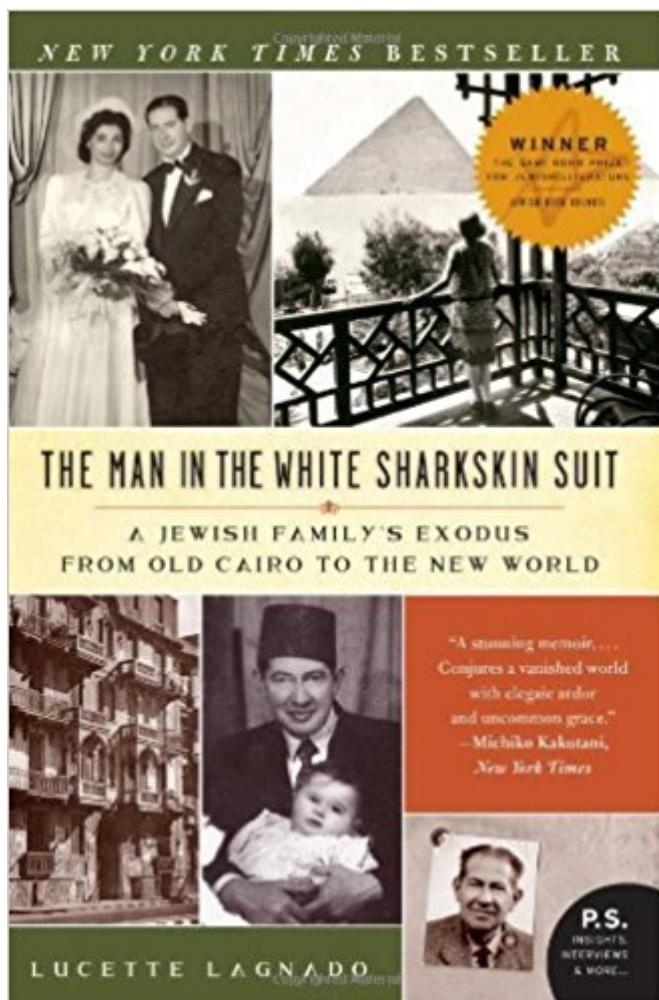


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# The Man In The White Sharkskin Suit: A Jewish Family's Exodus From Old Cairo To The New World (P.S.)



## **Synopsis**

Lucette Lagnado's father, Leon, is a successful Egyptian businessman and boulevardier who, dressed in his signature white sharkskin suit, makes deals and trades at Shepherd's Hotel and at the dark bar of the Nile Hilton. After the fall of King Farouk and the rise of the Nasser dictatorship, Leon loses everything and his family is forced to flee, abandoning a life once marked by beauty and luxury to plunge into hardship and poverty, as they take flight for any country that would have them. A vivid, heartbreaking, and powerful inversion of the American dream, Lucette Lagnado's unforgettable memoir is a sweeping story of family, faith, tradition, tragedy, and triumph set against the stunning backdrop of Cairo, Paris, and New York. Winner of the Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature and hailed by the New York Times Book Review as a "brilliant, crushing book" and the New Yorker as a memoir of ruin "told without melodrama by its youngest survivor," *The Man in the White Sharkskin Suit* recounts the exile of the author's Jewish Egyptian family from Cairo in 1963 and her father's heroic and tragic struggle to survive his "riches to rags" trajectory.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

A gripping story. Once I started to read this book, instantly it caught my interest, I could not let it

down until I have finished reading the entire book. A deeply moving biography. This book attracts the interest of the American public who is always avid to read about immigration to America. The book does not limit the story on what happened in Cairo Egypt, but also on what happened in America. About half of the book relates the many difficulties and the hard life of the family in Brooklyn New York. In my opinion, the key sentence in the book is what Leon Lagnado the father of the writer, said to the American social worker Sylvia Kirschner: "We are Arab, madame," Leon liked to listen to the songs of the famous female Arabic singer Om Kalthum and once as a handsome young man was her lover. Leon spoke Arabic with his mother Zarifa from Aleppo as with his siblings, and also was proud to wear the tarbouch like king Farouk, the last king of Egypt. According to Joel Benin's book: The dispersion of Egyptian Jewry, and according to Andre Aciman's book: Out of Egypt, the majority of the Jews of Egypt mainly spoke French at home and used a very rudimentary Arabic language in order to carry out basic communications with the servants and the local population in the markets and shops. Leon Lagnado who prayed in Hebrew, spoke English with a perfect British accent with the British army officers in Cairo during WWII, French with his wife and other Jews, was according to his own definition an Arab Jew because he also spoke fluently Arabic (his mother tongue) without any foreign accent, was also able to absorb the native Egyptian mentality or as we say in Arabic: "Ibn balad Asli" and that's precisely what makes this book so attractive to Jews and Arabs readers alike.

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