountability and better governance, are resonating throughout the Arab world. The political processes that will be witnessed in Egypt will continue to do so. And, therefore, they must be done properly, not only for Egypt's benefit, but for that of the Arab world as a whole.

I do not doubt that the democratization of Egypt and the Arab world is supported as a matter of principle by democratic countries throughout the world. Nevertheless, even democratic countries waiver when standing on principle may appear — at least in the short term — to be costly politically in terms of security and/or economically. I have followed numerous debates amongst Americans, Europeans and Israelis. All of these are understandably anxious, be it those concerned with bilateral relations or those focused and interested in ensuring a sustained flow of reasonably priced oil.

My response to all of them is that Arabs, Muslims and Middle Easterners are as human as all of you, no more so or no less. Like you, they will strive domestically, regionally and internationally to achieve their rights and to be treated equally. As democratic processes gain traction in the Middle East, the people in the region will not become more Arab or change strategic policy rapidly. However, needless to say, they will become less tolerant toward double standards, inequity, usurpation of their rights and freedoms; more demanding, not only of their government, but also of the world.

In short, strategically, the Arab world should have about the same objectives for its region that other peoples have for themselves. Hopefully, they will be more engaged internationally and less dependent on foreign powers. If non-Arab Middle Eastern states engage seriously in efforts to resolve regional problems on the basis of equal rights and responsibilities, I see no reason for them to fret or to worry. If international players promote democracy and equality, not only in the domestic affairs of states, but amongst nation states themselves in the international arena, here again, I see no reason for serious concern.

As the voice of the people exercising their democratic rights is heard more clearly in each of the countries of the Arab world, the same voices will also be heard with greater clarity and resolve in the day-to-day practice of international relations.

Nabil Fahmy ’74, ’77 is dean of AUC’s School of Global Affairs and Public Policy and former ambassador of Egypt to the United States and Japan. A longer version of this article was first published in The Huffington Post on March 10, 2011.
This revolution has no leader.” This has been the sentiment among January 25th youth, a sea of young men and women who formed virtual communities held together by a sense of purpose. Bearing diverse ideologies, in some cases none, this tsunami of fresh brains and talent shared and pooled information and convictions in parallel with their work — and that of others — on the ground. Their strive for freedom echoed loudly in their tweets, pounded adamantly on Facebook walls and hammered vigorously in their viral phone text messages. These are the homegrown digital voices whose roots were implanted in blogs and forums that started earlier in the decade and set the stage for a vibrant world of digital activism.

Yet, digital activists were but one cohort of the revolutionaries. The digital voice may have initiated a spark, but the fire quickly spread, extending beyond the digital arena. From critical mass to masses, it eventually encompassed Egyptians from all walks of life: young, old, rich, poor, man, woman, Christian, Muslim. It swept the nation, eventually toppling one of the most rigid hierarchical dictatorships in history.

And so is Egypt’s revolution doing to the realm of nation rebuilding. Egypt’s revolution is indeed a manifestation of this paradigm in the world of Web 2.0.

The power of the Internet, Web 2.0 in particular, is in giving a voice to the small player and an immediate tool to voice it. While this revolution starts off as an outburst of anger against the status quo, its logic survives this moment to support a much longer process of building.

The term Revolution 2.0 has been coined to emphasize the role of collaboration in the success of the Egyptian Revolution. A better term that has been circulating appropriately, with no one in particular to quote, is Egypt 2.0. Egypt needs to be built from the bottom up, literally and figuratively, in that the collaborative models that have proven successful in bringing down the hierarchical dictatorship be applied to developing the country.

We are grateful to technology for facilitating this discourse and to the youth for bringing it to the ground. But we are now at the point where the building of Egypt and the governance of the process are to be done organically, bottom-up, homegrown. It is not Revolution 2.0. It is Egypt 2.0, and more precisely, Development 2.0.

Nagla Rizk ’83, ’87 is associate professor of economics, associate dean of graduate studies and research at the School of Business, and director of AUC’s Access to Knowledge for Development Center.
“Now, there is hope that Egypt’s economy could find its way to sustainable growth, hope that we stop living in fear, hope that we will be treated with dignity in our own country and abroad, hope that nepotism would not be the only way to get a job, hope that the 40 percent of Egyptians who live below the poverty line would find their way out of poor conditions. I would like to see social justice, application of the rule of law on all without exceptions and the end of corruption. Most importantly, I would like to see a complete overhaul of the educational system because it is the only way out.”

Faten Sabry ’88, ’91
United States

Alumni in different countries reflect on the change in Egypt
“I am very proud of the revolution, and I am praying that the coming transition period would take us to a new setup where all Egyptians would have dignity and the right to self-determination. A system with checks and balances where everyone is accountable and with the ethics and spirit that we saw in Tahrir is what Egypt needs. We have a lot of highly talented individuals who were alienated by the previous system, and I hope this encourages everyone to work toward building a country with the regional and global status it deserves.”

Nashwa Saleh ’95
United Kingdom

“I was one of five co-founders of United Egyptians, a London-based group with no political or religious affiliation. We supported the basic demands of the revolution that have been articulated by the Youth Coalition, amongst others. We believe that only the Egyptian people should have the right to decide on their future and that any process for building a new civil society should be led from within the country and not imposed from outside. As a show of solidarity, I traveled to Egypt to join the revolution and another time to take part in the national referendum on the constitutional amendments. This is my duty as an Egyptian.”

Ammar Nouh ’07
United Kingdom

“When the revolution started on January 25, my wife [Rania Hamed ’91] and I spent days in front of the television so that we can follow what was happening. After spending a few weeks in front of the screen and behind the computer, I could not take it anymore. I decided on the night of Tuesday, February 8 that I had to go back to Egypt. I booked our tickets, and we were on the plane to Egypt at 9 am Wednesday morning. It was the longest flight ever, but the most joyful experience when we were finally back home. We spent the following few days in Tahrir with wonderful Egyptian protestors. It was only a few minutes after sunset on Friday, February 11 that we experienced the best feeling we ever felt in Egypt. We were in the streets till 4 am that day celebrating with all Egyptians.”

Assem Kabesh ’89
United Arab Emirates
Future generations will remember the Egyptian Revolution for many reasons: for the protestors’ insistence on non-violence, for its ripple effect across the region, for the way it brought about the dramatic end of the Mubarak regime, and for the way youth — the chief agents of the revolution — were able to mobilize new technological tools to further its spread. Indeed, newspapers and international coverage focused so much attention on the use of social media in the revolution that, for a time, it was termed — perhaps hyperbolically — the first Facebook Revolution.

A handful of young, entrepreneurial activists were behind this transformation in the tools of protest, alerting the world through their tweets minute-by-minute, often getting news out long before any established news bureaus could report the story. Gigi Ibrahim ’11, perhaps better known by her twitter handle @Gsquare86, is one such activist. The AUC graduate, who has a history in activism, was one of only a few who were able to tweet, even through the Internet blackout.

Ibrahim is vivacious and active. She has a tendency to act out her stories as she tells them: dipping and ducking, gesturing as she demonstrates the events of various protests. Her history in activism is long and varied, beginning with her teenage years in California, after which she came to AUC to major in political science.

Ibrahim credits a class she took at the University with inspiring her to return to political activism in Egypt. “I took a political science seminar about social mobilization under authoritarian regimes, and through this, became aware and read all about the history of mobilization,” she said. “I was so inspired that I started to contact people from many of the activist movements in Egypt and began attending meetings and protests on the subject. It was through this that I got involved with Al-Harak Al-Shababiya Al-Democratia Lil Tagheer (The Popular Democratic Youth Movement for Change).”

It was through this group that Ibrahim joined the ranks of citizen journalists. “I would go to protests and tweet what is happening,” she said. “Even in those days, we would organize using all sorts of social media sites and in face-to-face meetings. Thousands of people would say they were attending, but then it would be the same 50 people at each protest.”

Still, she maintains that the role of social media was important for the foil it played against state-run media. “In an authoritarian regime, any form of citizen journalism becomes activism,” she explained, adding that the January 25th Revolution was supported by new social media technologies, but not inspired by them. “There is no revolution without a struggle,” she said. “Social networks made this logistically easier, but this could not have happened without dedicated activists and the existence of a collective struggle.”

As @GSquare86, Ibrahim has more than 11,000 followers from Egypt and across the world. She
tweets about events in Egypt and developments in the continuing revolutions across the Middle East in Yemen, Bahrain, Libya and Syria. Even while using this personal twitter handle, she is aware of the importance attached to her words. “Verification is very important to me,” she affirmed, crediting the close-knit community of activists that has developed with ensuring that the news they put out is accurate. “It is very important to confirm anything that I tweet or re-tweet if I did not see it with my own eyes.”

Due to her role in getting information out when there was little indication to the rest of the world just what was going on at the beginning of the revolution, Ibrahim has received worldwide attention.

