

Handicrafts in Egypt

Are We on the Right Track?

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Let us start by a question:

- Are machine-made products a threat to handicraft?

Intrinsic Characteristics of Handicrafts

- Small scale; Niche Market
- Associated with a cultural heritage
- Reflect the motifs and designs of a region
- Clear story behind it – whether from heritage point of view or from the struggle/aspiration of the artisans behind it.
- Usually have a strong community connection!

Size of Market and Production Capacity

Example: Persian Rugs

"A master weaver is someone who invents new designs, new techniques, new ways of putting colors together, and he will weave only 15 to 20 rugs in a lifetime. Some of the bigger rugs can take more than 60 years to finish."

- By 2010, just before the latest round of sanctions were reinstated, Persian rug exports to the U.S. came to around \$80 million a year, or 16 percent of Iran's total shipments.
- Inside Iran, sales of rugs are slightly greater than outside the country, so total revenue is around \$700 million to \$800 million a year.



The Persian Rug Trade Is Back in Business, Newsweek Magazine, 2/21/2016

<https://www.newsweek.com/persian-rugs-iran-sanctions-428789>

Mis-positioning of the product: A handicraft should never be treated as a mass product!

Examples:

- Competing with the Chinese!
- Selling handmade furniture to IKEA!

A Map of Handicrafts in Egypt – It matches a touristic map of Egypt!



The Touristic Boost

Example of Turkish rugs – cooperation with cruises

- [Kusadasi harbour](#), [Ephesus shore excursion](#), they will usually include a **free rug demonstration at the very end**.
- Demonstration about Turkish Oriental Rugs **colors and motifs** and Turkish Oriental rugs **materials** used in rug making, as well as what is the difference between **Turkish pile** rugs and **Turkish kilims**.



Turkish Rug Buying Guide for Cruisers

<http://www.mediterranean-cruise-ports-easy.com/turkish-rug.html>

The story behind the product: The artisans!



Fair Trade Egypt – The artisans



[http://www.ask-](http://www.ask-mag.com/2014/5/design-that-makes-a-difference)

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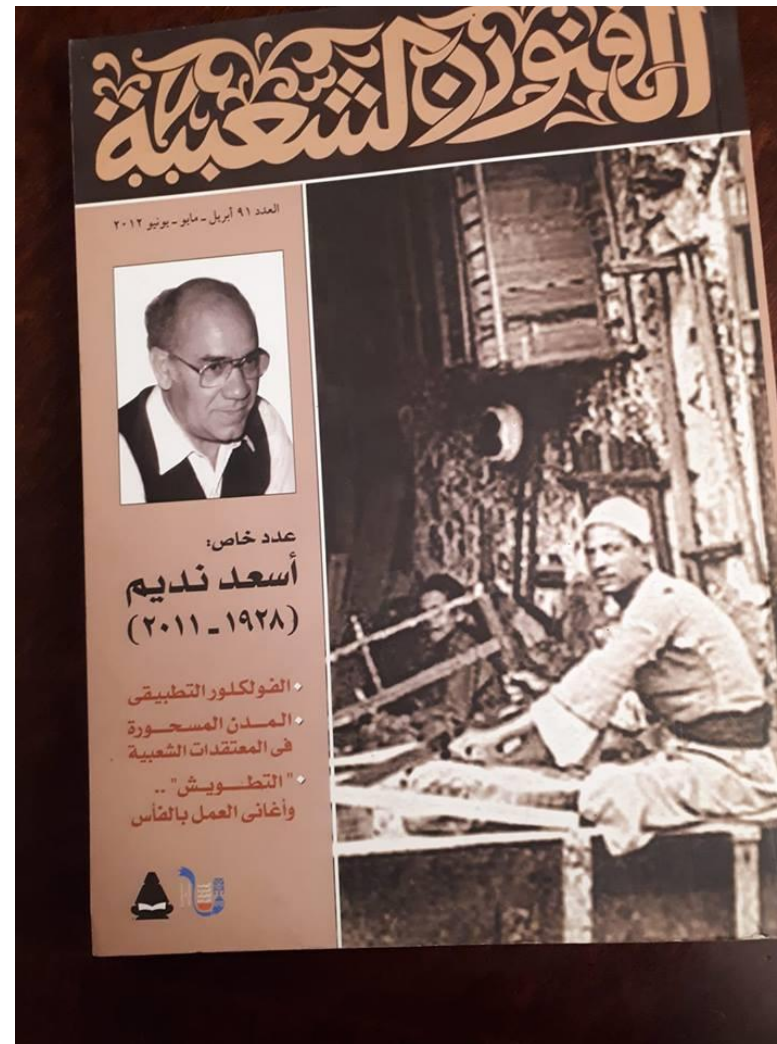


<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/32/98/116862/Folk/Folk-Arts/All-shades-of-Ra-Fair-Trade-Egypt-takes-traditiona.aspx>



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Research to Support Handicrafts



R&D: Inspiration from History: Pharaonic Furniture at the Louvre



Glass artifacts from History: A glass fish from the British Museum!



https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x6rflik?fbclid=IwAR24qdaAgXsfkeqeGsv9wSJ_pga8f2fOhr01GqG1kGis7mn-XQPibOHYjhs

Watch starting at minute 28, how a replica can be made ...

The forgotten dimension: The Community

- Examples of Saqia abou Shaara, Siwa, New Valley, etc.
- Create community platforms to design, source, produce and distribute the handicrafts.
- The social impact of a community platform!

Thank you