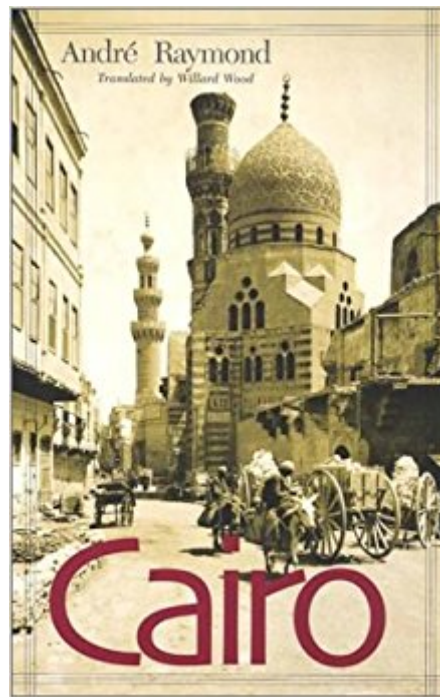


The book was found

Cairo



Synopsis

Gaze toward the Nile from the desert hills of Mukattam, and the vast city of Cairo unfolds before you, with its monumental architecture, teeming populace, and thousands of years of rich history. The extraordinary tapestry of Cairo's past and present comes vividly to life in this magisterial study by Andr   Raymond, arguably the premier social historian of the Arab world. The most deeply observed and historically nuanced account ever given of the greatest Arab city of northern Africa, this book shows us Cairo from the glimmer of its beginnings in the Arab conquest of Egypt in 640 through its transformation into the modern center of Middle Eastern life today. Here are the Fatimids, the Mamluks, and the Ottomans, the invasions, dynastic changes, and religious conflicts that one after another altered and shaped Cairo's destiny. And here, alongside rulers and religious leaders, are the merchants and artisans who have given Cairene life its distinctive character over time. Raymond depicts life in Cairo through the centuries, chronicling the coming of European influence, the vagaries of social evolution, and the development of economic structure and urban design. His work reflects all facets of Cairo's historical and social reality, weaving commerce, politics, religion, and culture into a finely worked portrait of the foremost Arab city on the continent of Africa. With its splendid illustrations and maps and its meticulous attention to the topography and archaeology of the city, this book will prove as valuable to the serious traveler as to observers of Middle Eastern history and society. It stands as the definitive work on Cairo, unparalleled in scope, depth, and detail.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I can sympathize with the reader who found Raymond's book boring and therefore gave it a middling rating. I used the French edition of this book for an MA years ago and while I found it useful because it is of the school of social history that digs out the facts and figures and puts them out there for us to use, it is most definitely useful, not fun. A ghost writer would have been a nice idea to make it an appealing book for general readers. For the academic writer who is looking for facts and figures to bolster an argument, this book is very useful, as are many of Raymond's boring books. Thus, I improve the rating by a star because the content is academically useful, if not intellectually or emotionally appealing beyond academic pursuits. This one's for the professors, and others should surely avoid.

It's difficult to give this book a bad review, as it's a masterful, scholarly...collection of facts. The problem, and I don't believe it's entirely one of translation, is that there is little narrative throughout the book. It's a big book full of facts. Quite often, this reader got so bogged down in how many hectares Qahira covered as opposed to Fustat, or how many suqs were built in a given decade, that I lost track of where I was in the book. The only good narrative begins at the section where Maqrizi's era starts. But it doesn't hold out. I just sort of trudged on, feeling I wanted to finish, but without any joy in the reading or the discovery. It's too bad because Al Qahira is one of the world's great cities and a fascinating topic. I wish Raymond had gotten someone to ghost write.

This is a large book dedicated to Cairo's emergence as the eminent city of the Middle East. It gives an exhaustive account of the various historical periods that have shaped its history, using its architecture as the medium for telling this story. It is very thorough, and the illustrations are of high quality, something you would expect from a Rizzoli publication. Considering that there are relatively few books that actually show and reveal the subject of Cairo in any real depth, this book, when seen in that light, becomes even more of a treasure. Moreover, the Pyramids are mentioned only infrequently throughout the book. This is a book about Cairo...if you want one on the Pyramids, there are plenty of others to choose from!

Good Product

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