“There is no revolution without a struggle. Social networks made this logistically easier, but this could not have happened without dedicated activists and the existence of a collective struggle.”

A Skype interview with her was broadcast over the Lede blog of The New York Times Web site, and she was one of a handful of Egyptian youth to be featured on the cover of TIME magazine’s edition about the Egyptian Revolution. “I could never have imagined how much the revolution was going to change my life personally,” said Ibrahim. “On a personal level, my family has always thought of my activism as risky and useless. I even had to lie to go to protests. When the revolution happened and they saw how my role was important, it was like winning two revolutions: one for the country and one with my family and everyone who doubted me. In this post-revolutionary era, it is great to see all of us on the same page.”

By Madeline Welsh
E-Revolutionary Sparks Change

*Wael Ghonim (MBA ’08) helped galvanize the masses from the virtual to the real world*

It was only a few months ago that Wael Ghonim (MBA ’08) led a normal life working in the Gulf as a marketing executive for technology giant, Google. As the uprising changed the lives of many Egyptians, Ghonim was no exception. His name resonated in all corners of the globe as a leading figure behind the change in Egypt.

Born in 1980 to a middle-class family, Ghonim earned his undergraduate degree in computer science from Cairo University. He then moved on to pursue an MBA from AUC. Ghonim worked for various local Web projects before being appointed as Google Egypt’s regional product and marketing manager for the Middle East and North Africa. Less than two years later, he was promoted to head of marketing at Google’s United Arab Emirates office in Dubai Internet City.

Ghonim, who belongs to a generation often accused of passivity and political apathy, proved that the world can be changed through the click of a button. Thanks to social media and networking Web sites such as Facebook and Twitter, Ghonim’s ideas and dreams for change were well-received and gained momentum in the virtual world, and eventually transpired into actions in the real world.

Ghonim’s association with the Egyptian Revolution began with the creation of a Facebook group called *Kolena Khaled Said* (We Are All Khaled Said). The page condemned acts of police brutality against Khaled Said, a 28-year-old Alexandrian who was tortured and beaten to death by two police officers. The page solicited thousands of members and became an outlet for the Internet generation to speak out on issues of corruption, brutality, oppression and, eventually, their dreams and visions for a better tomorrow in Egypt.

On January 25, hundreds of thousands of protestors gathered in response to group efforts in promoting nationwide anti-regime demonstrations. Ghonim reasoned that “breaking the psychological barrier of fear is the tipping point of any revolution in any police-driven regime led by a dictator.”

On January 27, Ghonim disappeared during the political unrest in Egypt. Days later, it was revealed that he was being incarcerated by members of the security force. As the story gained international interest and with increasing pressure from the media, Ghonim was finally released 12 days after. Upon his release, he had a moving interview on *Al Ashen Masa’an* (10 pm), hosted by Mona El Shazly ’96 on Dream TV. The episode was thought by many to have been a major driving force behind increasing numbers of protestors who had taken to the streets. Nevertheless, Ghonim insists that the success of the revolution in overthrowing the regime cannot be attributed to a single person. “The real hero is the young Egyptians in Tahrir Square and the rest of Egypt,” he noted. “No one was a hero because everyone was a hero.”

For Ghonim, the revolution is far from over. “This revolution is not over until democracy is enforced and until unemployment and poverty rates reach the same levels of developed countries,” he said. “[Egypt] has what it takes to become the second Silicon Valley: talents in technology, infinite passion and, soon, real democracy. … I believe in our nation. Egyptians will never trade away their freedom, and they will not accept cosmetic changes. I’m optimistic.”

*By Ghaydaa Fahim*

Quotes in the article are based on Ghonim’s tweets through Twitter.
The Soul of the Square

Ahdaf Soueif (MA ’73) shares luminous moments in Tahrir and optimism about the future

On Friday, February 11, Egypt partied. Chants, songs, drums and zaghared rang out from Alexandria to Aswan. Three chants were dominant and very telling. One, “Lift your head up high; you’re Egyptian,” was a response to how humiliated and hopeless we’d been made to feel over the last four decades. The second was: “We’ll get married; we’ll have kids,” and reflected the hopes of the millions whose desperate need for jobs and homes had been driving them to risk their lives to illegally cross the sea to Europe or the desert to Libya. The third chant was: “Everyone who loves Egypt, come and help fix Egypt.” And on Saturday, they were as good as their word. They came and cleaned up after their revolution.

Now, of course, we’re taking stock of the size of the task that lies ahead of us, and it is nothing less than re-imagining and restructuring our country. And doing this in the face of powerful forces working against us.

But I am hugely confident. I’m confident because I’ve watched and listened to so many young Egyptians over the last few months, and I am awed by your clarity of vision, your articulateness, intelligence and determination. And so, over the course of 18 short days, I have — like so many of my generation — moved from guilt and despondency over the state of the world and the country we are bequeathing to our children to a feeling of pride and confidence in this younger generation: in you. You stepped forward, took responsibility and started changing the world. Our part now is to fall in line behind you, to put at your disposal everything that we have, and to offer you our support in the form, quantity and time that you tell us you want it.

It is in this spirit that this piece is written. And in this spirit that I end it with a quote from my son, Omar Robert Hamilton, 26, who raced in from Washington, D.C. to join the revolution:

“We made a city square powerful enough to remove a dictator. Now we must remake a nation to lead others on the road to global equality and justice.

Tahrir Square worked because it was inclusive, with every type of Egyptian represented equally. It worked because it was inventive, from the creation of electric and sanitation infrastructure to the daily arrival of new chants and banners. It worked because it was open-source and participatory, so it was unkillable and incorruptible. It worked because it was modern. Online communication baffled the government while allowing the revolutionaries to organize efficiently and quickly. It worked because it was peaceful. The first chant that went up when under attack was always, Selmeya! Selmeya! (Peaceful! Peaceful!) It worked because it was just. Not a single attacking baltagi (thug) was killed; they were all arrested. It worked because it was communal. Everyone in there, to a greater or lesser extent, was putting the good of the people before the individual. It worked because it was unified and focused. Mubarak’s departure was an unbreakable bond. It worked because everyone believed in it.

Inclusive, inventive, open-source, modern, peaceful, just, communal, unified and focused. A set of ideals on which to build a national politics.”

By Ahdaf Soueif (MA ’73)
Witnessing History Unfold

International students who stayed in Egypt during the uprising tell their tale

In considering where or if to study abroad, international students often go through a mental checklist of questions. What will I eat? Where will I live? Will I make friends there? Suffice it to say, the question, Will there be a revolution?, seldom makes the top three. Yet, as the world watched the January 25th Revolution, many international students at AUC, some of whom had only just arrived in Cairo, were privy to this transformative event in Egyptian social and political life.

Having recently graduated from Tiffin University with a degree in criminal justice, Tim Larsen came to Cairo in June 2010 to study over the summer at the Arabic Language Institute. Larsen was selected as a resident adviser (RA) at AUC’s Zamalek Dormitory and was in the first days of his new position when the revolution began to gain momentum. “There was a tremendous amount of excitement and nervous energy around the dorms in the first days,” said Larsen. “Some of the study-abroad students were very excited, while others were concerned. I felt that my role during this time was to do my job as an RA here and try to have a calming effect.”

Other students found themselves purposely or accidentally in the middle of much of the action in Tahrir Square. Frank Rasmussen and Mads Noergaard-Larsen, two journalism students from the Danish School of Media and Journalism, saw the revolution as a way to further explore their intended craft. “We applied to AUC to explore life in the region, and as we were preparing to come to Egypt, we had begun to hear about the Tunisian Revolution and the possibility that it would spread to Egypt,” said Noergaard-Larsen. “I was aware of my role, not as a protester, but as a documenter. When we were in Tahrir Square on the 25th and 28th, we were careful to protect those with whom we spoke. Even through the tear gas, it was an exciting feeling in the square and also a fascinating place to be because everyone was, in a way, a journalist.”

Rasmussen echoed the same sentiment. “To be present for such a pinpointed moment, as a foreigner, you hardly feel that you are worthy of such involvement. I have a humbled attitude toward the bravery of the Egyptian people,” he said.

Like Rasmussen and Noergaard-Larsen, Clare Lofthouse, who came to AUC as a study-abroad student for a semester, was able to experience some of the events at Tahrir Square. “I was very wary at first, but when we were on the square, we were greeted with smiles and welcomes,” she said. “People were very helpful and watched out for our safety.”

Lofthouse returned to her native England briefly in the middle of the 18 days, but is pleased to have been able to return to Cairo to finish her semester at AUC and experience life in Egypt during the transition. “I study political science, so this is another reason to remain in-country, as it is firsthand experience and learning directly related to my interest,” she noted. “The whole country talks politics now, which is great for my learning.”

