



Baladi Women of Cairo: Playing With an Egg and a Stone

Evelyn A. Early

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Traditional, urban Egyptian women - baladi women - extol themselves with the proverb, "A baladi woman can play with an egg and a stone without breaking the egg". Evelyn Early illustrates this and other expressions of baladi women's self-identity by observing and recording their everyday discourse and how these women - who consider themselves destitute yet savvy - handle such matters as housing, work, marriage, religion, health and life in general. Based on more than three years of research in Bulaq Abu'Ala - a jammed popular quarter north of the fashionable Nile-side hotel district of Cairo - Early's work reveals important cultural themes by minimizing the reflective gaze of the researcher and allowing spontaneous discourse and narrative recountings to "catch" culture in action.

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