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# Beyond the Pyramids in Cairo

A PHOTO ESSAY

*by Ryan Littman-Quinn*

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HIS PAST AUGUST, I TRAVELED to Egypt for two weeks to visit my girlfriend who was studying Arabic and interning at a newspaper in Cairo. The following collection of photos is a small sample of the hundreds that we took during our unforgettable time in the beautiful and fascinating country.

In compiling my final selections for this contest, I realized that McDonald's has a coincidental presence scattered throughout my photo-essay. In small but noticeable ways, globalization has left its print upon Egypt. As I examined the collection more closely, I realized that there were also distinct symbols of modernity and ancient culture in most of the photos. Old and modern-day Egypt differ in so many ways, and these photos express that juxtaposition visually.

The effects of globalization are evident in Egypt—from McDonald's trash in centuries-old mosques, to satellite dishes sharing the skyline with ancient minarets, to locals learning other languages to attract tourist customers. It is up to the reader whether these photos evidence the defilement of a legendary ancient world or the harmonious coexistence of past and present. Either way, globalization is making our world much smaller.

\*I would like to dedicate this photo-essay to my parents and Meghan Michael.





Egyptian men escaping the sun in Al Azhar Mosque in Cairo. Like other mosques, the Al Azhar Mosque, built in 975 AD, provides free, clean water. Notice that the man in the foreground has just finished his McDonald's meal and his trash is on the ground next to him.



A view of Cairo's skyline from the stunning Al Azhar park. The only rooftops absent of satellite dishes are the ancient minarets scattered across the horizon. Networks broadcasting from around the world can be picked up by anyone with a satellite.











**ABOVE:** Egyptians selling food on the streets of Islamic Cairo. Egyptian merchants learn certain basic pleasantries and sales phrases in many languages to engage tourists. **BELOW:** A local boy takes a break from peddling tourists near The Pyramids of Giza to have a cigarette and rest his camel.





An Egyptian man snoozing under a tree in a park next to the Nile in Aswan. Several yards from him is another McDonald's, across the street from one of the many unfinished buildings in Cairo.









We got lost in the back streets of the poverty ridden 'real' Cairo and stumbled across this Egyptian boy who attempted to give us directions. Over the years, many buildings in the area have been damaged by natural disasters, vandalism and attacks; few are ever fixed or renovated.