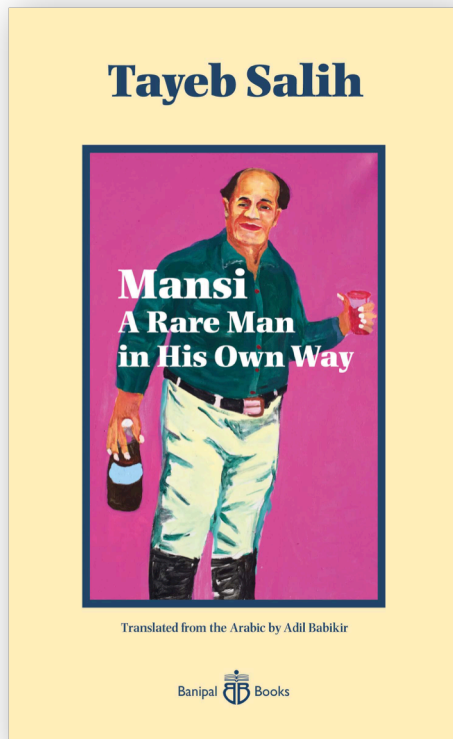


Mansi: A Rare Man in His Own Way

by **Tayeb Salih**



Tayeb Salih is internationally known for his classic novel *Season of Migration to the North*. With humour, wit and erudite poetic insights, Salih shows another side in this affectionate memoir of his exuberant and irrepressible friend Mansi Yousif Bastawrous, sometimes known as Michael Joseph and sometimes as Ahmed Mansi Yousif. Playing Hardy to Salih's Laurel, Mansi takes centre stage among memorable 20th-century arts and political figures, including Samuel Beckett, Margot Fonteyn, Omar Sharif, Arnold Toynbee, Richard Crossman and even the Queen, but always with Salih's poet "Master" al-Mutanabbi ready with an adroit comment. Adil Babikir, Sudanese like Salih, has written an introduction to the memoir, as well as producing a fine translation that retains the freshness and flavour of the original and aims to share glimpses of that beauty with the English reader.

Though Mansi was no person of note, **Tayeb Salih** said of him: "He was important in the eyes of a few, including myself, who accepted him as he was and loved him regardless. He was a man who had traversed life's short journey in leaps and bounds, occupied more space than had been allocated for him, and caused quite a clamour within the realm of his existence."

"This is a flavourful and entertaining memoir of Salih's friendship with a shape-shifting, rule-breaking character who treated life as an "endless laugh". His picaresque portrait of the Egyptian-born writer, actor, teacher and adventurer known as "Mansi" abounds in high spirits, tall stories, character sketches and outlandish plot-twists." **Boyd Tonkin**

"Part of the allure of Salih's non-fiction comes from his skilful employment of fiction-writing techniques. But it is also derived from rich references to Arabic classic literature, which are seamlessly woven into the fabric of his texts. Drawing on an almost inexhaustible repertoire, Salih adeptly uses historical anecdotes, philosophical reflections, and poetry to add depth and eloquence to the memoir." **Adil Babikir**

Translator: Adil Babikir is a Sudanese translator and writer, based in the UAE. His translations include *Modern Sudanese Poetry* (2019); *The Jungo: Stakes of the Earth* by Abdelaziz Baraka Sakin (2015); *Literary Sudans: an Anthology of Literature from Sudan and South Sudan* (2016).

First English edition • Paperback 978-0-9956369-8-9 • eBook 978-0-9956369-9-6

Memoir • 198 x 125 mm • 184pp • publication date: 27 April 2020

To request a review copy, email Margaret@banipal.co.uk