



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award



Winning & Shortlisted Titles

RIGHTS GUIDE 2025

Discover more at:
zayedaward.ae





جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award

2025 Rights Guide

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	ABOUT THE AWARD
4	FROM THE LEADERSHIP
6	2025 AWARD WINNERS
8	TRANSLATION GRANT INFO
12	RIGHTS GUIDE: LITERATURE WINNERS
27	RIGHTS GUIDE: LITERATURE SHORTLIST
37	RIGHTS GUIDE: CHILDREN'S WINNERS
45	RIGHTS GUIDE: CHILDREN'S SHORTLIST

Discover more at:
zayedaward.ae



ABOUT THE SHEIKH ZAYED BOOK AWARD

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award which commemorates the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Founding President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, and his pioneering role in promoting national unity and development. The Award, and its associated accolades, are presented annually to outstanding writers, intellectuals, and publishers, as well as young talent whose writing and translation in humanities objectively enriches Arab intellectual, cultural, literary and social life. The Sheikh Zayed Book Award, at the Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Centre, is an independent cultural initiative administered by Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi.



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award

PIVOTAL SUPPORT FOR ARAB CULTURE

“Through ALC’s various initiatives, we seek to promote Arabic language proficiency and ensure greater cultural understanding. For 20 years, the Sheikh Zayed Book Award has played a pivotal role in supporting our efforts to enrich cultural and intellectual creativity worldwide while providing a platform for writers, translators, academics and organisations to reach global audiences. Through this platform, we are celebrating Arabic-speaking writers and authors who write about Arab culture and civilisation, collectively advancing our intellectual and cultural heritage.”

HE Mohamed Khalifa
Al Mubarak

Chairman of the Department of
Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award

CONTRIBUTING TO LITERATURE AND TRANSLATION

“As we mark the 20th anniversary of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award, we are honored to witness an inspiring diversity of submissions that reflect the richness and dynamism of Arabic literature and thought. This milestone is a testament to two decades of championing cultural excellence and fostering meaningful intercultural dialogue. The Award has grown into a global platform that bridges cultures, celebrates intellectual achievement, and amplifies voices from across the Arab world and beyond. We eagerly anticipate welcoming a new generation of distinguished laureates who will join us in commemorating the Award’s enduring legacy in 2026.”



HE Dr. Ali bin Tamim

Secretary-General of Sheikh Zayed
Book Award and Chairman of Abu
Dhabi Arabic Language Centre



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award

2025 AWARD WINNERS ELIGIBLE FOR TRANSLATION GRANT

For more information on these titles and past winners available for the translation grant, please visit the Sheikh Zayed Book Award page on Frankfurt Rights.

LITERATURE

Hoda Barakat, Lebanon

[HIND, OR THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN THE WORLD](#)

Dar al Adab, 2024

The novel explores a new and contemporary idea, revolving around the female protagonist who suffers from acromegaly. With a reflective narrative voice, it investigates the life of people who live on the margins of society. Barakat examines the psychological and physical challenges these individuals face, exploring beauty standards in various cultures through complex characters and a rich, analytical, and human-centric voice.



CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Latifa Labsir, Morocco

[THE PHANTOM OF SABIBA](#)

Markaz Kitab, 2024

The book addresses the topic of autism, using a sensitive voice that speaks to children and youth. Narrated from the perspective of an elder sister telling the story of her autistic brother, the novel highlights the need for public awareness and a positive approach to autism, using a refined, artistic style that combines narrative aesthetic and a deep educational message.





جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award

FULL LIST OF 2025 AWARD WINNERS

For more information on the award and the full list of winners, please visit zayedaward.ae

CULTURAL PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

Haruki Murakami, Japan

Novelist widely translated and read throughout the world, with a significant following in the Arab world.

LITERATURE

Hoda Barakat, Lebanon

[HIND, OR THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN THE WORLD](#)

Dar al Adab, 2024

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Latifa Labsir, Morocco

[THE PHANTOM OF SABIBA](#)

Markaz Kitab, 2024

ARAB CULTURE IN OTHER LANGUAGES

Andrew Peacock, United Kingdom

[ARAB LITERATURE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES](#)

Brill, 2024

TRANSLATION

Marco di Branco , Italy

[ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF KITĀB HURŪSHIYŪSH, THE ARABIC VERSION OF PAULUS OROSIUS'S SEVEN BOOKS OF HISTORIES AGAINST THE PAGANS](#)

Pisa University Press, 2024

EDITING OF ARABIC MANUSCRIPTS

Rasheed Alkhayoun, Iraq

[NEWS OF WOMEN](#)

King Faisal Centre for Research and Islamic Studies, 2024

CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONS

Dr. Mohammed Bechari, UAE

[THE RIGHT TO STRIVE: PERSPECTIVES ON MUSLIM WOMEN'S RIGHTS](#)

Nahdet Misr Publishing, 2024

LITERARY ART & CRITICISM

Dr. Said Laouadi

[FOOD AND LANGUAGE: CULTURAL EXCAVATIONS IN ARABIC HERITAGE](#)

Afrique Orient, 2023



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award

TRANSLATION GRANTS

MORE OPPORTUNITIES:

Translation grants are available for shortlisted and winning Literature and Children's titles.

Literature and Children's Titles

The Sheikh Zayed Book Award launched the translation fund initiative in 2018 to promote the spread of Arabic literature around the world, as the initiative provides financial funding of up to 19,000 US dollars per winning title and is available to all publishing houses working to publish books in foreign languages.

Funding is available for translation of all literature and children's titles that have won the Sheikh Zayed Book Award, as well as shortlisted literature and children's titles starting in 2021.

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TRANSLATION GRANTS

SZBA's translation grant aims to increase the number of Arabic books that are translated, published and distributed abroad. Funding is available for translation of all literary and children's titles that have won or have been shortlisted for the Sheikh Zayed Book Award.

DEADLINE:

Applications are accepted all year round. Notification is made after 2-3 months of application date.

FORMAL REQUIREMENTS:

- The applicant must be a publisher in a country other than the Middle East
- The signed contract between the publisher and rights holder for the Arabic edition, and between the publisher and translator must be included.
- Funding is available to world languages. The translation shall normally be carried out directly from Arabic. An exception can be made in the event of special circumstances, such as a lack of qualified translators from Arabic or that the book is already translated to English. SZBA may in some cases review the quality of the translation before the translation fund is paid.
- The quality of the book must be of an acceptable calibre and a quality assessment will be carried out by SZBA Scientific committee. The applicant must submit a promotional plan to the translated work.

SUPPORT MATERIALS:

- Brief profile of your press and publishing mandate
- Budget
- Promotional plan
- An up-to-date biography of the translator(s), including relevant translation and publication credits

GRANT AMOUNT:

A maximum of approximately US\$19,000 per title; plus a supplement, if applicable, to cover specific promotion and production costs:

- Translation-related costs, up to a maximum of US\$10,000 per title.
- For translations of literary works, the cost of promoting the translated book, up to a maximum of US\$5,000 per translated title
- For translations of illustrated books containing at least 50% photos and/or illustrations (e.g. children's books, graphic novels, illustrated books etc.), production costs per translated title of up to US\$4,000 and promotion costs per translated title of up to US\$4,000

PAYMENTS:

If your application is approved, you will then need to register as a supplier with the Department of Finance, Abu Dhabi (instructions will be provided to you).

Payment will be provided upon the completion and submission of a final copy of the translated work to the Award's Officer.

DECISION PROCESS:

The Scientific Committee of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award reviews all grant applications and makes the final decision about which applications to approve.

HOW TO APPLY:

[Download the application form](#). Email the form and all support materials to grants@zayedaward.ae. Use the subject line "Translation Funding"

TITLES ELIGIBLE FOR TRANSLATION GRANTS

LITERATURE WINNERS

- HIND, OR THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN THE WORLD by Hoda Barakat (Lebanon)
- AL HALWANI: THE FATIMID TRILOGY by Reem Bassiouney (Egypt)
- WHERE TO, O POEM? AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY by Ali Jaafar Alallaq (Iraq)
- THE END OF THE DESERT by Said Khatibi (Algeria)
- EYE ON EGYPT: CAFÉ RICHE by Maisoon Saqer (UAE)
- IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ENAYAT AL ZAYYAT by Iman Mersal (Egypt)
- THE PENULTIMATE CUP by Moncef Ouhaibi (Tunisia)
- THE SELF - BETWEEN EXISTENCE AND CREATION by Bensalem Himmich (Morocco)
- REMORSE TEST by Khalil Sweileh (Syria)
- SUMMER RAINS by Ahmad Al Qarmalawi (Egypt)
- THE AUTUMN OF INNOCENCE by Abbas Beydoun (Lebanon)
- BEYOND WRITING by Ibrahim Abdelmeguid (Egypt)
- THE MADMEN OF BETHLEHEM by Osama Alaysa (Palestine)
- AFTER COFFEE by Abdel Rasheed Mahmoudi (Egypt)
- DEVELOPED CONCEPTS OF A POETIC THEORY: LANGUAGE, MUSIC AND MOVEMENT by Mohammad Miftah (Morocco)
- CALL OF WHAT WAS FAR by Ibrahim al Kouni (Libya)
- THE PRINCE AND THE PASSAGE OF THE IRON DOORS by Wacini Laredj (Algeria)

CHILDREN'S WINNERS

- THE PHANTOM OF SABIBA by Latifa Labsir (Morocco)
- THE MYSTERY OF THE GLASS BALL by Maria Dadouch (Syria)
- AN ARTIST'S JOURNEY by Mizouni Bannani (Tunisia)
- THE LILAC GIRL by Ibtisam Barakat (Palestine / USA)
- I DREAM OF BEING A CONCRETE MIXER by Hussain Al Mutawaa (Kuwait)
- THE DINORAF by Hessa Al Muhairi (UAE)
- HATLESS by Lateefa Buti (Kuwait)
- THE BOY WHO SAW THE COLOR OF AIR by Abdo Wazen (Lebanon)
- GOLD RING by Qais Sedki (UAE)
- THE JOURNEY OF BIRDS TO QAF MOUNTAIN by Huda Al-Shawwa Qadoumi (Kuwait)
- A JOURNEY ON PAPER by Mohammed Ali Ahmad (Egypt)



TITLES ELIGIBLE FOR TRANSLATION GRANTS

SHORTLISTED CHILDREN'S TITLES

- MAYMOUNA AND HER CRAZY IDEAS by Shireen Sabanegh (Jordan)
- THE DIGITAL FOX by Hegra Alsawi (Egypt)
- A LAUGHING SUN by Bayan Al Safadi (Syria)
- MY DATE WITH THE LIGHT by Raja Malah (Morocco)
- THE EMERALD GARDEN by Raja Malah (Morocco)
- THE BEAST AND THE BLACKBERRY by Naseeba Alozaibi (UAE)

CLICK TO BROWSE RIGHTS LISTINGS
ON FRANKFURT RIGHTS

SHORTLISTED LITERATURE TITLES

- THE SPHINX by Ahmed Mourad (Egypt)
- TRAVELS OF THE CITY OF CLAY TRILOGY by Saud Alsanousi (Kuwait)
- A CHANCE FOR ONE LAST LOVE by Hassan Dawood (Lebanon)
- THE DUDUK'S WHIMPER al-Duduk by Jalal Barjas (Jordan)
- OVER THE JUMHIRYA BRIDGE by Shahad Al Rawi (Iraq)
- DIRT AND STARS by Ahmad Lutfi (Egypt)
- AL-QATA'I: IBN TULUN'S TRILOGY by Reem Bassiouney (Egypt)
- REJOICE, MY HEART by Alawiya Sobh (Lebanon)
- STRANGERS AT HOME by Ezzat El-Kamhawi (Egypt)
- COMPOSITION BIOGRAPHY: THOUGHTS AND CONFUSION CARRY ME by Said Bengrad (Morocco)
- TO LOVE LIFE (Aan Ta'ashaq Al Hayat) by Alawiya Sobh (Lebanon)
- THE PASSENGERS HALL by Ezzat El-Kamhawi (Egypt)
- YALDA NIGHT by Ghada Al-Absi (Egypt)
- WHAT I LEFT BEHIND by Shatha Mustafa (Palestine)



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award



GET TO KNOW
PAST WINNING
TITLES

LITERATURE

Discover more at:
zayedaward.ae

Generations of pastry makers experience a turbulent era in Egyptian history

The novel "Al-Halawani" is a historical narrative that delves into a significant period in the life of the Arab history, when the region faced the challenges of the Crusader attacks, the emergence of heroes, and the endurance of severe hardships. The novel is divided into three stories.