By Madeline Welsh
Seeing the political reform movement and events leading to the collapse of the Mubarak government as unprecedented learning opportunities, departments across AUC have announced new educational initiatives for Spring 2011 that explore the series of events that began in Tahrir Square in January. These initiatives include the creation of new courses focusing on the Egyptian Revolution, adjustment of current courses to address events from January 25 to February 11, and the introduction of a number of seminars and panels that discuss Egyptian society before, during and after the fall of the Mubarak regime.

“This series of new academic and community-outreach programs demonstrate AUC’s responsiveness to the educational opportunities presented by social and political events in Egypt,” said AUC Provost Medhat Haroun. “In only two days, 40 of our faculty members have created new programs, workshops and panel discussions, and augmented courses that we are offering this semester. We also want our students to study the revolution closely and to be aware of its privileges. They are learning how they can help in developing Egypt in the coming period.”

Two of the courses that have been created in response to historic events are: Isqat Al Nizam: Egypt’s January 25 Uprising in Comparative Historical Perspective and Cairo: The Present and Future Megalopolis. The former addresses the events of the revolution and places them within the broader context of Egypt’s history, as well as the history of political revolutions in the modern world. The second course, taught by John Swanson, associate provost and director of the Core Curriculum, examines the development of the modern megalopolis of Cairo: its geographic, historical and cultural context; and the several ways in which the city struggles to meet the challenges of the present while preparing for a complex and uncertain future. “Course lectures address the significance of cities and also examine the ways in which modern Cairo strives to deal with the demands of commerce, food distribution, education, transport, sanitation and sewage, with an analysis of the future of Cairo in light of the events,” said Swanson.

Many students, inspired by their experiences in the revolution, have opted to take the new courses. “Before the January 25th Revolution, I was not very politically active. Since then I have wanted to learn more about this city — its past and its future,” said Aya Helmy, an architectural engineering major.

In addition to the two new courses, 24 existing courses have been adjusted to include discussion and analysis of recent events in Egypt, as well as ways in which students can contribute to the emergence of a new socio-political system. In addition, a number of workshops and lecture series discussing several aspects of the revolution have been introduced, including the Tahrir Dialogue panel discussion series by the School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, Meet the Media series by the Kamal Adham Center for Journalism Training and Research, and Transforming Egypt seminar series by the School of Business.

By Madeline Welsh
Celebrations in Zamalek the day Mubarak stepped down.

Military soldier looking out at the crowd at the end of Kasr El Nil Bridge.

Protestors on Kasr El Nil bridge.
Panoramic view of Tahrir Square the day after Mubarak stepped down

Ranya Shalaby ’99, ’02

Revolutionaries demonstrate their love of Egypt in Tahrir Square.

In front of Semiramis InterContinental Hotel a few days before Mubarak stepped down.

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Through Alumni Lens
“T"his revolution started by those who called for change, freedom and social justice — three keywords that triggered a dormant Egyptian gene that moved millions instantly all over Egypt to join in one of the most incredible revolutions of our modern time. It’s an outstanding historical experience that we are all in awe of,” said prominent Egyptian actor Khaled Abol Naga ’89.

Abol Naga is among many Egyptian actors and actresses who took part in the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, several of whom are alums. These include Amr Waked ’96, Asser Yassin ’04, Gihan Fadel ’93 and Angie Wegdan ’04, among others.

“I actually didn’t expect much to happen on the 25th,” said Wegdan, “but as events unfolded, I felt infuriated — youth dying, working class people living under the poverty line asking for their basic rights. I had to be part of this call for change, so I went to Tahrir on the 28th, as well as everyday during the last week of protests, behind my mother’s back. The spirit was very positive; people of all classes were there; and I felt that I was really doing something for my country.”

For Yassin, the seeds of the revolution began when he was a student at AUC.

“I always felt that we as youth were lacking an Egyptian identity — no sense of unity or identification,” he said. “At first, I went to check things out on the 25th; I wasn’t sure what to expect.

What I found, though, was an amazing and peaceful spirit. It was something very real and genuine, not moved by anyone. On the 28th, I had no fear inside me, seeing how we were all standing together as one. One thing that affected me the most was when [72-year-old Egyptian actress] Mohsena Tawfik came walking to Tahrir all the way from Mohandiseen, stood firmly against the tear gas and water cannons, and held our hands hard so we would not disperse. The strength and determination I felt was incredible.”

Looking ahead, Wegdan summed up her vision for Egypt in educating people about their rights; applying the rule of law on everyone, from the president to the layman on the street; and investing in human capital.

“Egyptians are smart, but they’re not provided with the proper resources or education to advance,” she said. “We have a long way ahead, but I’m sure Egyptians will be strong in this world. We’ll retrieve our heritage.”

Similarly, Abol Naga noted that in order for the revolution to reap fruit, all Egyptians must “stay honest and true to the newfound spirit in Egypt,” he said. “We have forever lost fear of the unknown and cannot be manipulated by fear or repression anymore. We have regained our sense of pride — the same we had in 1973. I don’t think I will ever be more proud of anything else in my life — being one of the millions of fellow Egyptians rising and standing up against injustice, corruption and state brutality. We all knew Egypt deserves better, and so we revolted because we wanted to be present, to be heard and to be free.”

By Dalia Al Nimr
Excerpt from Ethar El-Katatney’s undergraduate commencement speech in February 2007

“The world outside is tough. We live in a region which is becoming more and more disheartening. Everyday, we are bombarded with news and images of a deteriorating Middle East. It’s easy for us to become cynical, pessimistic and apathetic people, looking for the simplest way to live our lives. But there is nowhere to run from the fact that the Middle East needs us. True, it is riddled with countless social, political and economic problems, and yet something remains that proves all is not lost: hope. … Our people may be repressed, our economies stagnant and lagging behind the West, but this does not mean that we are in any way lacking. We have the education, the intelligence, the energy, the motivation and the integrity to stimulate positive change. It is up to us to prove there is so much more to the Middle East than what some people choose to see. … It’s not enough to dream of a better Middle East and a better world. Let’s take those dreams and turn them into reality. Let’s start now.”
Past the Protests: A Call to Civic Responsibility

AUC students take part in the youth-led initiative to clean the streets of Cairo

As the nation endured critical circumstances on January 25, it was crucial for all Egyptians, whether male or female, young or old, rich or poor, to attend to their civic duty. It is through these trying times that societies show what they are made of, and Egyptians did not fail to deliver with their magnificent sense of cooperation, solidarity and persistence.

Tamer Sergany, a business administration senior at AUC, was engaged in neighborhood watches at a time when police forces disappeared off the streets of Cairo. “I knew immediately that I had to go out when I saw my dad pick up a club and walk downstairs,” he said. “People were on every street corner with all sorts of hand weapons, armed to defend themselves, their families and their homes. I was on the street with a metal broom rod and a giant steel wrench, up until dawn the next day. Every time I’d patrol, more and more youth joined me to protect the area. We set blazing fires at every street corner and made sure to stop every vehicle that passed us.”

Sergany, who actively took part in the nationwide protests against the Mubarak regime, believed the revolution would succeed against all odds when violence was utilized against the demonstrators. “I knew that if Egyptians kept at the pace I saw and experienced on January 28, then the revolution would succeed,” he noted. “After seeing families, women, children and the sheer number of people marching to Tahrir Square, that’s when I told myself there’s no way things will be the same. Something was going to change, whether due to government fear or the force of the people.”

Marveling at the sense of responsibility and collaboration that was manifest in Tahrir Square, Sergany recalled efforts exerted by demonstrators in Tahrir the day before Mubarak stepped down. “On February 10, I went to Tahrir again only to find it was completely different,” he explained. “It was blockaded at every entrance, with regular citizens checking the IDs of everyone who wanted to enter. I was in sheer shock at the cleanliness of the square and the cooperation of the people. Everybody was very well-organized, and we all stood in unity.”

While some of the demonstrators may not have been politically active, they all shared one thing in common: a dream and vision for a better Egypt. “I wasn’t into politics much, but I went to protest against corruption,” Sergany said. “If there is any change that I’d like to see, it would be ethics, equality and the enforcement of human rights. No more bribes or under-the-table deals —

“It proved to be a civilized revolution.”

Manal Hassan ’11 painting a sidewalk in Mohandiseen, Cairo
just fairness and morality in every aspect of Egyptian life and society.”

Being a female in the midst of all the violence did not deter Hagar Eldidi, an economics major, from attending to what she believed were her responsibilities as an Egyptian citizen. “I was present in Tahrir Square on the day Mubarak stepped down,” she said. “It was overwhelming and amazing to finally witness such a moment. People around us were literally crying in happiness. It felt absolutely wonderful.” She added, “I definitely anticipated the success of the protests, especially when I saw the determination and strong will of the people. I feel very proud being part of this revolution — a tiny dot among hundreds of thousands in Tahrir Square who together created such a strong force that made all the difference.”

But Eldidi’s contributions were not limited to joining the demonstrators in Tahrir Square. After protestors successfully managed to overthrow the regime, Eldidi knew that this newly found sense of liberation, and indeed potential for a better future, had to be supported by positive action. “Cleaning the streets was my favorite part,” she said. “I went to Tahrir on Saturday, February 12, the day after Mubarak stepped down, and the spirit was amazing, with everyone there celebrating and cleaning the area where they camped. This mattered to me because I saw that these people really cared about the future of this country and were serious about rebuilding it the right way. It proved to be a civilized revolution. To me, it meant that if we could clean Tahrir Square, then we could also clean the rest of the country together. I would also like to commend all those who endured sleep deprivation to protect us at night. I saw neighbors get to know each other for the first time.”

Eldidi’s sense of commitment extended beyond Tahrir Square to serve her own neighborhood. “I collaborated with people from my neighborhood in cleaning the area and buying paint for the sidewalk,” she said. “We arranged for a truck to come and collect the garbage. Many people were helping out, including little children who were actually doing a great job. I think it was a very beneficial experience. It taught the younger generations good values. I hope that this level of enthusiasm doesn’t weaken over time so that we can really continue to give back to this country and live a dignified life.”

By Ghaydaa Fahim
truth and objectivity are paramount for journalists to maintain their integrity. For Shahira Amin ’78, former Nile TV deputy chief who has been working in the media field for more than 30 years, quitting her post on state TV during the revolution was a matter of conscience.

“Throughout my years on state TV,” Amin said, “I never felt restricted on my talk shows and frequently hosted analysts with anti-government views, but this was the first time I felt that I was jeopardizing my integrity as a journalist, as well as betraying the young activists who were putting their lives on the line for the freedom of this country. I didn’t want to spread the propaganda of the regime, even by hosting guests who relayed such messages. Press releases that we had to read out stated that the Muslim Brotherhood and foreign agents were behind the revolution, but what I saw with my own eyes in Tahrir was an all-inclusive people movement, educated AU Cians alongside the working class, families in their entirety fighting for what they believed in. However, there was immense fear of not sticking to these press releases.”

The breaking point for Amin was on Wednesday, February 2, when people on camels and horses raided Tahrir Square and attacked the protestors. “I was watching Al Arabiya and was horrified to see camels and horses storming through the crowd,” Amin recalled. “When we went on air, we weren’t allowed to say anything about that. I felt that the martyrs’ blood would be on my hands if I stayed. I went home feeling awful.”

On her way to work the next day, Amin had made her decision. “I sent an SMS to my boss saying: I’m not coming; I’m staying in Tahrir. I’m on the people’s side, not the regime.”

Describing the elation in Tahrir when Mubarak stepped down, Amin noted, “The spirit was unprecedented. We were all like friends talking to each other, jeans alongside the niqab. For years, the sense of patriotism was lacking, especially among youth who largely wanted to travel abroad because they had no hope in the future. What I saw that night was hope, optimism, liberation, not being afraid to speak our minds — all this was new to us!”

But, like many other Egyptians, Amin still hopes for more, particularly with the restructuring of the media. “State TV has to be the voice of the people,” she said. “The newsgathering process needs to be reorganized so that reporters go out to find the story rather than wait for press releases to be given to them. There have to be clear recruitment policies that are up to international standards. No more wasta.”

A Whistleblower’s Courage

Shahira Amin ’78 recounts her experience resigning from state television to be on the side of the people

Journalists need to be given proper training so that they don’t write things that people didn’t say in order to sensationalize the news. There has to be a holistic re-assessment and re-evaluation of the media.”

Amin has returned to Nile TV to host her weekly program, In the Hot Seat, through which she recently conducted an interview with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during her trip to Cairo. “The reason I’ve decided to return is my conviction that you can push for reforms better as an insider,” she said. “I know that the road ahead is long and difficult, but I see light at the end of a very long tunnel. We’re not out in the light yet, but we’ll surely get there.”
For Randa Abul-Azm ’91, Al Arabiya channel’s Cairo bureau chief, January 25 did not merely mark the onset of the revolution, but it also initiated a new phase in her career. “I’m proud of Al Arabiya being ranked as number one, capturing 65 percent of viewers. People would change the channel immediately if they didn’t think you were credible,” she said. Abul-Azm established a career in media in 1995. Upon the launch of Al Arabiya in 2003, Abul-Azm was appointed bureau chief of the channel’s offices in Cairo. Throughout her career, Abul-Azm affirms that maintaining credibility has always been a top priority. “I never announce information unless I am 100 percent sure,” she said.

During the Egyptian uprising, Abul-Azm was at the forefront of events, and her name became associated with exclusive breaking news. Just before Mubarak’s address on February 10, Abul-Azm was the first correspondent to reveal that the former president will not be stepping down. She was also credited for reporting on statements from the Supreme Council of Egyptian Armed Forces even before they were communicated on air.

One of Abul-Azm’s biggest accomplishments during the revolution was her interview with Ahmed Ezz, steel industry tycoon and former chairman of the Planning and Budget Committee in the Egyptian People’s Assembly. “He was one of the most controversial figures in the regime,” said Abul-Azm. “I had never interviewed him or established personal contact with him before. When the revolution started, people wanted to see this man and wondered if he felt any guilt. It was very intense and nerve-wracking. He had his opportunity to admit his shortcomings, but he didn’t. I don’t think public opinion changed much.”

With the country facing a nationwide telecommunications blackout, Abul-Azm found it difficult to remain connected, but the scarcity of communication means wasn’t her only challenge. “It was hectic and very difficult, not only in terms of getting news and information, but also the amount of pressure was unbelievable,” she said. “After the camel incident, our office was shut for three days, and our correspondents were assaulted. I didn’t see my family for three weeks. I was constantly in a state of hiding because I was subjected to the threat of being attacked or detained.”

When asked if she believed that the media played a role in shaping Egyptian history, Abul-Azm said she believed the news dictated the direction of the media and not the reverse. “Media coverage played a highly significant role, and especially new media because it helped us catch up on any coverage that has been missed,” she explained. “Perspective varied in each television station. There didn’t seem to be a homogenous pattern within privately owned channels; some were daring, others were not. One of the major defects in local media is that anchors tend to act like analysts. Maintaining balance in showing both sides of the story is critical. In fact, it strongly factors into how successful you become.”

By Ghaydaa Fahim
In today’s increasingly competitive media market, staying on top is a demanding job, as Mona El Shazly ’96, host of the famous Dream TV talk show Al Ashtara Masa’an (10 pm), testifies. “The era we’re currently witnessing is unprecedented,” said El Shazly, who came to AUC as part of Meet the Media lecture series, organized by the Kamal Adham Center for Journalism Training and Research. “As the parliamentary elections concluded the year 2010, we thought that the worst was over. There was enormous pressure on us, as individuals and institutions, and we never thought that what is to come will be even harder.”

El Shazly explained that every episode of her program leaves her pondering whether the impact, if any, will be a positive or negative one on society. “I always question if what I’ve presented in a given episode was for the good of the country,” she noted. “The struggle between political factions today is more vicious than ever. It’s easy for us as media personnel to give up and withdraw, but our social responsibility dictates that we do our job and say no when we’re supposed to.”

A journalism and mass communication graduate, El Shazly worked in the public relations department of Arab Contractors after graduation. As she moved on to pursue a career in media, she worked as a television hostess for the Arab Radio and Television Network, presenting entertainment programs as well as famous shows including Al Qadeya Lamn Tohsam Ba’ad (The Case Remains Open), La Arab, La Asma’a, La Atakalam (I Do Not See, Hear or Speak) and La Tathab Hatha Al Masa’a (Don’t Go Anywhere Tonight).

When asked if she ever lost hope during the revolution, El Shazly said that she almost endured a mental breakdown on the day of what was termed as the Camel Battle. “I was optimistic just one day before,” she recalled. “I felt relieved that Egypt might not have to endure much loss, but seeing these mobs assault protestors completely shattered this belief.”

Despite being praised for providing some of the best coverage of the revolution, including an exclusive and moving interview with Wael Ghonim (MBA ’08) after being held in custody for 12 days, El Shazly believes that the media has fallen short. “The media market is limited in terms of finances and human resources,” she reasoned. “We’ve got many talents, but not all have the proper foundation for the job. As private media outlets, we’ve got no regulations, no umbrella and no deterrents. Just like the press has columns, news sections and opinion editorials, the media operates in the same way. Many outlets make the mistake of mixing news with opinions. What govern us are our conscience, ethics and education.”

El Shazly also reflected on times of hardship while covering the uprising. “The pressure was enormous from regime figures. My staff and I were subjected to threats and were terrorized,” she said. “However, today, we’re at a period in time where we shouldn’t be governed by fear, but rather by reason, enthusiasm and hope.”

