

Gamal Al Ghitani

Nezar AlSayyad narrates the many Cairos that have existed through time, offering a panorama unmatched in temporal and geographic scope, through an in-depth examination of the city's architecture and urban form. His narration illuminates how there can be "no one history of the city, but rather multiple, contested, and often invented histories."

Built for eternity and radiating an aura of the divine, the pyramids have inspired wonder and fear for millennia. In this novel, Gamal al-Ghitani uses these enigmatic monuments to evoke the human quest for wisdom and enlightenment. Weaving strands of Sufi mysticism and medieval Islamic history into ancient Egypt's most enduring symbols, *Pyramid Texts* beguiles the imagination with its masterful use of language, its haunting parables, and its glimpses of divine revelation. In a series of chapters each shorter than the last - so that, like their subjects, they taper ultimately into nothingness - the author traces the obsessions that have drawn men over the centuries to the brooding presence of the pyramids. A Moroccan shaykh spends years contemplating them in the hope that one day he will understand their mysteries. Seven young men enter the Great Pyramid of Giza, seeking illumination as they penetrate its heart of darkness. Another visitor waits patiently for the moment when the shadow of one pyramid will diverge from its accustomed path and bestow immortality. In each of these tales, the pyramids are the link between the physical and the eternal, the point "where matter ends, and the void begins." Evoking both the modernist fiction of Jorge Luis Borges and the Sufi poetry of Rumi, *Pyramid Texts* is a revelation in itself.

Prize winning fiction exploring the invisible lives caught up in the petroleum industry

Elite and that of the people. This book presents a stimulating discussion of a subject previously only touched upon. The author tests his theories against similar phenomena in European society and with reference to several standard authorities in anthropology and social history. Popular culture in medieval Cairo will, therefore, be of interest to students and specialists in Middle Eastern studies and also to medieval historians.

A Modern Arabic Novel

Beer in the Snooker Club

The Zafarani Files

The Golden Chariot

Egypt's Occupation

The Republic of False Truths

During the nineteenth century, Cairo witnessed once of its most dramatic periods of transformation. Well on its way to becoming a modern and cosmopolitan city, by the end of the century, a 'medieval' Cairo had somehow come into being. While many Europeans in the nineteenth century viewed Cairo as a fundamentally dual city—physically and psychically

split between East/West and modern/medieval—the contributors to the provocative collection demonstrate that, in fact, this process of inscription was the result of restoration practices, museology, and tourism initiated by colonial occupiers. The first edited volume to address nineteenth-century Cairo both in terms of its history and the perception of its achievements, this book will be an essential text for courses in architectural and art history dealing with the Islamic world.

Modern Arabic literature remains little known and poorly understood despite growing curiosity among European readers. This brief introduction offers a unique overview, focusing on developments over the last fifty years. It provides a guide to the literary landscape, indicating the major landmarks in the shape of authors, ideas and debates. The picture that emerges shows that the literature of the modern Arab world, Europe's closest neighbour, is not so far from us as we are sometimes encouraged to think. A timely contribution to the dialogue between East and West, bringing modern Arabic literature into the mainstream for English-speaking readers. 'Tresilian's book is not only informative about its subject but also provides thought-provoking messages to the general reader.' Denys Johnson Davies

Banipal

This sweeping novel depicts the intertwined lives of an assortment of Egyptians—Muslims and Copts, northerners and southerners, men and women—as they begin to settle in Egypt's great second city, and explores how the Second World War, starting in supposedly faraway Europe, comes crashing down on them, affecting their lives in fateful ways. Central to the novel is the story of a striking friendship between Sheikh Magd al-Din, a devout Muslim with peasant roots in northern Egypt, and Dimyan, a Copt with roots in southern Egypt, in their journey of survival and self-discovery. Woven around this narrative are the stories of other characters, in the city, in the villages, or in the faraway desert, closer to the fields of combat. And then there is the story of Alexandria itself, as written by history, as experienced by its denizens, and as touched by the war. Throughout, the author captures the cadences of everyday life in the Alexandria of the early 1940s, and boldly explores the often delicate question of religious differences in depth and on more than one level. No One

Sleeps in Alexandria adds an authentically Egyptian vision of Alexandria to the many literary--but mainly Western--Alexandrias we know already: it may be the same space in which Cavafy, Forster, and Durrell move but it is certainly not the same world.

