



EMAD'S SCI-FI NEWSLETTER

INTRODUCTION

My name's Emad El-Din Aysha, a proud member of the Egyptian Society for Science Fiction (see our logo below) and the Egyptian Writers' Union. I'm here to induct you into the small universe that is Arabic science fiction. I begin with my colleagues, Dr. Hosam Elzembely [left center], the founder and director of the ESSF. And the designer of our logo [below] Ahmed Salah Al-Mahdi.

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Critical Explorations in Science Fiction and Fantasy, 74

Arab and Muslim Science Fiction

CRITICAL ESSAYS

Edited by
**Hosam A. Ibrahim Elzembely
and Emad El-Din Aysha**



Series Editors Donald E. Palumbo and C.W. Sullivan III



الجمعية المصرية
لأدب الخيال العلمي



NON-FICTION

The ESSF, founded in 2012, had been in cold storage for years but we relaunched in 2016 and now we have our first English-language non-fiction book, with McFarland [left below], covering 29 countries with 45 contributors (14 women) from 4 continents, with 45 chapters - with detailed academic-length articles (13), and easy-going interviews (17) and personal essays (15), with illustrations and photos for your convenience. I co-edited the book and did all the translation and have two chapters in there myself.

Buy the book while stocks last

I'll get to my other non-fiction, and fictional pursuits, below. But the book comes first. Like everything in life you need a plan and a work-team to get anything done, and *Arab and Muslim Science Fiction* was no exception. We had brainstorming sessions, between Dr. Hosam and me, and slowly assembled a list of authors to contact and illustrators. My friend Ahmed brought in Ammar Gamal [below right] while Dr. Elzembely brought in a friend of his, Yahya Salah Abul Ghait.



ammar gamal

I am relatively new digital
ambitious Skill, I wish to be
the next few years ♥

 ArtStation



Can't think on an
empty stomach.
and the Chinese
food her is halal,
prepared by
Chinese Muslims.
I won't show you
the gluttony!!

Alas, failure is the greatest teacher. We began with a university press here in Egypt, in English, and got nowhere with them and in the process learned how to present our case and got some pointers about what the layout should be like. I envisioned something more academic with some in-depth articles and contributions by bloggers and publishers who could survey this growing field for us and the reader, Dr. Hosam however wanted individual authors to give us their direct experiences writing and publishing in their respective countries. What resulted was a combination of both points of view - and rightfully so - with academic articles and personal essays and then, out of the blue, one of our early contributors (Saqib Sadiq) took the set of essay questions I sent him and turned it into a lively and detailed interview, giving us a whole new lease on life. Another thing we learnt the hard way is that fiction authors don't like writing essays. It's a whole other discipline. Interviews are more flexible and accessible to them, and the reader. our book evolved as we did then we brought in the big guns - James Gunn, Marcia Lynx Qualey and Rebecca Hankins.



"JAMES GUNN"
WATERCOLOR BY SRINIVAS AND GANDHI
MOUNI
JUNE 2018



That's Rebecca over there being sworn in to the job of archivist, under order from President Obama direct! (Historical Publications and Records Commission Meeting at the National Archives in Washington, DC, on May 25, 2017. NARA photo by Jeff Reed). Another beneficiary of President Obama was Dr. Naif Al-Mutawa [below] for his pro-tolerance comic *The 99*, which got blasted by Islamic fundamentalists and the rightwing in the US at the same time.

If they'd read this book they wouldn't have bothered. They would have realized that publishing it was an uphill battle because of the prohibitive economics of publishing. Dr. Naif is both a psychiatrist and an entrepreneur, and Tedxer. Marvel and DC can get away with it because they flood the market with a variety of superhero series. One is bound to succeed and prop up the others. Not so with choice items like this. Dr. Naif also discovered along the way that comics in the West are built on religious precepts - Dr. Xavier and his students are like Jesus or Moses and his disciples. (So much for secularism). This is his way of promoting Islamic values through the universal lingo of comic book heroes, with varying degrees of success.



Other celebrities we have are Noura al-Noman [above], from the UAE and in its cultural capital Sharjah no less. Her novel *Ajwan* was the *first* Emirati SF novel ever and its won an award too. Not to forget Dr. Ibrahim Al-Marashi [right], the man who's PhD thesis was exploited by the Bush administrative to prove Saddam had a viable weapons of mass destruction programme. Yes, he's an Iraqi and has his contributions to Iraqi science fiction, the new kid on the block who had to have their country invaded and pulverized into the dirt to get some SF out of them!





Something you have to understand, from the word go, about us at the ESSF. As Arabs and Egyptians we think of the Arab world as a single place, with the same culture and language and experiences. And additionally as Egyptians we think of Egypt as the center of the Arab world. The beating heart, so to speak. So, what did we discover and from early on contacting Arab authors and getting their country experiences? We were only half right!! Still, the old-fashioned way of contacting people still holds. Hence Faycel Lahmeur [left], Kawthar Ayed [below], Mouad Bouyadou [bottom left].

Egypt certainly is at the heart of the Arab world and the part of the Arab world that pulls the Western and Eastern parts together - the common denominator. Every Arab, East or West, has heard of Naguib Mahfouz or watched Egyptian cinema or listened to Egyptian pop singers and musicians. And we found this popularity extended to science fiction too. Practically everyone we spoke to has heard of Nabil Farouk and Ahmed Khaled Tawfik and their sci-fi pocketbook adventure series Malaf Al-Mustaqbal [Future File] and were often inspired to go into science fiction because of it. But that's about as far as it goes, and authors in the Eastern part of the Arab world haven't necessarily heard of those in the West and the opposite is the case. But we need to get to know each other, at least for intellectual jealousy to kick in.

This photo taken from an interview Kawthar Ayed did with Islam & Science Fiction. Others photos provided by authors.