By Ghaydaa Fahim
As tensions were on the rise throughout the Egyptian uprising, journalists found their task more challenging than usual. Capturing events proved to be a real issue, with photographers and reporters facing threats of assault, detention and having their equipment confiscated and bureaus shut down. However, for TV journalist Yosri Fouda (MA ’92), the biggest challenge was the ability to truthfully convey events to the viewer.

“As a journalist, you discover things as you go on, and you endeavor to present views and not tell the audience what to think,” said Fouda. “I made it clear that if we don’t follow the professional path in telling the truth, then I’m not in. I wouldn’t risk my reputation and career. ... When I’m in front of the camera, I try to set my beliefs aside so that I can serve viewers in the best way possible by presenting the best angle to the issue. Off camera, on Twitter and Facebook, my stances are clear.”

Fouda is a graduate of the Kamal Adham Center for Journalism Training and Research. Born in Egypt, he initially worked for BBC, covering escalating events in Bosnia. In 1996, he joined Al Jazeera network and played an instrumental role in uncovering secrets behind the 9/11 terrorist attacks. He works for the independent Cairo-based channel ONTV, owned by Egyptian businessman Naguib Sawiris. He is the co-author of Masterminds of Terror: The Truth Behind the Most Devastating Attack the World Has Ever Seen (2003, Arcade Publishing).

Fouda believes that new media had a tremendous effect in shaping history. “Facebook, Twitter and the Internet in general did not make the revolution, but rather facilitated it,” he said. “Media coverage exposed people and showed where they stood. The presence of international media on the ground was important, given Egypt’s weight, but credit must go to the people of Egypt.”

While the accomplishments of the revolution were remarkable, Fouda believes much remains to be done to bring Egypt to the status it truly deserves. “The small dream of most Egyptians now is education, healthcare, not being intimidated by police officers and for justice to be served. It sounds easy, but will be very difficult because the main nerves of the regime are still in place,” he said. “I’m an advocate of open and liberal societies as well as accountability. I’m aware of the fact that democracy in the Western sense is not applicable here, but I’m very much for sticking to some basic concepts such as accountability, true freedom of speech, political participation, and improving education and other core services.”

Looking at the way forward for Egyptian media, Fouda believes that a great first step was accomplished with the dissolution of the Ministry of Information, although skepticism remains about having a military officer oversee its functions. “I hope that this is only a transitional period, and I hope for a body of non-political professionals to take over,” he said. “The catastrophe of national newspapers and state TV for the last 30 or 40 years was because everybody who worked for them had the ruler in mind in everything they reported on. You should always ask yourself if your true aim is to give rightful service to the people. Breaking this mentality and moving on to a new era is absolutely crucial.”

By Ghaydaa Fahim
All of a sudden, Egypt was everywhere. From Al Jazeera to CNN to print media, the Egyptian Revolution was front-page news. The New York Times’s opinion page was no exception, dedicating column-inch after column-inch to each new progression of the revolution. Indeed, among its group of columnists are two who share more than just the distinction of a New York Times byline: Thomas Friedman (ALU ’74) and Nicholas Kristof (ALU ’84), who share five Pulitzer Prizes between them, are both AUC alumni.

Both columnists approached their coverage with an international mindset rooted in a study of Middle Eastern affairs. Friedman, who came to AUC in 1974 to study Arabic, later went on to earn a Marshall Scholarship at Oxford University. Early reporting assignments took him to Beirut, where he later served as bureau chief for The New York Times, a post he also held in Israel. Friedman has been The New York Times’s foreign affairs columnist since 1995. Kristof, who came to AUC to study at the Arabic Language Institute in 1983 after completing a Rhodes Scholarship, is best known for his coverage of humanitarian and human rights topics and has written extensively on Darfur. He has been working for The New York Times since 1984 and has earned two Pulitzer Prizes.

When describing the feelings associated with Tahrir Square, Friedman and Kristof — who both visited Cairo during the revolution — were overwhelmed by the display of courage and humanity shown by the protestors.

Kristof referred to his years in Cairo in his column on January 31, while reflecting on the changes to Tahrir Square since his time there. “When I lived in Cairo many years ago studying Arabic,” he wrote, “Tahrir Square, also called Liberation Square, always frankly carried a hint of menace. It was cacophonous and dirty, full of crazed motorists in dilapidated cars. That was way back at a time when the then-new Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, talked a good game about introducing democracy. Now the manic drivers are gone, replaced by cheering throngs waving banners clamoring for the democracy they never got, and by volunteers who scrupulously pick up litter, establish order, and hand out drinks and food.”

Friedman, in his February 7 column, commented on the great variety of people out in the square. “I’m in Tahrir Square,” he wrote, “and of all the amazing things one sees here, the one that strikes me most is a bearded man who is galloping up and down, literally screaming himself hoarse, saying, ‘I feel free! I feel free!’ Gathered around him are Egyptians of all ages, including a woman so veiled that she has only a slit for her eyes, and they’re all holding up cell phones, taking pictures and videos of this man, determined to capture the moment in case it never comes again. Aren’t we all? In 40 years of writing about the Middle East, I have never seen anything like what is happening in Tahrir Square. In a region where the truth and truth-tellers have so long been smothered under the crushing weight of oil, autocracy and religious obscurantism, suddenly the Arab world has a truly free space — a space that Egyptians themselves, not a foreign army, have liberated — and the truth is now gushing out of here like a torrent from a broken hydrant.”

By Madeline Welsh
As the world’s media converged on Egypt and the Middle East, pundits and journalists have been particularly transfixed by one question: How did this revolution happen and why didn’t we see it coming? While most of the literature on Middle East politics and many policymakers had not considered the possibility of a citizen-powered regime change, the AUC Forum publication, *The Changing Middle East: A New Look at Regional Dynamics*, published by AUC Press in October 2010, outlined the circumstances likely to push Egyptians and Arabs to the point of revolution.

Bahgat Korany, political science professor and director of the AUC Forum, is the editor and main author of *The Changing Middle East*. The book, said Korany, challenges the prevalent concept of Middle East exceptionalism, or the sense that while the rest of the world changes, develops and advances, the Middle East remains stagnant in its politics and society.

In the book’s first chapter, Korany presents the analytical framework to “look at the Middle East differently,” emphasizing change or transformation and the necessity of looking at “politics from below.” He drew early attention to what many are now citing as the catalysts of the revolution, specifically the youth population bulge, and the gap between this huge group and aging leadership. “My colleagues looked too much at the top of the political system and not enough below,” Korany noted. “This is why they could not see what the book identifies as ‘the volcano underneath.’ The lesson from this is not to limit ourselves to the top of the political pyramid, as the politics of ordinary people matters as well.”

Korany believes that the voice of Middle Eastern youth, who constitute almost two thirds of the Arab population, will continue to impact in the coming months on government and social transition. “I believe that youth get a lot more credit now,” Korany said. “Previously, many used to think that they had no interest in major public issues, but they have proven that this is not true. Young people have proven now that they can achieve. If communication between youth and the new government happens, I believe that the transition will be effective and smooth.”

*The Changing Middle East*’s chapters follow up on Korany’s framework to analyze different aspects of transformation, from media to the status of civil society and non-state actors. Korany’s collaborator’s are scholars, Rasha A. Abdullah, ’92, ’96, associate professor and chair of AUC’s journalism and mass communication department; Ola AbouZeid; Omar Ashour; Julie C. Herrick; Amani Khandil and Hazem Khandil. Given the attention the book received from international media, from CNN to Brazilian TV, AUC Press is releasing a paperback edition with a new introduction to reflect recent events.

Through its panels and workshops, the AUC Forum discusses issues of global and regional importance. ❑

*Forecasting Change*

*AUC Forum publication makes early predictions about the revolution and receives international attention*

By Madeline Welsh
With the eruption of the January 25th Revolution, security guards at AUC Tahrir Square found themselves in the heart of events, but had to distance themselves from the turmoil to safeguard the campus downtown. “We didn’t want to be associated with any faction in one way or the other,” said Mokhtar Ragab, assistant director for security. “Our main aim was to protect AUC property.”

Recounting the first few days of the revolution, when violence was at its peak, Ragab noted that on January 25, things were stable up until the afternoon, when riot police fired tear gas canisters and sprayed water cannons to clear protestors, who sometimes hurled rocks and climbed on top of armored police trucks. “In the midst of such clashes, tear gas canisters were thrown into the Science Garden,” Ragab noted. “We didn’t throw them back outside; otherwise, it will look like AUC was taking part in the uprising. We just monitored the tear gas until it reached its full volume and diffused.”

On the 28th, termed the Friday of Wrath, events took on a different turn. “We anticipated that this was going to be a difficult day, and consequently, took certain measures to ensure the safety of the campus,” Ragab said. “We closed University gates and put out all lights. Nobody was allowed to watch from the top of any AUC building, or throw tear gas canisters or rocks outside if such items found their way to campus. We also organized ourselves in 24-hour shifts between the Main, Greek, Falaki and Sheikh Rihan campuses. Because it was difficult coming to work during such unpredictable times, we were sometimes short-staffed, and some of us had to work three continuous days before being able to return home.”

