I. Highly Recommended

Naguib Mahfouz, *Midaq Alley*. New York: Anchor Books / Random House, 1995. Rob says: “Many of you will be familiar with the work of Egypt’s Nobel Prize winning novelist Naguib Mahfouz, who is often, and I think aptly, compared with Dickens. *Midaq Alley* is one of his earlier works, and, unlike later Mahfouz novels, it’s of manageable length. My own favored way into different worlds, different cultures, is through novels, and this one is simply a superb entrée into the lives of ordinary Egyptians during WW II.” (PAPER, 304 Pp.)

Khaled Al Khamissi, *Taxi*. London: Aflame Books, 2008. Rob says: “And speaking of novels, this is at once your best and most enjoyable guide through the corruption and economic inequities which eventually prompted Egyptians, in January of 2011, to demand a new government. Originally written, uniquely, in colloquial Arabic rather than in more formal classical Arabic, *Taxi* is a collection of brief chapters, each purporting to record a conversation between the author and a taxi driver. Aside from its window into how most Egyptians lived, the novel also demonstrates the wry wit and humor for which Egyptians are so justly known.” (PAPER, ca. 200 pages)

Max Rodenbeck, *Cairo: The City Victorious*. New York: Knopf, 2000. Rob says: “I’ll admit to feeling some slight ambivalence about this volume. On the one hand, it’s a readable, page-turning survey of Cairo’s history and geography and culture over the entire span of the city known in classical Arabic as al-Qahira, “The Victorious.” On the other hand, Rodenbeck displays that characteristic and often irritating cynicism in which English travel writers seem to delight. I guess I just love Cairo too much to enjoy much belittling of time-honored customs and habits. Still, one learns an awful lot about Cairo and Egypt in 300 pages.” (PAPER, 300 Pp.)

II. Recommended

Bill Manley, *The Penguin Historical Atlas of Ancient Egypt*. New York: Penguin Books, 1996. Rob says: “If any of you love maps, as do I, you’re going to like this book. A constant frustration for all who begin to study the history of ancient Egypt is the initial baffling way in which Egypt’s capital cities, religious and administrative centers, and national boundaries shift over time. Even the names of cities, largely the result of Greek translations of much earlier Egyptian names, are confusingly similar. Thus, there is (north to south, or more properly, Lower Egypt to Upper Egypt) a Heliopolis, a Herakleopolis, a Hermopolis, and a Hierakonpolis. The many maps in Manley’s volume are of great help in tracing these shifts and these names. In addition, Manley includes brief chapters on other topics of great interest, e.g., pyramids, Egyptian language and writing, the Amarna Letters, and the Biban al-Moluk (Valley of the Kings).” (PAPER, 144 Pp.)

Ian Shaw, *Ancient Egypt: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Books, 2004. Rob says: “In some ways, recommending Shaw’s volume, in the already prized OUP ‘Very Short Introduction’ series, is somewhat redundant with Manley’s *Historical Atlas of Ancient Egypt*. Still, I find a real clue to learning to lie in repetition, so that reading two different accounts of, e.g., Old Kingdom History or Egyptian writing can be helpful. In addition, Shaw is among the deans of Egyptology today and his book, even as brief as it is, is among the most sophisticated available today. Finally, and as the title suggests, the book is very small and hence portable, so that you might easily bring this volume along on our trip.” (PAPER, 208 Pp.)
III. Further Reading


Naguib Mahfouz, *Palace Walk*, and other volumes in the *Cairo Trilogy* (Item EGY84, $32.00). Rob says: “I’ve noted above the delights one experiences in learning about the lives of ordinary Egyptians today in reading Mahfouz’s novels. Exploring the relevant sections of most good bookstores or of on-line sources will reveal to you many others of his novels, so if there is time, enjoy them.” (PAPER, 504 Pp.)

Ian Shaw, ed., *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. Rob says “This comprehensive book is as long and detailed as Shaw’s *Very Short Introduction* is not. But it’s very solid and much the most up-to-date history of ancient Egypt available today. Since the volume is edited by Shaw, individual chapters are written by a collection of Egyptologists, and the quality of the chapters varies. The chronology I will follow, and I’ll distribute a handy chronology during our trip, is that of Shaw’s volume.” (PAPER, 552 Pp.)