

We Live in Cairo

O'Neill Theater Center

Dramaturgy Packet

Compiled by Kristopher Karcher

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What's the Sitch?: Here's what's been happening in Egypt for the last few years.

December 17, 2010: 26 year-old college graduate Mohamed Bouazizi, sets himself on fire after police confiscate his fruit and vegetable cart, officially starting what is known as "The Arab Spring," a term referring to the wave of uprisings in the Middle East starting in late 2010 and early 2011. Bouazizi's protests spark uprisings from Morocco to Syria to Oman and everywhere in between, including Egypt.

January 25, 2011: On Egypt's National Police Day, thousands of Egyptians protest in Alexandria, and thousands more occupy Tahrir Square in Cairo in protest against the oppression, greed, and corruption of the Egyptian government. Though the main concern for many protesters, others protest for a fair minimum wage, the end of the constant state of emergency imposed on the country, a term limit, and other injustices. Though many of the protests are initially peaceful, the police combat the protesters with tear gas and water cannons protesters then defend themselves by throwing stones at police.



January 26-27, 2011: More protests are held in the square and all across Egypt while others plan for the "Day of Rage." On the 26th, medical personnel in the Egyptian city of Suez report that 55 protesters and 15 police officers have been injured. Deaths are also reported throughout these two days, including one of a 17-year-old boy in northern Sinai.

January 28 2011: "The Day of Rage." Hundreds of thousands protest in public squares across Egypt, calling for the removal of President Hosni Mubarak from office. The protests become deadly, causing 11 casualties in Suez and 1,030 injuries nationwide. Though a curfew is set, riots continue throughout the night as many protesters vandalize and/or destroy many government buildings, even lighting some ablaze. The Egyptian government shuts down the Internet and deploys military forces in many major cities to assist police.

January 29-31, 2011: Riots and protests continue as the military tries to control the cities.

February 1, 2011: Hundreds of thousands (over a million by some reports) of people march in and around Tahrir Square. Egyptian officials protect Mubarak's presidential palace with barbed wire. That evening, Mubarak announces he does not plan to run for reelection in the following September, but protesters continue to demand his immediate impeachment. UN Human Rights Chief Navi Pillay reports more than 300 deaths and 3,000 injuries have been sustained since protests began (though this statistic was never confirmed).

February 2, 2011: The National Democratic Party of Egypt (NDP), and others come to Tahrir Square to show support for Mubarak by throwing Molotov cocktails, stones, and other firebombs onto protesters. Riders on camels and horses lead a charge of hired thugs and plainclothes police officers in an attempt to empty Tahrir Square by force.

February 3, 2011: Death tolls continue to rise and, with banks closed across the nation, many Egyptians are left poor and starving. Mubarak reports that he no longer wants to be in power, but stepping down would throw Egypt into further chaos. The Prosecutor General of the time bans many former government officials from leaving the country and freezes some of their bank accounts.



February 4, 2011: Many tanks take the streets around Cairo and Tahrir Square. Two million Egyptians flood the Square for Friday prayer, protected by a “human chain” of other protesters Ahmad Mohamed Mahmoud dies of wounds sustained on January 28 , becoming the first journalist to lose his life while covering the protests.

February 5, 2011: Pro-Mubarak activists fire more bullets into the square as an army general demands the protesters dismantle their barricades. In the border city of Rafa a grenade is tossed into an empty church and a public library is set on fire.

February 6, 2011: The same protesters who organized the “Friday of Anger” and “March of Millions” call for a “Sunday of Martyrs.” Egyptian Christians hold mass in Tahrir Square as Muslim protesters form a human chain around them.

February 7, 2011: A funeral is held for Ahmad Mohamed Mahmoud as protesters demand an investigation into the cause of his death. Ahmad’s newspaper “Al-Ahram” declares the company’s support for the protestors. Hundreds of citizens attack a police station in Khargah, resulting in 11 deaths and more than 70 injuries.