Available in English for the first time, *The Silence and the Roar* is a funny, sexy, dystopian novel about the struggle of an individual over tyranny. *The Silence and the Roar* follows a day in the life of Fathi Sheen, an author banned from publishing because he refuses to write propaganda for the ruling government. The entire populace has mobilized to celebrate the twenty-year anniversary of the reigning despot in this unnamed Middle eastern country. The heat is oppressive and loudspeakers blare as an endless parade takes over the streets. Desperate to get away from the noise and the zombie-like masses, Fathi leaves his house to visit his mother and his girlfriend, but en route stops to help a student who is being beaten by the police. Fathi's ID papers are confiscated and he is told to report to the police station before night falls. When Fathi turns himself in, he is led from one department to another in an ever-widening bureaucratic labyrinth. His only weapon against the irrationality of the government employees is his sense of irony. Tinged with a Kafkaesque sense of the absurd, *The Silence and the Roar* explores what it means to be truly free in mind and body.

The Last Nahdawi

Under the Naked Sky : Short Stories from the Arab World

A novel

La Momie de la Momification

The Mahfouz Dialogs

One Hundred Years on the Streets of the City

Egyptian writers divided between social commitment and individual expression

Waguih Ghali was raised in Cairo but spent much of his adult life studying and working in Europe. In Beer in the Snooker Club, Ghali chronicles the lives of Cairo's upper crust who, after the fall of King Farouk, are thoroughly unprepared to change its neo-feudal ways. Beer in the Snooker Club was the only book written by Ghali before his suicide in 1968. "Ghali's novel reproduces a cultural state of shock with great accuracy and great humor."--James Marcus of The Nation

The first in-depth look at how postwar thinkers in Egypt mapped the intersections between Islamic discourses and psychoanalytic thought. In 1945, psychologist Yusuf Murad introduced an Arabic term borrowed from the medieval Sufi philosopher and mystic Ibn 'Arabi—al-la-shu'ur—as a translation for Sigmund Freud's concept of the unconscious. By the late 1950s, Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* had been translated into Arabic for an eager Egyptian public. In *The Arabic Freud*, Omnia El Shakry challenges the notion of a strict divide between psychoanalysis and Islam by tracing how postwar thinkers in Egypt blended psychoanalytic theories with concepts from classical Islamic thought in a creative encounter of ethical engagement. Drawing on scholarly writings as well as popular literature on self-healing, El Shakry provides the first in-depth examination of psychoanalysis in Egypt and reveals how a new science of psychology—or “science of the soul,” as it came to be called—was inextricably linked to Islam and mysticism. She explores how Freudian ideas of the unconscious were crucial to the formation of modern discourses of subjectivity in areas as diverse as psychology, Islamic philosophy, and the law. Founding figures of Egyptian psychoanalysis, she shows, debated the temporality of the psyche, mystical states, the sexual drive, and the Oedipus complex, while offering startling insights into the nature of psychic life, ethics, and eros. This provocative and insightful book invites us to rethink the relationship between psychoanalysis and religion in the modern era. Mapping the points of intersection between Islamic discourses and psychoanalytic thought, it illustrates how the Arabic Freud, like psychoanalysis itself, was elaborated across the space of human difference.