And the literary experiences of the Western part of the Arab world are very different than in the East. There science fiction is more literary and in-depth. Not the adventure story variety at all. They suffer from the same kinds of problems we do in terms of the publishing industry and the critics and low book sales but they write a lot of philosophical fiction and see SF in those terms, and they have access to everything done in Europe almost on a daily basis because they speak French. They're also more scientific and scholarly. Kawthar Ayed gave us an introduction to the whole of the Maghreb [Arab West] and in the process charted the origins of Arab SF even in the East in a way we couldn't even dream of!

For Starters

Marcia Lynx Qualey, blogger-translator extraordinaire, pulls the reader into the worlds explored in our book through her first-person perspective. Her love of modern Arab literature and early introduction to SF and the possibilities opened up by splicing the two together. The internet knows no ceiling and translation is a vehicle for propagation. Please bear in mind that Marcia began life as a student of classical Russian literature, so being drawn to Arabic was a 'big' deal. It seemed fresh and sufficiently different and interesting for her to change her career path, setting up her own blog *Arablit.org* to promote Arab authors to an international audience. If it wasn't for her, and Rebecca (see below), this work would *never* have seen the light of day.

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Never mind someone of the weight of Dr. James E. Gunn, from the 'golden age' of SF, Realism, he says, is forever wedded to the here and now, but only SF can rephrase literature – and the human soul – on the path of continuous evolution. I've known Dr. Gunn since I taught Scientific Thinking at the American University in Cairo, so he was more than happy to lend a helping hand here!

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A Galaxy of Contributors

We were surprised, ourselves, how much talent was out there. And how many diverse perspective the authors and their respective countries brought to the topic of Arabic and Muslim SFF. At one end you have Egypt, Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia and Indonesia, which have pro-religious speculative fiction while countries like Algeria, Tunis, Jordan, Syria, Turkey, the Central Asian republics and Bosnia, that are secular. Everybody else lies somewhere between these two extremes, people that want literature to serve a moral function and those who want hard-hitting, challenging art. no harm either way, The important thing is filling in gaps in the reader’s knowledge about SF from this part of the Global South, with academic acumen and factual veracity.



Of all of the interviews I did the most *fun* was with Jeremy Szal, a guy who’s enthusiasm is infectious; one of the younger generation of authors who is both techno-savvy and in awe of the grand wizards of the genre. He’s from the hard-hitting brand of SF, emotionally harrowing body-horror type stories about friendship and triumphing over yourself.

You learn a lot about people and cultures along the way too. For instance, we had two Syrian authors from a country that only got to know SF in the 1980s and the two – Dr. Taleb Omran and Mohammed Alyasin – were more than eager to help. By contrast a tiny country like Lebanon produced a myriad of authors, in and outside Lebanon, and we were only able to get ‘one’ to help us out [Jeremy Szal, right]. The other three or four wanted to be paid. The downside of capitalism contrasted to classic Arab generosity. We could write a whole book about how we wrote this book, and the ‘things’ we encountered along the way. On the purely literary level you find that Turkey and Iran are equal opposites to each other. They are equally well organized in terms of sci-fi associations, awards, publishers and translators, but at ideological opposite ends. Even so there’s more in common...



... features since the writings of both peoples are governed by a philosophy. Persians want to get to the bottom of things, are not content to make mere morality plays; how does the world work, what causes a civilization to triumph or decay? Turkish authors likewise want to broaden their horizons and critique the world around them through SF. SF began in Turkey and Iran, long before it did in the Arab world, at the end of the 19th century and early 20th century, and the first Arab authors seem to have picked up the bug from Ottoman Utopianism, even though our first authors were predominantly Christians (Lebanon, Syria). We've got so much to learn from both, as Arabs. The most substantive chapters were by the Turkish and Iranian contributors, regardless of length.