February 8, 2011: More than one million people gather in Tahrir square during the “Day of Love” demonstration. More than one thousand citizens protest at parliament, the Shura Council, and the Council of Ministers, later sleeping in front of those buildings. As a move toward ending the protests and promising reform, the "Egyptian government begins to free prisoners who have completed at least three-fourths of their sentence; over the coming weeks, over one thousand will be released."

February 9, 2011: More protesters move from Tahrir Square to the parliament buildings, putting up a sign that reads “Closed until the fall of the regime.” Labor unions across the country stage general strikes, demanding higher wages and better treatment. Violence erupts at different police stations and the NDP party building and the building is destroyed in the clashes. Protesters set the governor’s Port Said office on fire.

February 10, 2011: General Hassan al-Roueini, the military commander of the Cairo area, informs protesters in Tahrir Square that “All of [their] demands would be met today .” As a result, many protesters expect Mubarak to step down and they begin discussing possibilities of future leaders.

February 11, 2011: By morning, when Mubarak has still not stepped down, massive protests erupt all over Egypt. After 18 days, more than 800 protesters have been killed. Finally, Mubarak resigns from his post, relinquishing power to Egypt’s armed forces. The Vice President, making the resignation statement, also resigns, leaving his power to the Supreme Council of the armed forces.

February 14, 2011: The military reports a six-month plan to draft a new constitution and hold elections for parliamentary and presidential elections, and promises to relinquish their power as soon as those newly elected officials are in place.

February 25, 2011: New protests arise demanding a faster transition to a democratic government, but they are ineffective and immediately defeated by security forces.



March 1, 2011: The military sets a March 19 date for voting on constitutional amendments. Egyptians argue that the military’s rapid timeline suits the already-organized Muslim Brotherhood and Mubarak’s former ruling party, and that more time is needed for political life to develop after decades of oppression.

March 9, 2011: After a violent clearing of protesters from Tahrir square, many are arrested. 18 women are taken into custody. 17 of those women are detained for four days and subjected to beatings, electric shocks, strip searches and “Virginity Tests.” These tests are later charged as rape then dropped to sexual assault. Ramy Essam, a young singer who wrote protest songs in Tahrir Square is also arrested by the security forces. Around 150 of the men and women protesting are ultimately tried and convicted in military courts and sent to military prisons.

March 19, 2011: Egypt’s holds its first vote since the uprising: a referendum on the constitutional amendments. Military rulers capitalize on the "yes" vote and release a 62-article declaration that goes beyond the original mandate, seizing full executive and legislative authority.

March 23, 2011: The military-backed government passes a law criminalizing protests and strikes. Egyptians protest.

August 3, 2011: Mubarak's trial. Outside the first of many trials, pro-Mubarak supporters and opposition forces violently clash, throwing rocks at each other.

October 9, 2011: After the burning of a church in late September—the third since the uprising—Christian protesters begin their third sit-in outside the state television headquarters. The military's response shocks the nation: armored vehicles ramp onto sidewalks, chasing and crushing civilians and civilians quickly come under fire by armed troops. It is the first time the military has used lethal force so publicly. Twenty-seven protesters are killed, including a young man, Mina Daniel, who becomes a celebrated martyr.

November 19, 2011: Over the next five days, dozens die and hundreds are injured in clashes between protesters and security forces outside the Interior Ministry in Mohamed Mahmoud Street.

November 28, 2011-Feb 15, 2012: Egypt votes in parliamentary elections, a six-week process that results in an overwhelming victory for Islamist parties. In the lower house, the Muslim Brotherhood wins the majority of seats, with the ultraconservative Salafis taking another quarter, putting religious groups in control of the parliament. In the upper house, Islamists take nearly 90 percent of the seats.



May 23-24, 2012: In the first round of presidential elections, the candidates of the Muslim Brotherhood and the military emerge at the top. Protesters again gather in Tahrir Square, many demanding the disenfranchisement of Mubarak-era officials, including the military-linked candidate.

June 2, 2012: Former president Hosni Mubarak is sentenced to life imprisonment.

June 15, 2012: The day before the presidential runoff election, the military, acting on a ruling by the Supreme Court, shuts down the parliament. It also awards itself sweeping new powers, including control over the national budget and the power to issue laws — effectively diluting the power of the president, which by this time appears likely to be Mohamed Morsi, the Muslim Brotherhood candidate, whom the military opposes.

