

April 2005

THE AUC PRESS

NEWSLETTER

NEW THIS MONTH

Birds of Amber

By Ibrahim Abdel Meguid

Translated by Farouk Abdel Wahab

During the 1956 Suez War, railroad workers and their families reside in Alexandria's low-income housing along the Mahmudiya Canal, and some of them take us on forays into the other, cosmopolitan Alexandria, whose European denizens are departing in droves. Ibrahim Abdel Meguid combines historical fact with fiction, and the mundane with the fantastical, to weave an engrossing, multilayered tale teeming with memorable characters.

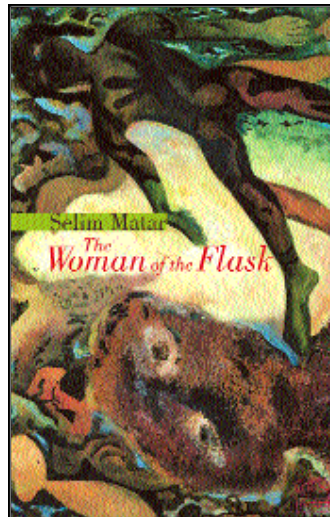


Nights of Musk **Stories from Old Nubia**

By Haggag Hassan Oddoul

Translated by Anthony Calderbank

Haggag Oddoul's work documents the personal tragedy of individuals caught up in massive social transformation and casts a nostalgic light on the heritage and way of life of the Nubians: their rhythmic dancing, their beautiful women, the lively humor of their elders, and the enormous centrality of their traditions and the spirits with which they shared the environment.



The Woman of the Flask

By Selim Matar

Translated by Peter Clark

Two Iraqi exiles reach Switzerland, having escaped from Saddam's Iraq. One of them, Adam, has brought with him an old flask found among the possessions of his late father. He polishes it and a fabulously beautiful nubile young woman appears. She has, it emerges, been the lover of his ancestors going back five thousand years. The novel reflects the complexities of the world of today's Iraqis—an unprecedented history, a grimmer recent past, and an uncertain but challenging future.

Calendar of Events

Monday, April 18, 2005

**AUC Press
Book & Author
Reception**

&

Cover Art Exhibit

Sequoia Terrace
Mohamed Mazhar Street
Zamalek
5 pm

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Monday, May 23, 2005

**AUC Press
Book, Art & Music
Festival**

Azhar Park
7 to 9 pm

Birds of Amber

Hardbound

LE 90

Nights of Musk

Hardbound

LE 70

The Woman of the Flask

Hardbound

LE 80

www.aucpress.com

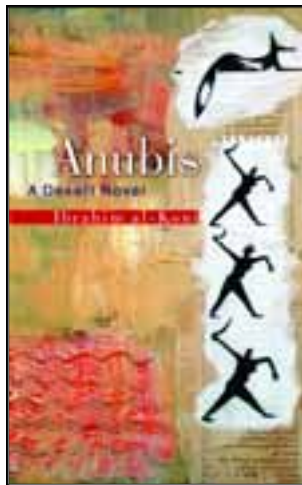
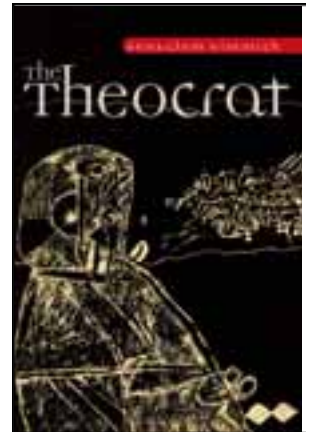
NEW THIS MONTH

The Theocrat

By Bensalem Himmich

Translated by Roger Allen

This novel takes as its subject one of Arab and Islamic history's most perplexing figures, al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah ("the ruler by order of God"), the Fatimid caliph who ruled Egypt during the tenth century and whose career was a direct reflection of both the tensions within the Islamic dominions as a whole and of the conflicts within his own mind. In this remarkable novel Bensalem Himmich explores these tensions and conflicts and their disastrous consequences.



Anubis

A Desert Novel

By Ibrahim al-Koni

Translated by William M. Hutchins

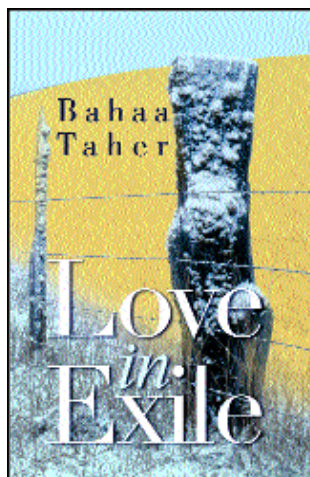
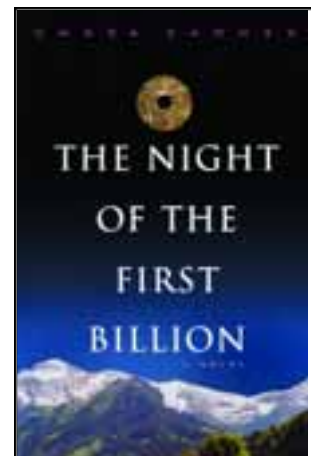
Fantastic mythology becomes universal, specific, and modern in *Anubis*. The Libyan Tuareg author Ibrahim al-Koni has used Tuareg folklore about Anubis, the ancient Egyptian god of the underworld, to craft a novel that is both a lyrical evocation of the desert's beauty and a chilling narrative in which thirst, incest, patricide, animal metamorphosis, and human sacrifice are more than plot devices.

