

Washington University in St. Louis

Washington University Open Scholarship

Spring 2018

Washington University
Senior Honors Thesis Abstracts

Spring 2018

Censorship and the Creation of Egyptian Culture in 1952 Independent Egypt

Rashi Narayan

Washington University in St. Louis

Follow this and additional works at: https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/wushta_spr2018

Recommended Citation

Narayan, Rashi, "Censorship and the Creation of Egyptian Culture in 1952 Independent Egypt" (2018).
Spring 2018. 93.

https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/wushta_spr2018/93

This Abstract for College of Arts & Sciences is brought to you for free and open access by the Washington University

Senior Honors Thesis Abstracts at Washington University Open Scholarship. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spring 2018 by an authorized administrator of Washington University Open Scholarship. For more information, please contact digital@wumail.wustl.edu.

CENSORSHIP AND THE CREATION OF EGYPTIAN CULTURE IN 1952 INDEPENDENT EGYPT

Rashi Narayan

Mentor: Jeremy Caddel

This project examines the creation of Egyptian culture under Nasser in the 1950s by comparing *That Smell of It* by Sonallah Ibrahim and *Miramar* by Naguib Mahfouz. Despite marked similarities between the two novels, only Ibrahim's novel faced censorship. The authorities and leading literary critics decried Ibrahim's novel as vulgar and immoral due to its reference to masturbation and sexual acts. However, Mahfouz's novel also contained sexual material. The two novels also had similarities with regards to content as they included discussions of degradation of emotional connections, lack of sexual fulfillment, and overall disillusionment with the regime. The main difference is in the writing style and outlooks of the two novels. Mahfouz's novel and its reception confirms the notion Nasser censored literature in order to manipulate the public image of Egypt. The regime chose to censor Ibrahim's work because it did not project a Western-palatable view of Egypt and threatened Nasser's ability to assert his country as a world power. This project argues that the Nasser regime worked with prominent literary critics in order to create a Western-palatable idea of independent Egypt, enabling the regime to project the new country as a major world power.

To support the argument, this project utilizes widely available secondary and primary sources which were either all published by main stream presses or in the public domain. These sources include novels, posters, and parliamentary minutes as well as peer-reviewed journals and books.