The American University in Cairo Press

New Books
Fall 2016
Cover: see *Cairo Inside Out*, page 18.
The pyramids of Abusir were built in the Fifth Dynasty, but the site remained sacred for another two thousand years until the Late Period, revered as the Realm of Osiris. In a completely new and up-to-date review, Miroslav Verner, the leader of the Czech mission at Abusir for decades, gives us a detailed overview of the discoveries at the site and their significance in *Abusir: Necropolis of the Sons of the Sun* (page 27). For an insight into the life of women in the New Kingdom, hieratic scholar Koenraad Donker van Heel once again builds up a world of intriguing lives and relationships from near-indecipherable papyri, in *Mrs. Naunakhte & Family: The Women of Ramesside Deir al-Medina* (page 29). And for a more lighthearted look at life—or rather, death—in ancient Egypt, Egyptologists of all ages can accompany Mr. Mummific on his journey through the embalming process in the wonderful *How I Became a Mummy*, by Leena Pekkalainen (page 30).

*Khul-Khaal: Five Egyptian Women Tell Their Stories* by Nayra Atiya has been one of our bestselling books since it was first published more than thirty years ago. Now, in an equally fascinating set of personal narratives, the author returns to reveal the other side of the coin in *Shahaama: Five Egyptian Men Tell Their Stories* (page 49). Other men’s lives are shared this season in a new printing of Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy’s classic *Architecture for the Poor* (page 37); an updated edition of Joel Gordon’s definitive analysis of the early Nasser years, *Nasser’s Blessed Movement: Egypt’s Free Officers and the July Revolution* (page 47); a new biography by Louise Foxcroft of the eccentric Irish medical officer who left one of Cairo’s best-loved small museums to the nation, *Gayer-Anderson: The Life and Afterlife of the Irish Pasha* (page 42); and the haunting account of the making of a documentary film in the Palestinian refugee camps of Lebanon by Syrian director Mohammad Malas, *The Dream: A Diary of the Film* (page 45).

Alongside six new paperback editions of novels by Naguib Mahfouz (pages 10–15), brand new fiction appears under our dedicated fiction imprint Hoo-poe, including works from Morocco, Syria, Egypt, and Sudan by Youssef Fadel, Khaled Khalifa, Mohammad Rabie, and Hammour Ziada (pages 4–9).

This season we add two more pocket anthologies to our popular series: *Women Travelers on the Nile*, edited by Deborah Manley (page 22) and *Ancient Egypt in Poetry*, edited by Donald P. Ryan (page 24). And for a really unusual look at Egypt’s endlessly beguiling capital, our own Trevor Naylor has teamed up with photographer Doriana Dimitrova to show you the view from *Cairo Inside Out* (page 18).

Dr. Nigel Fletcher-Jones
nigel@aucegypt.edu
The Diaries of Waguih Ghali
An Egyptian Writer in the Swinging Sixties
Volume 1: 1964–66

Edited by May Hawas
Including an interview with Diana Athill

The captivating diaries of an Egyptian political exile, novelist, and libertine intellectual in sixties Europe

In 1968 Egyptian novelist and political exile Waguih Ghali committed suicide in the London flat of his editor, friend, and sometime lover, Diana Athill. Ghali left behind six notebooks of diaries that for decades were largely inaccessible to the public. The Diaries of Waguih Ghali is the first publication of its kind of the journals, casting fascinating light on a likeable and highly enigmatic literary personality.

Waguih Ghali (1930–69), author of the acclaimed novel Beer in the Snooker Club, was a libertine, sponger, and manic depressive, but also an extraordinary writer, a pacifist, and a savvy political commentator. Covering the last four years of his life, Ghali’s Diaries offer an exciting glimpse into London’s swinging sixties. Volume 1 tells of Ghali’s life in Rheydt, West Germany, providing unique insights from the perspective of an Egyptian immigrant on postwar Germany and shedding light on Ghali’s own writing and personality when he was at the peak of his depression. This volume also includes his reminiscences of his childhood in Alexandria and Cairo, drawing in bittersweet nostalgia a picture of a bygone era in Egypt. Meanwhile, in the background loom what would become milestone events in his adopted countries in subsequent decades: the Treblinka trials and the gains of the National Democratic Party in Germany and the rise of the Labour Party in Britain.

Including an interview conducted by Deborah Starr with celebrated literary editor Diana Athill OBE, the Diaries bring together those most familiar with Ghali’s life and work, and offer a fresh take on a distinctive author and a vibrant decade.

Forthcoming:

May Hawas received her PhD in literature from Leuven University in 2014. In addition to her editorial experience she has worked in various NGOs concerned with women’s issues and youth employment. Some of her short stories have been published in Mizna Journal, Yellow Medicine, and African Writing. She currently teaches English literature at the University of Alexandria.
10th June 1964

Swam again yesterday during lunchtime. The weather is still superb. After work drove round for a while and then found myself, ipso facto of course, at Edda’s. Three beers, then Doctor Esser came and offered me beers and schnapps. Then went to his house to stay with darling Margarethe for a while. I find her very beautiful with her very short hair and very large eyes. She is not considered pretty I suppose—but then they have no taste here. I love to talk to her. She is so intelligent, and her German, uttered so well […] is a delight to me. Hope she and Heinz hit it off although one doesn’t know with Heinz. You never know what’s going on in his mind. […] Still, bless him. I still owe him £500. Yes, five hundred quid…

Had dinner with Margarethe and Dr Esser and drank whisky and was slightly tipsy. I did something I am very much ashamed for having done. I was helping hose the garden and had to fiddle in the cellar. It was full of wine and I pinched two bottles. Now why on earth did I do that? How horrible! And yet, this is typical me. […] Why? They’ll never never miss them. And today I bought a bottle of sherry for Margarethe which I shall not let her pay for. But I shouldn’t have pinched those bottles. Enfin.

Perhaps I did it because a good third of my money goes on my friends, for drinks, etc., and I never get that back although they can all afford it much more than I can. […]

Woke up in a wonderful mood. Had a shower, played records and heard the radio—singing all the time. Jesus I am strange. Drove happily to work. The weather beautiful. Today Gilla, Margarethe, Rolf, Ulla and Kurt, the friend in the swimming pool and his girlfriend (whom I don’t know) are coming to my place for drinks. I love having friends at home and just plying them with food and drink. […]

Anyone reading this Diary would find it strange I find this life boring. I think that the last two weeks are not really a specimen of the last four years. In fact, not at all. Now that I have this flat, and have had this book published, I am, I think, beginning to be the nucleus of a certain ‘set.’

9th June 1964

Couldn’t write at all yesterday. Went to bed with CHEKHOV—couldn’t sleep. Woke at 4 a.m., my nerves all taut […] Haven’t had sex for three weeks or so, perhaps that’s why. […] Liselotte itch—yearning again today. Very strange. I loathe that girl, I despise her, and when I see her it’s as though I am injected with a poison, a fluid poison in my blood, even a feeling of nausea. But I have a terrible passionate yearning for her. […]

It’s a sunny day, can’t wait to go to the pool at midday. Woei Curry is away and the office is nice and pleasant with that harmless gentle Major Swain. It’s quiet and I do what I want. Yesterday our WRAC [Women’s Royal Army Corps] sergeant invited me at her mess on Friday for a party. Tummy not in order again. Must have my appendix out. But I seem to have conquered my depression; this terrible one I had for a couple of weeks. According to this article I read in the Observer, a person is much stronger once he has conquered a depression. Of course it’s my writing which is depressing me. There seems to be no future in it, and so there is no future for me either. Sometimes I want to be CHEKHOV, at other times Nabokov, now Miller. I am inconsequent in my taste and style.

