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"A force of legend in Egypt." **Bidoun**

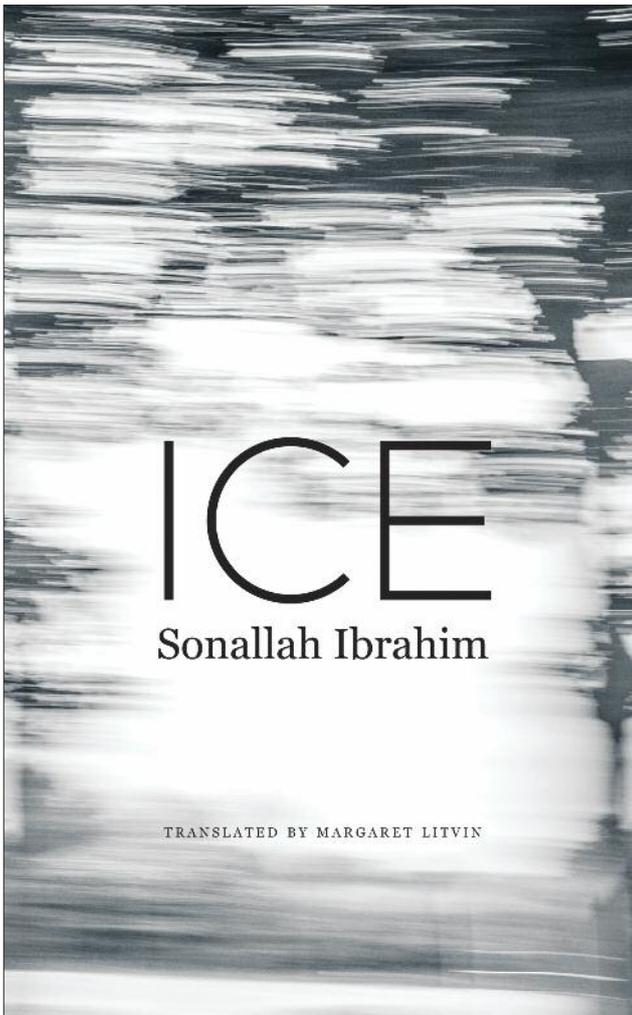
"One of Egypt's most artistically principled and politically engaged writers."

**Ursula Lindsey, *The National***

"One of the Arab world's most distinguished novelist... an intellectual who thoroughly understands the price and value of freedom."

**Sarnia Mehrez, *Al-Ahram***

"... *Ice* is a curious missive from a partly real, partly imagined past to a generation awakening to hope and upheaval—as well as the possibility of dashed illusions." **4Columns**



# Ice

SONALLAH IBRAHIM

*Translated by* Margaret Litvin

The year is 1973. An Egyptian historian, Shukri, pursues a year of non-degree graduate studies in Moscow, the presumed heart of the socialist utopia. Through his eyes, the reader receives a guided tour of the sordid stagnation of Brezhnev-era Soviet life: intra-Soviet ethnic tensions; Russian retirees unable to afford a tin of meat; a trio of drunks splitting a bottle of vodka on the pavement; a Kirgiz roommate who brings his Russian girlfriend to live in his four-person dormitory room; black-market Arab embassy officials; liberated but insecure Russian women; and Arab students' debates about the geographically distant October 1973 War. Shukri records all this in the same numbly factual style familiar to fans of Sonallah Ibrahim's *That Smell*, punctuating it with the only redeeming sources of beauty available: classical music LPs, newly acquired Russian vocabulary, achingly beautiful women and strong Georgian tea.

Based on Ibrahim's own experience studying at the All-Russian Institute of Cinematography in Moscow from 1971 to 1973, *Ice* offers a powerful exploration of Arab confusion, Soviet dysfunction and the fragility of leftist revolutionary ideals.

**Sonallah Ibrahim** is one of Egypt's best-loved contemporary novelists. He spent five years in political prison from 1959 to 1964. His works available in English include *The Committee* (2001), *That Smell and Notes from Prison* (2003), *Zaat* (2004), *Stealth* (2014) and *Beirut, Beirut* (2015).