June 24, 2012: By the slimmest of margins, Mohamed Morsi officially wins the runoff to become Egypt's first freely elected president.

June 30, 2012: Upon inauguration, Morsi pledges, as elected president and “leader of the revolution,” to “complete the revolutionary course” and reclaim presidential powers from the military council that has ruled since Mubarak’s overthrow.

August 12, 2012: Morsi orders the retirement of the top Mubarak-era leadership of the military.

November 22, 2012: Morsi issues a highly controversial declaration, freeing his decrees from judicial challenge. The authoritarian move outrages the judiciary and stokes further public anger.

November 29, 2012: Egyptian government approves a draft of the constitution.

December 4, 2012: More than 100,000 protest the draft constitution and Morsi’s new powers, chanting “Leave! Leave!” The police fire tear gas, but allow the crowd to surge to the palace walls. The next day, Islamists attack an anti-Morsi sit-in, sparking street battles that leave at least 10 dead.

December 6, 2012: Muslim Brotherhood regional offices are set alight throughout the Nile Delta provinces.

December 15-22, 2012: In the two-round referendum, Egyptians approve the constitution, with 63.8 percent voting in favor. Voter turnout is low.

December 29, 2012 – The Egyptian Central Bank announces that foreign reserves—drained from \$36 billion in 2010 to \$15 billion\$15 billion have fallen to a "critical minimum" and tries to stop a sharp slide in the value of the Egyptian pound. At this point in time, the Egyptian pound stands at just over 7 to the dollar, compared to 5.5 to the dollar in 2010.



January 25, 2013 – Hundreds of thousands hold protests against Morsi on the two-year anniversary of the start of the revolt against Mubarak, and clashes erupt across Egypt. More than 50 people are killed in the month of January. Army chief Abdul Fattah al-Sisi warns that political strife is pushing the state to the brink of collapse.

Feb – March 2013 – Protests rage in Port Said and other Egyptian cities, with dozens of more protesters dying in clashes.

April 7, 2013 – Christians hold a funeral/protest for martyrs at the Coptic Orthodox Church and are attacked by a Muslim mob.

May 7, 2013 – Morsi reshuffles his Cabinet. Officials say the changes aim to finalize long-stalled negotiations with the International Monetary Fund for a crucial \$4.8 billion loan, which requires reductions to fuel and food subsidies.

June 23, 2013 – A mob beats four Egyptian Shiites to death in a village on the edge of Cairo.

June 30, 2013 – Millions of Egyptians demonstrate, calling for Morsi to step down. Eight people are killed in clashes outside the Muslim Brotherhood's Cairo headquarters.



July 1, 2013 – Large-scale demonstrations continue, and Egypt's powerful military gives the two sides 48 hours to resolve their disputes before imposing its own solution.

July 2, 2013 –Military officials state that if no agreement is reached, they will replace Morsi with an interim administration, cancel the Islamist-based constitution, and call elections in a year.

July 3, 2013 – Morsi and opponents fail in coming to an agreement. Military ousts Morsi, suspends constitution, and imposes interim technocrat government.

July 5 and 8, 2013: A series of clashes outside the Republican Guard headquarters leaves dozens of Morsi supporters dead.

July 24, 2013: Army Chief Abdul Fattah al-Sisi calls on the public to “confront terrorism.”

August 14, 2013: The Rabaa Massacre. Early in the morning, Egyptian police commit one of the bloodiest massacres in recent history. One estimate by the Human Rights Watch counts close to 1,000 Morsi supporters killed at Rabaa al-Adawiya mosque alone.

September 1, 2013: Morsi is put to trial for inciting the killing of protesters while he was president.

October 6, 2013: On a day of pro-military parades and state commemorations of the 1973 October War, pro-Morsi marchers are confronted by security forces in Cairo, leaving at least 50 protesters dead. The following day sees deadly attacks against security and military forces by militants outside Cairo. In the coming months, Morsi supporters continue to protest, often meeting with lethal force. University campuses become nuclei of protest and clashes escalate, leaving several students dead as police repeatedly storm campus grounds.

