



“Al Amin Stud’s relationship with El Zabraa is very strong and goes back more than 25 years, as our state stud is the only stud in the world which owns a large number of the old Najdi horses, known today as “straight Egyptian Arab Horses”. Our attention and cooperation as Al Amin Stud to El Zabraa is the only road of heritage we choose to take. Al Amin Stud started its breeding program of Arabian Horses in the early 90ies with the best horses from El Zabraa.”

Mohamed Amin, Cairo



The Straight Egyptians in **Al Amin Stud** A Breeding Strategy and its History - Part II

by *Monika Savier and Tarek Hamza*
photo by *Mohab El Shayat*

The city of Cairo is a daily challenge even for her 20 million inhabitants – it's hard to imagine there are thousands of Arabian horses living in it, too. Astonishing as it may appear, it is a tradition in Egypt, according to historic literature. Even 150 years ago, at the time of the Khedives and Pashas, that's how it was done: The pure Arabian horses would usually live in buildings right within the city, to be harnessed and presented mainly on occasions of representation. Only the most privileged and the nobles would keep their horses in the green belts around the city, such as Gize or the islands of the Nile river, to the West of the city. Meanwhile, the air in greater Cairo is so bad that house building has extended into the desert to the East of the city. If you leave Cairo on Highway 6 heading eastward, you will find many big studs there today, all located in various well-guarded resorts in the sand desert along the highway.

Achmed Oraby is the name of the resort that the Egyptian businessman and passionate Arabian horse breeder Mr Mohamed Amin has chosen to build his

stud in. Uniformed police do vehicle checks at the entrance to the residential area, from there it's several kilometers by car through this protected oasis of the well-to-do. A boulevard lined with palm trees leads the way into the heart of the Amin family premises, which are a big garden of palm trees, cacti, blossoming bougainvillea, buildings, and various paddocks, all surrounded by barns with horses putting their heads through big windows and looking at us with friendly expressions in their beautiful faces.

Mohamed Amin comments: „I love Arabian horses, they are a cultural achievement of my forefathers and I want to continue this tradition here. We owe a lot to our horses. They made our culture known all over the world. All of this is why I decided to build a horse-friendly stud for them out here. The horses are turned out in the sand paddocks in groups every day, enabling them to live a social life together. I know this is not commonplace here in Cairo, so we developed this concept together with my consultant from Germany. We are partners in all questions concerning breeding





Open House at Al Amin Stud

and accommodating the horses.“ (Desert Heritage already published a report, in the spring of 2020, on Al Amin Stud and their joint venture with German breeder Peter Gross.)

It’s not just the white mares of the Dahman Shahwan family in his stud whom visitors find formidable, but also the black Arabians who make their striking impressions no later than when they can present their flying gaits in the arena. „I love the black Arabians, I’ve always been fascinated by them, maybe partly because they are rare here in the Cairo area. They are just what I dream of. My ideal is to breed black Arabians featuring the type of a refined Ghazal – however, we are still working on that“, so Mohamed Amin says.

The horses of El Zahraa, the state stud, are something Mr Amin keeps speaking of – they are what he is proud of, they are near and dear to him just the way their national soccer team may be to other people in the country. He wants to do his best to maintain and support the gene pool.

Here is what Tarek Hamza writes on the topic of Al Amin stud:

“Mohamed Amin decided to cut the story short, using

some EAO stallions on his broodmares. The choice fell on using two 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 origins was not a bad idea. In 2019, a very exquisite filly was born out of this new combination: Alwan Al Amin by the EAO stallion Shafea, who is a Tagweed son, and out of the elite mare Ahlam Al 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 Al Amin has never made a single mistake. She has consistently produced very nice colts and fillies of very high quality. Mohamed Amin has great 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 crossbreeding 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. “

Interview with Mohamed Amin

Monika Savier: *Al Amin stud nowadays is a famous farm with many horses. Do you breed for show and beauty or do you have also other aims you strive for?*

Mohamed Amin: I breed horses while keeping in mind several aims. Firstly, I am working on preserving the tail female line of the mare Moheba II through her daughter Mona III, by increasing the number of horses relevant to this family and selecting the best stallions that are expected to produce well with the family. Sometimes I decide to use some stallions based on a vision of mine, inserting them for inbreeding, linebreeding or outcrossing in order to correct a particular aspect or to add something to my breeding program.

Secondly, I have in mind the show ring and Al Amin stud has been doing well so far, though I participate in just a limited number of shows per year. I have some horses who won several titles in shows - for example the mare Marwa Al Amin out of our famous mare Mashuga Al Amin by NK Hafid Jamil, and out of Mabrukah tracing back to this same family of Moheba II. This introduction of the NK horses into our breeding stock served very well to enhance our program. In addition, I try to always provide good care and a healthy farm environment because we believe that this will find expression in our horses.