The first story recounts the arrival of the Fatimids in Egypt from Tunisia and the life history of the leader Jawhar Al-Siqilli, who built the city of Cairo. The second story is about the Al-Mustansiriya Famine or the famines that occurred in Egypt during the time of the Fatimid Caliph Al-Mustansir and how they ravaged the Egyptian population until the leader Badr Al-Jamali came to save Egypt from the famine, re-dividing its provinces, and building the current walls of Cairo. In the third story, the novel touches on the rise to power of Salah Al-Din Al-Ayyubi, the escalating threat of the Crusaders, and the end of the Fatimid state in Egypt.

The novel depicts also the role of Arab women in confronting the Crusaders and enduring famines and dangers.

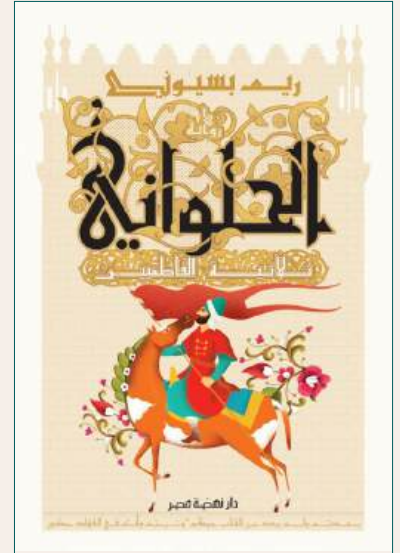
ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dr. Reem Bassiouney is an Egyptian author, as well as a professor and chair of the linguistics department at the American University in Cairo since 2013. She previously worked as an assistant professor of linguistics at Georgetown University (2007-2013) and as a lecturer of linguistics at the University of Utah (2005-2007), in addition to teaching at the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge (2002-2005), and serving as a member of the judging panels for the Excellence in Literature Award 2024 from the Supreme Council of Culture, as well as the International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF) in 2023.

Dr. Bassiouney holds a PhD in sociolinguistics from the University of Oxford (2002), a master's



degree in sociolinguistics from the University of Oxford (1998), and a bachelor's degree in English from Alexandria University (1994). She has garnered acclaim by notable critics from Egypt, other Arab countries, and around the world. Dr. Bassiouney has authored a collection of novels, which were all published in several editions. Most of her works topped the best-seller list and were translated by Dr. Roger Allen, who also worked on the novels of Naguib Mahfouz.



THE HALVA-MAKER: THE FATIMID TRILOGY

Reem Bassiouney,
EGYPT

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Nahdet Misr

Original Title: Al Halwani:
Thulathiyat al-Fatimiyeen
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2022
ISBN: 9789771461678
Pages: 672

Rights sold:

- English - Dar Arab UK
- Italian - Terra Somnia Editore

Reflections of a literary life amidst struggles and current events in Iraq and the Arab world

This autobiographical work centers on literary creativity. Poet Ali Jaafar Alallaq recollects his academic and professional experiences, as well as their diverse ventures into poetic, literary, critical, and academic writing earlier in his life. The book covers the poet's upbringing in a humble, impoverished village, his family's subsequent move to Baghdad in the early 1950s, and his journey up until the present day.

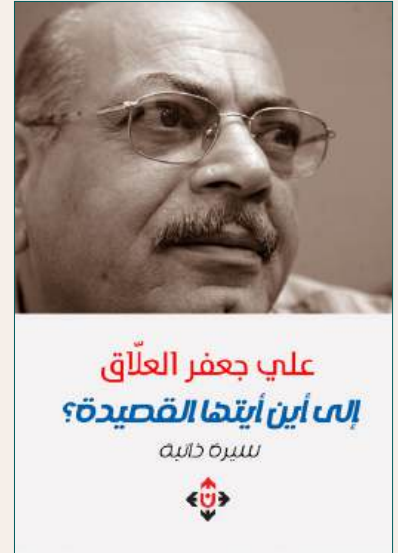
The biography details a plethora of human, cultural, and poetic events that impacted Alallaq's perspective on events he witnessed, interacted with, or was involved in. These events range in intensity and scope, spanning from his childhood years in the countryside to navigating significant societal changes in Baghdad, and from his early explorations in writing and literary journalism to pursuing doctoral studies in the United Kingdom. He reflects on enduring two destructive wars that displaced Iraq's people, leading to a life of exile and reliance on divine providence under the night sky.

Beginning in 1991, Alallaq began a long period abroad that included six years of teaching at Sanaa University, followed by ten years of work at the United Arab Emirates University from 1997 to 2015. He produced a remarkable body of poetry and critical works during his tenure as a university instructor and his active involvement in cultural and poetic affairs in Sanaa and later in the UAE, which continues to this day.

In this book, Alallaq takes on several roles, including narrator, contemplator, restorer, and descriptor, and expresses himself using elevated literary language. As a result, the work serves as an aesthetic testament to the purity of language as well as a cohesive account of the ups and downs of daily life. Despite living and working in a prosperous and stable environment for many years, he remains emotionally and imaginatively connected to the events and struggles affecting his country and the Arab world. He continues to document his aesthetic and patriotic testimony of current happenings, as clearly evidenced in his present autobiography.

FROM THE SZBA SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE:

"The book is a significant addition to the genre, particularly due to its focus on Alallaq's poetic experience. Through the book, readers can gain insight into the relationship between the poet and his work, as well as the challenges of the Iraqi and Arab cultural landscape for over 50 years. The author presents a modernist perspective that is broad-minded. The language of the book is stylistically diverse, ranging from everyday language to poetic prose. The author skillfully employs biographical techniques, incorporating Alallaq's own poems and those of other poets to create a distinct and exceptional work."



WHERE TO, O POEM?

Ali Jaafar Al Allaq,
IRAQ

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Alaan Publishing

Original Title: Ila Ayn Ayyathouha Al Kaseedah
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2022
ISBN: 9789923135358
Pages: 328

Rights sold:
• Portugese - Editora Rua do Sabão

Meet the Author: Ali Jaafar Alallaq

COMMENTARY ON HIS PRIZE-WINNING BOOK, 'WHERE TO, O POEM? AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY'

I believe that this book holds multiple aspects of significance for its readers. For starters, its literary and artistic merit is evident in its structure and compelling linguistic, narrative, and descriptive features, which ensure readers an enjoyable and satisfying experience.

The book provides valuable insights that can contribute to societal progress. Initially, the rich literary features expressed in the book's pure language offer the opportunity to develop a refined literary taste among the younger generation. The book teaches a valuable human lesson about the importance of determination, perseverance, and overcoming obstacles in order to achieve success. Additionally, the book highlights the strong allegiance toward the family unit, particularly parents, and their essential role in fostering a wholesome upbringing that forms the base of one's character, as well as raising children with positive values such as self-respect, self-esteem, and a love for reading, writing, and learning. It also promotes an appreciation for the country's heritage and culture, thus nurturing habits of good behavior, creativity, writing, singing, and music from an early age. Finally, the book instills a sense of deep attachment to the local environment while also encouraging venturing to embrace the wider world.



BIOGRAPHY:

Ali Jaafar Alallaq is an Iraqi Poet, critic, and university professor. He received a Ph.D. in Modern Literature and Criticism in the UK in 1984. He is currently a lecturer at the University of Baghdad and Mustansiriyah University, and editor-in-chief of monthly literary magazine Al-Aqlam. From 1991 to 1997, he taught at Sanaa University before moving on to become a professor of modern literature and criticism at UAEU, where he served until 2015.

His book "al-Shi'r wa-al-ta-laqqi" (Poetry and Reception) won the 1997 Sharjah International Book Fair Award for best book in literary creativity. He received the Sultan Bin Ali Al Owais Cultural Award for poetry in 2019, and was honoured by the First Arab Cultural Festival (Istanbul, 2022) for his poetic, critical, and academic achievements.

Alallaq is a member of several literary prize committees, and he has published over 20 books of poetry, the most recent of which include "Farashat Litabdeed Alwihda" (Butterflies to Ward Off Loneliness) and "Ila Ayn Ayyathouha Al Kaseedah" (Where to, O Poem? An Autobiography).

2023 YOUNG AUTHOR WINNER

Anyone could be guilty in this murder mystery, set in the wake of Algeria's War of Independence

On a nice fall day of 1988, Zakiya Zaghwani was found lying dead at the edge of the desert, giving way to a quest to discover the circumstances surrounding her death. While looking for whoever was involved in the death of the young singer, nearby residents discover bit by bit their involvement in many things other than the crime itself.

The story takes place in a town near the desert. And as with Khatibi's previous novels, this one is also marked by a tight plot, revolving around the murder of a singer who works in a hotel. This sets off a series of complex investigations that defy easy conclusions and invite doubt about the involvement of more than one character.

Through the narrators of the novel, who also happen to be its protagonists, the author delves into the history of colonialism and the Algerian War of Independence and its successors, describing the circumstances of the story whose events unfold throughout the month. As such, the characters suspected of killing the singer are not only accused of a criminal offense, but are also concerned, as it appears, with the great legacy that the War of Independence left, from different aspects.

The novel looks back at a critical period in the modern history of Algeria that witnessed the largest socio-political crisis following its independence in 1988. While the story avoids the immediate circumstances of the war, it rather invokes the events leading up to it and tracks its impact on the social life, while capturing the daily life of vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Nonetheless, those residents' vulnerability does not necessarily mean they are innocent. As it appears, they are all involved in a crime that is laden with symbolism and hints at the status of women in a society shackled by a heavy legacy of a violent, wounded masculinity. This approach to addressing social issues reflects a longing to break loose from the stereotypical discourse that sets heroism in a pre-defined mold and reduces the truth to only one of its dimensions.

FROM THE SZBA SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE:

"The novel exhibits imaginative characteristics, stylistic originality, and narrative proficiency in the genre of detective literature. It skilfully arranges events and utilises storytelling techniques, making it a noteworthy addition to the scarce historical detective novels in modern Arabic literature that cater to younger readers and encompass various societal settings. The text is distinguished by its eloquence and seamless flow, keeping the reader engaged without pause or tedium."



