

[PDF] Cairo: The City Victorious

MAX RODENBECK - pdf download free book



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Author: MAX RODENBECK
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Description:

Every great city deserves a book like this one: a sweeping chronicle by an author whose motives mix passion and bewilderment. Over the course of four and a half millennia, Cairo has eluded all who would try to pin it down, reinventing itself time and again: "It has survived countless invasions, booms and busts, famines, plagues, and calamities." Author Max Rodenbeck, a correspondent for the *Economist*, moved to Cairo as a 2 year old, and has spent a good portion of his professional life working there. He finds himself repulsed by the crowds and pollution of a late 20th-century megacity, yet drawn by Cairo's ageless vibrancy. *Cairo: The City Victorious* combines wide-ranging history and first-person travelogue in an unconventional narrative that bounces easily from the

present to the past and back again. ("If the story were to loop and tangle and digress," he writes, "well, that too would be in the character of Cairo.") Immersed in Rodenbeck's prose, readers will find themselves feeling at home as they discover (or rediscover) this unique place, its pyramids, and its people. --*John J. Miller* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Publishers Weekly From the awesome artistic trove of its 5000-year-old civilization to the high-rise buildings that dominate the skyline today, Cairo is evoked in all its dizzying variety in this rich, surprisingly concise history. Rodenbeck, the Economist's Middle East correspondent, has lived in Cairo since childhood and is not shy to admit that he has, on occasion, fallen "out of love" with his chaotic, noisy adopted home?the largest city in Africa, the Mediterranean and the Islamic world. He's especially dismayed at the city's current past-obliterating rush toward the trappings of global capitalism. But he notes, with characteristic wryness, that "not one generation in Cairo's five millennia of incarnations had failed to whine about decline." Eleven loosely chronological chapters fuse history with a contemporary travelogue. These include looks at Cairo's most ancient known civilization, On (credited with creating the modern-day solar calendar), of which virtually nothing remains today; medieval Cairo, "a prosperous and astonishingly cosmopolitan trading society" boasting a legal system far more humanistic than its European counterparts; and British-occupied Victorian-era Cairo, a chic stop for tourist hordes. He also examines the influence of 20th-century rulers, from King Farouk's corrupt reign to Anwar Sadat's nationalistic (and decidedly not pan-Arab) vision. Finally, Rodenbeck explores Cairo's current identity crisis and flirtation with Islamic fundamentalism: even in this most tolerant and bawdy of cities (it is, after all, the "belly-dancing capital of the world"), women are likely to don "retro seventh century" robes for the streets. Rodenbeck's tour brings this and other such quintessential Cairene paradoxes into rare focus. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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