November 24, 2013: A new anti-protest law is adopted, ostensibly in the name of human rights. Prominent activists are imprisoned after protesting the ban.

December 25, 2013: A day after a bomb targets a provincial security directorate and kills 16, the military government declares the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization and blames the group for recent bombings and attacks, ignoring announcements by Sinai-based militants that they are responsible. Bomb attacks in Cairo and elsewhere target Egypt's security apparatus over the next month.

January 18, 2014: With strong opposition from leading protest movements and the announced boycott by the Muslim Brotherhood's anti-coup alliance, less than 40 percent of the electorate head to the polls and endorse the amended constitution, which curtails religious verbiage and safeguards the military's autonomy.

January 29, 2014: The military's suppression of human rights and its crackdown on freedom of expression intensifies as prosecutors charge 20 journalists with aiding a terrorist organization and endangering national security.

May 29, 2014: Former army chief Abdul Fattah al-Sisi wins presidential election.

June 24, 2014: Three al-Jazeera journalists are jailed after being found guilty of spreading false news and supporting the banned Muslim Brotherhood. They are freed in February 2015.

November 2014: Sinai-based armed group Ansar Beit al-Maqdis pledges allegiance to extreme Islamic State movement, which controls parts of Syria and Iraq.

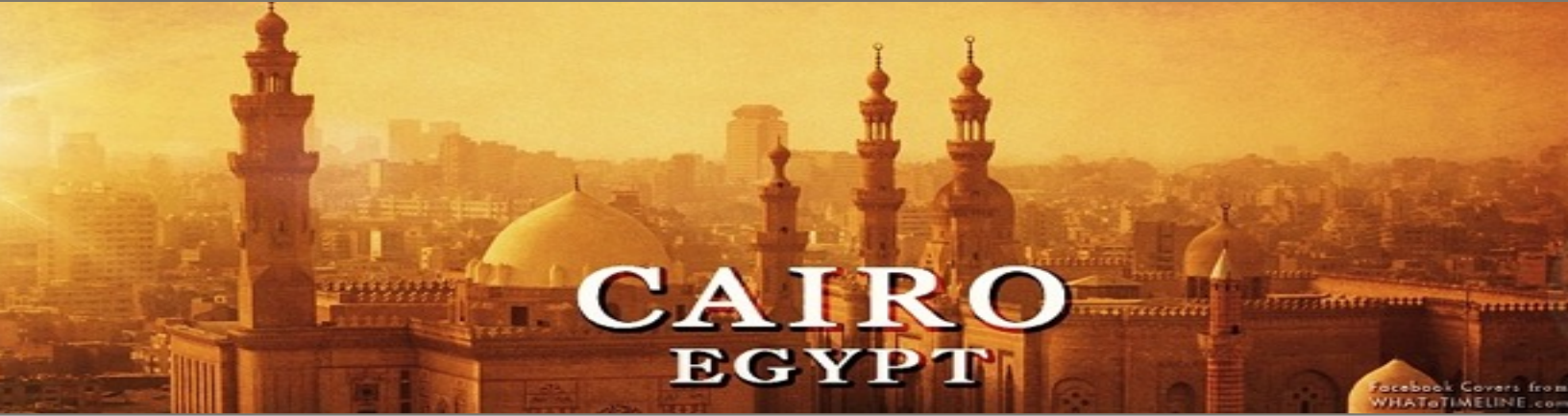
January 25, 2015: Riots in remembrance of the Egyptian revolution result in 18 deaths.

February 16, 2015: Egyptian aircrafts bomb Islamic State positions in eastern Libya after an extremist group releases video showing the apparent killing of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians. Egypt seeks UN mandate to sanction international intervention in Libya.

May 20, 2015: Ousted President Morsi is sentenced to death over the 2011 mass breakout of Muslim Brotherhood prisoners, along with more than 100 others. He is sentenced to 20 years in prison in April over the arrest and torture of protesters during his 2012-2013 rule.

June 17, 2015: The Tahrir Square metro station reopen after two years.