THE DIARIES OF
WAGUIH
GHALI
At the close of the nineteenth century in Sudan, freed slave Bakhit is let out of prison with the overthrow of the Mahdist state. On the brink of death, the memory of his beloved Theodora is all that has sustained him through seven years of grim incarceration—that and his vow to avenge her killing.

Set against a backdrop of war, religious fervor, and the massive social and political upheavals of the time, The Longing of the Dervish is a love story in the most unlikely of circumstances.

Lyrical and evocative, Hammour Ziada's masterfully crafted novel confronts sorrow, hope, and the cruelty of fate.

Winner of the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature:
a masterful history of love and revenge
in a time of war and slavery

“Explores a seminal moment in the region’s history.”
—The Guardian

Neither starry-eyed nor cynical, Ziada constructs, in exquisitely lyrical language, the story of Bakhit’s love for the white woman who finds solace in his company but cannot imagine marrying a slave. A rich and sensitive novel, The Longing of the Dervish reflects on tolerance, prejudice and freedom in ways that transcend its historic setting.”
—Financial Times

Hammour Ziada was born in Umm Durman, Sudan in 1977. He has worked as a civil society and human rights researcher, and is currently a journalist based in Cairo. He is the author of two novels and two collections of short stories. The Longing of the Dervish was awarded the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature in 2014 and was shortlisted for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction in 2015.

Translator of the winning novel in the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize and winner of the Saif Ghobash–Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation, Jonathan Wright was formerly the Reuters bureau chief in Cairo. He has translated Alaa Al Aswany, Youssef Ziedan, and Hassan Blassim. He lives in London, UK.
No Knives in the Kitchens of This City
A Novel

Khaled Khalifa
Translated by Leri Price

In the once beautiful city of Aleppo, one Syrian family collapses into tragedy and ruin. The mother, abandoned by her husband, struggles to raise her children alone. Her daughter Sawsan flirts with the militias, the ruling party, and finally religion, seeking but never finding salvation.

All are slowly choked in the fog of violence and decay, as their lives are plundered and their dreams wrecked by the brutal Assad regime.

Set between the 1960s and 2000s, No Knives in the Kitchens of This City is a graceful and profound depiction of life under tyranny. Through the story of a single family, we read the disintegration of a whole society over half a century. This novel teaches us about grief, fear, and the end of beauty.

Winner of the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature:
an eloquent portrayal of life under dictatorship
by an acclaimed Syrian writer

One of the rising stars of Arab fiction . . .
a rare public voice."—New York Times

Critically acclaimed . . . [No Knives] traces the degrading and destructive impact of Syria’s dictatorship on the lives of a family from Aleppo."—Financial Times

Khaled Khalifa was born in Aleppo, Syria in 1964. A founding editor of the literary magazine Alif, he is the author of four novels, including In Praise of Hatred. He has also written numerous scripts for TV dramas and films, several of which have won awards, and screenplays for several feature films. No Knives in the Kitchens of This City was awarded the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature in 2013 and was shortlisted for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction in 2014.

Leri Price is a translator of contemporary Arabic literature. Her translation of Khaled Khalifa’s In Praise of Hatred was longlisted for the 2013 Independent Prize for Foreign Fiction. She lives in the UK.

Original Arabic title: La sakakin fi matabikh hadhihi al-madina
Young, handsome Othman found his ticket out of a life of desperate poverty in the slums of Casablanca when he married Sofia. Sophisticated, French, rich, and forty years his senior.

But when she is brutally murdered in their bedroom one night, the police quickly zero in on Othman as the prime suspect.

Set to inherit everything and with his mistress, the love of his life, waiting in the wings he certainly has motive. But is he guilty? Or is he an innocent man, framed by circumstance and an overzealous corrupt police force?

"Abdelilah Hamdouchi seems to have found the formula for the emergence of the Moroccan detective novel."
—Libération Kaleidoscope

Born in Meknès, Morocco in 1958, Abdelilah Hamdouchi is one of the first writers of police fiction in Arabic and a prolific, award-winning screenwriter of police thrillers, including Whitefly (AUC Press, 2016). He lives in Rabat, Morocco.

Translator Jonathan Smolin is the author of Moroccan Noir: Police, Crime, and Politics in Popular Culture (2013), and translator of Abdelilah Hamdouchi’s Whitefly (AUC Press, 2016). He lives in Hanover, NH.
Ahmed Otared is a Cairene police officer and trained sniper. When the country is invaded and occupied by a force of foreign mercenaries he joins the underground resistance, embarking on a new bloodthirsty career.

As the violence he encounters and participates in intensifies, a terrifying reality, bubbling below the surface of ‘normal’ life, is revealed to him, and he finds himself in a fantasia of torture and torment, a hellscape from which there is no deliverance.

This unflinching and grisly tale is made vivid through Mohammed Rabie’s brutally beautiful writing.


Robin Moger studied Egyptology and Arabic at Oxford University before working as a journalist in Cairo for six years. He is the translator of *A Dog with No Tail* by Hamdi Abu Golayyel (AUC Press, 2009) and *Women of Karantina* by Nael Eltoukhy (AUC Press, 2014), and his translation for *Writing Revolution* (2013) won the 2013 English PEN Award for outstanding writing in translation.
Ibn Shalaby, like many Egyptians, is looking for a job. Yet, unlike most of his fellow citizens, he is prone to sudden dislocations in time. Armed with his trusty briefcase and his Islamic-calendar wristwatch, he bounces uncontrol-lably through Egypt’s rich and varied past, with occasional return visits to the 1990s.

Through his wild and whimsical adventures, he meets, befriends, and falls out with sultans, poets, and an assortment of celebrities—from Naguib Mahfouz to the founder of the city of Cairo. Khairy Shalaby’s nimble storytelling brings this witty odyssey to life.
Hassan makes a living in his native Marrakesh as a comic writer and performer, through satirical sketches critical of Morocco’s rulers. Yet, when he is suddenly conscripted into a losing war in the Sahara, and drafted to a far-flung desert outpost, it seems that all is lost.

Could his estranged father, close to power as the king’s private jester, have something to do with his sudden removal? And will he ever see his beloved wife Zinab again?

With flowing prose and black humor, Youssef Fadel subtly tells the story of 1980s Morocco. He evokes a system whose brutality emanates from the top, and is felt and reproduced in the countless uneven power relations of the people living underneath.
Love—who can count its varieties, measure its force, uncover the masks it wears, or predict how it binds and divides? In this spare novel, master storyteller Naguib Mahfouz gives us some of his most memorable characters, widely familiar to Egyptians from the film version of the book: Sitt Ain, with her large house, her garden, her cats, and her familiar umbrella, strong and active, mother of the neighborhood; her son Izzat, so different from her, emotional and unsure of his way; and the friends of his childhood, Sayyida, Hamdoun, and Badriya, all their lives entangled and shaped over many years by the encounter of commitment, ambition, treachery, and above all love. This is a story in and of twentieth-century Egypt, which can be read on more than one level. The neighborhood and the motifs may be familiar, but they combine to tell a new and intriguing tale, with an unexpected outcome.

Naguib Mahfouz (1911–2006) was born in the crowded Cairo district of Gamaliya. He wrote nearly 40 novel-length works, plus hundreds of short stories and numerous screenplays. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988.

