

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has taken many years to complete. I have incurred many debts in the long process, and it is a pleasure to acknowledge some of them here. The book grows out of research that I conducted for my doctoral dissertation at Harvard, and I would like to acknowledge the following institutions whose support made that research possible: the Fulbright Commission, Institute of International Exchange, Egypt, 1993–94; the Sheldon Fellowship of Harvard University, 1993; and the Social Science Research Council and MacArthur Foundation Program in International Peace and Security in a Changing World, 1994–96. The Center for Middle Eastern Studies under the directorships of Roy Mottahedeh and William Graham provided me with Foreign Language Area Studies Grants, a Mellon Foundation Grant, and a special Center grant that made possible my studies at Harvard. Also at Harvard, I would like to thank Tosun Ariçanlı, Cemal Kafadar, Arthur Kleinman, Zachary Lockman, David Maybury-Lewis, Roger Owen, Stanley Tambiah, and Nur Yalman for their support. I am indebted to my advisor and thesis chair, Sally Falk Moore, for her sharp critical eye and unwavering support: both have had a decisive impact on my work. Michael Herzfeld has been a generous source of advice on matters both intellectual and practical since we met during my last year at Harvard.

I am also grateful to the following individuals and institutions for helping me acquire some level of mastery of the Arabic language. The Mellon Foundation funded my study at Middlebury College in 1990, and the Center for Arabic Studies Abroad of Georgetown University awarded me a fellowship for an intensive course at the American University of Cairo in 1991–92. I was privileged to study with two teachers of Arabic,

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

‘Abbas al-Tonsi and Samira Khalil, whose skills are unparalleled and whose passion for Arabic language and literature is unmatched. ‘Abbas al-Tonsi in particular gave me the key for my learning of Arabic and Egyptian dialect, and for understanding much more about Arabic literature and culture. Laila Moustafa helped many times over the years with various aspects of Arabic language, and Essam Fawzi was a constant tutor during the two years of our work together in Cairo.

The committee members of the Program in International Peace and Security in a Changing World during my tenure between 1994 and 1996 shaped my research in important ways. Ashraf Ghani gave generously of his time and insights over the years of my graduate studies. Avraham Zloczower, to whom this book is dedicated, gave me my first education in anthropology and social theory. He supported this project in its early stages, even though it seemed to move in directions away from what he had taught me. His pathbreaking approach to theory of the state, class, and citizenship in the context of Israel/Palestine has had an impact in the world that he did not live to see.

The support of a number of individuals and institutions in Cairo was crucial to the success of this research. Throughout my stay I was privileged to have the institutional support of the Cairo Fulbright Commission. I remember with gratitude the unfailing kindness and professionalism of the entire Fulbright staff. Ann Radwan and Nevine Gad el-Mawla in particular facilitated my research in important ways, even after my formal association with the Fulbright Commission had ended. Samia el-Khashab of the Sociology Department of Cairo University was extremely helpful and generous while overseeing my project during my tenure with the Fulbright Commission. Asef Bayat of the American University of Cairo provided intellectual support and kind friendship. I also have an immense debt of gratitude to my friend and doctor, Milijana Vucicevic-Salama of Sarajevo and Cairo, for restoring my health on more than one occasion.

I wrote the first of many versions of this book and completed the final revisions while living in Ljubljana, Slovenia. I am grateful to the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts of Ljubljana and its director, Oto Luthar, for providing me with visiting fellowships in 1997–98 and 2004–5. My thanks to the Institute of Anthropological and Spatial Studies of the Scientific Research Centre, and its director Ivan Šprajc, for hosting me in 2004–5. I would also like to thank

Borut Telban and Božidar Jezernik for their intellectual companionship and many efforts on my behalf, Katarina Drenik for making the impossible possible, and Melita Pisek for her kindness and help. In New York I thank Tsewang Dolma for her loving care and friendship.

