



Al Amin Stud

The Return and the Renaissance of the
Dahman Shahwan Strain to Egypt

■ *by Tarek Hamza and Monika Savier*

*“If I could choose only one strain
to keep my stud farm going,
I would choose Al Dahmah!”*

(Ali Pasha Sherif, Cairo 1880)



in Cairo





Al Farabi Mennatallah

Al Farabi Mennatallah tracing on the sire line to Ruminaja Ali and on the dam line to Serenity Sonbolah

Al Dahmah's Legacy

It is thanks to the breeders Mohamed Amin and Peter Gross that Al Dahmah's legacy has now regained a foothold in Egypt and that for a period of almost 20 years now, a substantial herd of horses, most of which are descendants of this mare, have always had a home in Al Amin Stud.

Ali Pasha Sherif (1834 - 1897) was an Egyptian government official and a renowned breeder of Arabian horses during the late 19th century. In December 1860, Ali Pasha Sherif purchased approximately 30 horses of the original Abbas Pasha I stock, ultimately owning four hundred horses by 1873. The love of Ali Pasha Sherif for his mare Al Dahmah, 140 years ago, was not unfounded. She was not only a desert mare of the best Bedouin breeding and of noble descent; no she was a desert flower who founded her own

dynasty, which spread all over the world through her granddaughters Sabah and Farida. The Bloodstock offspring of Abbas Pasha I and Ali Pasha Sherif were the later foundation mares and stallions of the Royal Agriculture Society (RAS), which was later renamed the Egyptian Agricultural Organization (EAO).

In the state stud EL ZAHRAA these horses found a new home from the 1950ies until today. But the noble Dahman Shahwan horses were mostly exported to the USA and Germany in the 1960ies. These bloodlines contributed to emphasize the importance of Egyptian Bloodstock of Arabians. Too late it was recognized in Cairo that this gap in the stud farm was not so easy to close. The loss was painful for the new generations of breeders in the land of the Straight Egyptians. But thanks to the transnational breeding cooperation of

Borhan Al Amin
(*Shaah El Kharafi x Bint Omneyah*
El Hayah)





Mohamed Amin and Peter Gross, the genetic pool, offspring of the old noble lines from the century before last, came back to Cairo after almost 50 years in the diaspora in the USA and Germany.

Not only the pure Dahman Shahwan breeding was now continued, but also the successful combination of Dahman Shahwan and Saklawi lines are part of the breeding strategies at Al Amin Stud in the desert around of Cairo. The stud has accepted the challenge to support the preservation of the heritage of the Egyptian kings. Al Amin stud wants to continue the Egyptian tradition of pure breeding of beauty, nobility and performance.

Adam Al Amin

*(Amal Al khaled x Assialah Al Amin)
is a very promising colt, descending
from the family of Omneyah El Hayah
and tracing back to Mobebe II*





Salman Al Marbat
(Ezz Ezzain x Ghazallah) is a stallion at the stud tracing back to Bint El Bataa family





Moheeb Al Amin
(*Moheeb Al Amin x Mashuga Al Amin*)



Monafes Al Amin
(*Sheikh Mabboub x Molesta I*)



Asbaab Al Amin
(*Amal Al Khaled x Ahlam Al Amin*)



Bint Omneyah Al Amin
(Al Nakeeb x Omneyah El Hayah)



Meeram Al Amin
(Amal Al Khaled x Mariya Al Amin)



Mazzika Al Amin
(Amal Al Khaled x Ola Al Amin)



Momtaza

a two years old filly out of Mounira Al Amin



Babeya Al Amin

(El Thay Moufid x Bousbra Al Amin)

Mesteka Al Amin
(*Ansata Al Murtajib x Moheba Merlina*)



Awrak El Yasmine Al Amin
(*Salman El Marbat x Awrak Al Ward*)



History and Breeding Strategy of Al Amin Stud

Observing many breeding farms for Arabian in Egypt, it can be said that Al Amin stud is somewhat unique in Egypt since it has been established on the basis of a cooperation between Mohamed Amin and one of the famous German Arabian horse breeders, Peter Gross. Peter Gross agreed to relocate his horses to Egypt, where he decided to continue his breeding plans.