The Mahfouz Dialogs records the memories, views, and jokes of Naguib Mahfouz on subjects ranging from politics to the relationship between his novels and his life, as delivered to intimate friends at a series of informal meetings stretching out over almost half a century. Mahfouz was a pivotal figure not only in world literature (through being awarded the Nobel prize for literature in 1988 he became the first writer in Arabic to win a mass audience), but also in his own society, where he vastly enhanced the image of the writer in the eyes of the public and encapsulated as

the victim of a savage attack on his life by an Islamist in 1994 the struggle between pluralism, tolerance, and secularism on the one hand and extremist Islam. Moderated by Gamal al-Ghitani, a writer of a younger generation who shared a common background with Mahfouz (al-Ghitani also grew up in medieval Cairo) and felt a vast personal empathy for the writer despite their sometimes different views, these exchanges throw new light on Mahfouz's life, the creation of his novels, and literary Egypt in the second half of the twentieth century.

Sufism in the Contemporary Arabic Novel

The Arabic Freud

Prairies of Fever

Red Wine

Making Cairo Medieval

Short story writing in Egypt was still in its infancy when Denys Johnson-Davies, described by Edward Said as "the leading Arabic-English translator of our time," arrived in Cairo as a young man in the 1940s. Nevertheless, he was immediately impressed by such writing talents of the time as Mahmoud Teymour, Yahya Hakki, Yusuf Gohar, and the future Nobel literature laureate Naguib Mahfouz, and he set about translating their works for local English-language periodicals of the time. He continued to translate over the decades, and sixty years later he brings together this remarkable overview of the work of several generations of Egypt's leading short story writers. This selection of some fifty stories represents not only a cross-section through time but also a spectrum of styles, and includes works by Teymour, Hakki, Gohar, and Mahfouz and later writers such as Mohamed El-Bisatie, Said el-Kafrawi, Bahaa Taher, and Radwa Ashour, as well as new young writers of today like Hamdy El-Gazzar, Mansoura Ez Eldin, and Youssef Rakha. 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. The city's marginals are placed on its literary map, alongside representations of the relationship between writing and drugs, and the places, paraphernalia, and products of the drug world across class and time. With its Sufistic parables of the human condition, rendered in a style redolent of

both the austere meditations of Borges and the dark engorged ruminations of Arthur C. Clark, Pyramid Texts engages the mind and beguiles the imagination. In a series of chapters each shorter than the last so that, like their subjects, they taper ultimately into nothingness the author evokes the obsessions that have drawn men over the centuries to the brooding presence of mankind's most ancient and mysterious monuments. Among others in a procession of exotic characters, a Moroccan seeker after knowledge spends years contemplating the pyramids in the hope that one day he will understand the mysterious writing that fitfully appears on their sides. Another waits patiently for the moment when the shadow of one will diverge from its accustomed path and bestow immortality, and the Sphinx performs a celestial dance. Pyramid Texts leads us into a world of endless passages and mysterious sighing winds, a world whose claustrophobic and shadowy spaces may be illuminated by flashes of ecstasy leading to scintillating transfigurations and dizzying annihilations.

The history of capitalism in Egypt has long been synonymous with cotton cultivation and dependent development. From this perspective, the British occupation of 1882 merely sealed the country's fate as a vast plantation for European textile mills. All but obscured in such accounts, however, is Egypt's emergence as a colonial laboratory for financial investment and experimentation. Egypt's Occupation tells for the first time the story of that financial expansion and the devastating crises that followed. Aaron Jakes offers a sweeping reinterpretation of both the historical geography of capitalism in Egypt and the role of political-economic thought in the struggles that raged over the occupation. He traces the complex ramifications and the contested legacy of colonial economism, the animating theory of British imperial rule that held Egyptians to be capable of only a recognition of their own bare economic interests. Even as British officials claimed that "economic development" and the multiplication of new financial institutions would be crucial to the political legitimacy of the occupation, Egypt's early nationalists elaborated their own critical accounts of boom and bust. As Jakes shows, these Egyptian thinkers offered a set of sophisticated and troubling meditations on the deeper contradictions of capitalism and the very meaning of freedom in a capitalist world.