THE END OF THE DESERT

Said Khatibi,
ALGERIA

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Hachette Antoine / Naufal
Original Title: Nehayat Al
Ashra'a
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2022
ISBN: 9786140600164
Pages: 322

Rights sold:

- Slovenian - Založba Litera Publishing
- French - Gallimard
- English - Bitter Lemon Press

Said Khatibi is an Algerian writer born in December 29, 1984 in Bou Saada. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in French literature from the University of Algiers, then obtained a master's degree in cultural studies from Sorbonne Nouvelle University Paris 3. He has published translations, including *Baidan 'an Nejma* (a translation of the poetry of Kateb Yacine) and *Madar El Ghiyab* (an anthology of Algerian short stories written in French). He also participated in the translation of "The Encyclopedia of African Cinema". He published *A'ras El Nar* (on Rai music), and his book *Abartou El Massa' Hafiyan* included dialogues with key Francophone writers.

To date, Khatibi has released four novels: *Kitab Al Khataya* (The Book of Faults, 2013); *Arba'oun Aman Fi Intizar Isabelle* (Forty Years Waiting for Isabelle, 2016); *Hatab Sarajevo* (Firewood of Sarajevo, 2018); and *Nehayat Al Sahra'a* (The End of the Desert, 2022); in addition to a book about his travels, titled *Jana'en El Sharq Al Multahiba* (The Inflamed Heavens of the East, 2015).

He has been active in cultural journalism since 2006, and has worked and lived in Slovenia since 2016. He has a cultural column published every Saturday in *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* newspaper.

He was awarded the Arab Journalism Award, Ibn Battuta Prize for Travel Literature, and the Katara Prize for Arabic Novel, and has been shortlisted for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF).

Meet the Author: Said Khatibi

COMMENTARY ON HIS PRIZE-WINNING BOOK, 'THE END OF THE DESERT'

This novel isn't limited to one central story. Each of its characters has their own story pouring into the main one, all intertwined in a sequence of events that unveils the destiny of each of the characters, unfolding life as lived in Algeria, but also in other Arab countries as well that have been through similar transformations.

This novel seeks to create a modern form of writing, inspired by a common heritage. It attempts to use literature as a reflection of reality and its changes. The 1980s, when the novel's events take place, saw the beginnings of the disintegration of the concept of society and the emergence of a new period, that of "single individuals" (as evident in each of the characters' paths). The title in itself "The End of the Desert" is meant to highlight both the spatial context of the events (at the edge of the desert of Algeria) and the end of a period and the beginning of a new one.

One also must not lose sight of the effort of this novel to convey knowledge in its recalling of the War of Independence and all that followed it, notably the psychological changes in the hearts of those who survived it.

It's a story about the relationship between the East and the West, in an interchange with the novel *The Sheik* by the British orientalist, Edith Maude Hulland. It puts the location of the events at the centerstage, telling the story of the place and its historical weight. It goes inside and outside the difference places, from a house to a cafe, to a hotel, and a prison, all while allocating an important space to the presence of women in a society that hasn't yet recovered from its brokenness, highlighting their resilience despite all the alienation they experienced where they lived.

It's also a story that celebrates life, given the multitude of its characters, from the intellectual to the marginalized and despairing, whose voice is often not heard. This polyphony reflects the social pluralism and historical transformation of the location where the events novel take place.



A look back at an iconic place in Cairo and an important era of transformation in Egypt

The book opens a unique door to the history of Cairo and its journey from a social and cultural perspective and aims to build a new and different narrative for this history—one that shows Cairo as a cosmopolitan, multicultural city.

Cairo's Café Riche has a deep cultural history and a broad creative and social heritage. Saqer describes it as "the site where endless friendships are established between the café and history."

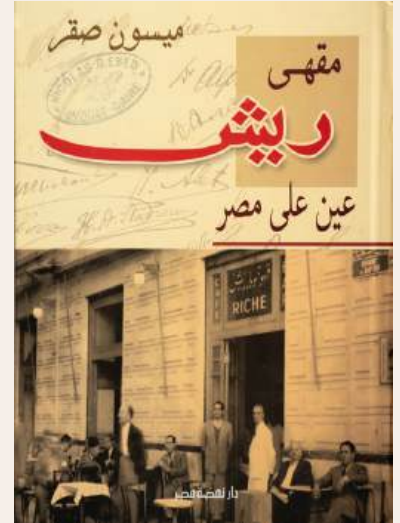
Saqer's narrative is not just about the small café, but rather constitutes observance and analysis of the presence of this café in the history of Egypt and how we can view many events surrounding it.

Here there is no separation between the political and the cultural, between the historical, the social, and the artistic.

The book combines history and narrative, which makes it a documented historical biography on the one hand and a creative work on the other. It also documents an important era in Egypt's cultural history by examining the cultural and social transformations in modern Egyptian history and highlighting prominent intellectuals and creators associated with the café and the history of intellectual life in Egypt.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Maisoon Saqer is a poet, novelist and artist who has published several collections of poetry in classical Arabic and has previously won the C.P. Cavafy International Prize for Poetry. Her novels *Raihana* (2003) and *A Pearl in My Mouth* (2016) were previously shortlisted for the Sheikh Zayed Award. Her professional background includes working at the Cultural Complex in Abu Dhabi in the Department of Culture, Arts, and Publishing, and at the Ministry of Information and Culture as Director of the Cultural Department.



EYE ON EGYPT: CAFÉ RICHE

Maisoon Saqer,
UAE

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Nahdet Misr Publishing

Original Title: Maq'ha Reesh, Ain
Ala Massr

Original Language: Arabic

Publication Date: 2021

ISBN: 9789771460404

Pages: 656

Rights sold:

- Polish - The Polish Arabic Library
- English - Khan Aljanub

Identity, feminism, mystery: a narrative on the life of Egyptian writer Enayat Al Zayyat

'In the Footsteps of Enayat Al-Zayyat' traces the life of Egyptian writer Enayat Al-Zayyat, who died in 1963, four years before the release of her only novel. Instead of a traditional biography, this narrative searches for a young woman whose family burned all her personal documents, including the draft of her second novel.

Mersal combines different writing techniques such as fictional narration, academic research, interviews, fiction, and fragments of the autobiography of the author of the novel.

The book deals with important political, social and cultural issues. We read about the history of psychiatry in modern Egypt, divorce and the continued suffering of women with the Personal Status Law, the changing geography of Cairo alongside changes in political regimes. In the library of the German Archaeological Institute, where Enayat worked, we find her unpublished second novel and unknown stories of German scientists fleeing Nazism to Cairo. We also see how Enayat's neglected tomb reveals the life story of her great-grandfather, Ahmed Rashid Pasha, and the disasters buried in the genealogy tree.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Egyptian poet, writer, academic and translator Iman Mersal works as an Associate professor of Arabic literature and Middle Eastern studies at the University of Alberta, Canada and currently resides in Marseille, France, where she holds the Albert Camus chair at IMÉRA, the Institute for Advanced Study of Aix-Marseille University until July 2021, while working on a book entitled *Al Laknah: Al Sawt fee Ghair Makaneh* (Accent: the Displaced Voice). An anthology of her works was translated into more than twenty languages and she has five poetry collections published. Her most recent published works include *Hatta Atakhlla Aan Fekrat Al Boyot* (Until I Abandon the Idea of Homes) in 2013, *Kayfa Taltaem: Aan Al Omoma wa Askhbahuha* (How

to Amend: On Motherhood and its Ghosts) in 2017, and *Fee Athar Enayat Al Zayyat* (In the Footsteps of Enayat Al-Zayyat) in 2019. Her book, *Mamar Moetem Yaslooh fee Talom Al Raks* (A Dark Path Suitable for Learning to Dance), is one of the most important poetry books issued by the generation of the nineties in Arabic poetry.



IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ENAYAT AL ZAYYAT

Iman Mersal,
EGYPT

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Al Kotob Khan Library

Original Title: *Fee Athar Enayat Al Zayyat*

Original Language: Arabic

Publication Date: 2019

ISBN: 9789778031027

Pages: 244

Rights sold:

- English – And Other Stories
- Polish - The Polish-Arabic Library
- Portuguese - Editora Rua do Sabao

Moncef Ouhaibi's poetry collection fuses modernity with Arab intellectual tradition

Rich in artistic, philosophical, literacy and historic values, Ouhaibi's poems offer readers rich experiences, not just poetically but with the imparting of crucial knowledge, too, as his writing is steeped in his own extensive personal experiences.

The Penultimate Cup begins with an autobiographical piece entitled "The Family", in which the poet chronicles his ancestral home and gives an account of his family life and childhood before poetry. "The Family" becomes a venue where his family members—those who influenced him the most—arrive in succession: his father, the village chief; his grandfather, the astrologer; his uncle, the chess player; his mother and the rest. The places where he lived fashion the corners of the poem like furniture.

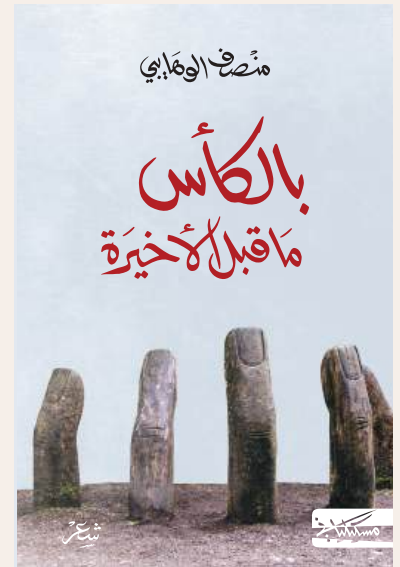
Ouhaibi's poetry combines several art genres, with few of the poems relying on narratives to merge reality with fiction. Poetic imagery is in abundance, his words transform into virtual art, music and philosophical ideas. "The Scream" poem for example, relates not to the sound of a person in pain but his image, which reminds the reader of the famous painting by Norwegian artist Edvard Munch. "Oh Youssef," writes Ouhaibi, "take my hand, while I scream like Munch in the wilderness".

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Moncef Ouhaibi, born in 1949 in Tunisia, is Professor of Arabic Literature at the Universities of Kairouan and Sousse and a permanent member of the Tunisian Academy of Sciences, Letters and Arts.

He has published numerous poetry books in both Arabic and French, as well as writing short films and documentaries, notably *En attendant Averroès* (Waiting for Averroès), *Paul Klee à Hammamet* (Paul Klee in Hammamet), *Devant les portes de Kairouan* (Before the gates of Kairouan), and *Pays qui me ressemble* (Country that looks like me), which has been translated into several languages. He has been nominated for several prizes including the

Comar d'Or literary prize, the Okaz Poet award for Arab poetry, and the Nikos Gatsos literary prize.



THE PENULTIMATE CUP

Moncef Ouhaibi
TUNISIA

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Meskeliani Publishing and Distribution

Original Title: Belkas ma Qabl Al Akheera

Original Language: Arabic

Publication Date: 2019

ISBN: 9789938240757

Pages: 425

World rights available

Celebrated Moroccan writer Bensalem Himmich diffuses his autobiography with literary and intellectual dimensions.

Himmich opens his book with a discussion on autobiographical writing, followed by chapters on the author's early life, starting with his childhood in Meknes. The heroic figures of his "rebellious youth" are Marx and Sartre, and the challenges of these and other radical thinkers, in both Arabic and European languages, find their way into his doctoral thesis, *Ideological Patterns in Islam: Ijtihad and History* (in Arabic, 1990).

Subsequent chapters move into the domain of creation, with four categories reflecting the author's literary, intellectual, linguistic, and cultural interests. Starting with an epigraph of Italo Calvino, the "literary" chapter focuses on the novel, its history, and its complexities.