The Night of the First Billion

By Ghada Samman

Translated by Nancy N. Roberts

Set in Geneva, Switzerland, around the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, this intricately plotted novel probes the emotional misfortunes of Arab men and women fleeing the horror of war only to find their ways of life constantly challenged by their foreign surroundings. With supreme artistry and insight Ghada Samman skillfully blends realism with fantasy into a highly stylized, thematically multilayered tale.



Love in Exile

By Bahaa Taher

Translated by Farouk Abdel Wahab

New paperback edition

This haunting novel presents multilayered variations on the themes of exile, disillusionment, failed dreams, and the redemptive power of love. Unwilling to recant his Nasserist beliefs, the unnamed narrator is an Egyptian journalist in a self-imposed exile in Europe following a conflict with the management of his newspaper and a divorce from his wife. He finds himself faced with the escalating tensions in Israeli-occupied Lebanon and, more personally, an unexpected love affair with a much younger Austrian woman.

THE AUC PRESS IN THE PRESS

Recently, the AUC Press has been extensively and most positively mentioned in both the local and international media. The following excerpts by Associated Press reporter Donna Bryson were published in *The Daily Star* and other international papers. The article portrays the important role of the AUC Press in bridging gaps between the Arab world and the West through the translation of Arabic Literature.

“The American University in Cairo Press is an inspiration. It has been publishing Arabic literature in translation for 20 years—its backlist of some 100 novels represents one of the largest troves of modern Arabic literature in English in the world.

“In the mid-1980s, the AUC Press pioneered English versions of the work of Naguib Mahfouz, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988 and remains the only Arab novelist so honored. The Press has since published 25 of his novels, and Mahfouz has written that these translations, along with those in other languages, introduced him to the world and ‘were among the foremost reasons for my being awarded the Nobel Prize.’

“When the American wing of the international writers’ group PEN began planning a forum on international writers, it turned to the AUC Press catalogue as a kind of directory for Arab writers, said Esther Allen, head of the PEN American Center’s translation committee. The AUC Press has ‘been at the forefront of publishing Arab literature in English,’ she said.

“AUC Press has also been a pioneer in prize-giving, establishing the annual Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature in 1996 to recognize outstanding Arabic writing, and publishing an English translation of each medal winner.”

All AUC Press publications are available at the AUC Bookstores:

On the **AUC Campus** (Midan Tahrir):
Saturday–Thursday from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm
Tel: 797-5900 or 797-5370

In the **AUC Hostel** (Zamalek, 16 Mohamed Thakib Street):
Saturday–Thursday from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm
Friday from 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Tel: 739-7045
Email: bookstor@aucegypt.edu

“The AUC Press has a glittering reputation for its continuous, careful, and outstanding efforts in gathering all that represents Egypt on a social, historical, and cultural basis.”
al-Ahram Newspaper
*

“The AUC Press doesn’t just publish Arab writers, it promotes them.”
The Daily Star / The International Herald Tribune

*

“The AUC Press introduced many beautiful high-quality art books which we’d never dreamed of having here.”
Akher sa`a

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“The AUC Press never fails to surprise.”
Al-Ahram Weekly

Novelists from Morocco to Iraq Translated by The AUC Press



BENSAÏEM HIMMICH was born in Morocco. Hereceived the al-Naqid Award for his novel *The Theocrat*. He also received the Grand Atlas Award in Rabat and the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature for his novel *The Polymath*.

HAGGAG HASSAN ODDOUL was born in Alexandria in 1944. *Nights of Musk* was awarded the Egyptian State Prize for Short Stories.



GHADASAMMAN, author of more than twenty-eight books, has been called "the most prominent Syrian woman writer of fiction of the last century."

SELIM MATAR was born in Iraq and has lived in Geneva for over twenty years. He has been a computer specialist, a journalist, and a novelist. *The Woman of the Flask* won the al-Naqid Award.



IBRAHIM ABDEL MEGUID was awarded the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature for his novel *The Other Place*.

IBRAHIM AL-KONI was born in Libya in 1948. A Tuareg who writes in Arabic, he spent his childhood in the desert and learned to read and write Arabic when he was twelve. He studied comparative literature at the Gorky Institute in Moscow.



AUC Press Book & Author Reception



The AUC Press held a Book & Author Reception on Sunday, March 20 at the Rare Books Library garden, where seven new publications were celebrated. These publications covered a range of subjects in the humanities and social sciences, as well as Egyptology. They included *Nasser: His Life and Times* by Anne Alexander, *The Dispersion of Egyptian Jewry* by Joel Beinin, *Dramas of Nationhood* by Lila Abu-Lughod, *The Egyptian Peasant* by Henry Habib Ayrout, *Palestinian and Israeli Nationalism* by Evans S. Weiss, *The Illustrated Guide to Luxor* by Kent R. Weeks, and *Divine Creatures* by Salima Ikram. Authors who attended the event included Joel Beinin, Kent Weeks, and John Feeney, as well as ambassadors, journalists, AUC faculty, alumni, and many other AUC Press friends.



Counterclockwise from top: Guests peruse AUC Press publications; AUC Press Director Mark Linz, AUC President David Amold, Sheny Amold, and Russian Ambassador Nikolay Kartuzov; AUC Press International Marketing Manager Chris Teny, Ms. M. Izzam Beinin, author Joel Beinin, and Mark Linz; author Jerre Bacharach and Mr. and Mrs. Kent Weeks; Prince Abass Helmy, author Jaroslaw Dobrowolski, and photographer John Feeney.

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