the yacoubian building

An Egyptian Novel

The Other Place

Conspiracy in Modern Egyptian Literature

Egyptian Writers Between History and Fiction

The Silence and the Roar

The intrigues of an old Cairo quarter: gossip, spells, betrayals, and busybodies in a parable about political and personal freedoms

In 1960s Egypt a group of writers exploded onto the literary scene, transforming the aesthetic landscape. Space in Modern

Egyptian Fiction explores how this literary generation presents a marked shift in the representation of rural, urban and exilic space, reflecting a disappointment with the project of the postcolonial nation-state in Egypt. Combining a sociological approach to literature with detailed close readings, Yasmine Ramadan explores the spatial representations that embodied this shift within the Egyptian literary scene and the disappearance of an idealized nation in the Egyptian novel. This study provides a robust examination of the emergence and establishment of some of the most significant writers in modern Egyptian literature, and their influence across six decades, while also tracing the social, economic, political and aesthetic changes that marked this period in Egypt's contemporary history.

A "glorious, humane novel" (*The Observer*) about the Egyptian revolution, taking us inside the battle raging between those in power and those prepared to lay down their lives in the defense of freedom—this globally-acclaimed narrative from one of the foremost writers in the Arab world is still banned across much of the region. Cairo, 2011. After decades under a repressive regime, tensions are rising in the city streets. No one is out of reach of the revolution. There is General Alwany, a high-ranking member of the government's security agency, a pious man who loves his family yet won't hesitate to torture enemies of the state; Asma, a young teacher who chafes against the brazen corruption at her school; Ashraf, an out-of-work actor who is having an affair with his maid and who gets pulled into Tahrir Square through a chance encounter; Nourhan, a television personality who loyally defends those in power; and many more. As these lives collide, a new generation finds a voice, love blossoms across class divides, and the revolution gains strength. Even the general finds himself at a crossroads as his own daughter joins the protests. Yet the old regime will not give up without a fight. With an unforgettably vivid cast of characters and a heart-pounding narrative banned across much of the region, Alaa Al Aswany gives us a deeply human portrait of the Egyptian Revolution, and an impassioned retelling of his country's turbulent recent history.

That last time I walked down the stairs, I remember my household help waiting to bid me goodbye. I have been up and down those oak-colored swirling stairs so many times, but they had never seemed that long before - like eternity this

time. I take a step down with one foot, but the other does not want to follow. Yet, I know that I have to; I have no choice. I go to each and every room in the house. Here is where I usually sit and have lunch. That is his seat; I remember and see everyone sitting down having lunch. My six children each have their own seat and no one ever dares sit in the other's place.

A Runaway Wife

Writers, State, and Society in Modern Egypt

Psychoanalysis and Islam in Modern Egypt

The Literary Atlas of Cairo

Politics and Practice

A Novel

"In the course of my long travels I have never seen a city so devastated. After a I ventured out into the streets. Death, cold and heavy, hung in the air. Walls have value here, doors have been eliminated. No one is certain that they will see another. The Egypt of the Mamluk dynasty witnessed a period of artistic ostentation and and political upheaval, at the heart of which lay the unsolved question of the ruler's legitimacy. Now, in 1516, the Mamluk reign is coming to an end with the advance of the invading Ottomans. The numerous narrators, among them a Venetian traveler and several native Muslims, tell the story of the rise to power of the ruthless, enigmatic puritanical governor of Cairo, Zayni Barakat ibn Musa, whose control of the corruption is effected only through a complicated network of spies and informers.

Widely acclaimed as Naguib Mahfouz's best novel, *Midaq Alley* brings to life one of the bustling, teeming back alleys of Cairo in the 1940s. From Zaita the cripple-maker to Kirsha the hedonistic cafe owner, from Abbas the barber who mistakes greed for honor, from Hamida who sells her soul to escape the alley, from waiters and widows to politicians, pimps, and poets, the inhabitants of *Midaq Alley* vividly evoke Egypt's largest city teeters on the brink of change. Never has Nobel Prize-winner Mahfouz's talent for rich and luxurious storytelling been more evident than here, in his portrait of one small alley as a microcosm of the world on the threshold of modernity.