Kay Heikkinen has taught medieval history and literature as well as Islamic civilization, and currently teaches Arabic at the University of Chicago. She is the translator of Radwa Ashour’s The Woman from Tantoura (AUC Press, 2014).
The setting is Alexandria in the early 1960s where six characters, all made exiles by circumstances, are brought together in the decayed elegance of the Pension Miramar. The central figure is Zohra, the beautiful peasant girl, whose relationship with the other five characters symbolically reflects the most basic political and social realities of the period.

Naguib Mahfouz (1911–2006) was born in the crowded Cairo district of Gamaliya. He wrote nearly 40 novel-length works, plus hundreds of short stories and numerous screenplays. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988.

Fatma Moussa Mahmoud (1927–2007) was professor and chair of the English Department at Cairo University. She was the author of The Modern Egyptian Novel and the editor of an encyclopedia of the theater. Her Arabic translation of King Lear ran on the Cairo stage for eight years, while her translation of her daughter Ahdaf Soueif’s novel The Map of Love was published in 2001.

Original Arabic title: Miramar
978-977-416-804-8. LE100. Middle East only.
In this extraordinary drama-in-dialogue, Naguib Mahfouz reveals his love for all of Egypt’s extensive history—and his deep knowledge of it. In *Before the Throne*, he summons nearly sixty of Egypt’s rulers to the afterlife Court of Osiris, from a king who unified Egypt for the first time, around 3000 BC, to a president assassinated by religious extremists in 1981.

He includes names as familiar as the pharaoh Ramesses II and as obscure as the medieval vizier Qaraqush. Defending their behavior before the divine tribunal, those who acted for the nation’s good are honored with immortality, but those who failed to protect it leave the gilded hall of eternal justice with a very different verdict.

Full of Mahfouz’s unique insight into his country’s timeless qualities, this controversial work skillfully traces five thousand years of Egypt’s past as it flows into the present, through the mind of its most acclaimed author.
Set in Cairo in the aftermath of the Six-Day War of 1967, *Love in the Rain* introduces us to an assortment of characters who, each in his or her own way, experience the effects of this calamitous event. The war and its casualties, as well as people’s foibles and the tragedies they create for themselves, raise existential questions that cannot easily be answered.

In a frank, sensitive treatment of everything from patriotism to prostitution, homosexuality and lesbianism, *Love in the Rain* presents a struggle between “old” and “new” in the realm of moral values that leaves the future in doubt. Through the dilemmas and heartbreaks faced by his protagonists, Mahfouz exposes the hypocrisy of those who condemn any breach of sexual morality while turning a blind eye to violence, corruption, and oppression.
Set in Cairo during the Second World War, this novel is a masterpiece of human compassion, reflecting with sympathy and well-balanced pathos the material, moral, and spiritual problems of an Egyptian family.

Suddenly confronted with poverty when the father, its sole support, dies unexpectedly, the family’s middle-class respectability and conformity can only be supported on the backs of a brother and a sister who sacrifice their own reputations by immersing themselves in the seamy underworld of Cairo.
Hamid Burhan, a retired government employee, and his loyal wife Saniya have built themselves a home in the quiet southern suburb of Helwan, where they raise their son and two daughters, expecting life to remain as blessed as it was in the photograph of the happy family at a picnic in a Nileside park in the early 1930s. Events in the wider world impinge—wars, revolution, peace with Israel—while Saniya and the old house in Helwan remain the bedrock of the family’s values. But everyone else is buffeted in one way or another by the tumultuous processes of change in Egyptian politics and society.

In this compact novel written in 1982, Naguib Mahfouz again uses a family saga, as he did in his Cairo Trilogy, to reflect on the processes of enormous social transformation that Egypt underwent in the space of a few generations in the twentieth century.

Original Arabic title: Baqi min al-zaman sa’a
978-977-416-808-6. LE100. Middle East only.
The Literary Atlas of Cairo
One Hundred Years on the Streets of the City

Edited with an introduction by Samia Mehrez

Bringing together writings by Egyptians, Arabs, men and women, Muslims, Copts, and Jews, this rich selection maps out many of the changes in Cairo's geopolitics and its urban fabric, while tracing spatial and social forms of polarization and new patterns of inclusion and exclusion within the expanding megacity. Through its thematic organization, The Literary Atlas of Cairo traces the developments that have taken place over a century in modes of literary production, and presents a unique historical cross-section of the actors within the Cairene literary field, to provide an unprecedented, original, and indispensable educational and research tool for scholars and students as well as a much wider readership interested in Egypt and Cairo in particular as one of the globe's largest historic, multi-cultural urban centers.

"Fascinating and absorbing, this book comprises about a hundred short selections from the writings of 60 authors."
—W.L. Hanaway, University of Pennsylvania

By the same author:

Egypt's Culture Wars: Women in Conflict

Samia Mehrez is professor of Arabic literature in the Department of Arab and Islamic Civilization and director of the Center for Translation Studies at the American University in Cairo. She is the editor of The Literary Life of Cairo (AUC Press pbk edition, 2016) and Translating Egypt's Revolution (AUC Press, 2012).
Unlike *The Literary Atlas of Cairo*, which focuses on the literary geopolitics of the cityscape, this companion volume immerses the reader in the complex network of socioeconomic and cultural lives in the city. The seven chapters first introduce the reader to representations of some of Cairo’s prominent profiles, both political and cultural, and their impact on the city’s literary geography, before presenting a spectrum of readings of the city by its multiethnic, multinational, and multilingual writers across class, gender, and generation. Daunting images of colonial school experiences and startling contrasts of postcolonial educational realities are revealed, while Cairo’s moments of political participation and oppression are illustrated, as well as the space accorded to women within the city across history and class.

Together, *The Literary Atlas of Cairo* and *The Literary Life of Cairo* produce a literary geography of Cairo that goes beyond the representation of space in literature to reconstruct the complex network of human relationships in that space.

“Highly recommended.”—*Choice*

“Mehrez’s *The Literary Atlas* and *The Literary Life of Cairo*, prepared on the brink of the Egyptian thawra (revolution) of early 2011, consummate in critically important ways both the storied history of a “city victorious” and a critical account of its literary historiography.”

—Barbara Harlow, *IJMES*

*Samia Mehrez* is professor of Arabic literature in the Department of Arab and Islamic Civilization and director of the Center for Translation Studies at the American University in Cairo. She is the editor of *The Literary Atlas of Cairo* (AUC Press pbk edition, 2016) and *Translating Egypt’s Revolution* (AUC Press, 2012).
Cairo Inside Out

Trevor Naylor
Photographs by Doriana Dimitrova

A whole new approach to seeing one of the world’s great cities

Cairo is a city of splendor and spectacle, long celebrated as much for its warmth and bustling street life as for the legacy of its tumultuous past. Yet for the countless visitors who fall under its spell, the prolonged din of its crowds and traffic can seem overwhelming at times, tempting them out of the city’s open spaces into its shadow light, the cooler, quieter interiors of restaurants, homes, hotels, and terraces. Cairo Inside Out evokes the light and moods of this great metropolis with stunning photographs shot from the city’s indoor havens. We observe it through and from nostalgic haunts, such as Café Riche and the Windsor Hotel, and look out onto its great sights—the Nile, the Red Pyramid at Dahshur, Ibn Tulun mosque—from the most intimate urban interiors, homes, and watersides. For those who may have lived in Cairo, this is a reminder of a city that moves and yet remains wonderfully unchanged. For visitors and residents, this evocative collection, an unabashed homage to Cairo’s persistent color and allure, will inspire them to visit those places once more.