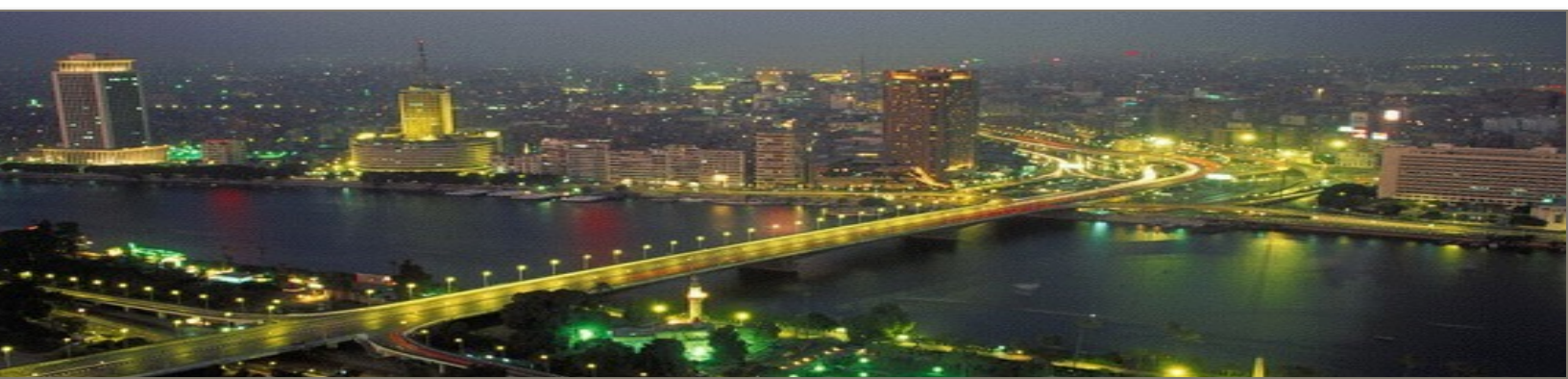




The capital of Egypt and the second largest city in the Middle East, Cairo is a buzzing metropolis with a population density that would make Manhattan look like a suburb. It's also much older than Manhattan. The city was founded in 969 CE. Egyptians today often refer to Cairo as Maṣr, the Egyptian Arabic pronunciation of the name for Egypt itself, emphasizing the city's continued role in Egyptian influence.



Cairo is home not only to Pyramids of Giza, but also the Egyptian Museum, Cairo Tower, two world renowned opera houses, and of course, Tahrir Square.



CAIRO FAST FACTS

Population: 12,000,000+

Population density: Can average up to 45,000 persons per square kilometer; up to 100,000/ sq km in older districts. (Compared to about 25,000 in Manhattan)

Adult Literacy: 69.3 percent total; 59.2 percent female (1992), Cairo city only.

Income: The average salary in Cairo is about 1115.00 US Dollars per month, though about 18% of Egypt lives on under \$2 dollars a day.

Unemployment: 10%

Religion: 90-94 % Muslim, most of the rest are Coptic Christian. Most Muslims are Sunni, though no specific percentages seem to be available. While Copts make up the largest percentage of Christians, there is a small, declining number of Catholics, and apparently an increasing number of protestants, mostly Episcopal.

Demographics: The most commonly spoken language in the city of Cairo is Arabic with a slight Egyptian dialect. Also, a good portion of the educated population can speak English, French, or Italian. As of May 2011, about 36% of the population is under the age of 15 years. Also, the life expectancy of a male is between 60 and 65 years, while the life expectancy of a female is 63 to 68 years.

Fun fact: If you live in Cairo you probably support either al-Ahly or Zamalek football club. Their rivalry is intense, yet they share the same stadium!

NOTE: Cairo is rapidly changing and growing, so these facts change each year, if not each month.

TAHRIR SQUARE

Tahrir Square, also known as "Martyr Square", is a major public town square in Downtown Cairo, Egypt. The square has been the location and focus for political demonstrations in Cairo, most notably those that led to the 2011 Egyptian revolution which led to the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak.