The penultimate chapter entitled "My Polemics" offers four of his own polemical stands: on fundamentalist trends—specifically Islam and "Islamism"; on the prevalence in Moroccan publications of the Latin alphabet; and issues with the well-known *littérateurs* Adonis and Youssef Ziedan.

The work closes with the author's reflection on the emergence of a new and negative cultural "hegemony", the awareness of which he attributes to Edward Said and the latter's interpretation of the work of Franz Fanon.

ADDITIONAL RECOGNITION FOR BENSALEM HIMMICH:

- Books translated into English include *The Polymath* and *The Theocrat*
- Short- and longlisted for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction
- Two-time winner of the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature
- Winner of the Grand Atlas Award of the Embassy of France in Morocco
- Winner of the Sharjah-UNESCO Prize for Arab Culture

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Himmich is an intellectual and author, and the former Minister of Culture for Morocco. He attained his PhD in Philosophy from the University of Paris. Writing in both Arabic and French, several of his novels have been translated into other languages.

The Writers' Union of Egypt chose Himmich's novel *The Theo-*

crat (Majnoun Al Hukm) as one of the 100 best novels of the 20th century. His novel *Mu'athibati* was shortlisted for the Arab Booker International Award. Himmich has spoken at several Arab, European, and American forums, and received the grand award of the French Academy of Toulouse in 2011.



THE SELF: BETWEEN EXISTENCE AND CREATION

Bensalem Himmich
MOROCCO

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Centre Culturel Du Livre

Original Title: *Al Dhat*
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2018
ISBN: 9789954705391
Pages: 239

World rights available

This semi-autobiographical novel offers a first-hand look at life and loss during the Syrian civil war

The novel offers an intimate view of the Syrian civil war tragedy and takes the reader on a trip through Damascus and down memory lane. Drawing on his experience as a journalist, poet and novelist, Sweileh writes about the psychological conflicts amid the shattered reality of place and society using language that is full of imagery.

The protagonist is a brilliant writer who is navigating a new, war-torn reality. While reminiscing about his past, he shows us what everyday life is like in Damascus—at once brutal and boring—and laments the missed opportunities and destruction the conflict has caused in his country.

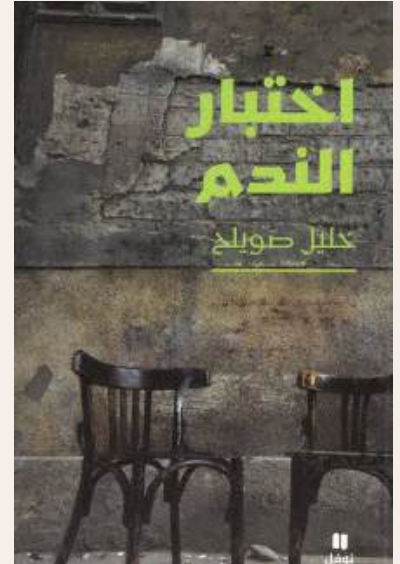
This work is an important addition to the Syrian literature, both for its subject matter and a unique use of narrative tools and vocabulary.

It's written in a reversed biographical manner, shedding light on specific historical periods from the current age of its author to his childhood years. The novel presents descriptions of the narrator, and the names of his friends, the places he used to visit in an extraordinary descriptive style.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Khalil Sweileh was born in 1959, in the city of Hasaka, Syria. In addition to writing, he is renowned journalist. Sweileh's portfolio includes multiple works in poetry including Prefaces, That Was the Scene, and Tracing the Marks. He has also written numerous novels including Stationer of Love, Express Mail, The Gazelle Will Come to You, and The Barbarians' Paradise.

Sweileh has won a number of literary and journalism awards, including The Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature for his novel Writing Love (2009)—which was translated into English and published by the American University in Cairo Press—and the Arab Journalism Award (2010).



REMORSE TEST

Khalil Sweileh

SYRIA

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)



UKRAINIAN EDITION

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:

Hachette Antoine / Naufal

Original Title: Ikhtibar al-nadam

Original Language: Arabic

Publication Date: 2017

ISBN: 9786144386712

Pages: 248

Rights Sold:

- German - Sujet Verlag
- Ukrainian - Nora-Druk
- Italian - Round Robin Editrice

Using music as a thread to connect past and present, his novel explores the clash between tradition and modernity.

The novel addresses the current Arab youth crisis, in which young people find themselves torn between fundamentalism and modernity.

Author Ahmad Al Qarmalawi infuses his latest book with music, both traditional and new. The characters in his novel must choose between the pursuit of materialism versus spiritual balance. They face the impact of modernization on heritage and arts versus the need to protect and preserve their traditional culture.

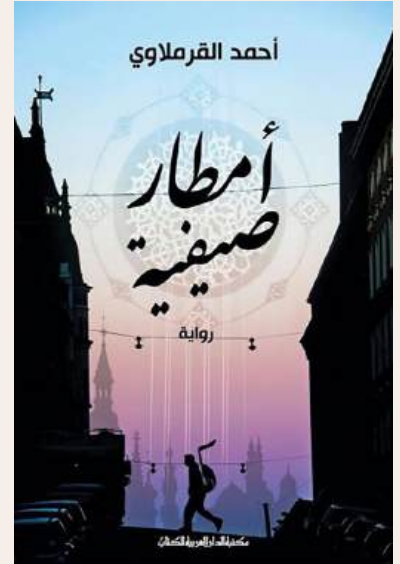
Giving readers a true sense of Islamic culture, Qarmalawi writes about the history of music from Sufism to the present era of electronic musical arts and modern technologies. The story offers the choice between traditions and modern sciences, material consumption and spiritual elevation. The novel highlights the interrelations between the music and the soul, and the sublimity of the spirit versus covetousness. Al Qarmalawi displays an extensive knowledge in music that creates a tangible setting in which to explore the paradoxes of modern life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Ahmad Al Qarmalawi was born in Cairo in 1978 and moved with his family to Kuwait in his early childhood, where he received his elementary and secondary education. He graduated from the International American School in 1996, then moved back to Egypt to study Architecture at the American University in Cairo, and later continued his post-graduate studies in University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

He has been active in creative writing since 2012, when he published his first work, a collection of short stories called *The First of Abbas*. He followed it with his first novel, *The Last Post*, published in 2014 by Al Dar Al Masriah Al Lubnaniah. Al Qarmalawi published two more novels to date: *Destiny*

in 2015 and *Summer Rains* in 2017, which won him the Sheikh Zayed Book Award. Besides writing, he is an avid painter and a musician. He is married and has three sons.



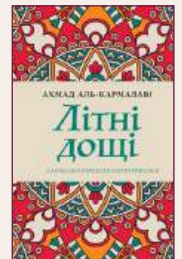
SUMMER RAINS

Ahmad Al
Qarmalawi
EGYPT

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)



ITALIAN EDITION



UKRAINIAN
EDITION

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:

Dar Al Masriah Al Lubnaniah

Original Title: *Amtar Sayfiyyah*

Original Language: Arabic

Publication Date: 2016

ISBN: 9789772937370

Pages: 220

Rights Sold:

- Italian - Round Robin
- Ukrainian - Anetta Antonenko Publishers
- Greek - Vakxikon Publications

A tragic father-son story during the Arab Spring explores religious extremism and masculinity.

The novel opens with a letter from Ghassan to his cousin, describing how his father Massoud strangled his mother to death when Ghassan was just three years old. Afterward, Massoud flees the village in southern Lebanon. For 18 years, no one hears from him.

Meanwhile, Massoud has moved to southern Syria, where he remarried and had two more sons. During the Arab Spring, the militant groups fighting the Syrian regime transform him into a religious extremist.

In the second half of the novel, Massoud returns to the village in southern Lebanon. He brings with him a group of men. Together they seize control of the village and terrorize its inhabitants. They begin murdering the villagers in the name of religion. One of Ghassan's friends is among the victims. He decides that he must kill his father, avenging the death of his friend and the deaths of the other villagers. In the end, he fails and is beheaded by Bushra's son, his cousin, who has joined Massoud's thugs.

Beydoun captures the shifting points of view in a family shattered by the tyranny of normative masculinity and the resulting violence. The victims are women, of course, but also the men like Ghassan who reject these social and cultural expectations. The novel also portrays the rise of religious extremism and the terrorism it can inspire, which wreaks havoc on the lives of ordinary people.

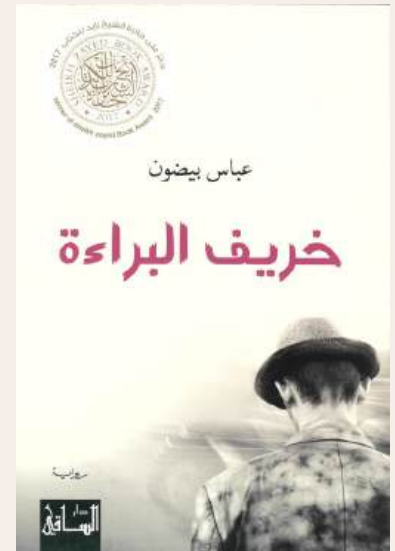
ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Abbas Beydoun is well known in the Arab world as a poet, journalist, and literary critic. He was born in the village of Sur in southern Lebanon in 1945 to a family passionate about literature. He studied Arabic Literature at Beirut Arabic University and received his master's degree in literature in Sorbonne, France.

Beydoun started his writing career as a poet and has published numerous poetry collections, including *Critique of Pain*, *Overdose of Time*, *Glass Graveyards*, *Chambers*, *A Ticket for Two*, and *The Metaphysics of the Fox*.

His poetry has been translated into Italian, German, French, and English. His narrative style blends

the volatile reality with a hint of fantasy. In 2002, Beydoun published his first novel, *Blood Test*, which was translated into English and published by Syracuse University Press. His second novel, *The Album of Loss*, was inspired by his own life story.



THE AUTUMN OF INNOCENCE

Abbas Beydoun
LEBANON

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Dar Al Saqi

Original Title: Kharif al-Bara'ah
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2016
ISBN: 9786144258811
Pages: 192

Rights Sold:

- Ukrainian - Anetta Antonenko Publishers

UKRAINIAN EDITION



One of Egypt's leading literary voices on how political, social, cultural events of the last 40 years influenced his writing

Ibrahim Abdelmeguid, called “the quintessential writer about Alexandria” by The National newspaper, looks back over his decades-long writing career in this book, which he calls a “literary autobiography.” In it, he reflects on the social, political, and cultural influences in Egypt and elsewhere that have shaped him as a writer.

He shares his views on major political events, such as the 1967 defeat after the Six-Day War, and explanations of their profound impact on his personal life and works of fiction. Abdelmeguid devotes a portion of his work to discussing the development of his views on Egypt's second president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, over the course of his turbulent tenure in office.

The book is divided into a brief introduction and four chapters. Abdelmeguid guides the reader through his literary career, moving masterfully between the factual and the meditative. He explores how each of his novels and many of his short stories was conceived. He also describes cultural, political, and social contexts in which his writing evolved and was received by literary critics and casual readers.