By the same author:

TREVOR NAYLOR is the co-author of A Roving Eye: Head to Toe in Egyptian Arabic Expressions (AUC Press, 2014) and author of Living Normally: Where Life Comes Before Style. He lives normally in Cairo.

DORIANA DIMITROVA is a Bulgarian photographer who lives and works in Cairo. She is the photographer of A Roving Eye: Head to Toe in Egyptian Arabic Expressions (AUC Press, 2014).
The complete guide to New York’s Metropolitan Museum, in Arabic

This completely reconceived and rewritten guide to the Metropolitan’s encyclopedic holdings—the first new edition of the guidebook in nearly thirty years—provides the ideal introduction to almost 600 essential masterpieces from one of the world’s most popular and beloved museums. It features a compelling and accessible design, beautiful color reproductions, and up-to-date descriptions written by the Museum’s own experts. More than a simple souvenir book, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Guide provides a comprehensive view of art history spanning more than five millennia and the entire globe, beginning with the Ancient World and ending in contemporary times. It includes media as varied as painting, photography, costume, sculpture, decorative arts, musical instruments, arms and armor, works on paper, and many more. Presenting works ranging from the ancient Egyptian Temple of Dendur to Canova’s Perseus with the Head of Medusa to Sargent’s Madame X, this is an indispensable volume for lovers of art and art history, and for anyone who has ever dreamed of lingering over the most iconic works in the Metropolitan Museum’s unparalleled collection.
This expansive book reveals the great diversity and range of art of the Arab lands, Turkey, Iran, Central Asia, and later South Asia. Published to coincide with the historic reopening of the galleries of the Metropolitan Museum’s Islamic Art Department, it presents nearly three hundred masterpieces from one of the finest collections in the world. The works range chronologically from the origins of Islam in the seventh century through the nineteenth century, and geographically from as far west as Spain and Morocco to as far east as India. Outstanding miniature paintings and illuminated manuscripts, ceramics, textiles, carpets, glass, and metalwork reflect the mutual influence of artistic practice in the sacred and secular realms. Many of these beautiful objects display the rich traditions of calligraphy, vegetal ornament (the arabesque), and geometric patterning that distinguish the arts of the Islamic world.

With seven informative essays and almost three hundred catalogue entries—supplemented by introductory essays on the collection and its display—this handsome and comprehensive overview will enlighten the specialist and the general reader alike.

**Masterpieces from the Department of Islamic Art in The Metropolitan Museum of Art**

**Islamic Art (Arabic)**

**A full-color introduction to the most outstanding pieces in the Metropolitan Museum’s superb Islamic collection, in Arabic**

MariaM d. ekhtiar is senior research associate in the Department of Islamic Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Priscilla P. Soucek is John L. Loeb Professor, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University.

Sheila R. Canby is Patti Cadby Birch Curator in Charge of the Department of Islamic Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Navina Najat Haidar is curator and administrator in the Department of Islamic Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Women travelers in Egypt in the nineteenth century saw aspects of the country unseen by their male counterparts, as they spent time both in the harems of Cairo and with the women they met along the Nile. Some of them, like Sarah Belzoni and Sophia Poole, spoke Arabic. Others wrote engagingly of their experiences as observers of an exotic culture, with special access to some places no man could ever go.

In our walks, the women in the villages, and on the banks, eyed us with the most intense curiosity. Some of them were much ornamented with gold, and their veils were tied up between the eyes with a string of small silver bells. Their chief occupation appeared to be the drawing and carrying of water; the children, generally in a complete state of nature, were frequently much frightened at our appearance, and one of them, on meeting us, ran quickly away, crying out “Mamma, Mamma,” in as broad a tone as any Scotch boy could have done.

—Anne Katherine Elwood, 1827

Yesterday was marked by us with a white stone, as being the date of our first personal introduction to live crocodiles! I was summoned from my cabin to behold the monstrous reptiles basking on a bank of sand in the river; there were three of them—one enormously large—I should say at least fifteen feet long, and the two others evidently young things. A double-barrelled gun was immediately discharged at them, which caused the little ones to shuffle away into the water in a great fright; but the old fellow treated the salute with superb contempt, and after a second or two that showed he was accustomed to stand fire, waddled in leisurely after them, appearing to be quite conscious that the shot might have been fired at the citadel of Cairo with the same effect as against his own impenetrable scales.

—Isabel Romer, 1845
Egypt’s ancient pyramids, temples, and tombs along the Nile, which have inspired artists and writers for centuries, have also inspired poets—and particularly in the nineteenth century when romanticism was at its height. Egyptologist Donald Ryan here collects a wide variety of English verse composed by British, Irish, and North American poets fired up by the magic, the splendor, or the desolation of the pharaonic ruins and their echoes of a distant history.

Includes verse by: Robert Browning, Lord Byron, John Keats, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Herman Melville, John Ruskin, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Alfred Tennyson, Lady Wilde, and many more.
But the first glitter of his rising beam
Falls on the broad-based pyramids sublime,
As proud to show us with his earliest gleam,
Those vast and hoary enemies of time.

Awful, august, magnificent, they tower
Amid the waste of shifting sands around;
The lapse of year and month and day and hour,
Alike unfelt, perform the unwearied round.

How often hath yon day-god’s burning light,
From the clear sapphire of his stainless heaven,
Bath’d their high peaks in noontide brilliance bright,
Gilded at morn, and purpled them at even!

—I see it in a vision, in the dark,—
The river, the great river, flowing, flowing
Forever through the shadowless, white land.
Upon its banks the gods of Abou Simbel
Sit patient, with their hands upon their knees,
And listen to the voice of cataracts,
And seem to say: “Why hurry with such speed?
Eternity is long; the gods can wait;
Wait, wait like us!” Along the river shores
The red flamingoes stand; and over them
Against the sky dark caravans of camels
Pass underneath the palm-trees, and are gone.

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

—Alfred Tennyson
The latter part of the fifteenth century BC saw Egypt’s political power reach its zenith, with an empire that stretched from beyond the Euphrates in the north to much of what is now Sudan in the south. The wealth that flowed into Egypt allowed its kings to commission some of the most stupendous temples of all time, some of the greatest dedicated to Amun-Re, King of the Gods. Yet a century later these temples lay derelict, the god’s images, names, and titles all erased in an orgy of iconoclasm by Akhenaten, the devotee of a single sun-god. This book traces the history of Egypt from the death of the great warrior-king Thutmose III to the high point of Akhenaten’s reign, when the known world brought gifts to his newly built capital city of Amarna, in particular looking at the way in which the cult of the sun became increasingly important to even ‘orthodox’ kings, culminating in the transformation of Akhenaten’s father, Amenhotep III, into a solar deity in his own right.
Abusir
The Necropolis of the Sons of the Sun

MIROSLAV VERNER

A comprehensive account of half a century’s excavation and investigation at one of Egypt’s most enigmatic pyramid sites

At the center of the world-famous pyramid field of the Memphite necropolis lies a group of pyramids, temples, and tombs named after the nearby village of Abusir. Long overshadowed by the more familiar pyramids at Giza and Saqqara, this area has nonetheless been the site, for the last fifty years, of an extensive operation to discover its past.

This thoroughly updated in-depth study documents the uncovering by a dedicated team of Czech archaeologists of a hitherto neglected wealth of ancient remains dating from the Old Kingdom to the Late Period. This is Abusir, realm of Osiris, God of the dead, and its story is one of both modern archaeology and the long-buried mysteries that it seeks to uncover.