At the centre of Tahrir Square is a large and busy traffic circle. On the north-east side is a plaza with a statue of nationalist hero Omar Makram, celebrated for his resistance against Napoleon I's invasion of Egypt, and beyond is the Omar Makram Mosque.

The square is the northern terminus of the historic Qasr al-Ayni Street, the western terminus of Talaat Harb Street, and via Qasr al-Nil Street crossing its southern portion it has direct access to the Qasr al-Nil Bridge crossing the nearby Nile River.

The area around Tahrir Square includes the Egyptian Museum, the House of Folklore, the National Democratic Party-NDP headquarters building, the Mogamma government building, the Headquarters of the Arab League building, the Nile Hotel, Kasr El Dobara Evangelical Church and the original downtown campus of the American University in Cairo.

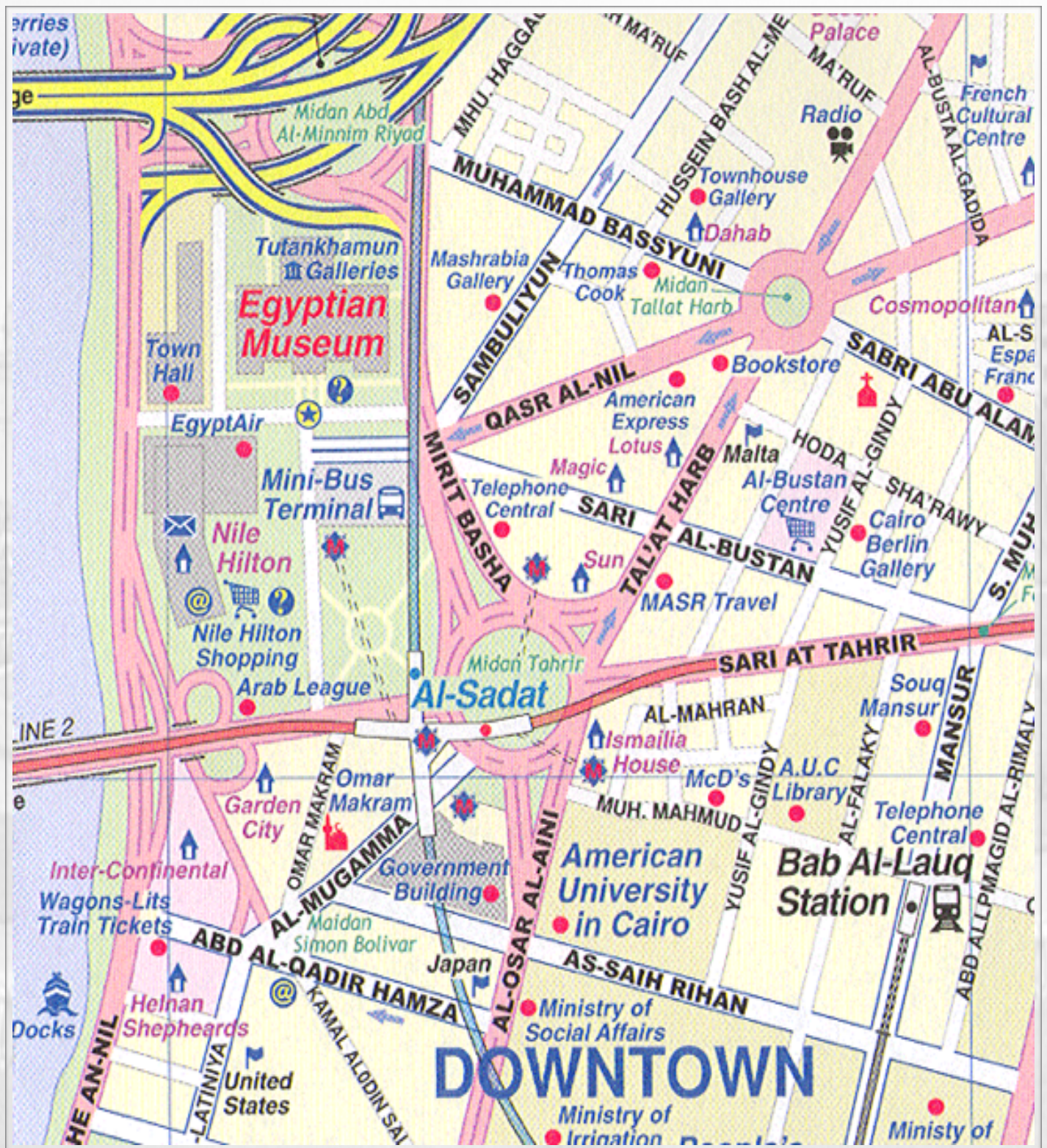
The Cairo Metro serves Tahrir Square with the Sadat Station, which is the downtown junction of the system's two lines, linking to Giza, Maadi, Helwan, and other districts and suburbs of Greater Cairo. Its underground access viaducts provide the safest routes for pedestrians crossing the broad roads of the heavily trafficked square.