The book aims to explore the foresight of prominent Middle Eastern authors and activists who anticipated the Arab Spring, which resulted in demands for change in the region and corrupted regimes. Eventually, it led to cracking down on the protests with military force, which caused tremendous human suffering, destruction, and also escalated into extreme insurgency. The author analyzes major literary and artistic works from Egypt, Syria and Tunisia, and their political context. This monograph will be helpful to scholars and students in the growing field of Middle Eastern and North African Studies and to everyone who is interested in the politics of MENA.

One of Egypt's greatest contemporary writers reflects on life and love. This haunting memoir, written ten years before Ghitani's death, weaves together a series of vivid memories in a style that mimics the uneven, discontinuous nature of memory itself. These fragments are summoned from across the span of a singular lifetime. We read of his childhood

adventures, his erotic awakenings, his time as a political prisoner, and his reports from the battlefield in Iraq and the corridors of power in Syria. Vivid passages capture fleeting glances of strangers through car windows, flavors and scents of delicacies savored, dreams and sorrows of neighbors in the apartment blocks of Cairo before Nasser, as well as chance conversations at points of transit, in cafés, on elegant streets and with unnamed paramours. These memories, and Ghitani's musings on memory's finitude and mutability, make *Traces* both a memoir and a meditation on memory and all its inscrutable workings and inevitable betrayals.

Taha Hussein and Institution Building in Egypt

Short Stories from North Africa : Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia

Colonial Economism and the Crises of Capitalism

Conscience of the Nation

Ibn Al-?Arab?'s Book of the Fabulous Gryphon

A Memoir

Muhammad Hammad is a young teacher hired, like hundreds of others from all over the Arab world, to teach in a remote part of the Arabian Peninsula. This novel recounts his harrowing struggle to retain any sense of identity in the bleak and alienating places he finds himself in.

This ground-breaking work presents original research on cultural politics and battles in Egypt at the turn of the twenty first century. It deconstructs the boundaries between ' high ' and ' low ' culture drawing on conceptual tools in cultural studies, translation studies and gender studies to analyze debates in the fields of literature, cinema, mass media and the plastic arts. Anchored in the Egyptian historical and social contexts and inspired by the influential work of Pierre Bourdieu, it rigorously places these debates and battles within the larger framework of a set of questions about the relationship between the cultural and political fields in Egypt.

From her cell in a women's prison, Aziza decides to create a golden chariot to take her to heaven, where her wishes and dreams can be fulfilled. As she muses on who to take with her, she tells the life stories of her fellow prisoners and decides in her heart which ones deserve a free ride to paradise. Aziza's cruelly frank comments about her friends and their various crimes including murder, theft, and drug-dealing weave these tales together into a contemporary Arabian Nights. Salwa Bakr takes a wry and cynical look at how women from widely differing backgrounds, some innocent and some guilty, come together in a single prison ward. Salwa Bakr's writing depicts life at the grassroots of Egypt's culture, admiring its resilience in the face of poverty and inequality. With a strong distrust of imported kitsch, western consumerism is contrasted with the indigenous culture. In *The Golden Chariot*, Salwa Bakr opens a magical door, through which we are able to see the injustices of a society in transition. Beyond these stories of crime, we glimpse the yearning and longing for a better life, and the problems of not being able to realize these dreams by honest means.

Zayni Barakat Amer Univ in Cairo Press

Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo

Essays on Naguib Mahfouz, Sonallah Ibrahim, and Gamal Al-Ghitani

Egypt's Culture Wars

Space in Modern Egyptian Fiction

Islamic Sainthood in the Fullness of Time

No One Sleeps in Alexandria

This definitive study of an important Sufi work by the "Greatest Shayk" of Islamic mysticism presents a provocative new perspective on the fundamental question of the nature and authority of individual sainthood in organized, prophetic religion.

