

*Do you know
these faces?*



*Come, hear their
words at the EAO
Poetry Reading
August 8.*

Egyptian American Report



P.O. Box 5194
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274
Tel. (310) 356-3500

Email: info@EAOUS.com Web: www.eaous.com

July 2010

Unaware and Unheard

The Naquib's Daughter is a historical novel with strong implications and intellectual impact. The first pages powerfully reflect the helplessness of the Mamlukes facing the French invading forces arriving near Cairo. One gets the clear impression that the outcome of the battle outside Cairo is never in doubt. The invading force is clearly superior to anything the Mamluke rulers of Egypt can put together. Serageldin skillfully and powerfully conveys the sense of terror and the impending doom to fall on Cairo and its inhabitants. The reader gets no indication of what the Egyptian population can do. They cannot do anything. They have been ruled by the Mamlukes for hundreds of years at this point. Their destiny has not been under their control for a long time. These are not good excuses, but such was the state of affairs at that time.

We, the first generation "EAOians," grew up in the age of Gamal Abdel Nasser, an Egyptian who finally took over the rule of Egypt after centuries of rule by foreigners of one kind or another. Even though we heard about what the British soldiers used to do before our time, we never physically experienced the presence of foreign forces entertaining themselves in our midst, as the novel indicates the French forces were inevitably going to do in the late 18th century Egypt. We were never faced with a foreign power taxing our income for one or another arbitrary reason, or a British officer heading the police force of a city and beating

Continued on page 4

In this issue:

"Unaware and Unheard"	by Yahya Sanadidi	p. 1
"Young Talent"	by Faiza Shereen	p. 2
"New Start" a poem	by Taryn Bayar	p. 2
Poetry Reading	Annoucement	p. 3
"Opinions"	Mamdouh Fayek	p. 3
Egyptian Medical	Dictionary	p. 4
Announcements		p. 5

Young Talent

Many talents remain unnoticed for a host of reasons: the gifted are too busy to nurture their gifts; the artists' sensibility keeps them introverted; the community does not notice either because it does not care or it does not understand. This writer is sure that the Egyptian-American community harbors many and varied talents. *The EAO Report* is committed to discovering and reporting on those hidden treasures. So, if you are--or know of--someone who possesses special skills, please let us know.

Luckily the work of one young talented Egyptian-American came to my attention, and I would like to introduce her to you. This young teenager has started writing poetry since she was twelve. The urge to scribble is one I'm familiar with, and it gives me real pleasure to present the work of Taryn El Bayar. Taryn is going to be 15 in October. Perhaps the discipline of Martial Arts taught Taryn the rigor of language; having earned a black belt in karate, she must know a lot about balance and focus! I read a few of Taryn's poems, and I find that they reveal a nuanced sensibility and, every now and then, a clever expression or a sharp ear for rhythm and balance. In a poem on best friends, for example, Taryn cleverly captures all her themes—friendship, affectionate support, sharing, giving—in one extended metaphor: Speaking of the "best friend, she says:

“She’s like an angel
Who shares her wings
To help me fly.”

Her sense of rhythm and balance peak in the following lines from a poem entitled “Fight for What’s Right”:

“Not only children cry,
Not only adults die,
We cannot all fall apart;
We cannot lose the beating of one heart.”

The EAO hopes that Taryn will read one of her poems at our Poetry Reading event in August.

--Faiza Shereen

(Information on the Poetry Reading on page 3)

New Start

*A poem by black belt martial arts
artist*

Taryn El Bayar

El Camino High School

Things are falling apart;
I need to pick up the pieces.
It's time for a new start,
Time to write a new thesis.

Don't begin where you left off,
Find some other place
From a time when you were happy;
Start with a smile upon your face.

Things could be better,
But things could be worse.
I won't let it happen;
I can't let my life go in reverse.

Times may possibly change,
But I won't be able to wait
For these things to rearrange.
It's just gonna be late.

The pieces remain missing;
Things are still falling apart.
I'm done waiting and wishing;
Now will be my new start.



Opinions:

The EAO Report will publish members' opinions on topics of relevance for discussion and debate. This issue's "opinion" discusses the ancient theme of "tradition versus reason" or "faith versus science" or "the heart versus the mind." Philosophers have grappled with the theme throughout the ages, and more particularly, perhaps, since the Enlightenment (18th Century Europe). There are many arguments out there from the other end of the spectrum, and we invite you to send us your responses. Many would argue the two sides of the apparent conflict are not at all exclusive of each other—indeed, there is a whole history of thought suggesting that these are "false dichotomies." Let us hear your thoughts.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Scientists have discovered that there are as many neurons in our three-pound human brain as there are stars in our Milky Way galaxy alone. Our galaxy is one out of one hundred billion galaxies, each of which includes one hundred billion stars and planets. All of that accounts for only 4.3% of this 13.7 billion-year old universe. Another 20.7% is dark matter and 75% is dark energy. Scientists are yet to discover what these are. Surely, and unstoppably, they are hard at work. By 2013, scientists will be working on a telescope that can possibly detect other universes to prove the multi-universe theory.

As scientists continue to discover and explain the incredible mysteries of the universe, the struggle to reconcile these facts with the traditional ancient faiths that depend on the supernatural seems to be getting harder and harder. Explaining the traditional forms and the customs of one culture to another is also becoming extremely difficult, particularly when these customs vary in their sub forms. Sometimes these customs seem contradictory or downright bizarre. And in some instances they are even offensive to others in the same society.

To illustrate, let's consider the overwhelmingly used code: the *hijab*, particularly in present-day Egypt.