**Margaret Litvin** is associate professor of Arabic and comparative literature at Boston University.

## FICTION

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JUST PUBLISHED

# *A Significant Year*

ABDALLAH SAAF

*Translated by David Alvarez*

On the eve of the 2007 general elections in Morocco, writer, academic, and former cabinet minister Abdallah Saaf embarked on several road trips across the country to get a feel for how its citizens had fared since Mohammed VI's accession to the throne.

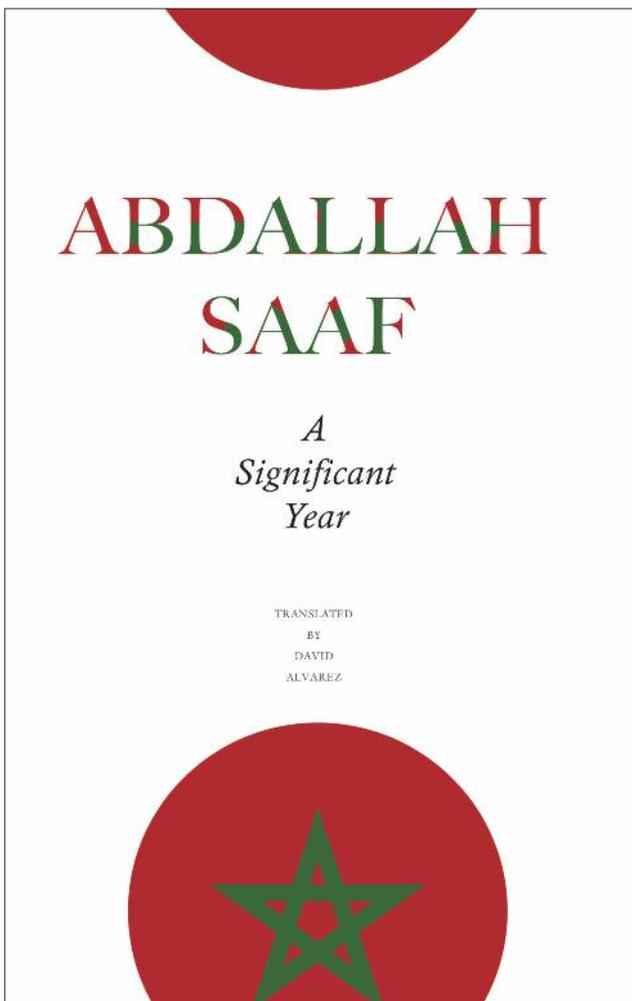
*A Significant Year* is the result: an analysis of the political and sociological state of the Moroccan nation on the eve of a crucial moment in the post-Hassan II period, but also a travelogue that describes what the author saw and heard on his travels in the summer months leading up to the epochal vote. Through Saaf's eyes, we see the country's varied regions and its urban and rural landscapes. We meet Moroccans from all walks of life, such as a waiter at a favorite cafe, a car-park attendant who recognizes the author from TV, and fellow writer and intellectual Abdelkadir Khatibi. Behind the deceptive simplicity of the book's narrative structure, readers will find in *A Significant Year* an insightful and nuanced portrayal of modern Morocco's many complexities.

Former Minister of Education in the Moroccan government (1998 to 2004), **Abdallah Saaf** is a professor of Political sciences at Mohammed V Rabat University, director of the Research Center for Studies in the Social Sciences (CERSS), and founder of the Moroccan Political Science Association. Prof. Saaf is the author of several works in political science and sociology. Most recently, he has authored a historical novel, *Le conquérant de l'empire imaginaire*. *A Significant Year* is the first of his books to be translated into English.

**David Alvarez** is a professor of English and an affiliate of the Middle East Studies Program at Grand Valley State University, where he teaches comparative topics in contemporary world literature.

**MEMOIR / POLITICAL SCIENCE**

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