By the same author:

MIROSLAV VERNER is an Egyptologist, archaeologist, and epigrapher who has been working in archaeological excavation and research in Egypt since 1964, and has published thirteen academic monographs and numerous academic articles. He is the author of Temple of the World: Sanctuaries, Cults, and Mysteries of Ancient Egypt (AUC Press, 2013).
The so-called Will of Naunakhte (1154 BCE) has become rightly famous in Egyptology. So where did she come from and what really happened to her eight surviving children, four of whom were daughters? By carefully studying the documents mentioning members of the family and including all the material mentioning the women of the New Kingdom village of Deir al-Medina and other sources, the author once again puts to the forefront the remarkable role played by ordinary women in ancient Egypt.

“A unique view into the lives of ordinary women in ancient Egypt

Dr. Donker van Heel . . . has a great gift for making the very complex material he works on accessible to non-specialists. Furthermore, he generally manages to make his audience laugh while doing so.”
—Chris Naunton, *Egyptian Archaeology*

*By the same author:*

*Koenraad Donker van Heel* is lecturer in Demotic at Leiden University. He is the author of *Djekhy & Son: Doing Business in Ancient Egypt* (AUC Press, 2012) and *Mrs. Tsenhor: A Female Entrepreneur in Ancient Egypt* (AUC Press, 2014).
After its conquest by Alexander the Great in 332 BC, Egypt was ruled for the next 300 years by the Ptolemaic dynasty founded by Ptolemy I, one of Alexander's generals. With the defeat of Cleopatra VII in 30 BC, Egypt became a province of the Roman Empire, and later of the Byzantine Empire. For a millennium it was one of the wealthiest, most populous and important lands of the multicultural Mediterranean civilization under Greek and Roman rule.

The thousand years from Alexander to the Arab conquest in AD 641 are rich in archaeological interest and well documented by 50,000 papyri in Greek, Egyptian, Latin, and other languages. But travelers and others interested in the remains of this period are ill-served by most guides to Egypt, which concentrate on the pharaonic buildings. This book redresses the balance, with clear and concise descriptions related to documents and historical background that enable us to appreciate the fascinating cities, temples, tombs, villages, churches, and monasteries of the Hellenistic, Roman, and Late Antique periods. Written by a dozen leading specialists and reflecting the latest discoveries and research, it provides an expert visitor’s guide to the principal cities, many off the well-worn tourist paths. It also offers a vivid picture of Egyptian society at differing economic and social levels.

**Contributors:** Roger S. Bagnall, Alan Bowman, Willy Clarysse, Ann Ellis Hanson, James G. Keenan, J. G. Manning, Dominic W. Rathbone, Jane Rowlandson, Dorothy J. Thompson, Peter van Minnen, Katelijn Vandorpe, T. G. Wilfong.

Roger S. Bagnall is professor of classics and history at Columbia University, New York.

Dominic W. Rathbone is professor of ancient history at King’s College London.
They did the same to my internal organs as to my body: wrapped them in linen so that they were neat bundles. These they placed in alabaster jars. Each jar had a different head-shaped lid—these were the four sons of the falcon god, Horus. The liver went into a jar with the head of a man: Imseti. The lung jar had the head of a baboon: Hapi. The stomach jar had the head of a dog: Duamutef. And the intestines were protected by the head of a hawk: Qebehsenuef.

The jars were placed in a calcite chest specifically made for them. My names were beautifully carved on the canopic chest in cartouches (meaning my names were inside oval bands that symbolized eternity) and painted in blue. The term 'canopic jar' is a later invention, by the way—we called them qebu en wet, 'jars of embalming'). The chest containing all the jars was placed in a gorgeous gilded wooden shrine, mounted on a sledge. Beautiful slender goddesses protected the corners of the shrine, their fingers reaching out to touch the goddesses next to them—Isis, Nephthys, Neith, and Selqet.

If you thought making an ancient Egyptian mummy was just a matter of wrapping a body in bandages, think again! It was a long, complicated, and sometimes gruesome process.

What happened to the intestines, lungs, and other soft inside bits? How did they get the brain out of the skull? What did they use to dry the body out, and how long did that take?

These questions and many more are answered here by Mr. Mummific, a king of Egypt who went through it all himself, and ended up a mummy with attitude.

A little confused when he first died (but relieved that he no longer had toothache), he needed his own guide to explain things, so it’s lucky that his dead but cheeky son was there to lead him by the hand. Together, they let us in on all the grisly secrets of the embalmers’ tent.
I was proud of my heir, because he did not ask for advice from the priests. All those years of studying religious scrolls had finally paid off! He recited the spells and prayers in their proper order, and touched my nose, mouth, ears, and chest with the knife. This he repeated four times.

The first time he did it, I suddenly realized that I could stand on the ground again. My son untied the linen strip that had held me attached to his mummy, and the wind did not take me.

The second time, I began to move toward the mummy, like someone was pulling me. The third time, I was sucked right inside it, and suddenly I could feel my body around me again. And the fourth time he repeated the spell, I could see, hear, and smell in my mummified body.

It was the oddest sensation! I could feel all the bandages around me. I could sense the weight of the golden mask. I could see right through it. But, being so tightly wrapped into a bundle, I could not move.

I saw people gathering together, pulling out blankets and baskets of food. They sat down on the valley floor in front of me, and started having a picnic. I saw all the delicacies they had brought with them, and they placed many bowls in front of me, too. Obviously that was not very nice, as I couldn't eat them, but I appreciated the gesture.

Once they had eaten, the priests took me up and carried me inside my tomb. They were chanting spells all the way down to the burial chamber. All I could do was observe the ceiling above me. Only my missus and my heir followed the priests and myself to the tomb.

"What are they doing?" I asked my son.

"Hearing," he was surrendering on a young female mummy with short hair and a golden mask. I suppose I recognized, so probably not one of my wives.

"Those mummies—what's the problem?"

One of the mummies was so upset that he pulled a papyrus scroll out of the scribe's chest. He fell on his back with a loud thud, creating a cloud of dust. Other operations fully helped the fallen one back to his feet.

"They are the chief embalmers who developed the art of mummification through the ages. They take great interest in the work of the living embalmers, and make routine inspections to see that the proper procedures are followed," my son informed me.

I wondered what such inspections would achieve, as the living embalmers could not communicate with the dead ones, but my son answered that before I could ask.

"Those embalmers who do their work poorly will be taken to a council of embalmers when they come to the afterlife, and will be punished accordingly to their transgressions."

"Really?"

"And right now they are arguing whether it is all right not to minus the whole process by digging the brains out first," my son clarified. "And whether these embalmers should be imprisoned for not following the band."

"The Brains"

My attention turned to a small group of mummified ghosts who were arguing with each other. One of them held a papyrus scroll up in front of him and tried to read it. He was having some problems, and I understood why when I saw he had no eyes, only two circles that had been stuck where his eyes had been.

The other mummies waved their hands so that they could be noticed by the audience, which was enjoying the argument. Someone picked the papyrus up from the floor and handed it back to the mourner in question. He stuck it between his wrappings and continued arguing.
Al-Fustat, the original Arab capital of Egypt, was founded in AD 642 (AH 21) around the Roman–Byzantine fortified town of Babylon in what is now Old Cairo. Early records and modern archaeological excavations of the site of al-Fustat have been of great interest to scholars investigating the life and development of medieval Arab cities as well as to those studying the organization and growth of early Arab Egypt.

In this comprehensive study, first published by the AUC Press in 1987, Dr. Kubiak synthesizes the evidence from both medieval documentary and narrative sources and twentieth century archaeology to present a detailed history of al-Fustat. In it he traces and examines the geography of the site; the pre-Islamic settlements; the foundation and early development of the city and its demographic and territorial evolution; and the topography of the city and its architecture.

