Cairo: My City, Our Revolution

Over the past few months I have delivered lectures, presentations and interviews on the Egyptian Revolution. I’ve had full houses in London, Washington, New York and elsewhere. I’ve been stopped by old ladies in the street and had my hand shaken by taxi drivers and shopkeepers. All because I’m Egyptian and the glitter of Tahrir is upon me.

Ahdaf Soueif was born and brought up in Cairo. When the Egyptian Revolution of 2011 erupted on January 25th she, along with thousands of others, called Tahrir Square home for eighteen days. She reported for the world’s media and did – like everyone else – whatever she could.

For years Soueif had shied away from writing about Cairo. “It hurt too much,” she admits: “But the city was there, close to me, looking over my shoulder, holding up the prism through which I understood the world, inserting herself into everything I wrote. It hurt. And now, miraculously, it doesn’t. Because my city is mine again.”

In this unique and beautiful personal document of an extraordinary moment in history, Ahdaf Soueif – novelist, commentator, activist – navigates her history of Cairo and her journey through the Revolution that is redrawing its future. Through a map of stories drawn from private history and public record Soueif charts a story of the Revolution that is both intimately hers and publicly Egyptian.

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The story of a revolution that surged through a nation, and the memory of the country it rose from.…

‘Souef is a political analyst and commentator of the best kind’ London Review of Books

Praise for The Map of Love, shortlisted for the Booker Prize

‘Souef is at her most eloquent on the subject of her homeland, her prose rich with historical detail and debate. Egypt emerges as the true heroine of this novel.’ Independent

‘Souef has woven past and present, romance and history, east and west into an extraordinary fictional discussion of love, politics and the fraught relationship between Britain and Egypt.’ Penelope Lively

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Ahdaf Soueif is the author of the bestselling novels The Map of Love (shortlisted for the Booker Prize) and In the Eye of the Sun, Mezzaterra: Fragments from the Common Ground, a collection of essays positioned at the intersection of culture and politics, and I Think of You, a collection of short stories. She writes regularly for the Guardian in the UK and al-Shorouk in Egypt, and is the founder of the Palestine Festival of Literature, PalFest.