Actually, one can notice the influence of the Dahman Shahwan strain on this breeding program through the mare Moheba II by Ghazal out of Malacha, and the impact of her very typey son Madkour 1 which can be found in almost every pedigree on the farm. In fact, this program has managed to achieve a very distinct and uniform look for its Arabians. Several reasons have contributed to this distinctive look, among them, for instance, the fact that Peter Gross, like many other German breeders, has been breeding Arabians for many years within a closed population genotype, in

addition to the fact that most of his horses are tracing back to the same family of Moheba II and her full sister Malikah.

In this respect, it has to be mentioned that right from the beginning of this partnership, the partners had in mind to try the experiment of outcrossing some of the mares with external stallions. One of the first trials was breeding the mare Mabrukah to the famous stallion NK Hafid Jamil. This mating turned out to be a very successful cross, blending the Katharinenhof bloodlines of Dr. Hans Nagel with the classical Dahman type of Peter Gross, giving birth to a very typey filly named Mashuga Al Amin who later became an elite mare of the farm and indeed one of the best producing of all broodmares of the stud. Afterwards, Peter Gross decided to breed his famous mare Molesta II by Mahadin and out of Molesta I known for her exquisite head with Arif Al khaled and the result was,



Moaaz Al Amin

(Tagweed EAO x Mabboubaty)

Moaaz Al Amin is a colt by the famous Tagweed of the EAO



Mashuga Al Amin

one of the elite mares of the farm by Nk Hafid Jamil out of Mabrukah bred by Peter Gross and tracing back to Moheba II



Misk El Nile Amin

(Al Farabi Mennatallah x Mesteka Al Amin)



Hemaya Al Amin

(Moulay Pasha x Hekayah Al Amin)

Hemaya Al Amin is one of the outstanding mares of the farm going back to the EAO mare Shabesta acquired by Mohamed Amin and descending from the Bint Rustem branch of the Hadban Enzahi strain



Ashqaa Al Amin

(Monafes Al Amin x Mashuga Al Amin)



Ayda Al Amin

(Al Farabi Mennatallah x Alya Al Amin)



Alya Al Amin

has several cross to Ruminaja Ali and traces back to the mare Nazeera of the kobeilan Rodan strain

again, a very special chestnut filly: Molesta III, who won the filly championships of El Zahraa show in 2013 and was later sold to Kuwait.

In fact, these two trials greatly encouraged Al Amin stud to further explore the outcome of outcrossing these Dahman broodmares with some original EAO stallions. Knowing Mohamed Amin, one can immediately feel that to him, this idea of outcrossing his mares with El Zahraa horses appeared to be very plausible and would easily captivate all his thoughts, since he is a big supporter of El Zahraa stud farm and is very keen to preserve such national heritage. His

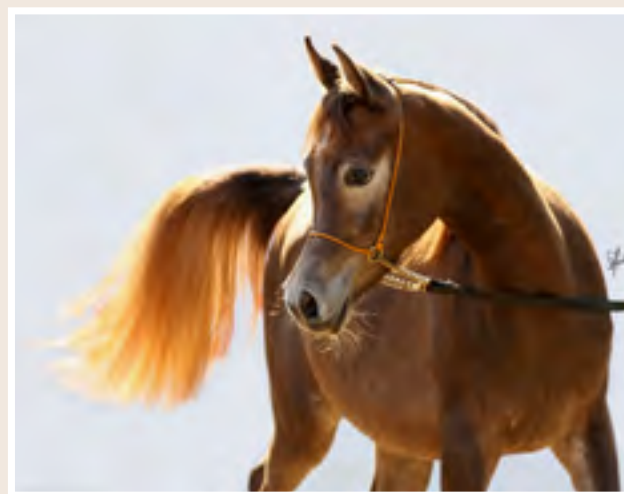
great approval to this outcross idea is also strongly linked to Mohamed Amin's purchase of a very nice filly from an El Zahraa auction, Awrak El Ward who is of the Hadban Enzahi strain, by Gabour and out of Nahawand tracing back to the Maysouna family, which emphasizes the good qualities of El Zahraa breeding stock. One must say that Mohamed Amin was very lucky to be able to acquire this filly, as it is not always the case to find such a good quality in an auction. Quickly, this filly was introduced to the band of broodmares at the farm and even though she is of a different type, one can notice some very good points