Winner of the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature. Suzie Mohammad Galal, born in the Egyptian city of Suez during the War of Attrition in the late 1960s, is a woman of inner conflicts, at once a fighter and a lover, who traverses the boundaries of ethnicity and religion. Her whole life is intricately tied to the wars and political events taking place in Egypt. But as she grapples with where to begin her story of personal and national crises, questions of narration arise: which metaphor best serves the layers of meaning she wants to communicate, and whose voice is telling the story anyway? Red Wine is both timely in its attention to the issues of state brutality, religious extremism, and gender, and timeless in the way it deals with the themes of coming of age, guilt, and sadness.

In this surrealist novel with political and religious aspects and an edge of satire, the narrator is an unseen, unheard presence with the privilege of observing events from the past, mostly those involving his father and grandfather. Inanimate objects that have "witnessed" events (such as a date palm, or a brick in a hospital wall) report to the narrator, who seems to know no temporal or physical boundaries. A sense of displaced time saturates the blending of real and unreal events, such as the fight in the desert around Karbala against Israel and the forces of the West (including William Casey (the former CIA director), the narrator's father, Gamal Abdel Nasser, and al-Husayn). Nasser, who has miraculously reappeared after his death, is shocked and appalled to find that peace has been brokered with Israel and that Israelis have made Egypt a holiday destination.

This book will present close readings of three contemporary Arabic novelists - an Egyptian (Gamal Al-Ghitany), an Algerian (Taher Ouettar) and a Touareg Libyan (Ibrahim Al-Koni) - who have all turned to Sufism as a literary strategy aimed at negotiating i

The Book of Epiphanies

Pyramid Texts

Homecoming: Sixty Years of Egyptian Short Stories

Cairo

Midaq Alley

Artists, Writers and The Arab Spring

The Yacoubian Building holds all that Egypt was and has become over the 75 years since its namesake was built on one of downtown Cairo's main boulevards. From the pious son of the building's doorkeeper and the raucous, impoverished squatters on its roof, via the tattered aristocrat and the gay intellectual in its apartments, to the ruthless businessman whose stores occupy its ground floor, each sharply etched character embodies a facet of modern Egypt -- where political corruption, ill-gotten wealth, and religious hypocrisy are natural allies, where the arrogance and defensiveness of the powerful find expression in

the exploitation of the weak, where youthful idealism can turn quickly to extremism, and where an older, less violent vision of society may yet prevail. Alaa Al Aswany's novel caused an unprecedented stir when it was first published in 2002 and has remained the world's best selling novel in the Arabic language since.

Exploring the nature of memory and consciousness, *Traces* is an evocative examination of what remains of memories after forgetting has done its work. How do we keep track of people we encountered and who were dear to us, the women we loved and the places we visited? How do we extract those moments spent on nothing? How to avert the passage of time? Reaching his sixties, the narrator decides to write down the fragments of his memories and explore the traces they have left behind. Taking us back through the neighbourhoods of old Cairo, *Traces* describes scenes from the narrator's childhood, his encounters and travels, and the awakening of his senses.

Many of these authors are major literary figures in their own countries and the Arab world, who have broken with taboos and censorship, and established standards of innovation that have encouraged younger generations of authors. Pain, hardship, heartache, humour, identity, joy, loss and strategies for survival are universal

Taking as the basis of her study the premise that the boundaries of history and literature are difficult to define, and that the two disciplines represent related types of narrative discourse, Samia Mehrez examines the work of three leading contemporary Egyptian writers: the Nobel laureate Naguib Mahfouz, Sonallah Ibrahim, and Gamal al-Ghitani. Mehrez delves into the relationship between history and narrative literature and shows that both attempt to transform 'reality' and 'life' into historical structures of meaning. By analyzing the works of these authors in terms of the relationship between authority and the production of narrative literature, she reveals a context in which literature becomes a kind of 'alternative' history - a discourse that comments not only on the history of a place but also on the creation of a narrative on history. As the author says in the Introduction, "The three writers whose careers and works are discussed in these chapters represent some of the most crucial contributions to the larger signifying entity that has engaged the Arab reader in many transformative ways. . . . The authors and their works provide an indispensable (hi)story of the literary field itself, mapping, through their own development as artistic producers, the history of the context which they inhabit and in which they produce".