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Maps and Images





GLOSSARY

The Big Players

President Hosni Mubarak- President of Egypt from 1981 to 2011. Accused of being corrupt and abusing his power, Hosni stepped down after 18 days of protests from Egyptian citizens.

Omar Suleiman - The vice president to Hosni Mubarak.

April 6th Youth Movement- On March 23, 2008, a small group of young Egyptian activists -- calling themselves the April 6 Youth Movement -- launched a Facebook page in support of a planned textile workers' strike in the city of Mahalla al-Kobra on April 6th. This movement, and the groups Facebook page, became a leader in the eventual Egyptian revolution and is still active today.

The Muslim Brotherhood- A religious, social, and political movement in Egypt which formed in 1928. Although they were accused of assassination attempts and other overthrow plots in their early years, the Brotherhood eventually became one of the leading political parties in Egypt and won almost half the seats in the parliamentary election. They're presidential candidate, Mohamed Morsi, also won the June 2012 presidential election.

Mohamed Morsi- Morsi was the first ever democratically elected head of state in Egyptian history. As president, Morsi issued a temporary constitutional declaration in late November that granted him unlimited powers and the power to legislate without judicial oversight or review of his acts, stating that such a move was necessary in order for him to protect the nation from the Mubarak-era power structure. The temporary constitutional declaration was called for a referendum, an act that his opponents called an "Islamist coup." These issues, along with complaints of prosecutions of journalists and attacks on nonviolent demonstrators, brought hundreds of thousands of protesters to the streets in the 2012 Egyptian protests. Morsi was out of power by July 3, 2013.

El-Sisi- The current president of Egypt. During the revolution, he served as the Director of military intelligence and reconnaissance department for the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces.

The Pages*

Pg 2:

Midan- A town square.

Pg 6:

Hurriya- A joyful cheer: Arabic translation: Freedom.

Pg 7:

February 9, 2011- In context, this was the day that Amir and Omar played their music in the square, however this was also a big day for the protests. More protesters moved from Tahrir Square to the parliament buildings, putting up a sign that reads “Closed until the fall of the regime.” Labour unions across the country staged general strikes, demanding higher wages and better treatment. Violence erupted at many different police stations and the NDP party building which were all destroyed. The governor’s office in Port Said was burnt down by protesters in response to his reluctance to provide enough housing for the city’s population.

Regime- An authoritarian government. Referring to Mubarak.

Pg 9:

Soothsayer- A person who can see into the future.

Pg 10:

Habibi- Arabic for “my love”

Death Metal- An extreme version of heavy metal music, death metal employs low tuned guitars, loud drums, screams, and aggressive growls.

EDM- Electronic dance music. Think remixes at clubs. Dubstep, electro, etc.

Pg 11:

Ban On Protests- In November of 2013, the Egyptian government outlawed public protests attaching heavy fines or prison time to anyone arrested during a public demonstration from there on out.

Pg 12:

Libido- Sexual desire.

Johnny Walker- Brand of whiskey. An actor's best friend after a 10 out of 12.

Pg 16:

January 24th, 2011- The day before the Egyptian Revolution began.

ISO- In photography, the ISO is a form of expressing light sensitivity. The sensitivity determines how much light is needed for each shot. Each time you double the ISO (for example, from 200 to 400), the camera needs only half as much light for the same exposure.