Omneyat Al Amin
(DF Samid x Adwana)



Manar Al Amin
(Shafea EAO x Maaly Al Amin)



Alwan Al Amin
(Shafea EAO x Ablam Al Amin)
owned by Marion Richmond of Simeon stud

on her that can complement this breeding program. Knowing that the outcross plan may take some time, Mohamed Amin decided to cut the story short and to undergo his own experiment using some EAO stallions on his broodmares. The choice fell on using three chief sires descended from the Moniet El Nefous family.

The results were astonishing and it looks like this was a perfect match. Hence, going back to the origin was not a bad idea. It permits to benefit from a lot of good points of other strains and families. In 2019, a very exquisite filly was born out of this new combination: Alwan Al Amin by the EAO stallion Shafea, who is



Ablam Al Amin
one of the lite mares by El Thay Moufid
out of Omneyah Al Hayah
tracing back to Moheba II





Mariya Al Amin
(El Thay Moufid x Miriya)
Mariya Al Amin traces back to
Maboubah family

A Filly out Mariya Al Amin





Petra Al Amin
(Sheikh Al Kharafi x Mabboubaty Al Amin)

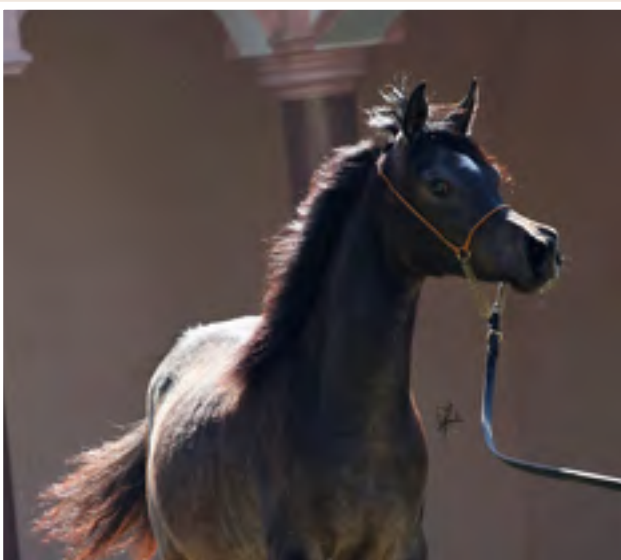
a Tagweed son, and out of the elite mare Ahlam El Amin, a daughter of the famous Omneya El Hayah and tracing back to the Moheba II family. This filly was purchased by Marion Richmond of Simeon stud and was on her way to Australia in May 2020.

This mare Ahlam El Amin has never made a single mistake. She consistently produced very nice colts and fillies of very high quality. Mohamed Amin has a big faith in this mare and he decided to retain a very special colt out of her, called Ashaab Al Amin, for his future breeding plans. In April 2020, another filly was born from the same mare by crossing to another

EAO stallion, Hasem who is a son of the famous Rawwah and out of the elite EAO mare Mobtasema. This combination tested by Al Amin stud seems to be working very well

and gives us a strong hope to see a good continuity for this breeding program in Egypt.

