



Alexandria: City of Gifts and Sorrows: From Hellenistic Civilization to Multiethnic Metropolis

A. J. Polyzoides

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Alexandria: City of Gifts and Sorrows is a historical journey from the third century to the multiethnic metropolis of the 20th century, bringing together two diverse histories of the city. Ancient Alexandria was built by the Greek Ptolemies who completed the grand library and museum, which functioned as a university with the emphasis on science. The city was known as “the birthplace of science,” and this book contains stories about the scientists, poets, and religious philosophers responsible for influencing the Western mind with their writings. Modern Alexandria was rebuilt in 1805 by multiethnic communities who created a successful commercial city and port. In 1952, a coup to free the country from the monarchy and British domination was masterminded, and in 1956, the socialist regime under Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser closed the Suez Canal, resulting in the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion. This outburst of Egyptian nationalism and military revolution included the confiscation of property belonging to foreigners and the subsequent mass exodus of business and artisan classes that had made the city so successful. The author was an eye-witness to these events, and he sets out the political errors and failures of both Egyptian and Western leaders.

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