This book presents an alternative story of the 2011 Egyptian revolution by revisiting Egypt’s moment of decolonization in the mid-twentieth century. *Anticolonial Afterlives in Egypt* explores the country’s first postcolonial project, arguing that the enduring afterlives of anticolonial politics, connected to questions of nationalism, military rule, capitalist development, and violence, are central to understanding political events in Egypt today. Through an imagined conversation between Antonio Gramsci and Frantz Fanon – two foundational theorists of anticapitalism and anticolonialism – *Anticolonial Afterlives in Egypt* focuses on issues of resistance, revolution, mastery, and liberation to show how the Nasserist project, created by Gamal Abdel Nasser and the Free Officers in 1952, remains the only instance of hegemony in modern Egyptian history. In suggesting that Nasserism was made possible through local, regional, and global anticolonial politics, even as it reproduced colonial ways of governing that continue to reverberate into Egypt’s present, this interdisciplinary study thinks through questions of travelling theory, global politics, and resistance and revolution in the postcolonial world.

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The Global Middle East

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For my parents, Mamdouh and Marlie, and my sister Nancy
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This was a difficult book to finish. It left me feeling as though some moments, some events, simply can’t be captured in academic prose. At times, trying to understand, analyse, and make sense of revolutionary shifts felt like an injustice to emotive experiences, to the hopes, dreams, and setbacks millions of people went through and continue to go through. In some ways, the book remains unfinished precisely because of my doubts around making sense of or understanding monumental events. Because this book explores revolutionary loss, juxtaposing it alongside its twin, revolutionary hope, it is one that is always open to interpretation, and I hope that what is written within these pages is not the final story of revolution in Egypt.

In other ways, it was important to me to think through a story of revolution in Egypt that centred afterlives and how they reverberate into the present in the most unexpected ways. This is my humble contribution to the broader project of recovering the centrality and emotive significance of the anticolonial moment, made up of much more than state-led projects that came to dominate the postcolonial world. My sense is that the afterlives of anticolonialism have been powerful enough to seep into and structure the present. The futures that were imagined and the ones that were ultimately created can tell us a lot about where we are today, where we came from, and where we might go.

Despite the focus on Egyptian anticolonial afterlives, this story could not have been told without the events of 2011. Those momentous days illustrate just how entangled revolutionary hope and revolutionary loss always are and how long it can take to think through, feel, and write about what takes place during moments of revolutionary change. It was often eerie writing about anticolonial revolution at a time when Egypt was going through another revolution; I realize now that it was not a coincidence these two moments felt connected.

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