This comprehensive study, first published by the AUC Press in 1992, examines the structure of the Ayyubid administration in Cairo and the associated military, religious, and commercial milieux. It goes on to survey in detail the changes in the general layout of Cairo—in defenses, governmental and private buildings, water resources, religious institutions and cemetery areas, and markets and commercial establishments.

Less than ten years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the new religion of Islam arrived in Egypt with the army of Amr ibn al-As in AD 639. Amr immediately established his capital at al-Fustat, just south of modern Cairo, and there he built Africa’s first mosque, one still in regular use today. Since then, governors, caliphs, sultans, amirs, beys, pashas, among others, have built mosques, madrasas, and mausoleums throughout Egypt in a changing sequence of Fatimid, Ayyubid, Mamluk, Ottoman, and modern styles.

In this fully color-illustrated, large-format volume, a leading historian of Islamic art and culture celebrates the great variety of Egypt’s mosques and related religious buildings, from the early congregational mosques, through the medieval mausoleum-madrasas, to the neighborhood mosques of the Ottoman and modern periods. With outstanding architectural photography and authoritative descriptive texts, this book will be valued as the finest on the subject by scholars and general readers alike.

Covers more than 80 of the country’s most historic mosques, with more than 500 color photographs, in 400 pages.

**The Mosques of Egypt**

**Bernard O’Kane**

A magnificent fully color-illustrated celebration of Egypt’s Islamic architectural heritage
A celebration of the history of religious life in the early Egyptian capital, in text and pictures

Just to the south of modern Cairo stands the historic enclave known as Old Cairo, which grew up in and around the Roman fortress of Babylon, and which today hosts a unique collection of monuments that attest to the shared cultural heritage of ancient Egyptians, Christians, Jews, and Muslims.

In this lavishly illustrated celebration of a very special place, renowned photographer Sherif Sonbol’s remarkable images of the fortress, churches, synagogue, and mosque illuminate the living fabric of the ancient and medieval stones, while the text describes the history of Old Cairo from the time of the ancient Egyptians and the Romans to the founding of the first Muslim city of al-Fustat, focusing on the Jewish history of the area (exploring the famous Genizah documents found in the Ben Ezra Synagogue that tell so much about everyday life in medieval Egypt), the early Coptic Christian churches, some of the oldest in the world, and the arrival of the Muslims in the seventh century, their establishment of al-Fustat on the edge of Old Cairo, and the building of the oldest mosque in Africa.

Gawdat Gabra is the former director of the Coptic Museum and the author, coauthor, or editor of numerous books on the history and culture of Egyptian Christianity. He is currently visiting professor of Coptic studies at Claremont Graduate University, California.

Gertrud J. M. van Loon specializes in Coptic art and archaeology. She holds a PhD from Leiden University. She is currently a fellow at the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium.

Stefan Reif is professor emeritus of medieval Hebrew studies and fellow of St John’s College at the University of Cambridge. He is the author of many books and articles on the Jewish heritage of Cairo.

Tarek Swelim earned his PhD in Islamic art and architecture from Harvard University. He has taught at the American University in Cairo, and is the author of publications on Mamluk, Ottoman, and Roman architecture, including Ibn Tulun: His Lost City and Great Mosque (AUC Press, 2015).

Sherif Sonbol is a highly regarded Egyptian photographer. He has contributed photographs to numerous illustrated books, including The Nile Cruise (AUC Press, 2010).
In this now classic work, Hassan Fathy, Egypt’s greatest twentieth-century architect, describes in detail his plan for building the village of New Gourna on the west bank of the Nile at Luxor, employing both the traditional building material, mud brick, and such traditional Egyptian architectural features as enclosed courtyards and domed and vaulted roofing. Fathy worked closely with the people to tailor his designs to their needs; he taught them how to work with the mud bricks, supervised the erection of the buildings, and encouraged the revival of ancient techniques, such as the use of claustra (mud-brick latticework) to adorn the buildings.

Although bureaucratic red tape and other problems prevented the completion of New Gourna, Fathy’s ideas have since commanded widespread attention both inside and outside Egypt, and *Architecture for the Poor* remains a testament to his vision as an architect of conscience.

Fathy demonstrates very powerfully that it is possible to build for the poor ... cheaply and humanly by the use of earth for building and by teaching people to build for themselves. There is no other book quite like this.”

—Choice

**HASSAN FATHY** (1900–89) taught at the Faculty of Fine Arts of Cairo University and served as head of its Department of Architecture. He received the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1980, and the Union of International Architects Gold Medal in 1984. He was also the founder and director of the International Institute for Appropriate Technology.
Many traditional crafts practiced in contemporary Egypt can be traced back hundreds, if not thousands, of years. Scenes inscribed on the walls of ancient temples and tombs depict the earliest Egyptians making pottery and papyrus and working with stone, wood, and other materials. The eleven chapters of this volume explore these and other crafts that continue to flourish in Egypt. From copper and glass works to jewelry, woodwork, and hand-woven carpets and fabric, each chapter offers an in-depth look at one material or craft and the artisans who keep its traditions alive.

The authors, drawing on historical sources and documentary research, sketch the evolution of each craft, looking into its origins, the development of tools and methods used in the craft, and the diverse influences that have shaped the form and function of craft items produced today, ranging widely through the pharaonic, Coptic, Islamic, and modern periods. This historical examination is complemented by extensive field research and interviews with craftspeople, which serve to set these crafts into a living cultural context and offer a window into the modern craft economy, the lives of artisans, and the local communities and traditions they express and sustain.

The volume is amply illustrated with vivid photographs of contemporary craft items and artisans at work, from the coastal town of Damietta to the far-flung deserts and the ancient alleyways of Cairo. It is a narrative and visual tour that provides valuable insight into contemporary Egypt as seen through its material culture and the legions of unsung artists who nourish and enrich it.

**Menha el-Batraoui** is a theater critic and architectural journalist based in Egypt. She holds a degree in French literature from Cairo University and is the translator from Arabic of *La crise de la société rurale en Egypte: La fin du fellah?* by Habib Ayeb.
The Taste of Egypt
Home Cooking from the Middle East

Combining mouthwatering recipes with a fresh, contemporary design, The Taste of Egypt brings the sophisticated colors and flavors of Egyptian and Middle Eastern cuisine to the modern home kitchen in unpretentious, down-to-earth style. Impress your dinner guests with sublime appetizers such as stuffed vine leaves and roast eggplant dip. Cook up a storm with silky cumin-infused lentil soup, sensational spiced meatballs, and delicious artichokes cooked in red pepper sauce. There are summery salads to fill a picnic hamper and hearty slow-cooked beans and basterma (fenugreek-spiced cured beef) to evoke the bustling warmth of a Middle Eastern food market. And the recipes for sweet delights are designed to satisfy even the most persistent sweet tooth. Presented in a vibrant, accessible style, The Taste of Egypt is a celebration of a great culinary tradition and an exciting addition to the repertoire of the modern home cook.

Dyna Eldaief was discovered by the Middle East edition of the reality television cooking show, The Taste, after she began to blog and post clips on YouTube about her mother’s recipes. She continues her passion for Middle Eastern cuisine by maintaining her blog and giving cooking classes. She lives in Melbourne with her husband and three children.
Judging from the evidence available from depictions of daily life on tombs and in historical texts, the ancient Egyptians were just as enthusiastic about good food and generous hospitality as are their descendants today. Magda Mehdawy and Amr Hussein have done extensive research on the cultivation, gathering, preparation, and presentation of food in ancient Egypt and have developed nearly a hundred recipes that will be perfectly recognizable to anyone familiar with modern Egyptian food.

