



Alaa al-Aswany

Famous for his Yacoubian Building (*Imarat Yaacoubian*) Alaa al -Aswany a dentist-turned-writer has been written prolifically for Egyptian newspapers on literature, politics and social issues.

Educated at the Lycee Francais Cairo, Al-Aswany is fluent in French, English and Spanish. He graduated from the Faculty of Dentistry, Cairo University, 1980 and was later accepted to a masters program in dentistry at the University of Illinois in Chicago and graduated in 1985. At present he practices at his clinic in Garden City, Cairo.

Al- Aswany has written articles, stories and novels in most of the Egyptian Quarterlies. He has also written a weekly column for literary critique entitled *Gomla e'teradeya* in *Al Shaab* newspaper and later became responsible for its cultural page. He also writes a monthly a political article for the Egyptian edition of *Al Araby Al Nassery*.

Al -Aswany's Yacoubian Building remained the number one seller in the Arab world for five successive years, taking second place only after the issuing of his subsequent novel *Chicago*, (which has sold almost 20 editions to date). The French translation of *Chicago* has been very well received and is on the best sellers list in France. *The Yacoubian Building* a best seller in Italy sold over 160,000 copies in one year. It was also number six on the list of the most important twenty books issued in France in 2006 by *Lire* Magazine, and considered the most important translated novel of 2006 in the US by *Newsday* Magazine. In Denmark, *The Yacoubian Building* saw unprecedented success for a novel by a foreign author,

To date, *The Yacoubian Building* has sold over one million copies in 100 countries, and has been translated into over 25 languages, and *Chicago* has been translated into almost 20 languages.

His latest work, *Friendly Fire*, a collection of 17 short stories is due for publication in English in March 2009.

Among Al-Aswany's works are *Awraq Essam Abdel Aaty*, (The Papers of Essam Abdel Aaty) 1990, a novel, *Allathi Ektarab wa Ra'aa* (He who Came close enough to see) 1990, a collection of short stories, *Gameyet Montazery Al Zaeem* (Waiting for a Leader) 1998, a collection of short stories, *Imaret Yaacoubian* (Yacoubian Building) 2002, a novel, *Nirann Sadeeka* (Friendly Fire) 2004, a collection of short stories, *Chicago*, 2007. He has also received many awards; Bashraheel Award for Arabic Novel 2005, The International Kavafi Award 2005, "Fête du livre du Var" , Toulon France 2006, Grinzane Cavour Award, 2007 Torino, Italy and the Austrian The Bruno-Kreisisky Award also in 2007.