

The
SHAFIK GABR
Foundation



Chairman Shafik Gabr with daughter Malak Gabr and the Gabr Fellows at the Foundation's Dinner Reception in Cairo, Egypt - October 2022

ZEBRAS IN EGYPT

It was a most pleasant invitation. Sam (Samir) Metaini, a classmate and now a history professor at the University of Nevada was visiting Egypt and invited me to a roundtable discussion. The get-together included friends as well as a group of young university graduates from Egypt and the US.

Sam's a special friend, so I made the extra effort. Planning for Cairo traffic, I arrived downtown on time at 4 p.m. at the Diplomatic Club. The event was hosted by another dear friend, retired Ambassador Ahmed Soliman, a geopolitical veteran, having served in both the East and the West. A significant crowd – more than thirty people – had assembled before I entered the large, well-appointed conference room on the third floor. I circled a large square table with an eye-catching floral centrepiece looking for Sam and Ahmed, when I felt a tap on my shoulder. It was another classmate, Aly Shakankiri with his wife. Mona was with us at university, but two years younger. A happy surprise, Aly had been living in the UK for more than fifteen years and, I knew, had an established global business there.

As we renewed our bonds, Sam and Ahmed joined us. A buffet with coffee, tea, juices, cakes and biscuits lured us. Standing there was Amr Hashem, another old friend who owned the largest hospitality company in Egypt along with a dozen hotels in Cairo, the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. Energetic as always, he greeted us all warmly and introduced a lady beside him as Soha Ramadan - an experimental psychology major, who had studied anthropology and sociology, and was now doing research in Upper Egypt. Two young alumni came over to the buffet. The first one introduced himself as Rafaat Ibrahim, originally from Tanta, Egypt's fifth largest city. He was a computer engineer working for the Alexandria Port Authority. The second alumnus, a businesswoman running a service company, was Tamara Mohsen from Mansoura, capital of the Dakahlia Governorate. After a few minutes of general conversation, Sam called the meeting to order. I took a cup of tea and two cinnamon biscuits from the buffet. As I took a seat, I noticed a banner behind the speakers' podium: "Egypt: Today and Tomorrow." Sam explained, as a historian born in Egypt and living abroad, that he still had deep roots here and wanted to learn more. That is why he organized this event - to hear from young Egyptians in their twenties and thirties on their country's status quo and learn their insights about the future. He thanked Ambassador Soliman for hosting the event and passed the microphone to the moderator. The moderator introduced herself as Hend – no second name – a TV presenter, graduate of media studies and marketing, and an Egyptian-American national. She kicked off the meeting with questions that engaged the audience. The questions, answers, and comments were flowing rapidly, which reminded me of piranhas feasting: "How do you see Egypt's economy?" "Is Egypt safe from regional disruption?" "What about the Nile River and challenges from Ethiopia?"

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The discussion got heated at times as the participants offered energetic views and loud suggestions. We (the older generation) remained silent, listening and learning, at times awed by the participants' maturity and other times disappointed at their lack of vision.

The roundtable discussion closed with more questions than answers, but it was undoubtedly a great and positive exercise. Ahmed invited us to a second helping at the buffet. The older generation, three younger participants and the moderator joined up for an after-event discussion. Writing in a notepad, Sam asked: "What about foreign direct investment? How much does Egypt get?" Tamara said: "Egypt receives less than 5 billion dollars a year. A mere pittance - we need 20 billion at a minimum." Hend, the moderator, jumped in and said: "All of you know the problem - we have a severely dysfunctional social contract, causing total ineptness in our government. Endless approvals needed for everything - for setting up a company, opening a bank account, issuing a commercial register, paying taxes, registering assets, etc. These are all nightmare activities that take time and incredible patience." Hend went on: "Nasser's social contract was - you were born and entitled to free healthcare, free education, guaranteed government job and subsidized food, energy and services. Your cost was that the state had your vote. This social contract needs to be buried and a new one born for the 21st century based on competition, discipline and team work." Tamara said that whilst Hend was right, the fact of the matter remained that in all aspects of society we have declined in performance, much worse since the accursed, so-called Arab Spring. Soha said: "Both Hend and Tamara are right. Whilst Sisi is rebuilding the physical infrastructure at lightning speed, we need to rebuild the human society." Amr added: "It is not only upbringing and education, but also the need for a political message." Ahmed, expressionless, broke his silence: "What do you mean a political message?"