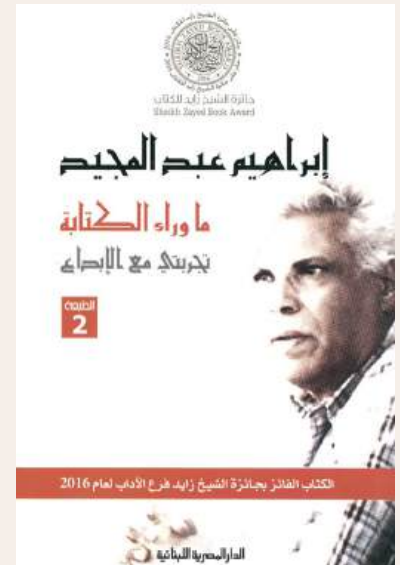
Beyond Writing is a rare and important addition to the modern Arabic literary map. Few Arab authors are willing to so transparently share their writing process, preferring to highlight the polished final product while concealing the hard work that brought it into existence. Readers are lucky that it is a writer as prominent, thoughtful, and engaging as Abdelmeguid is willing to draw back the curtain.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Ibrahim Abdelmeguid was born in Alexandria in 1946. He graduated from the faculty of Arts with a Philosophy degree before relocating to Cairo in 1974 where he began his writing career.

Abdelmaguid has written more than 15 novels, five collections of short stories, and several theatre plays. He wrote numerous novels including *No One Sleeps in Alexandria*, *Birds of Amber*, and *The House of Jasmine*. His works have been translated to English, German, Italian, Spanish and French. He has received numerous prizes

and accolades including Naguib Mahfouz prize from AUC press in 1996 and the Prize of State in 2007 for his contributions to literature.



BEYOND WRITING

Ibrahim
Abdelmeguid
EGYPT

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Dar Al Masriah Al Lubnaniyah

Original Title: Ma Wara'a Al-Kitaba

Original Language: Arabic

Publication Date: 2014

ISBN: 9789774278884

Pages: 334

World rights available

Adopting the story-within-a-story structure of Arabian Nights, this is a novel of Palestinian oppression

This remarkable novel eloquently brings together fictional characters alongside real-life historical figures in a complex portrayal of Bethlehem and the Dheisheh Refugee Camp in the West Bank. The common thread connecting each tale is madness, in all its manifestations.

These accounts of individuals and communities provide a gateway into the histories of the city of Bethlehem and Palestine. They paint a picture of the centuries of political oppression that the Palestinian people have endured, from the days of the Ottoman Empire to the years following the Oslo Accords, and all the way to 2012 (when the novel was written).

The novel is divided into three sections, each containing multiple narratives. The first section, "The Book of a Genesis," describes the physical spaces and origins of Bethlehem and Dheisheh Refugee Camp. The second section, "The Book of the People Without a Book", follows parallel narratives of the lives of the patients in a psychiatric hospital in Bethlehem, the mad men and women roaming the streets of the city, and those imprisoned by the Israeli authorities. The third and final section, "An Ephemeral Book," follows individuals—Palestinian and non-Palestinian—who are afflicted by madness following the Oslo Accords in 1993. These stories narrate the loss of land and the accompanying loss of sanity in the decades of despair and violence.

Alaysa's crisp, lucid prose and deft storytelling chart a clear path through the chaos with dark humor and wit. The result is an important contribution to fiction on the Palestinian crisis that approaches the Palestinians, madness, and Palestinian spaces with compassion and depth.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Osama Alaysa is an author and journalist from Bethlehem, Palestine. He has worked for numerous Arab and regional newspapers. He has published three novels, two collections of short stories, and seven research studies on Palestinian history.

He was imprisoned a number of times in various Israeli prisons in the periods 1978–1982 and 1989–1991, as well as having been prevented from traveling. Although he sees his personal experience as insignificant in comparison to the suffering of many Palestinians, he nonetheless perceives it as having

a profound impact upon his life, and this he reflects in many of his short stories and novels."



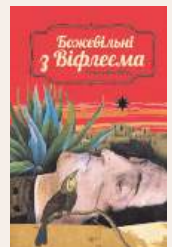
THE MADMEN OF BETHLEHEM

Osama Alaysa,
PALESTINE

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)



FRENCH EDITION



UKRAINIAN EDITION

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:

Hachette Antoine / Naufal

Original Title: Majanan Bayt Lahm

Original Language: Arabic

Publication Date: 2013

ISBN: 9789953269641

Pages: 254

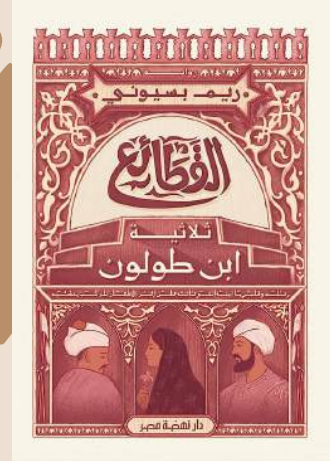
Rights Sold:

- French - Belleville Éditions
- Georgian - Intelekti Publishing
- Ukrainian - Anetta Antonenko Publishers
- Spanish - University of Alicante





جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award



GET TO KNOW
THE SHORTLIST

LITERATURE

Discover more at:
zayedaward.ae

An IPAF winner's memoir on his formation as a writer and reader

Our lives are essentially a story and we are the characters. “The Duduk’s Whimper” is story of Jalal Barjas, beginning with his birth in 1970 and ending in 2021. His story is inspired by his life as a human being and a writer with little time at his disposal. It is a life that intersects with many others in our Arab world. The idea for this biography/novel was born out of a question the author asked about his motivations for reading, writing, and traveling.

The result is a candid, bold narrative that presents his image to the reader without idealism or heroism. This memoir unfolds along three lines: the biography of the writer, the stories of three places, and the tale of three books he read. Through these narratives, Barjas reveals unknown aspects of his life and the difficult path he had to take to reach his esteemed position in the literary world. He takes us on an entertaining and profound journey with a high level of language that reveals many aspects that are not only relevant to him, but also to everyone who reads this book. It delves deeply into reading, writing, travel, love, failure, success, and the formation of human joys and sorrows starting from childhood. “The Duduk’s Whimper” is the story of a writer who only has three hours a day to write, yet he managed to establish himself as one of the great writers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jalal Barjas is a Jordanian poet and novelist who has won several Arab and international awards, notably the International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF) in 2021 for his novel “Notebooks of the Bookseller”. He also received the Katara Prize for Arabic Novel in 2014 for his novel “Snakes of Fire”; the Rukus Bin Zayd Al-Uzaizi Creativity Award in 2012 for his short story collection “The Earthquake”; and the Rifka Dudin Prize for Creativity in 2013 for his novel “The Dreamer’s Guillotine”. His novel “Women of the Five Senses” was longlisted for the IPAF in 2019, and the English translation of “Notebooks of the Bookseller” was longlisted for the Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation.

Barjas’ works have been translated into English, French, Persian, and Hindi. His book “Madaba Windows Guard Jerusalem” has been translated into seven languages.

He currently heads the editorial board of “Voice of the Generation” magazine and produces and hosts a cultural radio program titled “House of the Novel”.



THE DUKDUK'S WHIMPER

Jalal Barjas,
JORDAN

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Arab Institute for Research and
Publishing

Original Title: Nasheej al-Duduk
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2023
ISBN: 9786144863985
Pages: 224

World rights available

A sweeping historical saga about a city that defies the eroding power of time

In one of the first Arabic novels about the COVID-19 pandemic, relationships begin and end much like the pandemic itself. From his balcony in Beirut, Ezzat notices a solitary light on a lone balcony in the building opposite. From that moment, a connection begins to form across the empty space between the buildings, communicated through the air and signals.

The events unfold after the owner of the shadow steps out onto her balcony, confronting the voyeur. They share time, confusion... and desire.

Ezzat and Tamer successively both fall in love with the same woman, and a cautious friendship develops between the two men. It soon evolves into more dangerous forms.

The story also portrays the experiences of other building residents during the pandemic, who imposed strict isolation on themselves.

The protagonists, particularly the two elderly lovers, live on the edge of catastrophic expectations, as when they imagine that a woman pressing the intercom downstairs to ask for food could be a sign of an impending widespread famine.

The story does not conclude in a stalemate but rather with losers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Hassan Dawood was born in Beirut in 1950 and holds a degree in Arabic literature from the Faculty of Education at the Lebanese University. He has worked in literary journalism for newspapers such as "As-Safir," where he managed its weekly supplement, and "Al-Hayat" (1988-1999), as well as "Al-Mustaqbal," where he was the editor-in-chief of its cultural supplement "Nawafidh" (1999-2012). He has published collections of short stories and novels, including "Matilde's Building" (1983), "The Penguin's Song" (1998), which won the Lebanese Cultural Forum Award in France, "One Hundred and Eighty Sunsets," which received the Italian Mediterranean

Prize (2009), and "No Road to Paradise," which won the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature (2015). His book "Women and Fruits" (2020) was published by Dar Naufal, and his novels have been translated into several languages.



A CHANCE FOR ONE LAST LOVE

Hassan Dawood,
LEBANON

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Hachette Antoine/Nofal

Original Title: Fursat al-Gharam
al-Akheer

Original Language: Arabic

Publication Date: 2022

ISBN: 9786140600515

Pages: 240

World rights available

A sweeping historical saga about a city that defies the eroding power of time

The Ibn Tulun Trilogy is a stunning literary work that offers readers a fascinating glimpse into a significant period in the history of Egypt.

This novel interweaves historical facts with a continuous narrative about Egypt, exploring how it was before and after the arrival of Ahmad Ibn Tulun. His independence and the construction of the city of Al-Qata'i, along with the establishment of a powerful army, are vividly portrayed. As the story progresses, readers learn of Ahmad Ibn Tulun's death and his son's reign, as well as the attempts to destroy his legacy and the fate of Al-Qata'i.

Al-Qata'i is a story that explores the conflict between construction and destruction, the fickleness of fate, and the highs and lows of human existence. It tells of the meeting and parting of loved ones, the struggle between love and hate, oppression and justice, power and helplessness, and the ultimate triumph of victory and the agony of defeat.

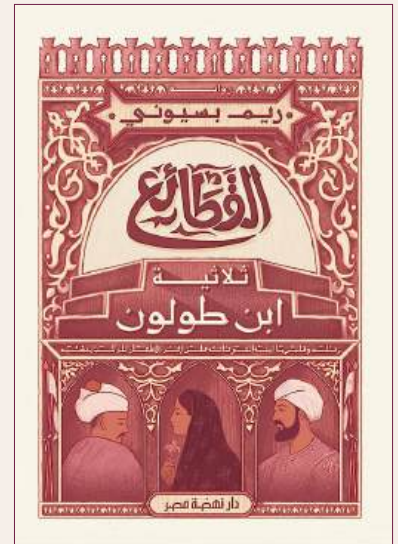
ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dr. Reem Bassiouney is currently a professor and chair of the linguistics department at the American University in Cairo. She graduated from Alexandria University and obtained her master's and PhD degrees from the University of Oxford.

She has won numerous awards, including the State Award for Excellence in Literature for her overall literary works, the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature from the Supreme Council for Culture for her "Sons of the People: The Mamluk Trilogy", as well as the Sawiris Cultural Award for her novel "Professor Hanaa," and the Best Translated Book Award in America for "The Pistachio Seller" from the King Fahd Center for Middle East Studies.

Dr. Bassiouney has authored several novels, all of which have been published in multiple editions and translations. Her

literary works include "The Smell of the Sea" (2005), "The Pistachio Seller" (2007), "Professor Hanaa" (2008), "Love on the Arabic Way" (2009), "Mortal Designs" (2010), "The Tour Guide" (2017), "Sons of the People: The Mamluk Trilogy" (2018), "Fountain of the Drowning: The Path of Land and Sea" (2020), "Al-Qata'i: Ibn Tulun's City Without Walls" (2021), and "Al-Halawani: The Trilogy of the Fatimids" (2023).