Beautifully illustrated with scenes from tomb reliefs, objects and artifacts in museum exhibits, and modern photographs, the recipes are accompanied by explanatory material that describes the ancient home and kitchen, cooking vessels and methods, table manners and etiquette, banquets, beverages, and ingredients. Traditional feasts and religious occasions with their own culinary traditions are described, including some that are still celebrated today. A glossary of ingredients and place names provides a useful guide to unfamiliar terms.
Gayer-Anderson
The Life and Afterlife of the Irish Pasha

Based on the personal journals of Robert Grenville Gayer-Anderson (1881–1945), Egyptologist, poet, surgeon, soldier, psychic, and noted collector, this candid and charming historical biography tells of Gayer-Anderson’s strange and eclectic life in the final days of the British empire.

As a child, he crossed an unforgiving America with his entrepreneurial and eccentric Irish parents. As a man, he immersed himself in the Arab way of life as colonials seldom did; he saw ghosts and witches, sailed the Nile, wrestled Turks and crocodiles, fought at Gallipoli, smoked opium, performed surgery in the desert, gathered and cared for artefacts and boys in his Cairene home, survived an assassination attempt and, in the name of science and Henry Wellcome, in flowery glades he boiled the flesh from the skulls of Nuba warriors. His personal journals are filled with frank accounts of his exploits and of the illustrious and colorful people who wandered by: Lawrence of Arabia, Gordon, Kitchener, Conan-Doyle, Eric Gill, and Stephen Spender, among others.

Drugs, race, class, family, sex, and selfhood are vividly mixed in this tale of two wars, colonial life, medicine, anthropology, and psychic phenomena. The stiff-upper-lipped ritual of a very British upbringing vied with his Romantic and consuming love of beauty, vividly embodied in the Gayer-Anderson Museum in Cairo, which to this day houses his vast collection of carpets, furniture, glassware, and other curios.

Louise Foxcroft is a prize-winning historian and Royal Literary Fund Fellow at Magdalene College, Cambridge. She has published six books, and has appeared on television and radio.
In 1986, when this autobiography opens, the author is a typical fourteen-year-old boy in Asyut in Upper Egypt. Attracted at first by the image of a radical Islamist group as “strong Muslims,” his involvement develops until he finds himself deeply committed to its beliefs and implicated in its activities. This ends when, as he leaves the university following a demonstration, he is arrested. Prison, a return to life on the outside, and attending Cairo University all lead to Khaled al-Berry’s eventual alienation from radical Islam.

This book opens a window onto the mind of an extremist who turns out to be disarmingly like many other clever adolescents, and bears witness to a history with whose reverberations we continue to live. It also serves as an intelligent and critical guide for the reader to the movement’s unfamiliar debates and preoccupations, motives and intentions.

Fluently written, intellectually gripping, exciting, and often funny, Life Is More Beautiful than Paradise provides a vital key to the understanding of a world that is both a source of fear and a magnet of curiosity for the west.

“"The memoir reaches the core of how fanatics—sects of any kind—draw in conceited youngsters by essentially appealing to a naïve hunger for self-sacrifice." — The Independent

“The author’s refusal to demonize and his relative objectivity in telling the story is precisely what makes this book authentic and extremely important. Above all it provides a rare and valuable insight into how easily the young idealist can become radicalized by sects who believe that truth has just one face.” — The Huffington Post

KHALED AL-BERRY was born in Sohag, Egypt in 1972. He has a degree in medicine from Cairo University, and currently works as a journalist and writer in London, where he has been living since 1999.

HUMPHREY DAVIES is the translator of a number of Arabic novels, including The Yacoubian Building by Alaa Al Aswany (AUC Press, 2004). He has twice been awarded the Saif Ghobash–Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation.
In 1980, Syrian filmmaker Mohammad Malas traveled to Lebanon to film a documentary of interviews with Palestinians of the refugee camps around Beirut about their dreams. *The Dream: A Diary of the Film* is Malas’s haunting chronicle of his immersion in the life of the camps, including Shatila, Burj al-Barajneh, Nahr al-Bared, and Ein al-Helweh. It also describes the filmmaking process, from the research stage to the film’s unofficial release, in Shatila Camp, before it reached a global audience.

In vivid and poetic detail, Malas provides a snapshot of Palestinian refugees at a critical juncture of Lebanon’s bloody civil war, and at the height of the PLO’s power in Lebanon before the 1982 Israeli invasion and the PLO’s subsequent expulsion. Malas probes his subjects’ dreams and existential fears with an artist’s acute sensitivity, revealing the extent to which the wounds and contingencies of Palestinian statelessness are woven into the tapestry of a fragmented Arab nationalism.

*The Dream* is essential reading for anyone interested in the history of the Palestinians in the modern Middle East, and for students and scholars of Arab filmmaking, politics, and literature.
Committed to Disillusion
Activist Writers in Egypt from the 1950s to the 1980s

David DiMeo

The first systematic and detailed examination of twentieth-century activist Egyptian writing

Can a writer help to bring about a more just society? This question was at the heart of the movement of al-adab al-multazim, or committed literature, which claimed to dominate Arab writing in the mid-twentieth century. By the 1960s, however, leading Egyptian writers had retreated into disillusionment, producing agonized works that challenged the key assumptions of socially engaged writing. Rather than a rejection of the idea, however, these works offered reinterpretation of committed writing that helped set the stage for activist writers of the present.

David DiMeo focuses on the work of three leading writers whose socially committed fiction was adapted to the disenchantment and discontent of the late twentieth century: Naguib Mahfouz, Yusuf Idris, and Sonallah Ibrahim. Despite their disappointments with the direction of Egyptian society in the decades following the 1952 revolution, they kept the spirit of committed literature alive through a deeply introspective examination of the relationship between the writer, the public, and political power. Reaching back to the roots of this literary movement, DiMeo examines the development of committed literature from its European antecedents to its peak of influence in the 1950s, and contrasts the committed works with those of disillusionment that followed.

Committed to Disillusion is vital reading for scholars and students of Arabic literature and the modern history and politics of the Middle East.

Offers a persuasive framework for the history of committed literature in Egypt, exploring how artists have grappled with the realization that political art is often powerless to bring about political change.”

—Margaret Litvin, Boston University

David DiMeo is an assistant professor and coordinator of the Arabic program at Western Kentucky University. He is the author, with Inas Hassan, of The Travels of Ibn Battuta: A Guided Reader (AUC Press, 2016).
Nasser’s Blessed Movement
Egypt’s Free Officers and the July Revolution
With a New Introduction

This essential book explores the early years of military rule following the Free Officers’ coup of 1952. Enriched by interviews with actors in and observers of the events, Nasser’s Blessed Movement shows how the officers’ belief in a quick reformation by force was transformed into a vital, long-term process that changed the face of Egypt.

Under Gamal Abdel Nasser, the military regime launched an ambitious program of political, social, and economic reform. Egypt became a leader in Arab and non-aligned politics, as well as a model for political mobilization and national development throughout the Third World. Although Nasser exerted considerable personal influence over the course of events, his rise as a national and regional hero in the mid-1950s was preceded by a period in which he and his colleagues groped for direction, and in which many Egyptians disliked—even feared—them. Joel Gordon analyzes the goals, programs, successes, and failures of the young regime, providing the most comprehensive account of the Egyptian revolution to date.

This edition includes a new Introduction that looks back at the post-1952 period from a post-2011 perspective.

