

EGYPT: AN EPISTLE ON LOVE, BEAUTY AND HOPE

BY DR. AHMED EL-MOKADEM

The beauty of Egypt is that there is no formula. It just is. Egypt is unique. It is deeply loved, and has been so by millions over time. This is no ordinary love. It is a consuming passion.

I am one of the millions who have adored Egypt from near and far. I am one of the more than 10 million Egyptians who have lived away from her for years—but the greater the distance and the longer the separation, the more intense the commitment.

Why? The answer is simple: She is unmatched. Her beauty is unique. The clear blue of the Mediterranean Sea might be her serene eyes; the shores of the Red Sea her flushed cheeks; the dark dreamy nights her hair. Remember, it was her ears that uniquely heard the only conversation between God and the Prophet Moses. And it was her mouth that was the first to recite the “One God Aten” prayer as well as the Ten Commandments. In her sweet voice is mingled the call to prayer from mosques and the ringing of church bells.

As one of Egypt’s great expatriate sons, singer and composer Halim Hafez has sung: “With hugs, with hugs, with hugs, oh my beautiful country, on a date all your children assemble, oh my country your festivals return, and your absentees could not bear being away, they all return hugging you, I hug you my darling mother, my country, as a song in my blood, and on your chest I rest my head and get rid of my worries.”

In the Messiah, Hafez celebrates her sacred soul: “Oh, my word go around the length and width of the world, open the eyes of all human beings to all that happened on her land, on her land Jesus the Messiah left his footprints.”



Around Egypt’s neck, which is as beautiful as that of one of her great queens, Nefertiti, hangs a unique necklace. It is a delta-shaped one, with a dangling Nile. Her beautiful green dress is made of her fertile fields and topped with a golden scarf of the desert sands.

In her hand, she holds the key to the Nile and she stands almost in the center of the world, with an unmatched location in terms of transit and trade. Within herself, she holds the fount of life with hundreds of thousands of acres of lush green land that are able to feed more than 100 million people. And then there is the Nile.

Egypt is the gift of the great river, and to sail down it means a voyage past more than a third of the world’s antiquarian treasures—from temples to statues, valleys rich with tombs and mummies to museums full of artifacts, unique mosques and churches. As the Nile merges into the Mediterranean, Africa is to the left and Asia to the right. Egypt’s beauty lies in where she is and what she is: an ancient, wise and glorious land with the potential to be one of the happiest and most prosperous nations on earth.

Dr. Ahmed El-Mokadem, educated in both Egypt and the U.K., is one of the founders of the British-Egyptian Society and a keen collector of antiquarian books on Egypt. A prominent economist and business consultant who once served Margaret Thatcher, he now focuses on writing, public service and charitable work.

Forbes apologizes for the spelling mistakes of the names of singer and composer Halim Hafez and Dr. Ahmed El-Mokadem in the Forbes September 28, 2015 issue.

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