Shutter Speed- In photography, the Shutter speed adjusts how much light comes into the lens.

Pg 17:

Bangles- A stiff bracelet that is usually slid or clasped on and hangs loosely off the wrist.

Pg 19:

Facebook Group- The Egyptian Revolution is very popular for being one of the first revolutions to use social media. Many pages, including the April 6th Youth Movement's page are still active today, notifying those in the group about different protests.

Pg 23:

Martyrs- A person who is killed because of their religious or other beliefs.

Pg 26:

Mohammad Mohmoud- Mohamed Mahmoud Graffiti is a collection of graffiti that was painted on several walls in the area surrounding Mohamed Mahmoud street near Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt during the 2011 Egyptian revolution. Areas bearing the graffiti included the walls of The American University in Cairo and some buildings and schools surrounding it, and the concrete wall that was installed later in Mohammad Mahmoud street to stop protesters from advancing to the Ministry of Interior building.

Pg 27:

Day of Rage- A violent protest on January 28th, 2011. Hundreds of thousands protested in public squares all across Egypt for the removal of Mubarak from office. The protests became deadly, and resulted in eleven casualties in Suez and 1,030 injuries nationwide. Though a curfew was set, riots continued throughout the night as many protesters vandalized and destroyed many government buildings, even lighting some ablaze. The Egyptian government deployed military in many of the major cities to assist police, though later had released a statement announcing they were there to protect the citizens of Egypt and their right for freedom of speech.

National Bank- Could be referring to any branch of the National Bank of Egypt, or the National bank tower, a forty minute walk from Tahrir square.

Pg 31:

Wench- A young women, usually directed at servants.

Pg 34:

Mosque- a Muslim place of worship.

Pg 35:

Nile- The longest river in the world. The river flows north into Egypt and empties out into the Mediterranean sea.

Habibti- The female form of Habibi

Pg 38:

Reggae- A music genre of Jamaica origin. Think Bob Marley.

Pg 43:

Lion on Oasr Al-Nil- The Oasr Al-Nil is a bridge in Cairo that spans the Nile River. Two large stone lions adorn entrances on both sides.

Pg 44:

Mahshi- Stuffed vegetables, usually zucchini based.

Babaganoush- An eggplant based dip.

Sambousas- A fried turnover.

El Fishawi- An old coffee house.

Salah Jaheen- A poet and cartoonist born in the 1930s. Possibly his most notable work, “In Egypt’s Name”, narrates the history of Egypt.

The Brotherhood- Referring to the Muslim Brotherhood.

Pg 48:

November 2011- From November 19th to the 24th, Egyptians protested outside the Interior Ministry in Mohamed Mahmoud Street resulting in many deaths and hundreds of injuries.

Pg 51:

Al Azhar- A large Mosque in Cairo. It is the home to the second oldest continuously run university in the world, dating all the way back to 989 CE

Pg 54:

Rabaa- The Rabaa massacre. Early in the morning on August 14th, 2013, Egyptian police commit one of the bloodiest massacres in recent history. One estimate, by

Human Rights Watch, counts close to 1,000 Morsi supporters killed at Rabaa al-Adawiya mosque alone.

Pg 69:

Tora Prison- A large prison for protestors and other criminals near Cairo.

Friday of Kandahar- July 29, 2011. Thousands of Muslims pour into Tahrir Square and demand that Islamic law be implemented immediately, clashing with the liberals who had been doing sit ins for weeks.

Mubarak's trial- Outside the first of many trials, supporters and opposers threw rocks at each other in a violent clash quickly dispersed by officials.

Battle of Mohammed Mahmoud-For about six days Egypt's riot police, the Central Security Forces (CSF), suppressed protests in Tahrir Square and Mohammed Mahmoud Street. The protests started after the security forces dispersed a sit-in organized by families of those killed or injured in the uprising in Tahrir Square in January and February 2011. More than 40 people were killed in what was to become one of the most violent clashes since the fall of President Hosni Mubarak in February. There was a notable use of tear gas and many were shot in the eye.

**(as they appear in the first O'Neill Rehearsal Draft)*