Continued on page 5



*We invite you to listen to the rhythms of thought
as they soar in Arabic and in English*

At our next event

August 8, 2010

*The Anaheim Hills Golf Course
6501 E. Nohl Ranch Road
Anaheim Hills, California 92807*

POETRY READING

Starting at 2:00 p.m.

~ ~ ~ ~

A 5-star brunch is served from 11:00 to 2:00 for those who wish to join for a socializing hour or two preceding the poetry reading.

Brunch cost: \$30 per person

No cost to attend ONLY the poetry reading

Please RSVP by phone:

Amany: [424 234 1326](tel:4242341326)

Faiza: [909 267 0037](tel:9092670037)

By e-mail:

faiwahshe@yahoo.com

Or confirm on FACEBOOK

It's a sign of well-being to laugh at oneself ...



Egyptian Medical Dictionary

Us in Egypt have the lowest Stress rate because we do not take medical terminology seriously, because you are going to die anyway, and so . . . live your life outrageously and eat and drink till you cannot lift your own mug any more!

Definitions

Artery.....	The study of paintings
Bacteria.....	Back door to cafeteria
Barium.....	What doctors do when patients die
Benign.....	What you be, after you be eight
Caesarean Section.....	A neighborhood in Rome
Cat scan.....	Searching for Kitty
Cauterize.....	Made eye contact with her
Colic.....	A sheep dog
Coma.....	A punctuation mark
Dilate.....	To live long
Enema.....	Not a friend
Fester.....	Quicker than someone else
Fibula.....	A small lie
Impotent.....	Distinguished, well-known
Labor Pain.....	Getting hurt at work
Medical Staff.....	A Doctor's cane
Morbid.....	A higher offer
Nitrates.....	Cheaper than day rates
Node.....	I knew it
Outpatient.....	A person who has fainted
Pelvis.....	Second cousin to Elvis
Post Operative.....	A letter carrier
Recovery Room.....	Place to do upholstery
Rectum.....	Nearly killed him
Secretion.....	Hiding something
Seizure.....	Roman emperor
Tablet.....	A small table
Terminal Illness.....	Getting sick at the airport
Tumor.....	One plus one more
Urine.....	Opposite of you're out

Courtesy Nabila Badawy

Continued from page 1

an Egyptian subject accused of any crime.

The Naquib's Daughter makes us face the indignities suffered by our ancestors during the French occupation--indignities that seem extremely difficult, if not impossible to live with.

For me, the question that reading this book evoked is how can a people let their guard down in such a manner, and for so very long (at that point, perhaps over 1500 years)?

Allowing their affairs to be in the hand of foreigners, and their civilization woefully behind the times. They have become defenseless against any nation that decides to invade Egypt and control it for its own interest.

While Egypt has been ruled nominally by Egyptians since 1952, it is still the case that its civilization (economic, political, military, cultural, and in almost any other respect), is far behind the times, and trails behind the pace of development in various parts of the world, in parts of Asia and South America, for instance.

When visiting Egypt and talking to our families and friends there, and actually when talking to Egyptians anywhere, often one senses a general disconnection from Egypt.

There is some discomfort at the lack of a political system, and there is lament at the sorry state of transportation, education and health services. Have the Egyptians of the last few thousand years displayed similar disconnection? if so, then the natural result would be falling behind the rest of the world in sophistication, wealth, strength, and therefore security.

In the EAO, we have built an organization and a distinguished community that is tied together with caring friendships. Can this organization and community participate and address the issues facing the Egyptian people, including our families and friends, in our country of origin? Are we concerned about catching up with the rest of the world and starting to build a civilization that can coexist with dignity among the current and future nations of the world? Is Egypt as defenseless today as it was in 1798 when it was invaded by the French? Should we feel insecure and sleepless, fearing an invasion and rule by foreign interests? What can we do to contribute? Can we at least discuss this matter along with our other Egyptian cultural interests in the EAO?

--Yahya El Sanadidi

Other sub forms of the *hijab* also exist: the *neqab*, where only the eyes are seen, and the *burka*, where even the eyes are screened-off. The equivalent code for men—growing beards and sometimes shaving moustaches—is not uncommon in Egypt today as well. While all these choices must be respectfully considered as the individual's free expression of belief, they may also, in some instances, become superficial expressions of a veneer of religious belief. What I am arguing for here is that such display of religiousness may not reflect deep religious values in all cases. Something that may be worth considering in this light is that there are basic values of good and evil in the human consciousness that

have existed from the beginning of evolution in our most basic cell-form. They manifest themselves in our code of behavior in dealing with ourselves and others in society. A keenly observant person can observe such discipline in the conduct of soldier ants and working bees. Such basic values are in every faith with form and style variations based on environmental situations and other inherited customs determined by the social context in which the faith evolves.

The point this argument makes is that it is time we pay more attention to scientific facts and reason. This is by no means to suggest respecting tradition and culture any less. It just calls for a genuine and deep approach, a discriminating mindset that rejects hypocrisy and the inconsistencies and self-deception that often result from trying to reconcile tradition and reason. Habitual practices, spiritual or psychological, are soothing to most people. Coupled with childhood upbringing and community support, tradition is always comforting and assures stability. Yet, it is just as important, if not more so, to use the three-pound brain on top of our shoulders as efficiently as possible for it is such a huge machine most of which is being wasted in many cases.

--Mamdouh Fayek

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- We put out a call in our last issue for talented actors and others interested in theater. Please contact us at: faiwahshe@yahoo.com or post your interest on FACEBOOK.
- The board has approved inviting sponsorship for our EAO Report and our FACEBOOK. Please contact us for details on getting space on our publications.
- We urge you to check out our FACEBOOK. A discussion thread was started, events are announced, friends of the EAO post their thoughts.
- Do you read your e-mail? We'd love to hear from you!