In addition, Mohamed Amin has always had a strong belief in the importance and big influence of Ruminaja Ali as a straight Egyptian sire line. Hence, in 2018 he decided to acquire from a friend a grandson of that sire line: Al Farabi Menatallah by Al Hattal



Awrak El Zahr
(Hasem EAO x Awrak El Ward EAO)
owned by Mohamed Amin



***Awrak Al Ward**
 a precious fleabitten mare bred
 by the EAO purchased by Mohamed Amin,
 a daughter of Gabour out of Nahawand
 showing the strong motion of the
 Hadban Enzahi strain.
 Is a mare of overall good conformation
 and balance tracing back to the
 Maysouna family*



A colt out of Awrak Al Ward and Wassaf from the EAO





Manial Al Amin
(*Ansata Safeer x Molesta II*)

Mennatallah, and out of Zt Mizwalah tracing back to the famous Kuheilan Rodaniyah mare Om El Saad via her renowned granddaughter Serenity Sonbolah. The aim of choosing this particular outcross bloodline is to continue focusing on breeding well-balanced horses, by increasing the general height as well as adding longer legs and longer necks to the program. The immediate results are very encouraging. This cross worked really well and a very promising colt named Misk El Nile was born by this new stallion. Misk El Nile is out of Mesteka Al Amin tracing back to the Malukah family, and he will be kept as a future sire for the farm. Another two special fillies have just been born by the same stallion, out of Mona Al Amin and Horayah Al Amin. The outcome so far is very good and we are still waiting for more results.

As a matter of fact, one can reveal that this outcross breeding philosophy seems to be fitting a lot with this program adding new beneficial elements that can

sustain the future of Al Amin program. Moreover, we are glad to know that Mohamed Amin is trying to be always very selective in his choices while conducting this outcross breeding concept in order to maintain the quality and type of each family. □



Interview with Mohamed Amin

Mr. Amin, what fascinates you about the Straight Egyptian Arabs? How did it all start?

There is no limit to the beauty of the Straight Egyptian Arab Horse. What fascinates me most about them is their beauty, originality, charisma, and history. To understand the true spirit of the Straight Egyptian Arab Horse, you need to go back to the 13th century, the time of Sultan Qalawun who started breeding Arabian horses from Najd; then Sultan Barquq who owned about 7000 Arabian horses; and then Mohamed Ali Pasha who was not only a big fan of Straight Egyptian Arab horses but was also known as a ruler who successfully built good relations with Saudi Arabia. He sent his son Ibrahim Pasha to Saudi Arabia in order to help them sort out some of their internal affairs. The Saudis in return wanted to grant Ibrahim Pasha a favor too. He asked the Saudis to get the records of the Najdi pedigrees and he started to buy from them. After that, the royal families in Egypt started to collect the best horses to compete against one another.

You've always had a strong connection with El Zahraa, the state stud. Is it your love for the Egyptian culture



and history that you wanted to cultivate through breeding, or were there some horses in the stud that sparked your love for this breed?

The royal family decided to establish a stud for Egypt called Kafr Farouq, and to donate their horses to this stud. After the Egyptian revolution, this stud was then named 'Al Zahraa' stud and became governmental.

Al Amin Stud's relationship with El Zahraa is very strong and goes back more than 25 years, because the Egyptian state stud is the only stud in the world which owns a large number of old Najdi horses, known today as 'Straight Egyptian Arab Horses'! Our attention and cooperation as Al Amin Stud to El Zahraa is the only road of heritage we choose to take, as I was convinced this heritage deserves careful maintaining and passionate promotion. And through good practice, this path we took proved to be a mine of gold.

Al Amin Stud started its breeding program of Arabian Horses in the early 1990ies with horses from El Zahraa and a filly out of Bint Molesta.

The cooperation with Peter Gross has brought you a certain advantage here in Egypt, because an old Egyptian line, which nearly no longer exists in El Zahraa, came back to Cairo. How did your breeding concept continue then?