Amr stood up and said that at all the top levels of the government and the political echelons the message must be "We are one Egypt - we stand as one and fall as many. The message from the top must come in torrents that urge cooperation, efficiency, trust, honesty, discipline, conviction in Egypt's greatness and potential, and that we all work toward its success." His voice had risen, and you could see his deep conviction. As he paused, you could see emotion in his eyes as he went to refill his orange juice one more time. I filled the silence: "I lived during the defeat of the 1967 war when all global think tanks and international global war study institutes said Egypt cannot cross the canal where Israel had occupied Sinai. Israel built a pipeline across the east border of the canal to release napalm in the canal and start a blaze at a touch of a button if Egypt dared to send troops across. As if that was not enough, Israel built a 35-foot sand bank at the eastern shore of the canal, supported by artillery." I explained that, according to American and European military experts, the best estimate for casualties Egypt would incur if it dared to cross was 100,000 troops. "We crossed the canal and lost 2,000 brave soldiers. Vision, courage, discipline, and innovative execution was the answer. Moreover, Egyptian divers blocked the napalm pipe openings with cement. Using specially built high pressure pumps, Egyptian commandos opened gaps in the sand trap as military engineers built floating pontoons to allow for tanks and troops to cross, which they did. All of Sinai today is liberated and 100% Egyptian," I concluded with a flourish.

I looked at Soha and asked: "As a sociologist and psychologist, can you tell me why we are not today as we were in 1973?" Soha calmly answered: "The answer to your query is long and complicated, but the short answer is that the President and the minority have the vision, the President has the courage. However, today we have no discipline and very little innovative execution which sadly keeps us struggling against deep-thrusted ignorance and lack of knowledge."

Sam asked: "Any solutions?" I smiled and responded that we must start with the zebras. Some people smiled and others looked awkwardly at me. Mona looked at me with doe eyes, feeling sorry for me as if I was suffering from sunstroke. Sam asked me to explain what I meant, especially since Egypt has no zebras. "On the contrary," I said. "We have a huge number of zebra crossings at every road, city highway, and ring road, but they are all ignored. I believe that no democracy can rise without stability and security, and no country can rise without discipline. Our roads speak volumes, but nobody is listening." I explained that the day all pedestrians and drivers respect zebra crossings will be the day a vision has the opportunity to be implemented. "Without that," I added seriously, "we will continue to have half-baked solutions or worse."

"Yes," Tamara interjected, "we built great highways but we have rubbish on the pavements, we plant trees but we do not water them, we try to digitize government services but there are no capable or trained staff to run them." She sighed and added that we build amazing structures but we don't maintain them. "Discipline is indeed needed." Ahmed, fidgeting and looking at his watch, joked: "So the problem is with the zebras?" I responded that this is just the starting point because without the key tool to start the engine, we are spluttering, and time is not on our side.

As I was getting in my car and driving home, I truly felt burdened that we could not see the zebras and respect them as a launching point for discipline and its benefits, as without discipline, the tide is against us. Passing a toll station heading to my home I remembered what the Lee Kuan Yew, former prime minister of Singapore said: "A nation is great not by its size alone." Egypt is physically as big as France and has a population of 107 million - but it is "the will, the cohesion, the stamina, the discipline of its people" that creates success.

FELLOWS NEWS AND UPDATES



SARAH DERDOWSKI

2014 Gabr Fellow Sarah Derdowski is speaking at the 2022 C3E Women In Clean Energy Symposium And Awards: "Retaking The Helm: Steering Clean Energy Through Perilous Storms" on November 2 at the Texas A&M University's Bush School Of Government And Public Service In Washington DC.

At the 11th Annual U.S. C3E Women in Clean Energy Symposium & Awards, Sarah Derdowski and other key thought leaders will explore how humankind can steadily pursue sustainable energy goals through current and future challenges.

NOURHAN MOUSSA

Nourhan Mousa, 2014 Gabr Fellow and Researcher at the National Institute of Intellectual Property participated in the World Intellectual Property forum in Bangkok, Thailand on October 10 – 12 with international experts from across the globe. She participated as a speaker with topic "Digital IP rights in the cyberspace," sharing the challenges and the international cooperation opportunities and referring to more serious cooperation to fight piracy and infringement using technology.