It would be impossible for me to thank every individual who has helped me over the many years it has taken me to research and write this book. Among those who have helped me with their friendship, support, and comments are Mirielle Abelin, Talal Asad, Ragui Assaad, Kamran Asdar Ali, Kelly Askew, Jean-François Bayart, Rosemarie Bernard, the late Avriel Botowsky, Koray Çaliskan, John Comaroff, Virginia Dominguez, James Ferguson, Julie Graham, Béatrice Hibou, Charles Hirschkind, Marion Katz, Petra Kuppinger, Yahya M. Madra, Cameel Makhoul, Achille Mbembe, Timothy Mitchell, Hiro Miyozaki, Dorothea von Moltke, Laila Moustafa, Hudita Mustafa, Eve Troutt Powell, Moustafa 'Abd el-Rahman, Annelies Riles, Janet Roitman, Shahnaz Rouse, Kristin Sands, Eileen Setzman, Bashir al-Siba'i, Cliff Simms, Mara Thomas, 'Abbas al-Tonsi, Thomas Trauttmann, Ruth Turner, and the editors and anonymous readers of *American Ethnologist*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, and *Public Culture*.

This book took its final shape during the three years that I spent as an assistant professor, faculty fellow, and director of graduate studies at the Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies at New York University. I had the pleasure there of working under two outstanding directors. Timothy Mitchell brought me to NYU and helped me in countless ways. I will always be deeply grateful to him. Zachary Lockman, who assumed the directorship of the Kevorkian Center during the last year of my stay at NYU, took time from a very busy schedule to read the entire manuscript of this book and to offer invaluable comments. Michael Gilsenan was generous with his time and interest. I am also grateful to Shiva Balaghi, Bill Carrick, and Barbara Pryce, the staff of the Kevorkian Center, for their help and friendship. Without Bill Carrick, I would have accomplished much less and with much less pleasure.

For their comments on earlier versions of the entire manuscript, my thanks to Walter Ambrust, Bill Fisher, and Diane Singerman. At Duke University Press, I am indebted to the editors of this book series, Julia Adams and George Steinmetz, for their probing and critical comments on an earlier version of this book, and for their confidence in taking me on when this book was far from ready for publication. Julia Adams in

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

particular has been a source of help far beyond the call of duty. Raphael Allen, who has since left Duke University Press, expressed early confidence in the project, and Ken Wissoker, who took over the project at a late stage, has been a source of much understanding and helpful advice. Fred Kameny edited the manuscript with graceful precision, improved it immensely, and expertly oversaw production of the book. Two anonymous readers for the Press contributed insightful comments. The University of Michigan International Institute provided generous financial support for the publication of this book.

Four colleagues read this book in its entirety when I thought it almost finished and showed me how to improve its final shape. Michel Callon twice helped me see what I was doing before I realized it myself. Bill Maurer forced me to sharpen my argument when I equivocated, helped me to restructure the book, and caught a number of errors and omissions. Zachary Lockman helped me to understand what was important and how to communicate it better. My debt to Essam Fawzi is immense. I discuss his contribution and the nature of our working relationship in chapter 1. Essam believed in my project and its importance before I did. He shared with me his genius for ethnography and wealth of knowledge about Cairo and its people. Our rich conversations over the course of this research continue to animate my mental world.

My debts to those with whom this research was conducted are immense. I could have accomplished nothing without the kindness and generosity of countless residents of el-Hirafiyeen and other neighborhoods of Cairo. Some took risks to speak openly about controversial matters. Even if I cannot thank them here by name because of concerns about privacy, I would like to note my gratitude to all of those in el-Hirafiyeen who were so kind as to spend many hours talking with me, and who welcomed me into their homes, workshops, micro-enterprises, and offices. I am equally grateful to all of those in USAID, Cairo; the Industrial Development Bank of Egypt; the National Bank for Development; the Governorate of Cairo; the Local Government of el-Salam; Environment Quality International; and Integrated Development Associates who spoke to me and offered important chances to understand more about their work and lives. Others in Cairo who offered assistance in various stages of this research also requested anonymity; to them I am grateful as well.

My expression of gratitude to Tomáš Mastnak comes last because he is

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

first. My debts to him go beyond thanks for his readings of, and comments on, countless versions of what became this book. Those readings have been so many, and his comments so extensive, that his thinking is woven into every page. He often knew what I wanted to say before I did, figured out how to say it when I could not, and always calmed me when I was desperate that I would never finish. I am grateful to Elijan and Martín Mastnak for lending me their pencils and pencil sharpeners during book revisions, and for making life such a joy.

To all those who influenced my work over the many years it has taken me to complete this book, and whom I forgot to mention here by name, I offer my gratitude and my apologies. Despite my countless debts to others, responsibility for remaining errors is mine alone.