Mapping the Maghreb: The History and Prospects of SF in the Arab West

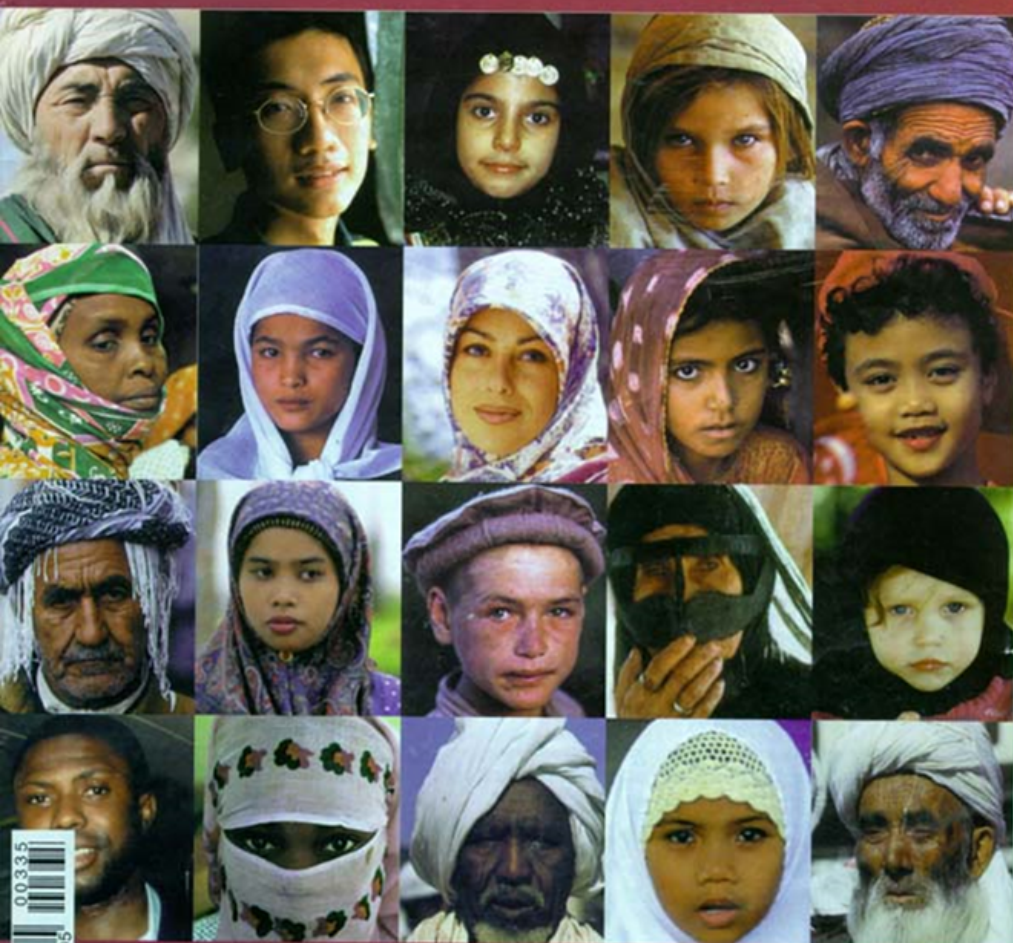
KAWTHAR AYED 20

Turkish and Iranian SF, also, got put on hold by their countries respective trials and tribulations. With Turkey it was the end of the Ottoman caliphate, with Iran it was foreigners interfering in their affairs. Their national pride was hurt and they needed to liberate themselves first before they had the confidence to take up a 'luxury' like SF [just ask Dr. Zahra Jannesari-Ladani, right]. Something similar happened in Tunis, it emerges since that country had its first SF novel published in 1933, during the French occupation, according to Kawthar Ayed. (And proper hard sci-fi no less). After independence other things came first, for everyone. Talk about Zeitgeist!!



Funda Ozlem Seran, from Turkey [above], had the honour of earning words of praise from the late Ursula LeGuinn

The brands of science fiction produced in Turkey and Iran are also more diverse than what exists in the Arab world. They've got noticeably more cyberpunk and steampunk and also a small graphic novels industry and far more websites, awards and groups dedicated to SFF.



UNITED COLOURS OF ISLAM

One small exception to that is Egypt. Wherever we went in our travels in the Arab world, we found authors talking about the famous pocketbook series helmed by Nabil Farouk and Ahmed Khaled Tawfik, often being the formative literature that got them interested in SF to begin with. Some have gone as far trying to get these books standardized in school libraries. Egypt is the one thing that pulls the Arab world together on the literary stage and science fiction is no exception. The first proper Arab SF author, who specialized in the field and is referred to by most Arab SF writers, is Nihad Sharif. Also, Egypt has some continuity when it comes to SF, beginning in the 1950-60s (with the space race, interestingly), and then in the 1970s, 1980s-90s, then the turn of the century following the Arab Spring.



Another curious feature of Arabic science fiction is what could be called 'information blackout'. Authors in one Arab country don't know what their counterparts are doing in the country right next to them. An Algerian won't necessarily know what's been done in Morocco over the years in SF, and the same in Kuwait compared to Saudi Arabia, Syria and Lebanon. Quite frequently this applies within a country too, between generations. Every new generation of authors goes up the learning curve, by itself, often reading the classics of Western SF (Verne, Wells, Clarke, Asimov, Gunn, Heinlein, Moorcock) but not their own country's endeavors. Even a country as small as Kuwait, with a handful of authors, doesn't necessarily know what transpired before.

Compare that to [Malaysia and Indonesia where they have online databases](#). It made it so much easier for us to contact authors there instead of relying on word of mouth and personal connections in the Arab world. The Turks and Iranians are also aware of what was written before their generation, whatever the time gap (see below), doing their own thing without being tied down by the past but at the same time seeing themselves as part of history, tradition and set of expectations.



The most in-depth and frankly quite heartbreaking interview I did was with Mr Hamid Ismailov [above]. He's an author in exile, since post-Communist Uzbekistan had less free speech than the original USSR. He explained that SF writers got away with a lot in the Soviet era because the genre was considered 'distractive', not subversive, literature. (If only the authorities over here thought the same). There was plenty of state-sponsored translation too. Not that it was all nice, reminds us Shamil Idiatullin (Tartar Russian). Next to censorship there were restriction on certain SF works being translated into Russian and there was a lot of backstabbing and ass-kissing in literary quarters. But, in all cases, the situation was still better than it is now. In a bizarre twist of fate the quality of translations has gone down with privatization, and pocketbooks had the opposite effect that they did in the Arab world - harming the once stellar reputation of Russian SF.



I got this picture of Mr Shamil from his own [webpage](#)!

Bosnia is a special case given that this was a Muslim country within a Communist country, although there was a good and noble history of sci-fi in Yugoslavia thanks to the tremendous legacy and reputation of Nicola Tesla. Other advantages all the Communist states enjoyed, Bosnia and Afghanistan included, was a very rich set of fables and fairytales...

A whole swathe of other lessons we learned from looking at our co-conspirators from the former Communist block - Bosnia [see [Harun Siljak](#) below], Afghanistan, Central Asia, and the big boy of them all Russia. The general pattern is that things were better off under Communism, certainly economically. Intellectuals were well paid because the authorities understood the power of words - to mislead and delude people into thinking their lives were better, and 'newer', than they actually were. Leninism was more powerful than Marxism and the job of the state, and its intellectuals was to *relabel* things like towns and street names and bridges to convince people they had put the bad old past behind them.

Afghanistan also fared quite well since the government believed literature was a way to advance the country.





Picture taken from [Exiled Writer's Ink](#).

... and epics and poetry to draw from. There's a lot of borderline science fiction out there which is closer to Magic Realism and Surrealism. This is particularly true of Abdulwakil Sulamal (from Afghanistan, see picture on left), Shamil Idiatullin, and other Bosnian writers Harun mentioned in his chapter. Mr Sulamal was very generous and gave us many of his short stories to read and one was almost identical to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, which he insisted he constructed from the myths and fairytales of his own country, in a tragicomic satire. Still, just goes to show the universality of human mythology. And he also helped us identify several proper SF authors in his still war-torn country. He's also used his brand of Surrealism to advocate the cause of women in Afghani society and lampoon how the so-called allies of the Americans are taking advantage of the War on Terror to their own financial benefit. How ironic that we had to update his chapter after the Americans pulled out and the Taliban took over, once again. The tragedy is unending.