AL-QATA'I: THE IBN TULUN TRILOGY

Reem Bassiouney,
EGYPT

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Nahdet Misr

Original Title: Al-Qata'i:
Thoulathayat Ibn Tulun
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2022
ISBN: 9789771460411
Pages: 704

World rights available

Fleeing his hometown in Lebanon, Ghassan confronts life between two cultures.

Ghassan, a musician and Oud player, leaves for New York, fleeing the Lebanese civil war after his extremist bother, Afif, murdered his older and pacifist brother Jamal, who sought to open the door to Muslim-Christian dialogue. In New York, Ghassan struggles to erase all his memories but his thoughts would always bring him back to his hometown, Dar El Ezz, as it was long before the war.

Soon, he falls in love with and marries Kristin, becomes more emotionally stable, and embraces American culture. But when he must return to Lebanon for his father's funeral, nostalgia for his homeland and a series of events force Ghassan to face a convergence of two cultures.

"Efraha Ya Qalbi" (Rejoice, My Heart!) is a novel about love, music, identity, one's sense of belonging, brotherly conflicts, and the diaspora. It dives into the lives, troubles, and dilemmas of the characters.

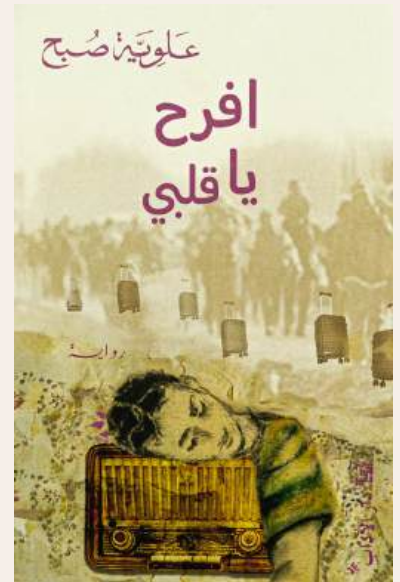
The stories intertwine amid a fascinating narrative, thus revealing the turmoil and troubles of the Lebanese community torn by wars and outbursts. The novel also addresses the relationship between the East and the West, where struggling and cracked identities are silenced and offers a new vision through analysis and narration.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Alawiya Sobh is a Lebanese writer, journalist, and novelist born in Beirut in 1955. She earned bachelor's degrees in both Arabic and English literature from the Lebanese National University in Beirut. She has worked in journalism since the early 1980s, working as editor of the cultural section of the most widely-read Arabic women's magazine at that time. 'Al-Hasnaa', and in 1986 became the editor-in-chief. In the early 1990s she founded 'Snob Al-Hasnaa', the best-selling women's cultural magazine in the Arab world today, and remains its editor-in-chief.

Her books include Maryam: Keeper of the Stories, which

was translated into several languages and won the 2006 Sultan Taboos Prize; It's Called Love, which was longlisted in 2010 for the International Prize for Arabic fiction; and To Love Life, shortlisted for the 2021 Sheikh Zayed Book Award.



REJOICE, MY HEART

Alawiya Sobh,
LEBANON

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Dar Al Adab Publishing &
Distribution

Original Title: Ifrah ya Qulbi
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2022
ISBN: 9789953897325
Pages: 352

World rights available

Three generations of a Baghdad family experience the US invasion of Iraq and its aftermath

This novel, a bestseller in Baghdad, starts with the first two American tanks that crossed over the Jumhuriya Bridge into the heart of Baghdad in 2003, as the narrator watches events unfold from her grandfather's house at the riverfront. That's when her emigration journey begins, setting her on a path to experience both love and death away from her country. After her mother passes away, her father resorts to quantum physics in an attempt to interpret the meaning of existence, while the nameless protagonist discovers the novels of Virginia Woolf, Charles Dickens, and Françoise Sagan.

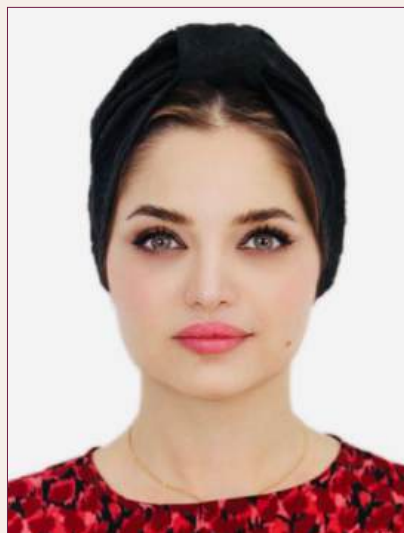
The author depicts how different generations of the same family live different worlds, separated by experiences and time despite occupying the same physical spaces. The Jumhuriya Bridge threads symbolism throughout the novel—ushering in the beginning of the military fall of the city and later being the setting of sporadic events, from innocent flirting, to gulls, down to the shocking event that pushes the story up to its climax.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Shahad Al Rawi is an Iraqi novelist, born in Baghdad in 1986. She published her first novel, "Sa'at Baghdad" (The Baghdad Clock) in 2016. It was shortlisted for the 2018 International Prize for Arabic Fiction. The novel's English edition won the Edinburgh First Book Award in 2018. "The Baghdad Clock" has been translated into several languages, including English, Hindi, Persian, Turkish, Indonesian, Kurdish, Albanian, and soon French and German.

Her second novel, "Fawqa Jisr Al Jumhuriya" (Over the Jumhuriya Bridge), was published in 2020. It has been translated into Persian, with an English translation expected to be out by the end of the year.

Al Rawi holds a PhD in anthropology and administration. Vogue chose her as one of the key Arab personalities for 2018, and she regularly writes for several Arab and global newspapers, and she contributes to literary conferences and academic lectures.



OVER THE JUMHURIYA BRIDGE

Shahad Al Rawi,
IRAQ

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Dar Alhikma Publishing & Distribution

Original Title: Fawqa Jisr Al Jumhuriya

Original Language: Arabic

Publication Date: 2020

ISBN: 9781784811921

Pages: 256

Rights sold: English and Persian

A short story collection that cherishes literary traditions of the pre-Islam Arab world

How do you imagine the Arabs before Islam? People who drink alcohol, milk goats, and fight each other for trivial reasons? Or perhaps you imagine them ignorant in an environment of darkness and sand?

In this short story collection, Ahmad Lufti presents a fresh picture of the Arabian Peninsula before Islam, its legends and poets, its kings and its oral traditions. Inspired by the storytelling form of Scheherazade in “One Thousand and One Nights”—in which one narrator tells a story about another narrator, and another—as well as traditional Arab tales, Lufti’s stories explore and exalt Arab history and culture as well as larger themes of love, weakness, and power.

COMMENTARY FROM THE AUTHOR:

I am trying to reintroduce prose in Arab stories, as an attempt to praise authors whose books were highly underestimated. These works of art were deeply criticized for focusing on the pre-Islamic era or for adopting a classical rigid style.

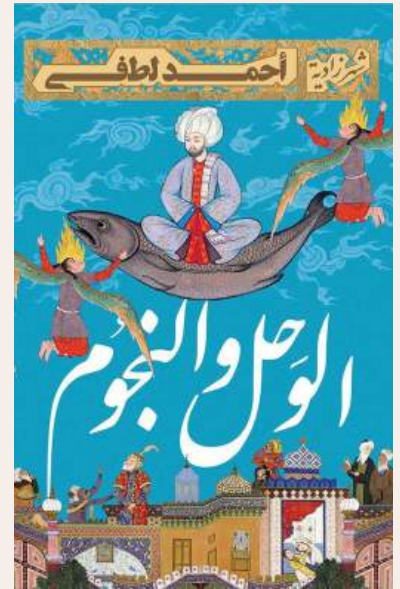
It is crucial to revive Arab stories, this pristine and rich field that would never fail to exist, even if all authors were to perish. This has proven of importance in modern stories, which are the reflection of the contemporary human. How can we refute modern stereotypes, if Arab literature is absent from today’s books?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Born in Sharqia Governorate in Egypt in 1996, Ahmad Lufti Mohamad Ahmad is an Egyptian physician who earned his bachelor’s degree in medicine and surgery from Mansoura University in 2020. Following his graduation, he served as a designated physician in Aswan Governorate, specializing in pediatrics and neonatology.

In addition to his medical work, Ahmad has written numerous articles for various websites. In 2020, he published his first story, “Tayfaha” (Her Ghost), through the Arab Library

for Publishing. Two years later, his debut collection of short stories, “Dirt and Stars,” was published by Aseer AlKotb. This book represents his initiative to revitalize Arab narrative traditions through contemporary fictional storytelling.



DIRT AND STARS

Ahmad Lufti,
EGYPT

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Aseer AlKotb

Original Title: Al Wahl wa Al
Noujoom
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2022
ISBN: 9789776972377
Pages: 248

Rights Sold:

- Portuguese - Editora Rua do Sabão

During the pandemic, apartment building residents confront isolation

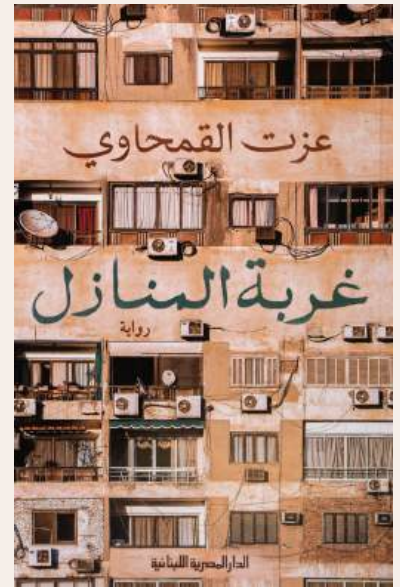
The novel brings together residents of a multi-story building. In a world besieged by COVID-19, Ezzat El-Kamhawi's new novel places its main characters in a fictional world dominated by isolation and obsessions, where people are forced to surrender to a crushing flood of memories.

FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE:

"The novel explores the pandemic and its impacts on social life in Egypt, by presenting examples of the people who suffered from the disease. Structurally, it interacts with other literary genres and combines realism and fantasy."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Ezzat El-Kamhawi is an Egyptian novelist, born on December 23, 1961, he has published 15 books. His novel *Beit El Deeb* (The Wolf's House) won the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature in 2012 and was translated to English and Chinese, while *Madinat Al Lathah* (The City of Pleasure) and *Al Aar men Al Difatayn* (Shame on the Two Bank) were translated into Italian. In 2018, his novel *Yakfi Annana Ma'an* (At Least We are Together) was shortlisted by the Sheikh Zayed Book Award. His works were the subject of several university theses, the most recent of which are: *Identity in the novels of Ezzat El-Kamhawi* – a thesis by researcher, Hoda Abdullah Abu Al-Maati, with which she obtained a doctorate degree from Suez Canal University in 2020.



STRANGERS AT HOME

Ezzat El-Kamhawi,
EGYPT

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Al Dar Al Masriah Al Lubnaniah

Original Title: Ghorbat Al
Manazil

Original Language: Arabic

Publication Date: 2021

ISBN: 9789777953320

Pages: 208

World rights available

An exploration of the significance of narrative in understanding our lives and culture.

The book is a story that combines childhood living in the 1960s deserts, before current forms of technology and virtualization. In this narrative text, it was not a matter of resurrecting a moment in a fleeting life in a non-stop chronology, but of shaping it into concepts that reconstruct it in an abstract way.