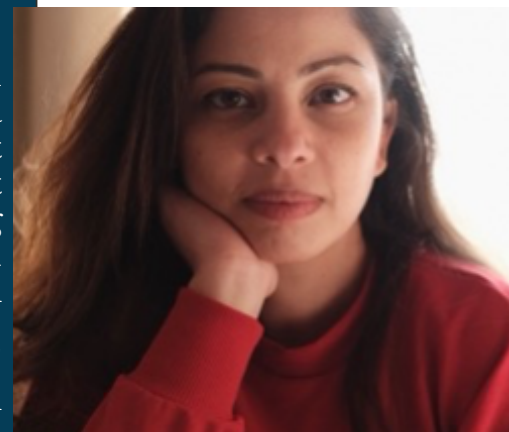
FABRICE GUERRIER

2018 Gabr Fellow and a Haitian-American Science Fiction and Fantasy Writer, Fabrice Guerrier signed with Trident Media Group (TMG), a leading literary agency based in New York City with Literary Agent Mark Gottlieb.

TMG has consistently been ranked as "The #1 literary agency in the United States." Fabrice has been a long-time advocate for underrepresented creative writers and voices from diverse backgrounds especially through the work with the LA based sci-fi and fantasy production house he founded in 2018 called Syllble.

MARWA ABDALLA

2018 Gabr Fellow Marwa Abdalla is currently paying full attention to her career as a film producer. She is now a producer at "DayDream Art Production," the first independent Egyptian film production company that produced several successful Egyptian films, including "Factory Girl," the Egyptian entry for Oscars 2014, directed by the late Egyptian director Mohamed Khan. At DayDream Art Production, Marwa is producing several film projects, such as the feature film "Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner," which participated last September in the 44th Annual Gotham Week Project Market at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.



East-West: The Art of Dialogue

2012-2022: Ten Years of Bridge Building between American and Egyptian Leaders of Tomorrow

Shafik Gabr Foundation Dinner Reception



Chairman Shafik Gabr with daughter Malak Gabr and the Gabr Fellows at the Foundation's Dinner Reception in Cairo, Egypt - October 2022

On Saturday, 15th October 2022, Chairman Shafik Gabr, his wife Gigi and their daughter Malak hosted a Dinner Reception at ARTOC Headquarters in Cairo, Egypt to celebrate the Foundation's ten-year initiative *East-West: The Art of Dialogue*, and to welcome the 2022 Gabr Fellows to Egypt.

Over 190 guests came together to celebrate the Gabr Fellows' past, present and future, as the Foundation continues to promote greater mutual understanding and friendship between Egypt and the United States.

Among the distinguished guests were HE Amr Moussa, Former Secretary-General of the Arab League; Ambassador Hrachya Poladian (Armenia), Ambassador Dominic Goh (Singapore), Ambassador Antonio Patriota (Brazil), Ambassador Francois Cornet d'Elzius (Belgium), Ambassador Amjad Al-Adaileh (Jordan), Ambassador Arturas Gailiunas (Lithuania), Ambassador Michele Quaroni (Italy), Ambassador Abdullah bin Nassir Al Rahbi (Oman), Ambassador Salih Mutlu Sen (Turkey), Ambassador Axel Wabenhorst (Australia), Ambassador Polly Ioannou (Cyprus), and Ambassador Daniel Rubinstein (Charge d'Affaires of the US Embassy). Among the distinguished guests was also Dr. Ahmad Dallal, President of the American University in Cairo, and Prof. Ahmed Farouk Ghoneim, Executive Director, The Authority of the National Museum.

The 2022 iteration of the Gabr Fellowship took place 8 – 18 October in Egypt, and the Fellows are travelling to the the US 28 November – 10 December. The travel in Egypt and the US includes an intensive program consisting of high-level meetings and constant face-to-face dialogue with peers and distinguished speakers. The Fellows conclude the program with collaborative projects that take into account their new and expanded global views.

QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH: A PULSE OF THE GABR FELLOWSHIP COMMUNITY

As the Gabr Fellows enter into leadership roles—in business, diplomacy, government, finance, and more—they will continue to grapple with significant challenges, magnified by an increased pace in technological advancement, the potential for ramped up global inequalities, and changes in governance and economic structures. To better understand the pulse of the Gabr Fellowship community and to begin to articulate substantive dialogue, the Foundation polls the Fellows each month on the key issues facing their respective countries and the global community at large.

1.) For US Fellows: Who do you think will win the House Majority in the upcoming November's US elections?

Democrats - 23%
Republicans - 62%
I don't know - 15%

2.) For Egyptian Fellows: Major banks have recently imposed limits on foreign exchange use in a move to conserve hard currency. Do you agree with this strategy?

Yes - 16%
No - 34%
I don't know - 50%

3.) Are you going to get the next C-19 vaccine booster when it becomes available?

Yes - 62%
No - 25%
I don't know - 13%

4.) Do you think that religious institutions should be tax-exempt?

Yes - 22%
No - 69%
I don't know - 9%

Stay tuned for next month's 'questions of the month' and the Gabr Fellows' takes on current events, as our community of future leaders consider the most pressing challenges of today and tomorrow.

Shafik Gabr Foundation Launches 8th Round of Leadership Programme

by: Menna Farouk, 2017 Gabr Fellow, *The Egyptian Gazette*

October 2022

The Shafik Gabr Foundation launched on Saturday night the *East-West: Art of Dialogue* programme for the year 2022 with the attendance of several ambassadors, politicians, members of parliament and an array of other public figures.

The Gabr Fellowship programme is being held after two years of suspension due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The *East-West: Art of Dialogue* is an initiative launched by one of Egypt's top businessmen Mohamed Shafik Gabr with a view to bridging gaps between the peoples of the Arab world and the West, particularly the US, through boosting cultural exchanges among young emerging leaders on both sides, in business, politics, the media, science, the arts, engineering and civil society.

The initiative launched its eighth round this year, allowing 20 young leaders from Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the U.S. to speak to top government officials,

private sector leaders, intellectuals, politicians, economists and celebrities in Egypt and the US.

The Gabr Fellowship seeks to enhance relations between the United States and Egypt by making room for cross-cultural dialogue and co-operation over projects. The Fellowship's carefully selected participants work on these projects together, in order to promote the goal of the programme: building bridges.

Egyptian businessman Gabr gave a speech during a dinner reception held at the Foundation's premises, highlighting the importance of building bridges between Egypt and the Arab world on one hand, and the US on the other hand.

Gabr said that the Foundation is committed to supporting young people in order for them to become enlightened leaders in the future.

The Fellowship has been running since 2013 and is made up of 20 to 24 fellows, half of them American and half Egyptian, with each side equally divided between men and women.

Sometimes, the Fellowship includes other nationalities, with one participant from the United Kingdom having been included in the 2015 programme, and a participant from Lebanon included in the 2016 programme as well as a participant from Saudi Arabia in the 2022 programme.

To read the full article,

[CLICK HERE](#)



Disclaimer: The views presented in this article are the author's alone and do not represent the opinion of the Foundation.

ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP

Launched in 2012, the Gabr Fellowship programme helps to connect and build constructive relationships between future leaders between the ages of 24 and 35. Each year, the Fellowship consists of 20-24 Fellows, half of which are men and the other half women, with an equal distribution between participants from the United States and Egypt. The Fellowship also accepts applicants from Jordan, Lebanon, France and the United Kingdom. Fellows represent a variety of sectors, including the arts, law, finance, tech, non- profits, and entrepreneurship – both business and social.

The mission of the Fellowship is to promote greater mutual understanding by building bridges between the two cultures by instigating dialogue and the exchange of ideas between emerging leaders from the United States and Egypt. Together, they explore one another's cultures, political realities, business trends and their goals for the future.



2018 Gabr Fellows visit the World Bank, Washington DC

In addition to engaging in deep discussions with key stakeholders from both countries in business, government, academia, religion, science, tech and finance, all Fellows are invited to form multinational teams to complete an action project. These projects empower the Fellows as inter-cultural ambassadors, amplifying the Fellowship's reach and impact.