All of this holds lessons to us Arabs. We seem to have inherited our fetish for realism - socialist realism - from the communist states but typically we didn't understand it was a package deal. Science fiction and surrealism all have their role to play, and state-sponsorship should apply to all genres, as well as translation. (No wonder we only had one lowly chapter on translation in the whole darn book). The other big common denominator we have as Arabs with the former Communist states is, in a word, war. Please ask Yemeni author, Wajdi Al-Adhal [right], since there you not only have to put up with the censorship of the state, but also of the warlords running your particular province or district! The Yugoslav war actually killed the first Bosnian sci-fi writer, Karim Zaimović. Nonetheless, Bosnians having been writing SF ever since then. (Perhaps it can help a nation forget the past as well as build a future).



Picture provided by author



Here's a quip from Mr Shamil's **interview**: "I have been suspecting for a long time that the work of George Lucas also experienced both Soviet and Turkic influence. Russian SF-fans have a joke that Darth Vader from Star Wars is an aged Communist superhero Dar Veter from Ivan Efremov's novel *Andromeda Nebula* (1957). And Han Solo in fact is the name of the hero of the Altai folk tale, recorded in the early 20th century."

Conclusions and Future Trends



These people are doing the most to recharge and upgrade the genre for Arabs and Muslims, from minorities in America to the Philippines and the (non-Arabs) lying in between (Senegal, Nigeria, Malaysia, Indonesia). Indonesian authors like Aditya Nugraha Wardhana are producing light comics, in emulation of Japan, while Filipinos like Kristine Ong Muslim are winning international sci-fi poetry prizes (her country grew up with comics *long* before us) while Malay authors like Azrul Bin Jaini imagine galaxy-spanning caliphates to bring peace to all races, man and alien.

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Mame Diane [right] combines languages, literatures and religious cultures from Senegal, France and New York, splicing Sufi rituals and Dogon myths into his worlds. Riawani Elyta has an older species of man returning to earth to reclaim their Quranic birthright, from us!





The novel *Trinil Gate* was actually a talking point in a presentation I did on exotheology and Islam. It proved that Muslims, instinctively, are sci-fi writers. they don't think in a anthropocentric way where man is at the center of creation, the best of creation. Man wasn't created in God's image, in the Quran, and Muslim SF writers - however conservative - always fill their universes with other races, often more advanced than us humans. By funny coincidence the man who invited me to make the presentation was the same man who introduced me to Riawani Elyta [left], Dr. Jörg Matthias Determann, Virginia Commonwealth University.



Kristine Ong Muslim, like Mame Diene, is of mixed Muslim-Christian parentage and very open minded when it comes to her writing. This is a common trait in the Philippines, it seems, since the first author we contacted was an agnostic Catholic more than willing to help out, were it not for his schedule!

Nigeria is a particularly interesting test case - two authors here, Rafeeat Aliyu and Ashiru Muheez Afolabi - because it is hooked into the transcontinental world of Afrofuturism and also developing its own indigenous comic books industry. Practically all the Arabs we talked to said they got hooked on SF as kids - reading novels (including Egyptian pocketbook adventures) or watching TV shows or, yes, comics. Its the perfect age to breed future readers and writers and with Afrofuturism [see Rebecca Hankins, pictured below] we have a firm grounding in the US market. But we have to take stock first. Hence Barabra Dick's compendious overview of Arab SF and its near organic connection to real-world science and technology. They feed each other. We also need...



Africa now has its own version - or alternative - to the X-Men, Avengers and Justice league with Comic Republic universe, thanks to Nigeria's tireless efforts in the comic book realm.



... to understand what marks our brand of SF off from the Western mainstream. In the early days, as Barbara argues, Arab authors tried to distinguish themselves by setting themselves at odds with modern science and Western civilization. culture and spiritualism and religion understood not in anti-scientific terms but as an antidote to Western modernity. Since then things have changed, thank heavens, what Dr. Hosam Elzeinbely explored in his own introductory chapter about Egyptian SF. We've stopped either being opposed to the West or blindly imitating it, and are exploring our own identity with increasing brazenness and confidence.

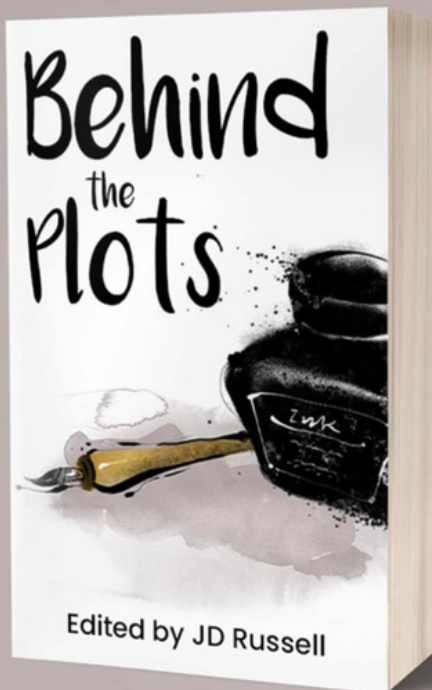
But what is this identity, what makes our SFF so different? I explored this topic myself with Rebecca, for a joint presentation we made at the "Muslim Futurism: Definitions, Explorations, and Future Directions" conference (21-23 January 2022, organized by MIPSTERZ). We concluded together that it was:

- Decolonization; the Global South
- Religion and traditional values; Utopia, alternate world orders
- Countering stereotypes of the Other; Orientalism, anti-Black racism, Islamophobia
- Environmentalism
- Rewriting history; African and Muslim philosophy, cosmology, question of Being



