



# Hold on to Your Veil, Fatima!: And Other Snapshots of Life in Contemporary Egypt

*Sanna Negus*

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What happened to a former Miss Egypt when she took to wearing the veil under her pilot's cap? Who are the young people posting videos of policemen torturing crime suspects? Where do Coptic Christians celebrate the Holy Family's journey to Egypt? Why is President Hosni Mubarak still ruling Egypt, virtually uncontested, after more than 25 years in power? In "Hold on to Your Veil, Fatima!", author Sanna Negus answers these questions and more, taking the reader on a journey into 21st-century Egypt. As a reporter, Ms Negus witnessed Egypt's political opening after the Iraq war, the subsequent quelling of the Cairo Spring, and the growing influence of the Muslim Brotherhood. In addition to politics, the author discusses the thorny issue of relations between the sexes, listens to Copts' grievances about the worsening relations between Muslims and Christians, and reveals an appalling human rights record. On the brighter side, she also visits oriental dancers and authors who defy censorship. While Egyptians joke about the longevity of their president, there is no doubt that Egypt is a nation waiting for a new, uncertain dawn. "Hold on to Your Veil, Fatima!" relies heavily on primary sources, on the words and experiences of extraordinary Egyptian men and women, as well as the author's personal encounters as a Western woman. Intimate stories are woven together with historical narratives and news events. This is the other side of Egypt, an intriguing modern nation a long way removed from the pyramids and temples visited by most visitors to the country.

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