Perceptive and extremely well-researched. . . . Gordon skillfully unravels the complex maneuvering between the military and civilians during the first two years [of military rule].”
—Peter Mansfield, Times Literary Supplement

“Elegantly written . . . a subtle and effective view of the period . . . a new perspective that takes the military success much less for granted.”
—Robert L. Tignor, Middle East Journal

“Will likely become the standard work on the early years of military rule in Egypt . . . a carefully researched and original view of the period.”
—Selma Botman, American Historical Review

JoeL Gordon is professor of history at the University of Arkansas.

The classic account of the early years of military rule in Egypt after the 1952 coup

Musiqah al-Kalimat
Modern Standard Arabic through Popular Songs
Intermediate to Advanced

By the same author:

Kilma Hilwa
Egyptian Arabic through Popular Songs

One of the best ways to learn a language is by studying the media that native speakers themselves listen to and read, and popular songs can also reveal much about the culture and traditions of an area where the language is spoken. Following on the success of his Kilma Hilwa: Egyptian Arabic through Popular Songs (AUC Press, 2015), Cairo-based Arabic teacher Bahaa Ed-Din Ossama now brings together twenty songs in Modern Standard Arabic performed by popular singers of the Arab world from Abd al-Halim Hafez to Fairouz and builds a variety of language lessons around them, with notes on vocabulary, grammar, and usage, and communicative exercises in listening, writing, and speaking. The songs are graded from easiest to most difficult, and each lesson includes a link to a performance of the song on YouTube, the lyrics of the song, and notes on the songwriter, the composer, and the singer.

Students using this unique book will not only improve their Arabic skills but will also gain an insight into the cultural landscape of the Arab world. The book can be used in the classroom or for self-study.


Bahaa Ed-Din Ossama teaches Arabic to foreign learners in Cairo. He has a BA degree in Greek and Latin from Cairo University, and has translated works by Ovid from the Latin to Arabic. He is the author of Kilma Hilwa: Egyptian Arabic through Popular Songs (AUC Press, 2015).
Shahaama
Five Egyptian Men Tell Their Stories

By the author of the bestselling
Khul-Khaal: Five Egyptian Women Tell Their Stories

Between the late 1970s and the early 1980s, Nayra Atiya gathered the oral histories of five Egyptian men: a fisherman, an attorney, a scholar, a businessman, and a production manager. Through personal interviews over the course of several years, Atiya intimately captured the everyday triumphs and struggles of these young men in a rapidly changing Egyptian society. These tender stories of childhood experiences in the rural countryside, of the rigors of schooling, and of the many challenges in navigating adulthood shed light on both the rich diversity of Egyptian society and the values and traditions that are shared by all Egyptians. The concept of shahaama—a code of honor that demands loyalty, generosity, and a readiness to help others—is threaded throughout the narratives, reflecting its deeply rooted presence in Egyptian culture. Moving beyond leaden stereotypes of the oppressive Middle Eastern male, these candid self-portraits reveal the complexity of male identity in contemporary Egyptian society, highlighting the men’s desires for economically viable lives, the same desires that fuel the many Egyptians today working toward revolutionary change.

Together, these stories provide deep insight into Egyptian culture, especially the details of domestic and work life that few westerners are able to access.”—Pauline Kaldas, Hollins University

Nayra Atiya
is an American oral historian, writer, and translator born in Egypt. Her book Khul-Khaal: Five Egyptian Women Tell Their Stories (AUC Press, 1984) won a UNICEF prize and has been widely translated.
Social Capital and Local Water Management in Egypt

Dalia M. Gouda

A groundbreaking study of Nile water management in Egypt

From the 1980s onward, billions of dollars were poured into irrigation improvement programs in Egypt. These aimed at improving local Nile water management through the introduction of more water-efficient technology and by placing management of the improved systems in the hands of local water user associations. The central premise of most of these programs was that the functioning of such associations could rely on the revival of traditional forms of social capital—social networks, norms, and trust—for their success. Social Capital and Local Water Management in Egypt shows how the far-reaching social changes wrought at the village level in Egypt through the twentieth century rendered such a premise implausible at best and invalid at worst.

Dalia Gouda examines networks of social relationships and their impact on the exercise of social control and the formation of collective action at the local level and their change over time in four villages in the Delta and Fayoum. Outlining three time frames, pre-1952, 1952–73, and 1973 to the present, and moving between multiple actors—farmers, government officials, and donor agencies—Gouda shows how institutional and technological changes during each period and the social changes that coincided with them yielded mixed successes for the water user associations in respect of water management.

Social Capital and Local Water Management in Egypt is essential reading for anyone working in the field of community-based natural resource management in Egypt, including policymakers and practitioners, donor agencies, and civil society organizations, as well as anthropologists and sociologists.

“... In the context of increasing water demand, and the uncertainty over water supplies worldwide, this book makes a timely and valuable contribution to the debate about water management across the developing world.”
—Stephen Connelly, University of Sheffield

Dalia M. Gouda is a development professional with twenty years’ experience, of which more than ten are in Egypt’s water sector. She was awarded her PhD from the University of Sheffield in 2013. Her main interests include water resources management, water users organizations, and the impact of development interventions on the socioeconomic aspects of rural communities in Egypt.
Sports and Society in the Middle East
Cairo Papers in Social Science Vol. 34, No. 2

A set of studies looking at the history, politics, and sociology of sports in the Arab world

The sociology of sports in the Middle East has been neglected compared to other world regions. This volume aspires to encourage a greater focus on this topic. Here are assembled papers that discuss various aspects of this subject. Some are historically or politically oriented while others take a more sociological approach. Papers deal with the relation between organized sports and fans, with the special place of youngsters and women in sports, or with the role of sports in a more general understanding of culture and society as indicators of modernization and other facets of social change.

Nicholas S. Hopkins is emeritus professor of anthropology at the American University in Cairo.
Sandrine Gamblin is director of the Middle East Studies Center at the American University in Cairo.

Organizing the Unorganized
Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon
Cairo Papers in Social Science Vol. 34, No. 3

A study of workers’ rights in a non-unionized field in Lebanon

This study examines the process of unionizing domestic workers in Lebanon, highlighting the potentialities as well as the obstacles confronting it, and looks at the multiple power relations involved through axes of class, gender, race, and nationality. The author situates this struggle within the larger scene of the labor union ‘movement’ in the country, and discusses the contribution of women’s rights organizations in rendering visible cases of abuse against migrant domestic workers. She argues that the ‘death’ of class politics has made women’s rights organizations address migrant domestic worker issues as a separate labor category, further contributing to their production as an ‘exception’ under neoliberalism.

Farah Kobaissy is senior research assistant at the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship at the American University of Beirut (AUB).
Distribution and Sales Contacts

Egypt
AUC Press Distribution Center
New Cairo, Egypt
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The American University in Cairo Press
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Trevor Naylor
Associate Director, Sales and Marketing
+20 2 2797 4001 / trevornaylor@aucegypt.edu

Basma El Manialawi
Marketing Manager
+20 2 2615 3973 / basma.manialawi@aucegyot.edu

Eissa Abou-Omar
Assistant Sales Manager
+20 2 2797 6323 / eissa@aucegypt.edu

Sameh Elmoghazy
Senior Sales Representative
+20 2 2797 6546 / elmoghazy@aucegypt.edu

Angela Y. Hafez
International Sales Coordinator
+20 2 2797 6897 / angelah@aucegypt.edu

Cherif Samaan
Distribution Center Manager
+20 2 2615 4715 / csamaan@aucegypt.edu

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