The text does not present an individual story, but rather redraws the boundaries of an entire generation's experience, a generation that saw the light after Morocco's independence, with all of its subsequent achievements, failures, victories, and tragedies.

The narrator in the text does not present ready-made theories; instead, he captures life in its events and facts and elevates it to an abstract level pending contemplation. The event in the text is an excuse for restoring life in the form of a "human experience," and that is the outlet for returning academic knowledge to its role as an incubator for people's concerns as depicted by their narratives, stories, and beliefs. What people experience by instinct; the story turns into another story constructed in the abstract. We do not simply live, we also contemplate our own living, and this is the sublime function of narration.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Born in in the desert of Berkane, a city in eastern Morocco, Said Bengrad holds a BA in Arabic literature. He received a doctorate at the Sorbonne in Paris, and another doctorate at Moulay Ismail University in Meknes. He is one of a group of professors who co-founded the semiotic and linguistic studies magazine "Alamat" in the early 1990s, which was published in 1994 and is still published on a regular basis today. Bengrad is currently a professor of semiotics at Mohamed V University in Rabat. He's the author of 20 books and has translated 17 others.



COMPOSITION BIOGRAPHY: THOUGHTS AND CONFUSION CARRY ME

Said Bengrad,
MOROCCO

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Le Centre Culturel Du Livre

Original Title: Wa Tahmelany Hayraty Wa Dh'anony. Seerat Altakween
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2021
ISBN: 9789920627887
Pages: 342

World rights available

2021 LITERATURE SHORTLIST



TO LOVE LIFE

Alawiya Sobh, LEBANON

A metaphoric story of a dancer's body that betrays her and Arab cities enduring social unrest.

World rights available

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Dar Al Adab Publishing & Distribution

Original Title: Aan Ta'ashaq Al Hayat
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2020
ISBN: 9789953897028
Pages: 352



THE PASSENGERS' HALL

Ezzat El-Kamhawi, EGYPT

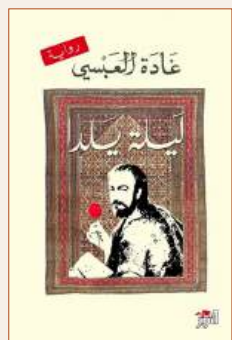
A reflection of travel as an essential human experience and a metaphor for the journey of life and death.

World rights available

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Al Dar Al Masriah Al Lubnaniah

Original Title: Ghorfat Al Mosafreen
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2020
ISBN: 789777952675
Pages: 240



YALDA'S NIGHT

Ghada Al-Absi, EGYPT

An imagined story of the night that Persian poet Hafez al Shirazi died.

World rights available

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Dar Al Tanweer

Original Title: Laylat Yalda
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2018
ISBN: 9786144720257
Pages: 256



WHAT I LEFT BEHIND

Shatha Mustafa,
PALESTINE

A Palestinian student examines her memories, family relationships, and individuality.

Rights Sold:

• English: Banipal Publishing

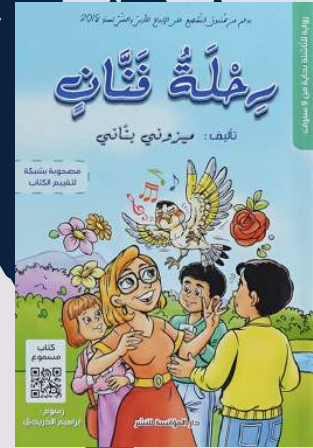
TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Hachette Antoine / Naufal

Original Title: Ma Tarkto Khalfy
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2020
ISBN: 9786144695432
Pages: 168



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award



GET TO KNOW
THE WINNING
TITLES

CHILDREN'S
LITERATURE

Discover more at:
zayedaward.ae

Mysterious and exciting middle-grade adventure story set in the desert

Ghassan Al Ghurairi had to accompany his old grandfather to the Leewy Museum in the middle of the desert. They are attending a ceremony honoring his grandfather, who spent his entire life in service of the desert.

As they head to their destination onboard an ancient train, Ghassan came across a conspiracy plotted by the criminal Aqrabawi and his bald friend—disguised as two elderly women—to poison the oasis's water supply. In place of the ecological life in the desert, they want to make way for an international resort and take over the place.

Although Ghassan doesn't mean to confront this conspiracy alone, he finds himself embroiled face-to-face with the criminals.

Fortunately for him, a girl appears at his side to help. Sophia Al-Adnani from Chiparazumpia is also heading with her grandfather and his great eco-friendly invention, the glass ball, to the Leewy Museum, where her grandfather is to be honored.

The two children are able to hold off the criminals initially, but not for long, as Aqrabawi and his friend soon reappear—this time deadest on revenge against the two children.

Ghassan and Sophia resist in the face of intimidation and threats, and, using clever intrigue, they manage to disarm the conspirators and escape seconds before the desert guards arrive and arrest the criminals.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Maria Dadouch is a children's author and screenwriter based between the United States and Syria, who has published over 50 books in the Arab world and the USA. She has previously received the Claire Carmichael Scholarship for Fiction, the Katara Prize for Arabic Novels, the Khalifa Award for Educational Creativity, the Shoman Award for Science Fiction, the Arab Publishers' Forum Prize, the Daybreak Award for Picture Books, and was featured on the Etisalat Prize shortlist. Dadouch's screenwriting includes the comedy series Maraya and the animation channel Spacetoon.

She also worked as editor-in-chief for the children's magazine Fulla Magazine. She completed her BA in Creative Writing at University of California, Los Angeles in 2016.



THE MYSTERY OF THE GLASS BALL

Maria Dadouch,
SYRIA

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)



TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Dar Al-Saqi

Original Title: Loghz al Kora al Zujajiya
Original language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2021
ISBN: 9786140321885
Pages: 104
Age Range: 9+ years

Rights Sold:

- German - Sujet Verlag

Imagery and metaphor work together to show children the value of belonging to a community

'An Artist's Journey' emphasises the values of loyalty and belonging to one's homeland, speaking to teens in an eloquent and beautiful language while raising contemporary issues of illegal immigration and problems faced by expatriates, as well as the value of art and cultural integration.

It's an interesting story told by an enlightened grandmother in the Hakawati style. She uses sound effects, masks and drawing tools while narrating the tale. Told from the perspective of small and colourful birds, the story is a miniature example of desired civic life in our Arab Islamic societies based on the values of justice, equality, respect for the supremacy of law, tolerance, love, cooperation, national identity, and defending the homeland.

This work encourages educators and pedagogists in general to teach in different ways, such as using art to encourage children to pursue knowledge, acquire life skills and develop their intelligence.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Professor of Education Sciences at the Higher Institute for Applied Studies in Humanities in Sbeitla, Tunisia. Bannani won the Regional Creativity Prize for Child Literature in Kasserine in 1999. He published two collections of short stories entitled Humma Al Ardh (The Fever of the Earth) in 1989, and Mawawil Aaed men Dhefat Al Nar (Mawawil of the One who Returned from the Shore of Fire) in 1996, in addition to a novel entitled Doroob Al Hawan (Paths of Humiliation). He also published a group of literary works for children and teens, including Sorah Laysat Kalswar (A Picture Like No Other), and Turab Al Watab (The soil of the homeland), Rehlat Fannan (An Artist's Journey) and others. Bannani works as a literary and artistic consultant at Al Moanasah Publishing House, and

has participated in establishing the branch of the Union of Tunisian Writers in Kasserine in 1997 and chaired it until 2017.



AN ARTIST'S JOURNEY

Mizouni Bannani,
TUNISIA

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Dar Al Mua'nasa Publishing

Original Title: Rehlat Fannan
Original language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2020
ISBN: 9789973985002
Pages: 144

Age Range: 9+ years

Rights Sold:

- English - Bookland Press
- French - Bookland Press

Inspired by the life of Palestinian artist Tamam Al-Akhal

The Lilac Girl is a magical realism children's tale, written as a tribute to the life and work of renowned Palestinian artist Tamam al-Akhal.

Tamam, the narrator, sets out one night, in her imagination, to visit her childhood home in the city of Jaffa, which she and her family were driven out of in 1948. When she knocks on the door, a girl answers and refuses to let Tamam in. After turning away in despair, Tamam decides to paint a picture of her long-lost home, using her tears that now fall in every colour, only to see that the colours of the house itself have begun running after her, stripping it bare of colour like a tree shorn of its autumn leaves.

The only colour that remains in Jaffa after Tamam's magical departure is a blend of the red of rage, the blue of despair, and the yellow of defeat, all of which combine into a lilac hue that tints Tamam's house and the city of Jaffa the long night through. (Banipal Magazine)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Ibtisam Barakat is a bilingual Palestinian-American poet, artist, translator, educator and the author of the critically acclaimed memoirs, *Tasting the Sky*, a *Palestinian Childhood* (FSG/2007) and *Balcony on the Moon*, *Coming of Age in Palestine* (FSG/Macmillan 2016). The two memoirs combined won more than thirty awards and honors, including the International Reading Association's best book award; the Middle East Council's best book award, and the Arab-American Museum's best book award. Her Arabic language books include *The Letter Ta' Escapes*, which won the

Euro-Mediterranean Anna Lindh Foundation's best book award for children's books in Arabic. Her most recent books include *The Jar that became a Galaxy*, which was the title for Palestine's national reading campaign in 2019, and *The Lilac Girl*.



THE LILAC GIRL

Ibtisam Barakat,
PALESTINE / USA

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)



TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Dar Al Mua'nasa Publishing

Original Title: *Rehlat Fannan*
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2020
ISBN: 9789938240757
Pages: 425

Age Range: 9+ years

Rights sold:

- English - Bookland Press
- French - Bookland Press
- German - Sujet Verlag
- Greek - Strange Days Books

An uplifting tale about the power of friendship, finding your place in the world, and realising your dreams

Tumbledown is a little demolition truck growing up in a loving family. His parents go to work every day demolishing buildings with their big wrecking balls. But soft-hearted Tumbledown doesn't like to destroy. He'd rather build things. He dreams of being a cement mixer.

When Tumbledown cries, his wrecking ball swings out and destroys everything it touches. His soft heart can't skip a beat without leaving a trail of destruction. At school other students laugh at him, but still he won't let go of his dream.

Tumbledown can never be a cement mixer, but maybe there are other ways, better suited to his nature. After some searching, the Wise Old Crane finds a new job for Tumbledown at a construction site using his wrecking ball to smooth out the cement on the ground. It's hard work but Tumbledown is finally happy, and he grows stronger with every passing day.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Al Kuwaiti writer and photographer born in 1989, Almutawaa attained a Bachelor's degree in Literature and Criticism from the College of Arabic Language at the University of Kuwait, minoring in Philosophy. He started his literary career as a poet in 2009, and has participated in many poetry events and festivals. In 2015, he began writing short stories and won first place in the "University Poet and Story Teller" category at the University of Kuwait. Almutawaa then moved on to novels, publishing his first, Turab, at the end

of 2017, and his children's novel, I Dream of Being A Concrete Mixer, in 2018.



I DREAM OF BEING A CONCRETE MIXER

Hussain Al Mutawaa,
KUWAIT

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)



GERMAN EDITION

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Al-Hadaek Group

Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2018
ISBN: 9786144391457
Pages: 40
Age Range: 4–8 years

Rights Sold:

- Albanian - Shkupi Publishing.
- English - Bookland Press
- French - Bookland Press
- German - Sujeet Verlag

A little dinosaur goes looking for his family and finds identity, belonging, and acceptance

An egg has hatched, and what comes out of it? A chicken? No. A turtle? No. It's a dinosaur. But where is his family?