In 2002 our partnership with the German breeder



Peter Gross started when he offered to move first four, then another eight of his horses to Al Amin Stud in Egypt, to start a joint breeding program. Consequently, I bought two stallions of his choice, El Thay Ali Pasha and El Thay Moufid, to use in the new breeding program. Later on, Peter Gross expressed his interest to transfer all of his remaining horses to Al Amin Stud and we both agreed on this move. The intensive efforts in this partnership and professional breeding program have supported the production of many beautiful eye-catching mares and stallions of well-rooted origins carrying the name "Al Amin".

As we are in close contact with El Zahraa and fully support their preservation breeding of the Straight Egyptians, we would also have liked to see them receiving some of the horses that Peter Gross brought to Egypt. But El Zahraa has a closed studbook, as you know of course, and they closed it for good reasons. So we are now in a situation where we are happy and proud that we can supplement El Zahraa's efforts and gene pool and be of service to interested breeders of Straight Egyptians.

How is the stud today? Is there still a market despite the economic crisis in the world? What are your plans for the future of your horses?

Al Amin Stud is located in the outskirts of Greater Cairo, where there is still space enough to design a horse-friendly stud. We are lucky enough to have spacious box stalls for every horse, several big sand paddocks, a lot of green plants for shade, and good living spaces for the grooms. People tell us we have a beautiful place here, that fills us with pride.

The facilities on the stud include a laboratory for producing and using frozen semen, and a library stocking state-of-the-art references as well as old books collected from around the world related to the Najdi (straight Egyptian) horses, and also books on horse art and other horse-related topics.

The stud is in excellent shape, well organized, served by well-trained and active grooms; it covers more than 200 horses, and enjoys good hygiene practice. The stud is supervised by the qualified veterinarian Dr. Nora Fawzy who was originally trained by El Zahraa and is now extending her professional capacity through taking part in most of the international courses in the field.

Al Amin stud is both a local and international horse seller. The excellent quality we can offer, and the unique tail lines we have here, make our horses highly interesting to Egyptian breeders as well as Arabian horse fans and breeders from all over the world.

About our breeding concept, we used outcross breeding with horses from El Zahraa stud and other Straight Egyptian studs, linebreeding with our horses, and inbreeding (in very rare cases) to preserve our lines. We can present a lot of positive evidence for each element of this concept, and I can definitely say we have fantastic results from all of them.

Thank you very much for all of this interesting information about your stud and your breeding strategies. □



Interview with Peter Gross

What made you decide to breed Straight Egyptians? How did this success story start?

It was a happy coincidence for us that Dr. Nagel's stallion Jamil (Madkour I x Hanan), the grandson of Ghazal, was leased to Judith Forbis in the USA and that Ansata Halim Shah, the grandson of Bint Bukra, came to Germany in exchange. This allowed us to genetically consolidate this offspring from Nazeer x Bukra both in the USA and in Germany. These were horses with enormous type and charisma.

It can be said that these valuable lines were lost to El Zahraa State Stud at that time, so should the stud have avoided to sell them?

Yes of course, they should not have sold their best horses. This Dahman Shahwan line was not much present in Egypt anyway, and even the superb breeding that is done in El Zahraa would have profited from the refinement that these lines might have imparted to their mares. Many of them were the results of breedings to other lines, and it might be said that the lack of influence from that lost Dahman Shahwan line made itself felt, there was a



Peter Gross, straight Egyptian breeder

lack of that special look in the broodmare band, in my opinion.

This means that Mohamed Amin knew exactly why he invited you to integrate your breeding concept into his stud...

I think so, yes. All of my horses go back to Moheba II (Ghazal x Malacha), so the gene pool of the siblings Bint Bukra and Ghazal has returned to Egypt.

How did you get at these lines back then? That was 30 years ago and there were neither Arab newspapers nor other sources of information about these important horses.