One of the scary moments for the guards was when fire broke out in the police booth just outside the Mohamed Mahmoud Gate. “We all collaborated to put the fire out using the University’s water hoses,” Ragab said, adding that they faced a dilemma when some protestors wanted to use the hose to spray water at riot police. “We were afraid that if we reject, they’ll storm angrily into AUC, so we kept the water running for a little while before we were able to gradually turn it off.”

The problem was compounded when a Molotov bomb caught onto a tree next to the AUC Press Bookstore, and leaves on fire fell onto plastic plant pots near the historic palace gate. Isaac Atef, a security guard who boldly threw himself into the heavy smoke to put out the fire, recalled how scary those moments were. “My heart sank when I saw the fire from where I was standing [near the bookstore] because I knew there were electric wires nearby, and this could turn into a catastrophe,” he said. “We were all afraid, but we had to put out the fire quickly before it spread. This campus is historic, so if any damage occurs, it is a loss not only for AUC, but for the country as a whole.”

Things got worse that evening when
people forcefully stormed into AUC’s Downtown Cultural Center through the gate in front of the historic palace building. Ragab classified entrants into three groups: a peaceful group of protestors who sat in the Science Garden to drink water and catch their breath from the tear gas before leaving quickly; another more violent group who took sculptures from above Ewart and Oriental halls, broke them into pieces and used them to hurl at riot police; and a group of thugs who went into offices and stole computers. In the midst of such commotion, riot police broke into the campus through the Sheikh Rihan gate, pointed their guns at AUC security officers so they wouldn’t stand in their way and threw tear gas canisters from the top of AUC buildings. “Because they were armed and ready to shoot, we knew we couldn’t forcefully ask them to leave, so I asked the police officer from the booth next to the Mohamed Mahmoud gate, who took shelter inside Hill House when fire broke out in his booth, to talk to them peacefully and convince them to leave,” said Ragab, who was hit in the head by a stone during the protests. “When they left, we inspected the campus and found papers on the ground, some broken computer monitors, desks on the floor, chairs on top of one another and some AUC Press offices looted. We tightened new chains around the gate in front of the palace building so nobody would be able to enter again.”

Throughout the 18 days, security guards at AUC Tahrir Square went through ups and downs as events unfolded in the country. However, their perseverance and dedication helped protect AUC Tahrir Square from what could have turned into a violent bloodbath. “We had to keep the interests of the University in mind and not have anybody use AUC as a center of activity,” Ragab said. “When dealing with armed police officers and thugs, it was important for us not to be provocative, remain calm and look very composed, even though at many times, we were really scared.”

By Dalia Al Nimr
Memoirs of a Mother

Rania Zaki ’97 tells her 7-year-old son what it felt like to be part of the historic change in Egypt

I am an Egyptian mother of two children, in the midst of both inspiring and scary times in Cairo, Egypt. I teach language arts to amazing high school students, and I’ve assigned them to keep a journal/scrapbook of the revolution taking place in our country.

I’ve written a diary entry — a letter to my 7-year-old son — and I’ve posted it on my Facebook page. I received feedback from my students as well as my foreign friends abroad. My friends told me that the letter served to give them a more personal side to what is seen in the news, something raw and relatable.

That is why I decided to post it publicly. It gives you a slice of life. What happened with my family happened to many other families, too. Some have not been so fortunate to have a loved one return. They will not be forgotten.

“To get to us, your dad walked many, many kilometers on foot. He walked so much, the soles of his feet were covered in blisters. ... Your father had been in the midst of all the tear gas, rubber bullets and firebombs we had seen on TV.”

The Day Your Dad Joined the Protest on “The Day of Wrath”

Dearest Seif,

Being 7 years old right now, you are witnessing a piece of history that you may forget about when you are older. I am writing to you today about what you and I have seen and been through on January 28, 2011, the day your dad decided to join “The Day of Wrath” protest.

Your dad [Waleed Nassar ’96] and I had a “moment of wrath” when he came to me after the Friday prayer, sat beside me on the couch and told me in his ever-so-calm manner, “Rania, I’m going to the protest.” I flew off the handle. I told him that a day named “Day of Wrath” meant it was certainly not going to be peaceful, that his primary duty was to protect his wife and children, that some people go to a protest and end up in the morgue, that he can support the protest in any other way, that thousands of people were going to be there and the demonstration didn’t depend on him.

I said all sorts of things, anything to keep him from going. He told me that he was going to do his duty as a father, and that meant speaking up to provide a better country for his children to live in. I shouted at him as he closed the door, “It is clear that your priority is not your family!”

He left. You called to me from my room and said, “Mama, baba left a note on your bed.” It was a piece of paper that contained cash, an ATM card, and your dad’s bank account number and password written down neatly. I felt extreme sadness, anger, anxiety. I was paralyzed for a moment, before deciding to pray. You joined me too, and when we finished, I told you to make a wish to God. With our foreheads pressed to the ground, I heard soft footsteps behind me and turned around to find your dad kneeling down beside me. “I didn’t want to leave without telling you that I love you,” he said, with tears welling up in his eyes. I gave him the biggest hug my arms could muster, and in the middle of my sobbing, he
told me calmly about all sorts of technological things such as how to track down his phone by GPS so that I could know where he was when the phone lines were activated again.

And so, he left again. I was left in the hands of Al Jazeera live news coverage and my imagination. At first, I saw the water cannons being sprayed on the protesters on top of the 6th of October Bridge. The water cannons were followed by tear gas. The tear gas was followed by rubber bullets. The rubber bullets were followed by firebombs. Five people had lost their lives, the news reported. I was crying so hard I had to sit a few inches away from the television to be able to see through my tears. When bloody images came up, I would scream to you, “Seif, go draw me something! Draw me anything — a dinosaur — ANYTHING!” I didn’t want to appear hysterical, but I was, and you knew it. You sat beside me, patted my hair and said, “Mama, it’s okay. Salamtekh ya mama, salamtekh ya mama.” It was you who was comforting me. [Your sister] Lara was marching up and down the TV room chanting, “Baatell, Baatell!” and I thought to myself, “I hope that one day, I can look back at this moment and laugh.”

I saw someone who looked like your dad, even dressed in the same clothes as your dad, stretched out lifeless inside a car. I felt myself becoming light-headed, and my speech became a little slurred. I wanted to call your dad to make sure he was safe, but the phone lines were purposefully cut. I sat even closer to the TV, waiting for the clip to come again to verify if it was your dad or not. All other clips came except for that one. My hysterical sobbing made you lose your cool, as you kept asking me, “Mama, are you worried about baba? Is baba going to be okay?”

Hours later, 9:15 pm to be precise, the doorbell rang. You and I ran toward the door. I opened it, and as soon as I saw your father, I flung my arms around him and cried like I never cried in my life before.

To get to us, your dad walked many, many kilometers on foot. He walked so much, the soles of his feet were covered in blisters. He managed toward the end of his walk to hitch a ride in several different taxis, and the drivers refused to charge any fare. Your father had been in the midst of all the tear gas, rubber bullets and firebombs we had seen on TV.

The next day, despite being exhausted, your dad unscrewed the metal rods of his camera tripod and went to the street at night to protect us while we slept. Gun shots were being fired all over the place, but thankfully, you were fast asleep.

What I want to conclude is: Although I disagreed with your dad about going to the protest, I know that he did it for you, he did it for Lara and he did it for the future of his country. Dad made it back from the protest, but others did not. Most of them were youth, Seif. Remember this revolution; remember the people who fought and died trying to achieve a better life; and remember that your dad was a part of it, despite your mother’s famous wrath!

Be proud and dream big.

Love you,
Your hysterical mother, Rania

To read all of Rania Zaki’s blog posts, visit http://dearseif.wordpress.com
Documenting History

A new initiative seeks to preserve the change in Egypt through the eyes of the AUC community

Weeks after the historic AUC Tahrir Square bore witness to the 18 days of demonstrations that toppled the Mubarak regime, AUC announced the launch of a new project, University on the Square. The project documents the experiences of AUCians in the revolution through photographs, videos, testimonies and other digital material online, in addition to designated collection centers for the donation of physical items. It is one of several new initiatives created by AUC to integrate the revolution into the academic and cultural life of the University.

AUC President Lisa Anderson described the initiative as “a constantly evolving project that combines systematic archiving and creative exhibition in an effort to preserve the facts and feel of these transformative times in Egypt as well as at AUC,” she said. “Individuals with compelling stories and captivating experiences will have the opportunity to schedule interviews with our staff to recount and preserve our oral history.”

Project planners have already begun conducting interviews with members of the AUC community for their testimonies. According to Steve Urgola, co-coordinator of the Oral History Committee, senior librarian, University archivist and director of records management, there are approximately 80 people on the list of targeted interviewees, including students, alumni, faculty, staff, senior administration and Board of Trustees members, as well as security personnel at AUC Tahrir Square and vendors who have long served the Tahrir Square campus. In addition to those who are formally contacted, the project will set up booths on campus where those who wish to share a story can do so.