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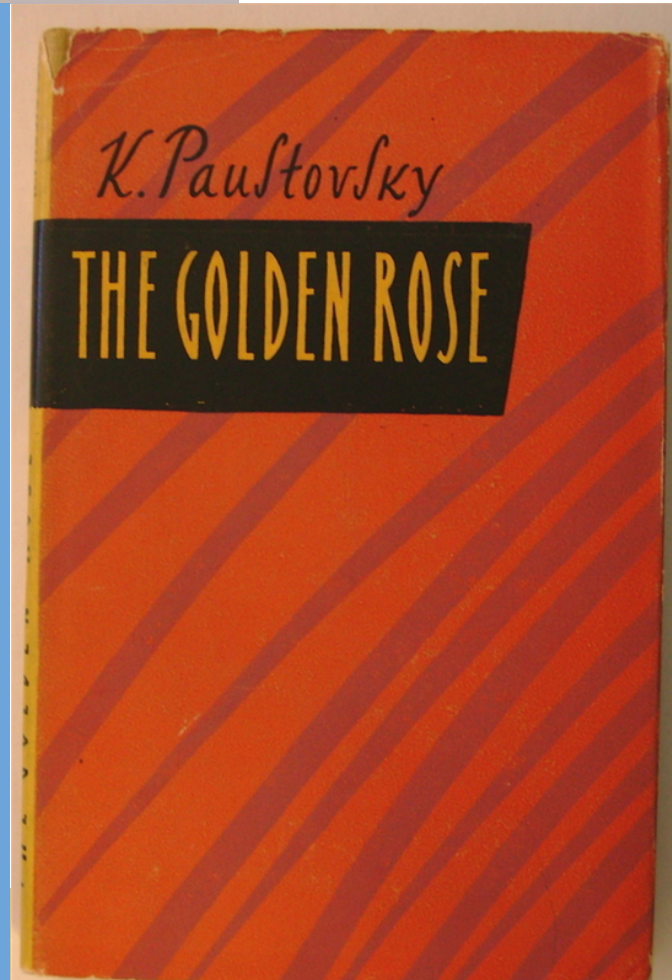
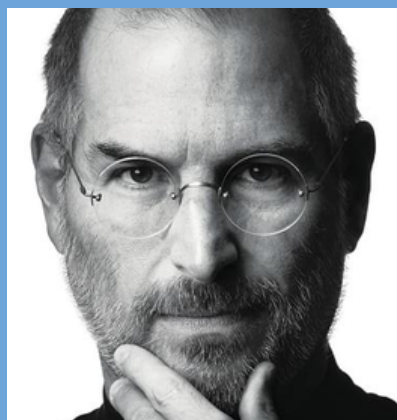
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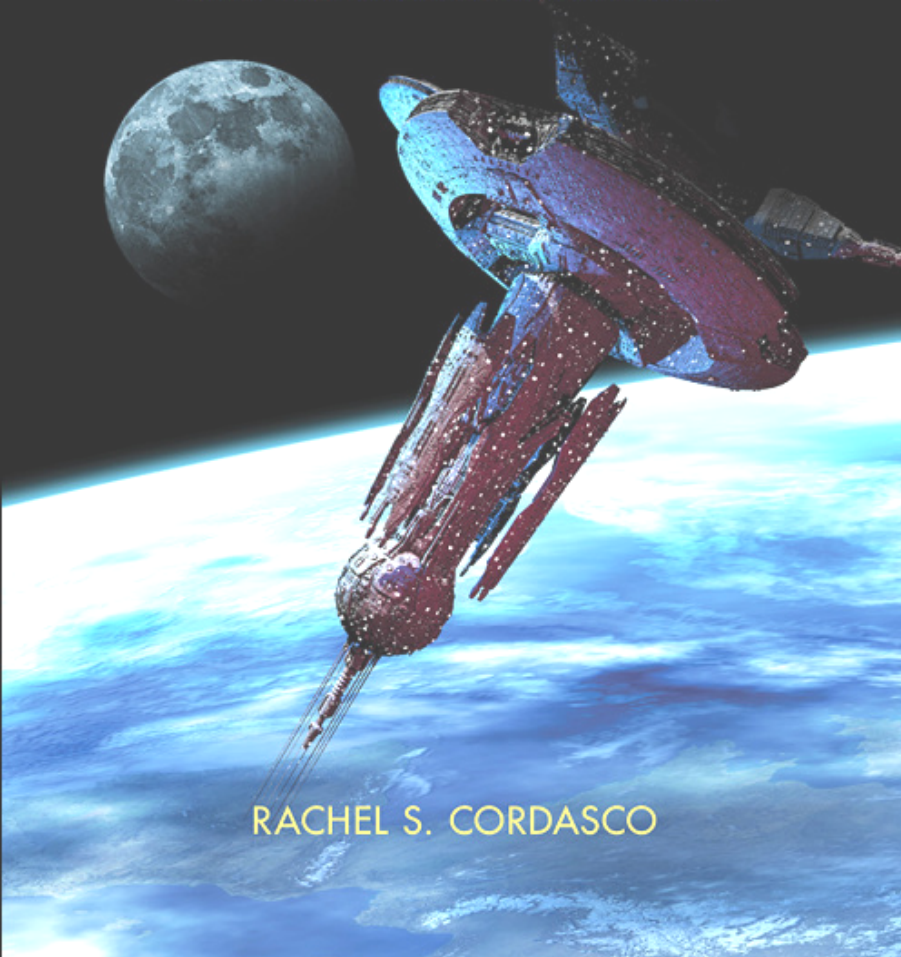
Well, that's enough of that. on to my other non-fiction work. The ones you can also buy online, that is. (Click the images to take you to the purchasing links or homepages). I have an essay I'm exceptionally proud of in *Behind the Plots*, published by the Writing Bad people: 11. The Alchemy of Writing Science Fiction: Memory, Imagination and Characterization, pp. 118.

A big chunk of my inspiration came from this book by Konstantin Paustovsky, a Russian Nobel prize winner no less. its all about the neuropsychology of memory (overlapping, digesting, recategorizing sensory data and experiences) which itself is the basis for creativity. Steve Jobs wasn't the only guy who realized that creativity was connecting things. the trick is that the brain does it for you, most often in your sleep when you are dreaming, in the right side of your brain as it turns out. not the logical, linguistic, analytic side (the left hemisphere) but the musical, artistic, synthetic hemisphere you access in REM sleep or when doing art or anything of a creative nature, including scientific discovery or technological invention.



OUT OF THIS WORLD

Speculative Fiction in Translation from the Cold War to the New Millennium



... Khaled Tawfik onto to Basma Abdel Aziz and Muhammad Rabei (*Utopia*, *The Queue*, *Otared*). These books deserve critical acclaim and commercial success, no doubt, but they are not representative of what's going on in the whacky world of Arabic science fiction. We've got steampunk, cyberpunk, alien invasion, first contact, time-travel, military SF all branded with our distinctive hallmark the deserve international attention and we need our own translation industry to get our voice heard abroad. And we also need copyright laws to be clarified and actually implemented here too!

A big shout out to Rachel for doing such a great and inspiring job in her book .See her pic in the slide above, in the bottom right corner.

Next in line is a nice short, short essay I did for a chapter in this book. I did a little background research on translation in the Arab world using the book featured below [Shawki Galal, Translation in the Arab World The Reality and the Challenge] but mostly I relied on my direct experience with the translation field in Egypt when it comes to SF, and also some casual queries I made at the main translation center in Egypt. As I suspected, all the focus on translation was from the outside to the inside, from English, French, German, Russian and now Chinese to Arabic, and not the other way around. Nobody was in the slightest concerned with popularizing Egyptian and Arab literature abroad - and least of all in an upstart field like science fiction which still isn't getting enough critical recognition here as it is. as a consequence, no push factor and only pull factor - foreign publishers translating select items they are interested in for their purposes. Hence, the overemphasis on Arab dystopia, beginning with Ahmed...



FICTION FROM NOW ON



Now for what you've all been waiting for. I began writing in earnest in 2015, after the academic job market dried up, and found an advert for a Qatari newspaper in my email (I'd subscribed to and forgot all about) for the theme of 'Reconnecting'. I tried out two stories I'd already written on them, they liked them, but they needed something significantly smaller. then I watched an annoying scene in a Ramadan TV series in Egypt and found myself thinking 'it's hopeless, if you put Egyptians on Mars they'd still behave the same way', and I got my half-satirical story "A Detour in Space". I did the picture for it myself! [Below]

Next stop on the road was this anthology and I took a previous story I'd written about brainwashing Bush using music and turned it into a story about Trump. [Link in pic]



My story was called "The Cymbals of Progress", and grew out of a series of frustrations I was having with publishing an article about the Arab Spring, relying on the media theories of Marshal McLuhan. I argued in it that Arabs became revolutionary because of satellite television, social media and mobile phones - not books and the old print press 'revolution' - because we're more attuned to radio and the sound scape than Westerners, who think in a more visual and print mode. We evaluate reliability of knowledge and sentiment based on hearsay and word of mouth, like pre-print societies on the McLuhan model. Arab journalists, even satellite TV broadcasters, will tell you that. But it all fell on deaf ears - pardon the unintended pun. So, when in doubt, publish in fiction what you can't in fact!

الهيدرا الرقمية

قطر قطيرة من أصل الخيال العلمي والمستقبل

ترجمة
أحمد صلاح المهدي

تأليف
د. عماد الدين عيشة



Palestine

+100

stories from
a century after
the Nakba

Edited by Basma Ghalayini

WINNER
ENGLISH PEN
AWARD

I accumulated enough disparate stories to publish my own anthology (in Arabic) under the title *The Digital Hydra and Other Stories*, and contributed to all these other anthologies; ranging from cyberpunk to military SF to environmental SF. [Book links in the pics]

The Worlds of SF, F & H Volume IV



Edited by
Robert N Stephenson

THE WORLD'S REVOLUTION

G A I A AWAKENS

A CLIMATE CRISIS ANTHOLOGY
READ BY JESSICA TIPTON



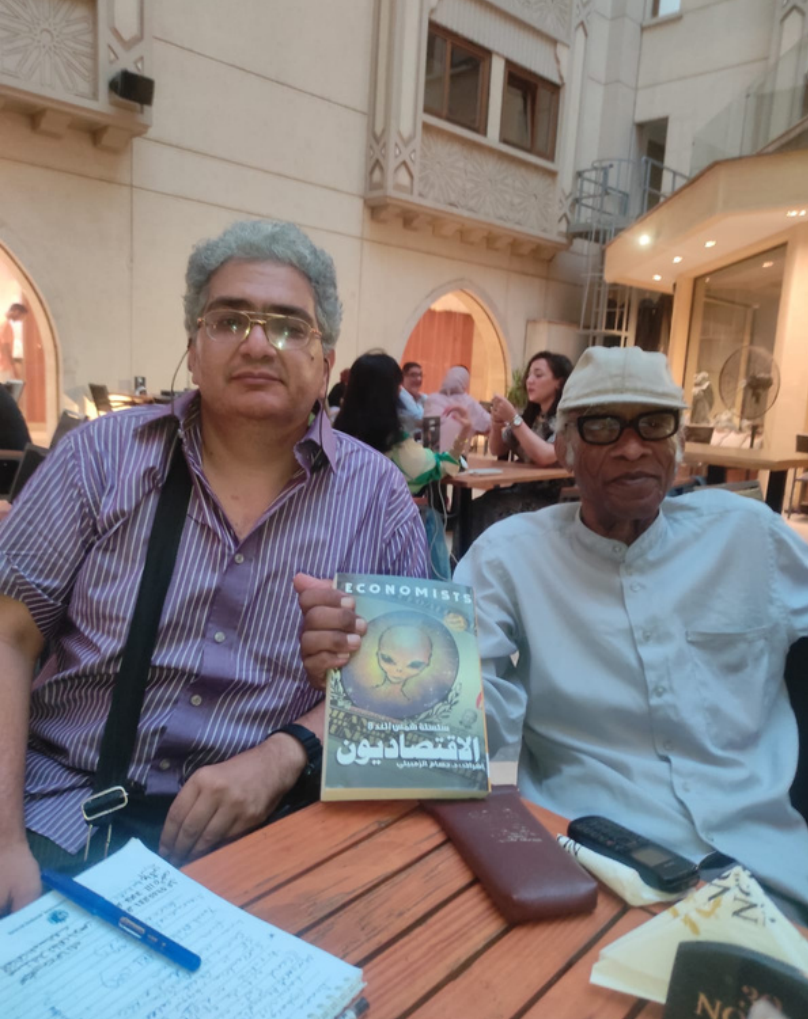
Here's more details. [*The Digital Hydra and Other Stories*](#) contains a translators intro, my stories "The Digital Hydra", "Demigods in Time", "Spiritual Exchange", "Cats Paw", "A Detour in Space", and two review essays on selected stories. As for the anthologies that I've contributed to include [*Trump Utopia or Dystopia*](#) ("The Cymbals of Progress"), [*Palestine+100*](#) ("Digital Nation"), [*The Worlds of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Volume IV*](#) ("Lambs of the Desert") and [*Gaia Awakens*](#) ("The Green Ceiling", "The Crystal Haze").

For my online short stories (in order of publication) please see: [*"A Detour in Space"*](#), [*"Code of Conduct"*](#), [*"Ramadan Tidings"*](#), [*"The Revolving Door"*](#), [*"Demigods in Time"*](#), [*"Vitamin for the Soul"*](#), [*"A Frog Pond in Time"*](#), [*"Paid to Remember"*](#).

If you're wondering about this picture here, its of the Turkish actress Bergüzar Korel. That's where the inspiration for "Paid to Remember" came from. I had a dream where she appeared, dressed in like Fred Astaire, doing a dance routine with the point stick and the tuxedo. The woman, named Nayrouz in my (planned) Mars stories, said one line in my dream 'Paid to Remember' and I turned it into a story about the value of tradition and continuity with the past - and conservatism. I turned that impulse into an argument for energy conservation and renewable-clean energy too. You see, this actress got famous in the Arab world for playing a judge, a woman both stunningly and romantically beautiful but also shy and decent and calm.

Without bragging my story is going to be translated into Bengali for a book on African speculative fiction in translation; first book of its kind!





As you've guessed most of my stories are published and written originally in English. I'm an anglophone, born in the UK. I'm not good enough with Arabic so I get my friends to translate for me. same goes for all my publications in the ESSF anthologies (see next slide). But here's one anthology worth especial mention since I have a whopping four stories in it - "The Green Ceiling", "The Commanding Heights", "The Lightning Cure" and "Genie in the Lantern" (my original names). Please see:

Science fiction commentaries: 'The Economists', a much needed anthology from Egypt and Arab authors

By El Mubarak Fadl

<https://the-levant.com/science-fiction-commentaries-the-economists-a-much-needed-anthology-from-egypt-and-arab-authors/>

Here is Mr El-Mubarak Fadl, a Sudanese friend, with a copy of *The Economists*. The below photograph was taken during the writing of our McFarland book. We were at a fish restaurant in Nasr City, a stone's throw away from our HQ!!

A conversation I had with Senegalese American author Mame Diena helped birth this anthology, since I was talking about my background in economics and how I put it into many of my stories. Dr. Hosam Elzembely overheard us and got the idea for this path-breaking anthology, the first of its kind in the Arab world. and not just in SF. hardly anybody in Arabic fiction writes about economics!