In 1976, I had just founded my Arabian Stud "Gut Dieckhorst", and I met Count Knyphausen, whose ancestor Prince Knyphausen had imported Ghazal and Moheba I from El Zahraa State Stud in Cairo. He had bred Moheba II, the beautiful daughter of Ghazal, out of his Malacha, and Moheba II in turn had two daughters, Mona III and Molesta. I managed to buy these two offspring of Moheba II from the Count. Three foals were born, all from the same sire, Dr. Nagel's Ibrahim, a son of Mahomed x Mahiba. These foals were the two stallions Melek and Machmut and the mare Mahameh. Based on these horses I started to breed. So, the basis of my present

*Bint Bint Mabboubah
(Abbas Pasha I x Bint Maboubah)*



stock of horses is Moheba II, who tails back to Moheba I and thus to Halima, the dam of the famous Ansata Ibn Halima. Through this relationship, Ghazal (by Nazeer out of Bukra) is a full brother of Ansata Bint Bukra.

My interest in this blood was extremely high because in my opinion there are four important bloodlines, namely Halima, Bukra, Moniet, and Kamla. In addition to that, there are the two sires of the Rodanian bloodstock, Alaa el Din and Kaisoon, both of them going back to valuable Kateefa.

What was your Breeding Aim?

My aim was to breed back to Moheba II and especially to her two daughters Mona III and Molesta, who are both by Hadban Enzahi (by Nazeer out of Kamla). Their full brother Madkour I is manifested in almost all of the pedigrees of my horses.

Via the stallion Ibrahim, the Moniet blood and the blood of Alaa el Din came in. At the same time, the blood of Malikah, a full sister of Moheba II, came in via Ibrahim's sire Mahomed. Out of this combination came the mare Mahameh, who became my foundation mare and mother of the now Al Amin horses Maboubah and Mahfouz.

One of the other main mares is Molesta I who again is out of a daughter of Mona III by Machmut, who was a son of Ibrahim out of the full sister of Mona III, the original Molesta.

The second main mare Saemah comes from the Saklawi strain and tails back to Inshass Stud. She is a daughter of El Samraa (by Kaisoon and out of Bind Wedad). Her sire is again Madkour I by Hadban Enzahi and out of Moheba II.

This way the mares Mahameh, Molesta I, and Saemah built up the basis of my breeding program. With a very strong focus on the stallion Madkour I (Hadban Enzahi x Moheba II), I have consolidated my breeding program specifically on the Farida and El Samraa dam lines as well as I succeeded to introduce some stallions carrying the bloodlines of Bukra, Halima and Kamla to my program.



Mafouza Al Amin
(Moulay Pasha x Bint Bint Maboubah)



Mashuga Al Amin
(NK Hafid Jamil x Mabroukah)

A mating of NK Hafid Jamil and the mare Mabroukah (El Shahwan x Maboubah) was still possible to take place in autumn 2005, the resulting filly Mashuga was born in Cairo and is today a very important, correct and very typeful mare at Al Amin Stud.

There you can find a lot of horses with the strongest concentration of the Bukra, Halima, and Kamla lines in the whole world. It goes without saying that these lines are unique in their features, so any pedigree that has these lines in it is sure to be special.

Which other stallions have you added to your breeding program?

Before my horses were exported to Egypt, I was able to add a very interesting stallion to my program: Abbas Pasha I (Ansata Abbas Pasha x 2 Ghalion), who was bred in Babolna. He goes back to the beautiful Ghazalah (Mashour x Bint Farida). This mare should never have left Cairo, but Douglas Marshall from the USA is certain to have offered a good price.

From this Abbas Pasha I, I bred the very expressive mare Bint Bint Maboubah and her full brother Moulay Pasha, both out of Bint Maboubah.

In Egypt I dared to do what Judy Forbis had done: A full sibling mating, resulting in Ansata Shah Zaman (Morafic x Bint Mabrouka). I dared the same experiment again, with the full siblings Moulay Pasha x Bint Bint Maboubah, and got two mares from this mating, namely Mahfouzah and Mrouah. Mahfouzah was the best I ever bred. Unfortunately, she died at a young age after she had given birth to a filly shortly before, whom I named Bint Mahfouzah in memory of the great loss.