“Historically, oral histories have been important in adding texture to events and issues,” said Kim Fox, associate professor of practice in AUC’s journalism and mass communication department who is co-coordinating the oral history component of the project. “We hope to do the same by adding to AUC’s oral history archives with the experiences of AUCians in the Egyptian Revolution. People who want to share their stories will be able to make an appointment to talk about their experience with someone from the oral history team. The audio recordings will eventually be available on AUC’s Digital Archive and Research Repository.”

While the project is currently in the data collection stage, the University plans to showcase materials through the Web, exhibitions, publications, seminars and presentations.

In addition, AUC is launching After Tahrir, a Web site dedicated to coordinating the multitude of initiatives held at AUC New Cairo and AUC Tahrir Square that revolve around the revolution, from public lectures and panel discussions to workshops, courses and seminars.

To contribute to the project or for more information and updates, visit www.aucegypt.edu/onthesquare.
Around the World

Australia

Alumni dinner in Sydney in November 2010 at the Sahra by the River restaurant

Bahrain

Launch of the Loyal for Life alumni regional chapter in Bahrain and the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia at Bahrain’s World Trade Center in January 2011

Egypt

A fall gathering hosted by Mohamed Ismail ’87 at the Katameya Residence in October 2010 brought together approximately 60 alumni

Alumni in Alexandria meet in September 2010 at the Hilton Hotel as part of the launch of the Loyal for Life chapter

Launch of the Loyal for Life LEAD interest chapter in November 2010

A farewell reception for former AUC President David D. Arnold and his wife Sherry was held at AUC Tahrir Square in December 2010

Launch of the Loyal for Life initiative for the senior Class of 2011 at a reception held at AUC New Cairo in November 2010
AUC has introduced a multifaceted initiative designed to keep alumni connected to their alma mater. The Loyal for Life campaign, which was launched at the beginning of this academic year, is an opportunity to encourage alumni involvement in the AUC community.

To be a Loyal for Life AUCian, alumni must fulfill four requirements: they stay informed and connected to AUC; they get involved in any of the events or activities that the University holds; they give back a gift to The AUC Annual Fund; and lastly, they show pride in AUC by speaking positively about the University in social media channels and by displaying items that carry the University’s name such as T-shirts, car stickers and mugs. Distinguished alumni receive a recognition package that has a Loyal for Life AUCian pin, car sticker, thank you certificate from AUC as well as a membership card.

“We encourage all alumni to join the Loyal for Life AUCian effort and spread the word about it to their fellow alumni,” said Raymonda Raif, director of alumni and trustee affairs. “We want this to grow through alumni efforts, increasing the engagement and participation of all alumni in something greater than oneself.”

Alumni will be asked to renew the Loyal for Life AUCian pledge annually. They will have to keep their contact information current and plan to attend several University events a year, including lectures, class or regional reunions, and meetings of the newly launched interest chapters, which help alumni in the same industry or with similar interests network with one another. “We are very proud of AUC, and this initiative is a way we can reach out to all our alumni, no matter where they are,” said Manar Ayoub, associate director of alumni programs and special events. “This campaign is a recognition program that was conceived in order to increase alumni participation across the University.”

Over the past months, alumni have been gradually inducted into the Loyal for Life campaign. Ramy Riad ’98, chief executive officer of Intoegypt, affirmed that a stronger campaign to solicit alumni support is appropriate and timely. “For me, being an AUCian means having confidence in my educational background and overall mindset,” said Riad. “Belonging to the best educational institution in the country, if not the region, gives me a sense of pride as well as confidence in my abilities. The new Loyal for Life AUCian campaign should bring alumni together and bring to light the strong network of high-caliber, well-established and capable individuals we have. It is then that alumni will realize that AUC is the experience that connects us all.”

By Madeline Welsh
Saudi Arabia

Jeddah

Alumni dinner hosted by Souhail El Farouki ’68 and his wife Abla Leheta ’69 at their residence in Jeddah in December 2010

Riyadh

Alumni reception hosted by Issam Abu Dabat ’73 and his wife at their residence in Riyadh in December 2010

United States

San Francisco

Panel discussion and launch of the Loyal for Life alumni chapter hosted by AUC Trustee Paul Bartlett and Elizabeth Bartlett at the Westin Palo Alto Hotel in October 2010

Seattle

Alumni gathering in Seattle at the Washington Athletic Club with Sherif Sedky (center), physics professor and director of AUC’s Yousef Jameel Science and Technology Research Center, in October 2010

United Kingdom

AUC Trustee Basma Alirezza hosted the Loyal for Life launch event in October 2010 for the UK alumni chapter, with former AUC President David D. Arnold, his wife Sherry and the Egyptian Ambassador to the United Kingdom Hatem Seif El Nasr in attendance
Marwan Moustafa recently retired as president and CEO of the Canadian Energy Research Institute, after previously serving as deputy director of the California Energy Commission. He is now a member of the International Advisory Council of the King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center, living in Santa Rosa, California, and enjoying his first granddaughter, Rania.

Nada Tantawi is the senior communications officer at the Sawiris Foundation for Social Development. She has more than 25 years of experience as a writer, editor and translator for a variety of donor-funded development projects, non-governmental organizations and Radio Cairo. Before joining the foundation, she served as communications officer for the Canadian International Development Agency to develop and implement promotion and media strategies for its Participatory Development Program. She also worked as publications and public relations manager for three projects in horticulture, industry and agriculture, funded by the United States Agency for International Development. She is a freelance news editor and translator in the English newsroom of Radio Cairo. Tantawi earned a bachelor’s in journalism and mass communication from AUC and a diploma in business administration from the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport. She was granted a fellowship from AUC to pursue a master’s in Arabic literature.

Mirette Mabrouk (MA ’90) is the director of communications at the Economic Research Forum and is a non-resident fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. Formerly associate director of publishing operations at AUC Press, she is also the founding publisher of The Daily News Egypt. She previously served as publishing director at IBA Media, which publishes the region’s largest monthly magazines. Mabrouk is a member of the Brains Trust at the Switzerland-based Evian Group and is involved with both The Aspen Institute in Washington, D.C. and the Consumer Unity and Trust Society in Jaipur, India.

Amr Sheta (MPA ’94) serves as co-CEO of Orascom Development Holding A.G. as well as executive vice chairman of the board of directors. He is also a board member of a number of subsidiary companies of the Orascom Development Group. Sheta has 19 years of experience in corporate and investment banking, with an emphasis on private equity. He holds a bachelor’s in economics and a master’s in management from AUC. He also holds a diploma in project appraisal and investment management from the Harvard Business School.

Tarek Selim (MS ’95) has written a book on energy policy and the conditions for Egyptian nuclear energy feasibility titled Egypt, Energy and the Environment: Critical Sustainability Perspectives, which has been published in the United Kingdom by Adonis & Abbey London. He is married to Rehab Sharafeldin ’96, ’02, and they have been blessed with a baby girl. They named her Carmen after the opera, which they both enjoy greatly.

Tamer El Naggar is the CEO of Synovate Middle East and North Africa. He has been with Synovate since 1993, working across the region. Prior to his current position, he was country manager for Morocco and Egypt, as well as managing director for North Africa. El Naggar is the elected Egypt representative of the European Society of Market Research. In 2010, he served as co-chairman of the Core Marketing Committee of the American Chamber of Commerce in Cairo, of which he has been a member since 2001. He took part in a delegation made up of 50 businessmen visiting Washington, D.C. during the annual DoorKnock mission meeting of U.S. officials and business leaders. El Naggar was a key speaker at several public events as well as a part-time lecturer in Egyptian Universities. He holds an MBA in international business, as well as a bachelor’s in business administration from AUC.

Youssef Hafez has been living in Belgium for the past five years working on an assignment as an international fuels trader for ExxonMobil, with whom he started work in Cairo 12 years ago. Prior to his current position, he worked for four years at Shell Egypt. He is married with two boys: Hani (8) and Karim (3). His e-mail is Youssef.H.Hafez@exxonmobil.com.
Walid Nagi joined the Mansour Group’s marketing department after graduation. In 2002, he became head of government relations and corporate social responsibility in the company. His job has allowed him to work with the United Nations Development Programme. Currently, Nagi is based in New York on secondment working with the United Nations.

Basel Roshdy (MBA ’98) has been working as a senior professional and director in the private equity and fund management area for the past 14 years. Previously, he was a corporate banker responsible for project finance and syndicated loans for large projects in Egypt and some offshore projects. Currently, his group is managing private equity funds based in Egypt and has made direct private equity investments in Egypt, the Arab region and select global markets. He has taken part in several Euro-Mediterranean and Mediterranean activities and initiatives as an expert member, panelist, speaker and promoter. He is also a founding member of the Egyptian Private Equity Association, where he heads the international relations committee. He has participated in writing and reviewing the first guidebook of SMEs’ Access to Finance, published in Egypt and sponsored by the Egyptian Junior Business Association.