Ultimately, through hands-on activities, rigorous discussions, cultural site visits, and the collaborative action projects, the Fellows have a greater understanding of both countries and become part of an international cohort dedicated to building a more equitable and peaceful world.

The Gabr Fellows have acquired a greater understanding of both Egypt and the United States and the challenges faced by both communities. Having served as cultural as well as linguistic ambassadors to one another, they then return home to play the role of diplomat, introducing Egyptians and Americans to a people, a culture and a future never before explored in this way.

Together, they are creating the legacy of 'The Gabr Fellowship': an international cohort dedicated to pursuing cooperative, collective solutions to their regions' most pressing issues.



Gabr Fellows with Egypt's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister Sameh Shoukry



Gabr Fellows take on the Pyramids

SUPPORT THE FOUNDATION

The Shafik Gabr Foundation invites you to invest in the future and partner with the Foundation using one or more of the following means:

Sponsor a Fellow - Individuals have the opportunity to nominate a Fellow and if selected, sponsor their participation in the Gabr Fellowship. Sponsors will be recognised in all Foundation publications, marketing materials, and at all events.

Corporate patron - Corporations can nominate Fellows for participation in the Fellowship Foundation and sponsor their participation on a company-wide level. The company will be listed in all publications, the logo will be presented on the Foundation's homepage and be given visibility at all events in the United States and Egypt.

Unrestricted support - A general operating grant can empower the Foundation to continue to invest in innovative platforms to facilitate ongoing dialogue between the East and West. From new technologies to expanding the programme to more countries and a greater number of participants, the Fellowship can create a broader multiregional impact.

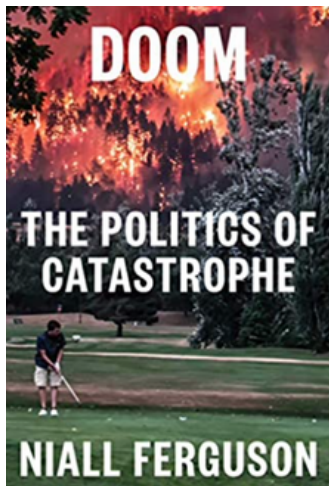
To support the Foundation, visit

<https://www.eastwestdialogue.org/fellowship/how-to-support/> or

CLICK HERE



Gabr Foundation Reading Corner



The Foundation Reading Corner encourages Fellows to critique the books that have been recommended to them in each issue. For this issue, Mr. Gabr recommends *Doom: The Politics of Catastrophe* by Niall Ferguson and *The Age of AI: And Our Human Future* by Henry Kissinger, Eric Schmidt and Daniel Huttenlocher.

Drawing from multiple disciplines, including economics, cliodynamics, and network science, *Doom* offers not just a history but a general theory of disasters, showing why our ever more bureaucratic and complex systems are getting worse at handling them. *Doom* is the lesson of history that the West as a whole needs to learn, if we want to handle the next crisis better, and to avoid the ultimate doom of irreversible decline.

In *The Age of AI*, three leading thinkers have come together to consider how AI will change our relationships with knowledge, politics, and the societies in which we live. The Age of AI is a roadmap to our present and our future, an era unlike any that has come before.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR OCTOBER FELLOWS!



Hadeel Hassan
2016 Gabr Fellow
October 1



Michael Matthiesen
2017 Gabr Fellow
October 4



John Ryan
2016 Gabr Fellow
October 5



Allison Feikes
2018 Gabr Fellow
October 9



Ibrahim Hammouda
2017 Gabr Fellow
October 14



Magda Kura
2015 Gabr Fellow
October 24



Thomas Hanna
2016 Gabr Fellow
October 25



Stephanie Cate
2014 Gabr Fellow
October 29

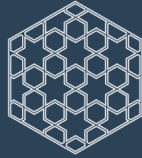


Leah Moschella
2015 Gabr Fellow
October 31

October

THE GABR FELLOWSHIP

Monthly Newsletter



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For more information on the Shafik Gabr Foundation and its
East-West: The Art of Dialogue Initiative,
please visit the website <https://eastwestdialogue.org/>

For earlier itineraries of the program, please see the previous years' reports at
<https://eastwestdialogue.org/fellowship/brochures/>



Ludwig Deutsch, *Reading the Letter*
Oil on panel
The Shafik Gabr Collection

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