Another enrichment were the stallions El Thay Moufid and El Thay Ali Pasha, who were also exported to Cairo in 2006. Both stallions again brought the blood of the mare Moheba II and her full sister Malikah into their pedigrees. Both stallions are bred to Ansata Halim Shah twice, they bring in the blood of Bint Bukra, Morafic, Ibn Halima and Bint Mabrouka, so again a strong concentration was achieved.

My friend Dr. Tauschke of El Thayeba Stud got the mare



Manial Al Amin
(Ansata Safeer x Molesta II)
owned by Peter Gross

Mona III from me, as well as her daughter Mahameh, for a breeding season, to be mated to Ansata Halim Shah. From these matings the mare Kamla II and the stallion El Thay Ibn Halim Shah were born. The expectations for both stallions generated great interest in Egypt. At Al Amin Stud there is the very beautiful mare Ahlam (El Thay Moufid x Omneya) who goes back to my lines of Moheba II.

Another stroke of luck was the mating of Molesta II and Ansata Safeer. This is where the stallion Manial came from, his dam gave him a lot of type and from his sire's side he got size and topline.

I admire your strategic endurance and goal orientation. Did you get where you wanted to go in breeding?

Of course, things remain exciting. You learn from generation to generation. Of course, I am also happy to have conserved these old Dahman Shahwan lines and I see that there are many interested breeders here in Egypt again.

Thank you very much for the insights into your successful breeding strategies.

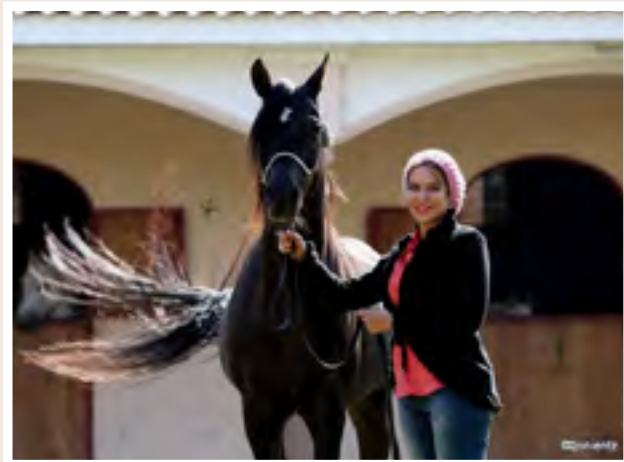
History Doesn't Wait

Probably, history does not even wait for the Straight Egyptian horses. At Al Amin Stud, they obviously understood that: quick acting and intervention appeared to be necessary to make sure the precious bloodlines that were offered to Egypt from Germany were really coming back, as the state stud with its closed studbook policy was not in a position to take them in. Egypt's breeders can now access the long-lost Dahman Shahwan lines at Al Amin Stud and can complement the excellent gene pool they can obtain from El Zahraa with this blood. The range of options has been widened, the gene pool has been added to. Genetically speaking, this is bound to be beneficial in the long run.

However, just as history won't wait, only history will tell whether this was indeed one of the the right paths to take. For although breeding may appear simple, it usually takes a breeder a long time to find the right path. Genetics is a wide field, and breeders cannot know the results of the matings beforehand, they can only speculate on good results, hoping to have considered all factors and done everything right. Sometimes you just have to give things a try, in order to learn from the results. Studying pedigrees and family characteristics must not be neglected. Additionally, a good start is always a big



Mr. Amin and friends



*Dr. Noora Faawzy, veterinarian
of Al Amin stud*



*All photos by
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advantage in this Arabian breeding world.

Mohamed Amin has risked a lot and won a lot. Concerning Al Amin stud, it definitely appears that one should keep an eye on this breeding farm, as it has been evolving a lot in the course of the last few years while doing its very best to shape its own path. □



Monika Savier: straight Egyptian breeder and equestrian journalist.

Mohammed Amin: owner of Al Amin stud.

Tarek Hamza: straight Egyptian breeder and international ECAHO judge.

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