

Cairo: My City, Our Revolution by Ahdaf Soueif.
Bloomsbury 2012.

Ahdaf Soueif brought news of the revolution in Egypt and its impact on its people to the readers of the Guardian in 2011. She wrote powerful pieces through which they were able to understand the motivation of demonstrators, feel the fear engendered by the regime's forces, and share the euphoria when their goals appeared to have been met.

In Cairo: My City, Our Revolution, Ms Soueif brings together personal and public experiences, most significantly between January and February 2011. With a preface and an epilogue Cairo is divided into three sections: Eighteen Days: 25 January – 11 February; An Interruption: Eight Months Later: October 2011; The Eighteen Days Resumed: 1 February-12 February 2011. Undoubtedly, when the paperback is issued there will be a supplementary section on the presidential election that brought a representative of the Muslim Brotherhood to the presidential palace.

Readers will be well aware that the Arab Spring has passed on now to Syria, and in a far bloodier form than its Egyptian manifestation. Ahdaf Soueif's book will stand as a fine record of the most important days of the revolution in the premier country of the Arab world, which ultimately toppled an autocrat from power and gave that power back to the people.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh