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BIOGRAPHY OF EXILE AND THE REALITY OF THE MIGRANT IN ITALY: A NOVEL "HOW TO BREASTFEED FROM A WOLF WITHOUT BEING BITTEN"

BY AMARA LAKHOUS AS A MODEL

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Abstract:

This study aims to uncover the reality of immigrants in Italy through the story of the Algerian protagonist/narrator who adeptly learns to "breastfeed from the wolf" (Rome) without being harmed. The novel embodies escaping from a wounded memory and the tragedy of living without it amidst the clutches of the fierce wolf. It seeks to answer questions of identity, civilization, and history, exploring themes of conflict, integration, and culture. It delves into the Algerian individual's burdens during the "black decade" and their diaspora, where Algerian concerns persistently haunt individuals, even as they attempt to escape death—a reflection of the author's own flight into the Italian space, inspiring the creation of this bilingual novel in Arabic and Italian.

Keywords: immigrant, identity, otherness

Introduction:

Algerian Emigrant Literature represents a cultural phenomenon witnessed in both the Algerian and Arab literary scenes. It emerged from several historical, political, and social motivations that compelled writers to traverse seas to other worlds, challenging themselves to establish creative identities. This literary movement aims for global relevance, expressing the Algerian human experience and addressing the complexities of identity, belonging, and the enduring Islamic values unshaken by Western cultural allure. When discussing immigrant literature, it doesn't solely pertain to Algerian literature in French or Algerian writers making France their home. Algerian literature has found its way to global audiences through translation and the migration of writers to various regions. Amara Lakhous* is among contemporary Algerian writers who, after migrating to Italy in the 1990s during a period prompting many intellectuals to flee abroad, unleashed their creative energies to articulate the transformations of their homeland. Lakhous authored several novels in both Arabic and Italian, which have been translated into numerous languages worldwide. We have chosen the novel "How to Breastfeed from a Wolf Without Being Bitten" because it reveals several crucial aspects. Beyond being a work of immigrant literature written during Lakhous's time in Italy, it tackles the significant issue of immigrant struggles, alienation, and the transference of Algerian individual burdens and tragedies. Despite fully integrating into Italian society without questioning his belonging, Lakhous was recognized as one of the marginalized immigrants in Rome. This analysis relies on cultural criticism to explore various cultural dimensions through the following elements:

- Journey of Memory and Resisting Nightmare Obsessions

- Problematics of Identity and Belonging in Immigrant Literature

- Italian Rejection of the Immigrant

1. Journey of Memory and Resisting Nightmare Obsessions:

The traumatic experience emerged prominently in contemporary novels starting from the 1990s as a significant turning point in narrative fiction. Most readers of this era are likely drawn to this distinctive feature, even if authors do not overtly prioritize it in their works. The depiction of trauma and its impact on the human psyche has transformed into a perpetual nightmare haunting fictional characters, where grim reality itself becomes the nightmare. This compelled authors to deliberately "explore latent unconscious aspects to embody their crises and the nightmarish truth that torments them"(Allaoui, 2013, p 315) .Novels now delve into "plumbing the depths of the inner psyche," making dreams, nightmares, and hallucinations central themes in sensitive new literature, effectively integrating societal concerns into narrative frameworks"(Subha Ahmed, 2006, p 94).

Typically, when life becomes harsh, it negatively affects individuals' mental states, leading to nightmares as an escape mechanism. This reflects unresolved disturbances, worries, and suppressed desires manifesting as dreams. Sigmund Freud affirmed that "deep within every human being are repressed desires, perpetually seeking gratification in a society that may not allow it." Since extinguishing these fiery passions in the subconscious proves challenging, individuals escalate them through various means—whether in dreams, waking dreams, hallucinations, artistic endeavors—as an attempt to satisfy these yearnings. This artistic escalation and compensation are known in psychological theory as a spontaneous response to dormant psychological stimuli that artists may not achieve in their social reality"(Oughlisi, 2007, p 22) .

Thus, dreams unveil the hidden worlds of characters' personalities, influencing not only their psychological makeup but also the artistic structure itself (Abu Nidal, 2006, p 276, 277). Dream technique and nightmare obsessions have become prominent themes dominating contemporary narrative texts for some writers, sometimes blurring the lines between reality and fiction, challenging readers with ambiguous and provocative narratives. This approach seeks to create an open text that stimulates the reader through ambiguity and skepticism, blurring the distinction between fantasy and reality, and generating problematic discourse between the reader and the text or the fantastical and the existential dimensions. (Al-Khatib, 2008, p 23)

The complex and troubled events that humans experience create a constant inner struggle and perpetual fear within themselves, transforming them into tense and anxious personalities. This negative state reflects adversely on their dreams, which turn into nightmares represented by fictional characters. Even if these characters exist in reality, they have transitioned into an imaginary mental world within the unconscious. Therefore, the characters used by novelists in dreams "serve merely as carriers of symbols and reveal them in the present moment; they do not play a role in the development of events, nor do novelists assign them psychological weight or development through the narrative. They are indistinct in features, enigmatic in structure, performing their symbolic role without becoming active or interactive characters within the rising dramatic sense in the novel, which reduces individuals to mere ghosts without history, features, or distinct psychological traits." (Sandy Salem, 2008, p 194)

The novel of nightmares relies on reality as its fundamental ground upon which the writer stands to weave dream events, which are inherently continuous with reality. This means that reflections of reality in the form of terrifying nightmares are symbols that require interpretation and further reading. Therefore, the novel "constructs its elements from the fabric of real substance while attempting to transfer this substance into symbolic ground. It forms through enigmatic characters with indistinct features, events unseen, and abstracted characters, each embodying an idea or symbolic meaning from the realm of thought"(Sandy Salem, 2008, p 194), manifesting intense significance within a short timeframe through their movements, behaviors, and dialogues with the central character typically representing the focal figure in the dream.

If the harsh realities experienced by individuals transform into nightmares that torment fictional characters, then these nightmares themselves become obsessions and heavy burdens weighing on these characters' hearts. Surely, the world of nightmares becomes a dark realm reflecting a tragic world. "It is clear that the juxtaposition of dreams with reality, or the intertwining of real events with nightmarish dreams, reflects a troubled reality, souls trapped in fear, haunted by anxiety, and targeted by evil and oppression. "(Al-Khatib, 2008, p 25)

As a result of the threats received by the novel's characters or the recollection of harsh scenes and the loss of loved ones, these events turn into constant nightmares that haunt the characters, even if they attempt to escape through emigration and leaving their homeland and family to rid themselves of this world that has caused many pain. The ghost of the tragic reality experienced by Algeria in the 1990s continued to haunt the characters in their exile and alienation, so the immigrant hero "Amedeo" in the novel "How to Suckle from the Wolf Without Biting" is also enduring the harshness of the nightmares that have haunted him in his dreams. He has been unable to rid himself of them and has not been able to sever his connection with the bleak reality that compelled him to emigrate to Italy. The nightmares continued to haunt him, causing him to rush to the bathroom to eliminate the pain of the memory and the remains of the sad past. Moreover, he struggled against the nightmares more than he did against reality. Here, his Italian wife reveals to us his suffering, even though she didn't know the cause: "Amedeo suffered from nightmares from time to time. I didn't ask him about the content of those dreams because nightmares are a window through which the past sneaks in. A French author once said.

I heard him murmuring unintelligible words in his sleep. Once, he woke up terrified, repeating, 'Baja! Baja!' Sweat poured from his forehead as if he had escaped from hell! " (Lakhous, 2006, p 122) When her husband, "Stefania," heard him screaming unintelligible words and repeating the word "Baja," she tried to ask what the word meant. She asked everyone who spoke Arabic well but didn't find an explanation. However, she avoided asking her husband because she promised not to ask about his past and why he came to Italy.

The word "Baja" was the name of his former fiancée who was assassinated by terrorists in Algeria, and her name was "Bahja". Since Stefania did not pronounce Arabic well, she omitted the letter "ha" and abbreviated the word to "Baja". This girl whom Amedeo/Ahmed loved before leaving Algeria to forget her and the sad past, and to forget the homeland from which his beloved was taken with such cruelty. When terrorist groups attempted to abduct her when "Bahja" went to Boufarik to visit her sister, on her return, the terrorists stopped the bus at a fake checkpoint, and they began to slaughter all the passengers except for the women. Bahja tried to flee from the grip of the criminals and escape rape, so they unleashed a hail of bullets at her. Ahmed (Amedeo) did not accept the situation and remained confined to his house, not leaving until he disappeared and was out of sight... (Lakhous, 2006, p 131) The memories of this tragic reality that caused many people pain have continued to haunt him even after his emigration and departure from his homeland for Italy, his country of choice. He chose to marry another woman to forget his former fiancée who had died after deciding to escape to preserve her honor.

Terrorism and abductions, which were common and widespread in Algeria during the dark decade, became a nightmare for society members. Violence and torture differ, both involving physical pain. The impact of these acts is profound and lasting on the psyche of the raped woman and her family, which is a stain on the family name, particularly for the conservative families in the countryside that still hold antiquated views. They disown their daughters who were raped, and Bahja decided to escape from the terrorists' grip, but she met her end in the death that turned her fiancé Ahmed's life into hell, and a nightmare that continues to haunt him. Even after he left all that reminded him of her, his memory still refuses to give up this past, through nightmares that he suffers from, "Wake me up a little while ago, visitor of darkness, it is the same nightmare that visits me from time to time. I won't go back to sleep. What is the nightmare? The nightmare is a fierce dog, " (Lakhous, 2006, p 139) he describes the nightmare as a fierce dog because it tries to get rid of it as the nightmares that made him suffer throughout the night, made his wife believe that he was suffering from stomach pain, "Poor Stefania, as she is concerned about me, I think I suffer from stomach pain. The truth is that my stomach is healthy, the problem is in the memory of my stomach that I did not digest what I consumed before my arrival in Rome. Memory is exactly like the stomach, forcing me from time to time to vomit. I am vomiting the memories of blood without stopping. I suffer from a memory of gastric ulcer. Is there a cure? Yes, a howl! Ow. (Lakhous, 2006, p 125, 126)

His memory, therefore, could not rid itself of the memories of the sad past, and the real problem lay in his past that memory could not purge, despite leaving the homeland that was the source of that pain.

The writer successfully employed a new narrative technique by utilizing the technique of recollection manifested through nightmares, to express a tragic reality that continued to thread through his memory despite leaving the homeland to escape the sources of pain. This novel, written in Italy, confirms that migrant literature cannot shed the burdens of homeland or native language, as it was initially written in Arabic and later rewritten in Italian.

2. The Problem of Identity and Belonging Among Immigrants:

The theme of identity and belonging is a matter of profound importance in creative writing, prompting us to inquire into their true meaning before exploring how they manifest in the novel.

Belonging asserts the presence of an integrated set of ideas, values, customs, and traditions that penetrate deep within an individual, enlivening and sustaining them as if it were the air they breathe yet cannot see. Belonging constitutes the root of social identity and the nerve center of social existence. It answers the question of identity in the form of "who are we?" Belonging also represents the stance an individual takes towards a group or belief, forming a network of emotions and a system of sentiments that bind the individual to a community or philosophy. This, in turn, establishes a series of objective relationships that transcend emotional boundaries into a system of activities and interactions exchanged between the individual and their affiliations. (Wafwa, he Issue of Identity and Belonging in Contemporary Arab Societies: Does National and Patriotic Loyalty Retreat in the Face of Sectarian and Tribal Tendencies, <http://edusocio.net/index.php/%D9%83%D9%8F%D9%91%D8%AA%D8>)

French thinker Émile Michel defines identity as a comprehensive system encompassing material, psychological, moral, and social data, involving a pattern of cognitive integration processes characterized by its unity embodied in an inner spirit that entails a distinct sense and feeling of identity. Identity thus represents an internal emotional unit characterized by continuity, distinction, permanence, and central effort. This implies that identity is a unit comprising integrated material and psychological elements that differentiate a person and evoke a sense of self-unity. (McShiley, 1993, p 15, 129)

Identity is a composite entity combining integrated affiliations and societal identity, granting individuals a sense of confidence, security, and stability. This essence is subtly hinted at in the disappearance of the protagonist's character in the novel under study. Perhaps the reason lies in the political turmoil that gripped the country and the widespread phenomena of violence, insecurity, and instability necessary for any society. These conditions led the protagonist to disavow his homeland, origins, language, and culture as portrayed in the novel. The homeland became a turbulent space, a focal point of tension mingling contradictions, reflecting the tragedy and suffering of the fictional characters who experienced this rupture and fracture within the nation. This compelled "Amedeo" to reject his national paternity and refuse to acknowledge it, echoing the sentiments and perspectives of fictional characters in the novels of the 1990s, which generally share similar themes. This stands in contrast to the narrative view of the homeland prevalent in the novels of the 1970s, which defended and elevated its stature. It reflects the transformation witnessed in the novel and the fragmentation that affected its spaces, characterized by tragedy and calamity.

This tragedy drove many characters to flee their homeland due to their disdain and rejection of it, as it failed to provide security for its inhabitants. Among them was the protagonist in the novel "How to Suckle from a She-Wolf," where he migrated to Italy after the assassination of his fiancée - as previously mentioned. He felt a loss of identity and began to mock the question of identity "Who am I? Who are you? Who are we?" amidst a homeland whose contours began to fade due to destruction, expressing a crisis of self and homeland shaken amid political, security, and cultural chaos. Identity and stability emerged as key issues in this novel and others, representing two facets of the nation's crisis as depicted in the literary text. (Attia Jumaa, 2010, p 98, 99)

Indeed, Amedeo sees it as beautiful for one to liberate oneself from the shackles of identity that lead to oblivion! "What a beauty it is to free ourselves from the constraints of identity that lead us to nothingness! Who am I? Who is he? Who are you? Oh, what trivial questions!" (Lakhous, 2006, p 126) The transformations that affected the nation, along with the spread of violence and corruption, compelled the character to dissociate completely from his homeland and origins. As one character remarked about him, "He wasn't enthusiastic about knowing news from Algeria. I stopped discussing Algerian topics with him to avoid upsetting him. I didn't dare to advise him to abandon the name Amedeo and return to the name of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. Shouldn't returning to the origin be a virtue?" (Lakhous, 2006, p 132)

Amedeo, on the other hand, disregarded his homeland's opinion because he saw it as the cause of self-disintegration, identity disappearance, and exile of characters by declaring absolute rejection of this distorted world, where existence ceased to have meaning due to chaos. The narrative's characters felt alienation, identity absence, and self-disintegration in the absence and collapse of their homeland. Therefore, he pledged allegiance to the Italian language, through which he learned how to suckle from the she-wolf until he became indisputably Italian, without anyone doubting his belonging. He mastered the Italian language better than Italians themselves and knew Rome's history and streets better than its inhabitants. Therefore, he believes in the saying: "We do not inhabit a country, but we inhabit a language. Is Italian my dwelling?" (Lakhous, 2006, p 126, 127) He questions

his identity through the language he sucked from the she-wolf's breast in Rome, becoming her legitimate son without question. His wife confirms this in saying: "I know Amedeo speaks Italian better than Italians themselves. This is due to his will and curiosity... Like an infant feeding multiple times from his mother's milk... Indeed, he suckled from Italian every day." (Lakhous, 2006, p 119, 120) Regarding his knowledge of Italy and its history, one Italian, Sandro Dandini, says: "He knows Rome more than I do... I find it hard to believe what you say! Amedeo, an immigrant like Parviz the Iranian, Iqbal the Bengali, the fat maid Maria Cristina, fishmonger Abdul, and the blond Dutchman... You don't know Amedeo as I do, he knows the history of Rome and its streets more than me and even more than Riccardo Nardi who boasts of his family origins dating back to the Roman era... Amedeo's knowledge of Rome's history is beyond doubt; he knows the reasons behind the street names and their meanings. I haven't seen anyone like him in my whole life... Ricardo said... You suckled from the she-wolf, so you deserve to stand between the twins Romulus and Remus in Rome's embrace, Adieu." (Lakhous, 2006, p 108, 109) Moreover, everyone who knows Amedeo, whether Italians or immigrants, considers him Italian and was surprised to learn that he was an immigrant after being accused of murder, even though everyone agreed on his kindness and noble ethics. "Mr. Amedeo is a murderer! This is beyond belief. I am sure of his innocence. Then how can they accuse him of being an immigrant?" There are many opinions that reflect their stance on Amedeo and consider him Italian, not an immigrant. "Mr. Amedeo is one of the few Italians who come to me to buy some food... Mr. Amedeo is an exceptional Italian; he is not a fascist or a racist who hates foreigners like the gladiator who used to assault and humiliate immigrants in various ways." (Lakhous, 2006, p 49)

From the foregoing, it becomes evident how Ahmed, the Algerian immigrant, abandoned his identity, language, and culture, convincing everyone that he was Italian. They refused to acknowledge him as an immigrant because they reject the presence of immigrants in Italy and harbor resentment and hatred towards them, as we will explain later.

In contrast, we find the character of Abdallah Ben Kaddour, the Algerian immigrant who preserves his belongingness, proud of his religion, language, and name. He resents Amedeo for changing his name and wonders about the reason behind it: "Why did he name himself Amedeo? That's the question that puzzles me. His real name is Ahmed, a great name because it's the name of the Prophet mentioned in the Quran and the Bible. Frankly, I don't respect anyone who changes their name or denies their origin. For example, I know my name is Abdullah, and I am fully aware that it's difficult for Italians to pronounce. