



# Alexandria: City of Memory

*Michael Haag*

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## **Alexandria: City of Memory** Michael Haag

This book is a literary, social, and political portrait of Alexandria at a high point of its history. Drawing on diaries, letters, and interviews, Michael Haag recovers the lost life of the city, its cosmopolitan inhabitants, and its literary characters.

Located on the coast of Africa yet rich in historical associations with Western civilization, Alexandria was home to an exotic variety of people whose cosmopolitan families had long been rooted in the commerce and the culture of the entire Mediterranean world.

Alexandria famously excited the imaginations of writers, and Haag folds intimate accounts of E. M. Forster, Greek poet Constantine Cavafy, and Lawrence Durrell into the story of its inhabitants. He recounts the city's experience of the two world wars and explores the communities that gave Alexandria its unique flavor: the Greek, the Italian, and the Jewish. The book deftly harnesses the sexual and emotional charge of cosmopolitan life in this extraordinary city, and highlights the social and political changes over the decades that finally led to Nasser's Egypt.

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