Monika Savier: *In recent years, you greatly reduced the number of your horses. Which selection criteria did you use for the horses you kept? Which horses are the most important ones for you?*

Mohamed Amin: I have been focusing, in order to reduce the number of horses in my farm, on several factors. Among them of course, is to retain good quality horses. You know, at a certain point I exceeded 220 horses! And now I managed through certain sales to reduce the number to 150 horses. I developed a local sales list as well as an international sales list for

some other very good quality horses to whom I may have alternatives or replacers in my breeding program. I have mainly three very important families in Al Amin stud.

- Firstly I have the Moheba II family.
- Secondly, I have the family of Bint Toali by Anaza Al Farid and tracing back to the mare Nazeera, a Koheilan Rodan in strain.
- Thirdly, I have the family of the exquisite El Zahraa Hadban Enzahi mare named Awrak Al Ward EAO by Gabbour and out of Nahawand tracing back to Bint Rustem.

I have many important mares. The most important one for me is my foundation mare Omnia El Hayah by Sheikh El Araby and out of Bint Molesta. Actually, Omnia El Hayah did very well for our breeding farm since she succeeded in producing two very nice fillies that turned to be among the best mares currently owned by our stud: these are the famous mare Ahlam Al Amin by El Thay Moufid, and Bint Omnia by Al Nakeeb. Last year, Marion Richmond of Simeon stud bought a filly out of Ahlam Al Amin by an EAO stallion..

Another important mare within the same family would be Mashuga Al Amin, and also Mesteka Al Amin which is by Ansata Al Murtajiz and out of Moheba Merlina tracing back to Malikah, a full sister of Moheba II. From the Nazeera family, I have the mare Alya Al Amin by Moulay Pasha and out of Bint Toali. This mare is a full sister to the exquisite stallion Adham Al Amin who is a show champion who won the most classic head in the El Zahraa Championships three years ago.

Monika Savier: *How is the market in Egypt right now, which problems are you facing, which chances do you see for the future?*

Mohamed Amin: In general, Egypt has a large market. A lot of Egyptians are interested in breeding

horses and preserving this noble creature. The problem we are facing in Egypt is that many horse advertising channels have been reduced in recent years, preventing many local breeders from selling. We used to have a good race scene and several races were held on a weekly basis for Arabian horses, be it in Cairo or Alexandria. Unfortunately, this race activity has been interrupted or reduced due to certain decisions, and we hope to see it back again soon in order to help this business. Another challenge is the still-existing partial ban on Egyptian horse exportation and the very high fees for this exportation process, both of which hinder some local breeders from accessing the international market. However, we are still very optimistic for the future of the country and especially for the horse business. Currently, the State is building a new facility and a racetrack within the new capital East of Cairo and planning to promote the whole business.

Monika Savier: *The globalization of the Arabian horses has suffered very much during the Corona lock down. Which are your plans for next year? Can we expect an international Open House on your farm again, to party with your horses?*

Mohamed Amin: Actually, our activities did not

stop completely, but they were reduced for a while due to this Corona pandemic and lock down. In the past few years, Al Amin stud realized the importance of exchanging knowledge in the field of Arabian horse breeding, so it decided to form a sort of a salon for gathering a small number of elite and selective Arabian horse breeders to discuss ideas and exchange knowledge about Arabian horses. The members of this group usually meet in one of the farms, between three to four times a year, to enjoy Arabian horses and the shop talk about them.

In addition, Al Amin stud invites annually for an international Open House to take place at the farm, in order to present to the Arabian horse breeding world what's new about our bloodlines and our own experience. This is usually scheduled to be held after one of the major Egyptian shows and most likely after the El Zahraa show in November. This year we plan to host it at the same date in November - provided there are no travel restrictions or bans. We would be glad to invite whoever is interested in the Arabian horse world to follow our breeding program and of course we are inviting some famous breeders, judges, photographers, equine journalists, and media. I hope that this will make a good occasion to exchange knowledge and enjoy Arabian horses together. □



Molesta III (Amal Al Khaled x Mokesta II) owned by Al Amin stud and winning the fillies Gold championship at El Zahraa National Show



Omayma Al Amin

DF Samid | Omneyat Al Amin





Sahar Al Amin

DF Samid | Adwana





Omneyat Al Amin

DF Samid | Adwana



Besheer Al Amin

Amal Al Khaled | Boshra



Adwana

Shaikeel | Arkaba



Awraq El Ward

Gabour | Nahawand





Mesteka Al Amin

Ansata Al Murtjajiz | Moheba Merlina





Tamara Al Amin

DF Raheem | Bint Toali





Melouky Al Amin

Arif Al Khaled | Malukah





Alyya Al Amin

Moulay Pasha | Bint Toali





Horses for Sale

Petra Al Amin

Dahman Shahwan strain

*22.12.2015 grey (Sheikh el Khorafy x Mahboubaty)

Montaza Al Amin

Dahman Shahwan strain

*18.10.2016 grey (Al Faraby x Monira)

Sahar Al Amin

Kohailan Rodan strain

*19.01.2016 grey (Samid x Adwana)

Salman Al Marbat

Saglawi Jedran strain

*2007 grey (Ezz Ezzain x Ghazallah)

Borhan Al Amin

Dahman Shahwan strain

*13.11.2015 bay (Shah El Khorafy x Bint Omnia)

Al Amin Stud

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