



## **An Egyptian in the Swinging Sixties: The Diaries of Waguih Ghali: Volume 1: 1964-66**

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In 1968 Egyptian novelist and political exile Waguih Ghali committed suicide in the London flat of his editor, friend, and sometime lover, Diana Athill. Ghali left behind six notebooks of diaries that for decades were largely inaccessible to the public. *An Egyptian in the Swinging Sixties* is the first publication of its kind of the journals, casting fascinating light on a likeable and highly enigmatic literary personality.

Waguih Ghali (1930?-69), author of the acclaimed novel *Beer in the Snooker Club*, was a libertine, sponger, and manic depressive, but also an extraordinary writer, a pacifist, and a savvy political commentator.

Covering the last four years of his life, Ghali's *Diaries* offer an exciting glimpse into London's swinging sixties. Moving from West Germany to London and Israel, and back in memory to Egypt and Paris, the entries boast of endless drinking, countless love affairs, and of mingling with the dazzling intellectuals of London, but the *Diaries* also critique the sinister political circles of Jerusalem and Cairo, describe Ghali's trepidation at being the first Egyptian allowed into Israel after the 1967 War, and confess in detail the pain and difficulties of writing and exile.

Including two interviews conducted by Deborah Starr, with celebrated literary editor Diana Athill, OBE, and with Ghali's cousin, former director of UNICEF-Geneva, Samir Basta, the *Diaries* bring together those most familiar with Ghali's life and work, and offer a fresh take on a distinctive author and a vibrant decade.

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