Sardines and Oranges

Zayni Barakat

A Brief Introduction to Modern Arabic Literature

Traces

Taha Hussein (1889–1973) is one of Egypt's most iconic figures. A graduate of al-Azhar, Egypt's oldest university, a civil servant and public intellectual, and ultimately Egyptian Minister of Public Instruction, Hussein was central to key social and political developments in Egypt during the parliamentary period between 1922 and 1952. Influential in the introduction of a new secular university and a burgeoning press in Egypt—and prominent in public debates over nationalism and the roles of religion, women, and education in making a modern independent nation—Hussein remains a subject of continued admiration and controversy to this day. *The Last Nahdawi* offers the first biography of Hussein in which his intellectual outlook and public career are taken equally seriously. Examining Hussein's actions against the backdrop of his complex relationship with the Egyptian state, the religious establishment, and the French government, Hussam R. Ahmed reveals modern Egypt's cultural influence in the Arab and Islamic world within the various structural changes and political processes of the parliamentary period. Ahmed offers both a history of modern state formation, revealing how the Egyptian state came to hold such a strong grip over culture and education—and a compelling examination of the life of the country's most

renowned intellectual.

This book examines the diverse uses of conspiracy theory in Egyptian fiction since the early twentieth century. Read against the historical and intertextual backgrounds of individual authors and their works, conspiracy theory emerges not as a single, rigid ideology, but as a style of writing that is equal parts literary and political.

Drawing on an intimate knowledge of modern Arabic writing, Denys Johnson-Davies brings together in this collection a colorful mosaic of life as lived and portrayed by Arabs from Morocco to Iraq. From a diverse area of the world with the common factor of a written language, these thirty stories tell of an old Moroccan peasant woman who kills snakes; an Iraqi soldier who returns home as a stranger after years as a prisoner-of-war; a repairer of lost virginities in a Tunisian village; a typically Mahfouzian start to a train journey; the steamy meeting of two women and a cat at the height of an Iraqi summer; the ill-fated attraction of a boy to a magical bird in the Tuareg deserts of Libya; and a novel way of hunting ducks in the Nile Delta. The purveyors of this strange and delightful cornucopia of fictions include Naguib Mahfouz, Yusuf Idris, Gamal al-Ghitani, and Mohamed El-Bisatie from Egypt; Fuad al-Takarli and Mohamed Khudayyir from Iraq; Zakaria Tamer from Syria; Hanan al-Shaykh from Lebanon; and Ibrahim al-Kouni from Libya.

One of Egypt's greatest contemporary writers reflects on life and love This haunting memoir, written ten years before Ghitani's death, weaves together a series of vignettes in a style that mimics the uneven, discontinuous nature of memory itself. These fragments are summoned from across the span of a singular lifetime. We read of his childhood adventures, his erotic awakenings, his time as a political prisoner, and his reports from the battlefield in Iraq and the corridors of power in Syria. Vivid passages capture fleeting glances of strangers through car windows, flavors and scents of delicacies savored, dreams and sorrows of neighbors in the apartment blocks of Cairo before Nasser, as well as chance conversations at points of transit, in cafés, on elegant streets, and with unnamed paramours. These memories, and Ghitani's musings on memory's own finitude and mutability, make *Traces* both a memoir and a meditation on memory itself, in all its inscrutable workings and inevitable betrayals.