In this picture book by educator and author Hessa Al Muhairi, with illustrations by Sura Ghazwan, a dinosaur sets out in search of animals like him. He finds plenty of animals, but none that look the same . . . until he meets the giraffe. This story teaches children about accepting differences using carefully crafted language.

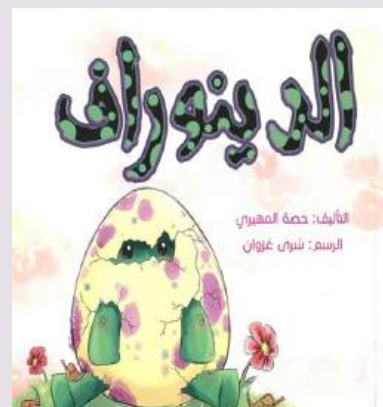


ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Hessa Al Muhairi holds a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education and two master's degrees from Deakin University in Australia, one in Science in Education Management and the other in Policy. She has been working as a nursery teacher since her graduation. Al Muhairi participated in numerous children's literature workshops and managed a number of training programs. She has two published books for children: *Whose Footprints are These?* and *The Dinoraf*.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR:

Iraqi children's stories writer and illustrator Sura Ghazwan holds a bachelor's degree in English Translation. She was born in 1989 and has been working as a professional book illustrator and comic artist for several years. She specializes in children's book illustrations, cartoon and games drawings, and works as a freelancer for a number of magazines, institutions, publications and companies in UAE, Iraq, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Her work has been recognised in several exhibitions and awards.



THE DINORAF

Hessa Al Muhairi,
UAE

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)



ENGLISH / ITALIAN / ARABIC
EDITION

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:

Dar Al Mua'nasa Publishing

Original Title: *Rehlat Fannan*

Original Language: Arabic

Publication Date: 2020

ISBN: 9789938240757

Pages: 425

Age Range: 9+ years

Rights Sold:

- English, French, Italian - Marcos y Marcos

Encourages children to think independently through innovation and creativity

The main character is a young girl named Hatless who lives in the City of Hats. Here, all of the people are born with hats that cover their heads and faces. The world inside of their hats is dark, silent, and odorless.

Hatless feels trapped underneath her own hat, and one day she takes it off. As she takes in the beauty of her surroundings, the other inhabitants of the city ostracize her. It is not long before they ask her to leave.

Rather than giving up or getting angry, Hatless feels sad for her friends and neighbors who are afraid to experience the world outside of their hats. She comes up with an ingenious solution: if she can stay, she will wear a hat as long it is one she makes herself. The people of the City of Hats agree, so Hatless weaves a hat that covers her head but does not prevent her from seeing the outside world. She offers to loan the hat to the others.

One by one, they try it on and are enchanted by the beautiful world around them. The people celebrate by tossing their old hats in the air.

Buti's language is eloquent and clear. She strikes a skilled narrative balance between revealing Hatless's inner thoughts and letting the story unfold through her interactions with other characters.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Lateefa Buti is a Kuwaiti author specialized in children's literature. Her portfolio includes from stand-alone novels, theatrical works, publications in magazines and periodicals, as well as works in radio and television. She has several independently published works including *The Mermaid* and *My Country* and *Ininkayo*, in addition to theatrical acts such as *Juha's Gate* and *Salma the Princess of the Sea*.

Buti is also a regular contributor to the well-known magazine *Al Arabi Al Sagheer* and worked on a number of radio-based programs and series targeting adolescents. He works in television were mainly with *Al Jazeera Children*

Channel and *Al Baraem Channel*, focusing on the cultural heritage and folklore of the Arab region.



HATLESS

Lateefa Buti,
KUWAIT

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)



FRENCH EDITION

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Seedan Media

Original Title: *Bila Qubba'ah*
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2015
ISBN: 9789996653186
Pages: 32

Age Range: 6–9 years

Rights Sold:

- English - Darf Publishers
- French - Bookland Press
- German - Sujet Verlag

A blind teenager in Lebanon finds strength and friendship among an unlikely group

Growing up in a small Lebanese village, Bassim's blindness limits his opportunities, despite his family's love and support.

So at thirteen years old, Bassim leaves his village to join the Institute for the Blind in a Beirut suburb. There, he comes alive and discovers talents he didn't know he had.

Thanks to his newly developed self-confidence, Bassim wins a short story competition sponsored by the Ministry of Education and is hired to work at the Institute for the Blind.

At the Institute, Bassim, a Sunni Muslim, forms a strong friendship with George, a Christian. Cooperation and collective support are central to the success of each student at the Institute and overcome religious differences.

The Boy Who Saw the Color of Air is also a book about Lebanon and its treatment of people with disabilities as well as the unique religious and cultural environment of Beirut.

Wazen's lucid language and the linear structure he employs result in a coherent and easy-to-read narrative. The Boy Who Saw the Color of Air is an important contribution to a literature in which people with disabilities are underrepresented. In addition to offering a story of empowerment and friendship, this book also aims to educate readers about people with disabilities and shed light on the indispensable roles played by institutions like the Institute.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Abdo Wazen was born in Beirut, Lebanon in 1957. In addition to writing poetry and novels, he's a French-to-Arabic translator and the well-known culture editor of Al-Hayat newspaper.

His first collection of poems, *The Locked Forest*, was published in 1982. Since then, Wazen has published a number of other poetry collections, and a memoir, *An Open Heart*, after he had major heart surgery in 2010. The Lebanese Ministry of Interior seized copies of his 1993 book, *The Garden of Sensation* on accusations of licentiousness. He's translated the poetry of Jacques Prevert and Na-

dia Twueni into Arabic. In 2005, he received the Culture Journalism Award from the Dubai Press Club.



THE BOY WHO SAW THE COLOR OF AIR

Abdo Wazen,
LEBANON

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)



ENGLISH EDITION



UKRAINIAN

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc

Original Title: Al-Fata al-ladhi Absara Lawna al-Hawa'
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2011
ISBN: 9786140103412
Pages: 119

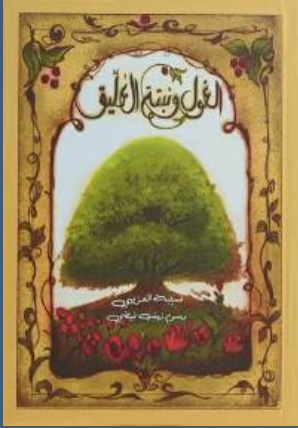
Age Range: Teen

Rights Sold:

- English - Bookland Press
- French - Bookland Press
- Ukrainian - Anetta Antonenko Publishers



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award



GET TO KNOW
THE SHORTLIST

CHILDREN'S
LITERATURE

Discover more at:
zayedaward.ae

A collection of engaging and educational poetry for children about the objects around them

These poetic tales for children address things around us such as the wall, the stone, the ear, the river, and others, humanize them, and present them as free verse poetry. It also includes an audio CD containing song versions of the tales, all of which are loaded with pedagogical, aesthetic, and humanitarian messages.

The importance of "A Laughing Sun" stems from its adoption of the poetic tale in most poems. It carries implications for reverence of science, arts, freedom, and human diversity, and highlights the beauty of nature and the protection of the environment. The poems are replete with a sense of cheerfulness and humor, and the collection focuses on the imagination and stimulates both scientific and creative thinking.



A LAUGHING SUN

Bayan Al Safadi,
SYRIA

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Born in Syria in 1956, Bayan Al Safadi holds a BA in Arabic Language and Arts and a diploma in management. His first work for children was publishing in "Osama" magazine when he was just 20 years old. He's also written award-winning children's songs, and his texts are used in elementary school curricula across the Arab world. He's published 14 books for children and 7 books for adults, including poetry and academic works.



TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Dar Al Banan

Original Title: Shams Tadhak
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2020
ISBN: 9786144550632
Pages: 23

World rights available

A young girl overcomes poverty, disability, and loss by finding optimism and strength

The character of the novel "My Date with the Light" was born with a rare disease that gradually eliminates her sense of sight. From an early age, she realized that she was in a struggle with time and loss. Who said that this little girl in that remote village between its harsh mountains and deep valleys will one day be able to turn her date with darkness into a date with light, insight, and hope?

She left her village in search of scientific horizons and dreamy expanses. Twenty years later, she decided to return to her hometown, believing in her role in assisting the children of her village.

In her cabin, between the night silence and train whistles, she begins to tell her life story so we can learn about the details of her childhood, her handicap, her family, her village that languishes in poverty and destitution... To witness how she was finally able to make her way towards achieving her dream with rare courage, and touch the light of success, despite losing sight.

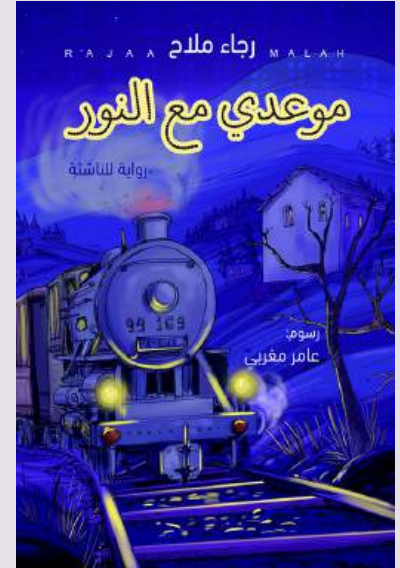


ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

An architect from Morocco, Raja Malah holds a master's degree in city planning from the University of Paris X - France. Besides her work as an architect in Dubai, she writes for teenagers and children.

Her most important books include Hadyaty La Eed Miladak (My gift for your birthday), Ajnehat Taaeraty (The wings of my plane), and Hadyqat Al Zomorrod (The Emerald Garden). Two of her books have been translated into French: Antologia Al Shaer Al Imarati Al Moaaser

(Ontology of contemporary Emirati poetry) and Ayna Kano Yaktoboon (Where were they writing).



MY DATE WITH THE LIGHT

Raja Malah,
MOROCCO

[CLICK FOR MORE INFO](#)

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Dar Al Moualef and Maalem

Original Title: Maw'idi maa al Noor

Original Language: Arabic

Publication Date: 2022

ISBN: 9786144562857

Pages: 107

Age Range: 9-12 years

Rights Sold:

• French - Bookland Press

2021 CHILDREN'S LITERATURE SHORTLIST



THE EMERALD GARDEN

Raja Malah, MOROCCO

A child's memory of his grandmother's garden turns into a magical experience.

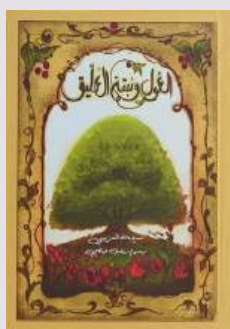
Rights sold:

- English - Bookland Press
- French - Bookland Press

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Dar Al Moualef and Maalem

Original Title: Hadyqat Al Zomorrod
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2019
ISBN: 9786146542284
Pages: 40
Age Range: 10+ years



THE BEAST AND THE BLACKBERRY

Naseeba Alozaibi, UAE

Appearances are deceiving, in this story about a beast who is more than he appears to be.

Rights Sold:

- English - Bookland Press

TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:
Dar Ashjar Publishing and
Distribution

Original Title: Al Ghoool wa Nabtat Al Olayq
Original Language: Arabic
Publication Date: 2019
ISBN: 9789948362708
Pages: 156
Age Range: 10+ years



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award

CELEBRATING
ARAB
WRITING



Discover more at:
zayedaward.ae