Shima Barakat (MBA ’98) heads undergraduate and postgraduate teaching as well as research in entrepreneurship at the University of Cambridge Judge Business School. She earned a PhD from the University of Strathclyde in Scotland and has set up a company with her husband called Value in Enterprise, which helps management personnel overcome the problems they face as they try to become more environmentally and socially responsible.

Tarek Gineina is a franchise business development consultant working in the fields of commercial real estate, food and beverage, and retail. As the leader of AUC’s Food Industry Chapter, he encourages all AUCians who are involved in businesses in the field of food and beverage (franchise, concepts, hospitality, manufacturing, commercial real estate and consulting), or are just passionate about food, to join. He could be contacted at TGineina@yahoo.com or FIIC@aucegypt.edu.

Fahd Albinali began work as a research scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology after graduating from AUC. His research involves exploring the development of technology that enables measurement of physical activity and caloric burn on mobile phones using wearable sensors. At the mHealth Summit 2010, the premium forum for mobile phone health technologies, he was invited to showcase cutting-edge mobile technology. Out of more than 450 submissions, Albinali’s was selected to be presented in front of Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft. Albinali has also served as the chief technology officer for EveryFit, Inc., a startup company in Boston, Massachusetts that is commercializing and extending the technology pioneered by Albinali and his colleagues at MIT. Albinali could be reached at albinali@mit.edu.

Wael Eid received an MBA with distinction from the University of Warwick in England in 2005. He works as associate director at the European Islamic Investment Bank Plc. in London, in addition to pursuing his PhD in risk management from the University of Durham. He gives presentations and lectures frequently, and has been interviewed twice by France 24 channel about financial and banking topics.

Noha Abdel Fattah began her career after graduation in marketing research with Synovate, a multinational research agency, where she has been working for almost 10 years. She currently serves as associate director for insight and training, qualitative head of the department in Egypt and qualitative trainer for Africa. She specializes in psychodynamic analysis and ethnographic observational research. She also completed a diploma in Islamic studies and another in international advertising.

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Hebatallah Khalifa is married to Samer El Kachouty. They are currently living in Bahrain and have a 2.5-year-old daughter, Layan, and a 3-month-old son, Aaser. Khalifa started her own home-based business in 2008, a healthy, homemade catering service for babies and toddlers in Bahrain. Currently, she is a member of AUC’s alumni chapter in Bahrain and is enjoying being in touch again with her beloved University.


Special Programs

’77

Stanley Reed (CASA) is publishing a book with co-author Alison Fitzgerald titled *In Too Deep: BP and the Drilling Race that Took it Down* (John Wiley and Sons). Reed was a student at the Center for Arabic Study Abroad from 1976 to 1977 and is now a London-based correspondent for Bloomberg News, covering energy, the Middle East and other issues.

’84

Steve Farley (YAB) is a graduate of Williams College, but spent his junior year at AUC (1983 – 1984). He still thinks of that year as the most important year of his life, and someday, he would like to live in Cairo again. He is currently both a public artist and Arizona state legislator living in Tucson, Arizona. He invented an art process called tilography for converting photographs to glazed ceramic tiles, and has created large-scale murals all over the United States. He is hoping to expand his art business to the Middle East and can be reached at sfarley@igc.org.

In Memoriam

Waheed Samy ’74, ’80, former full-time faculty member at AUC’s Arabic Language Institute (ALI), died on February 20, 2011 after a sudden illness. Both Samy and his wife Mary were AUC faculty members before they left in the late 1990s to Ann Arbor, Michigan with their daughter, each pursuing a different degree. Samy earned a bachelor’s in English and comparative literature from AUC in 1974 and a master’s in teaching Arabic as a foreign language in 1980. During his tenure at AUC, he taught different subjects at all levels in the ALI intensive programs, the Arabic Language Unit and the Center for Arabic Study Abroad. He also served for several years as director of the Arabic Language Unit intensive summer program. In the mid 1980s, he established ALI’s first Computer-Assisted Language Learning lab, and in 1999, AUC Press published his *Arabic Writing for Style*. Samy received his PhD in 2004 and became a full-time faculty member at the University of Michigan’s Department of Near Eastern Studies. In addition to teaching, he remained active in professional projects related to Arabic pedagogy and continued to design multimedia instructional software of the highest caliber.

Cecilia Mary Kammerer (MA ’71) from Douglas, Arizona died on March 31, 2011. She was a fellow at AUC’s English Language Institute from 1969 to 1971, after which she earned her master’s in teaching in English as a foreign language.

Weddings

Safinaz El Tarouty ’97, ’05, who is currently pursuing her PhD in politics at the University of East Anglia in England, married Khalid Emana ’87, deputy assistant foreign minister for international economic relations, on January 5, 2011 at the Four Seasons Hotel - First Residence, Giza. They spent their honeymoon in Sharm El Sheikh.

Doaa Farag ’05, ’11, assistant director for development writing at AUC, married Dr. Mohamad Anwar, consultant at Kasr El Aini Hospital, on December 2, 2010 at the Marriott Hotel in Zamalek. They spent their honeymoon in Thailand and Malaysia.
At the Crossroads: Tunisia, Egypt and Libya

I went to Tunisia in early November 2010 to deliver my baby girl, Mona. I was planning on spending my maternity leave there with my family. Little did I know that my baby girl and I would witness a revolution firsthand. When the revolution started in Tunisia, I had mixed feelings. I was happy and proud on the one hand, and very scared on the other. When riots began after Bouazizi burned himself, we were all sad, but we had no idea that it would flare up this way. For the past two decades in Tunisia, people complained behind closed doors and in hushed voices; they were scared to express themselves. My family actually fell victim to this regime. One of my close relatives was harassed because she expressed political views opposing the regime. As a result, she was bullied and threatened, her car stolen, daughter slandered and husband imprisoned. They instilled such fear in her that they silenced her, and this was their way with everyone who attempted to speak out. With the revolution, I felt great pride throughout. I felt that what my grandfather (God bless his soul) fought for was retrieved. My grandfather was part of the Bourguiba regime, and he fought for Tunisia’s independence against colonialism from France. I felt that Bouazizi and others did not die in vain. With this revolution, hope was restored.

However, there were many frightening moments, particularly when we heard gunshots outside. It was also scary reading on Facebook the status of my friends from all around Tunisia who would reported on drive-by shootings, lootings and attacks on homes. I kept wondering if this would ever happen to us. When the army took over the streets and helicopters started circulating, this helped alleviate the fear, but it was a constant reminder of what was going on outside, and it made me feel we were in a state of war.

I was really impressed with Tunisian people in the aftermath of Ben Ali, when things got violent and citizens took it upon themselves to defend their houses and neighborhoods. In our residence, young men took shifts guarding homes. They patrolled the entire night. This was the case all over Tunisia. The coming together of communities was astonishing.

When the revolution happened in Egypt, it was like living the whole thing all over again. I was very scared for Egypt, the same fear I had for Tunisia, though for Egypt, I was worried it would turn into a huge bloodbath just by the sheer number of people. I am proud of both countries. I think their perseverance was what made both revolutions successful, and it is this perseverance that will provide a better future for the Arab world.

I am half-Libyan, and with the situation in Libya, I am heartbroken. Really heartbroken. No words can express how I feel to see the country going down in flames after it was finally starting to breathe again. My heart goes out to my family and friends in Libya. I cannot imagine the fear they are living in because I don’t believe that the situation in Tunisia or Egypt was the same. With Libya, it is worse and much more violent.

There is still a lot of work to be done. I don’t think this coming period for Tunisia, Egypt or Libya is going to be easy, but I also think we are paving the road for a better future. I envision a free Tunisia where the government is not corrupt, where people have the freedom to express themselves, where everyone has the opportunity to build their country and where people are encouraged to succeed. I dream of a Tunisia where the government is there to support the people, not to repress them and drive them to a state of mediocrity. I dream of a regime that is accountable and has the best interests of the country at heart. I have the same dream for the entire Arab world.

Ghalia Gargani ’99, ’03 is a research associate and project manager at the Dubai School of Government’s Gender and Public Policy Program.
After Tahrir: Building the New Egypt

As deeply engaged members of the Egyptian community, AUC faculty, staff, alumni and students work to help build Egypt’s future. A newly launched Web portal, After Tahrir, helps you learn about upcoming events related specifically to the new Egypt, open dialogues, videos, alumni initiatives and volunteer opportunities.

www.aucegypt.edu/AfterTahrir
Wael Yassin (MBA ’87) (left) and diving companions in Hurghada send a message to support Egypt’s economy, photographed by Ashraf Salloum, director of campus planning and design and University architect.