F U T U R I S T S



سلسلة شمس الغد

العدد رقم ٥



الصامدون

مجموعة مؤلفين



الجامعة المصرية
لادب الكتاب العلمي



سلسلة شمس الغد

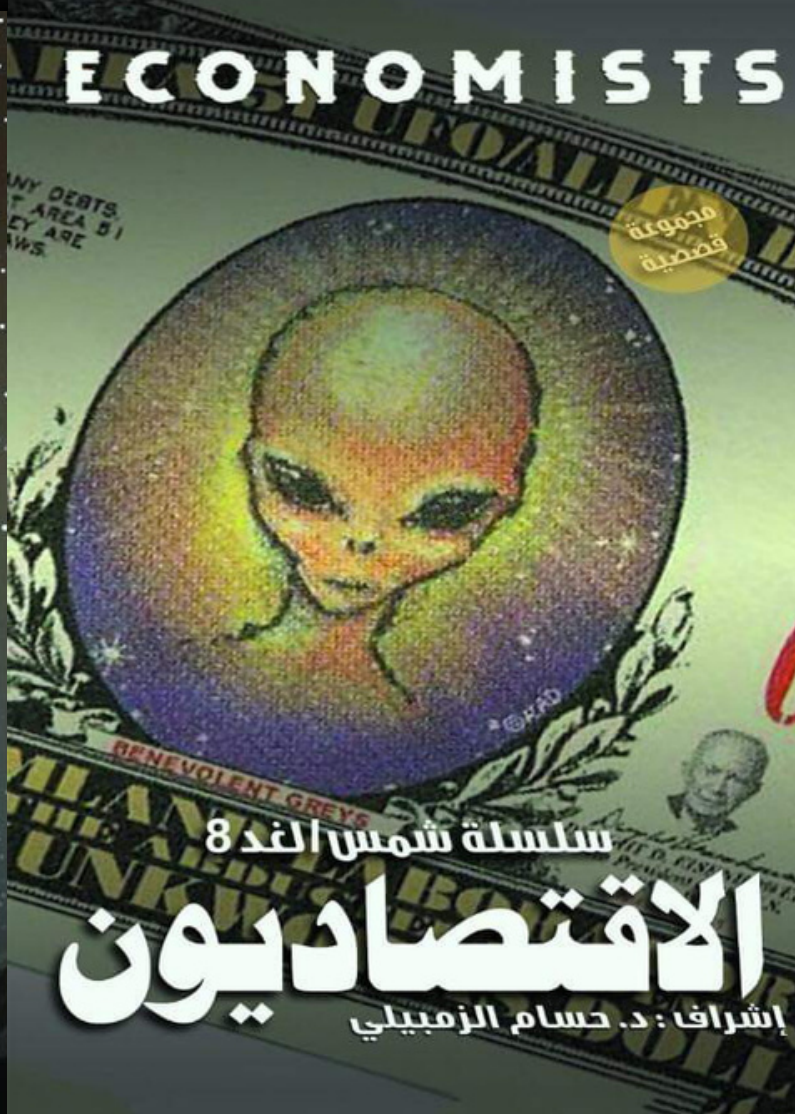
العدد رقم ٧

المقاومون

مجموعة مؤلفين



الجامعة المصرية
لادب الكتاب العلمي



ECONOMISTS

مجموعة
قصصية

سلسلة شمس الغد 8

الاقتصاديون

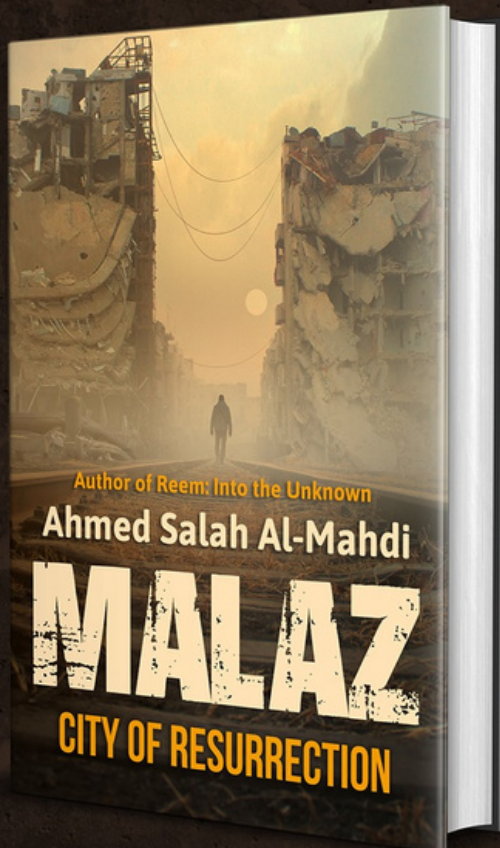
إشراف: د. حسام الزمبيلي

HER MAJESTY

A NOVEL BASED ON TRUE STORY

TRANSLATION CORNER

Layla Azmi Goushey, Professor of English at
St. Louis Community College in St. Louis, Missouri.



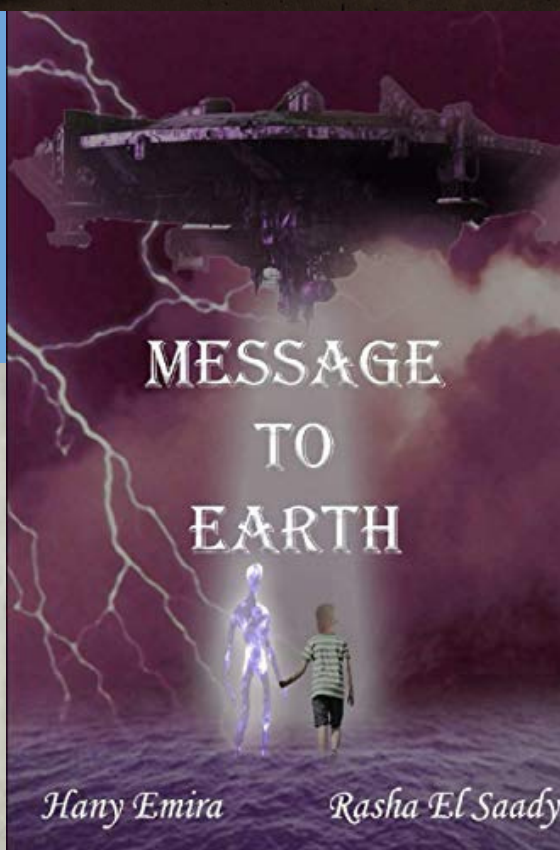
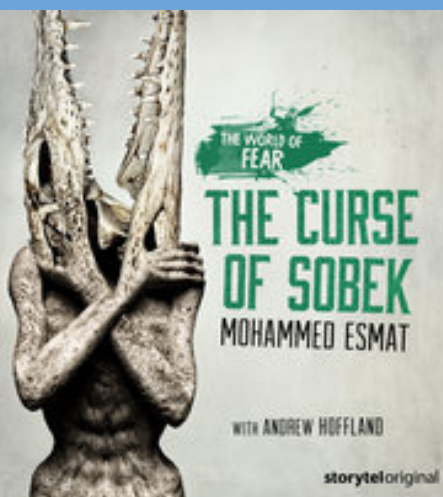
Ahmed Salah Al-Mahdi is a multi-talented author who writes unique, inventive stories. His dystopian fantasy novels entertain and delight readers while also guiding us to think deeply about society and humanity.

Available Now



Once again I'll have to thank ahmed Al-Mahdi for getting me into the business of translating Arabic SF to English. He got me to translate the first chapter of his steampunk novel *Malaz* to English to popularize it online and also some short stories for friends and it took off from there. He got me in touch with Hany Emira, in America, and I did my first full length novel and had quite a lot of fun doing it too (see next slide) and that took me to a couple of SF and dark fantasy novels. ironically the novel that started it all, I'm Just Like you, is realism and romantic drama. Normally I can;t stand that kind of thing but looking at an Egyptian reading of American society was a hoot!

Links for the books in the pictures. Will tell you more when there's more to tell!!



Anthologies that I've contributed to include *Palestine+100*, *The Worlds of Science Fiction*, *Fantasy and Horror Volume IV*, and *Gaia Awakens*. As for other novels I've translated (not all SF): *I'm Just Like You*, *The Curse of Sobek*, *The Story of Her Majesty*, *Message to Earth*. For online short stories please see "A Detour in Space", "Code of Conduct", "Ramadan Tidings", "The Revolving Door", "Demigods in Time", "Vitamin for the Soul", "A Frog Pond in Time", "Paid to Remember".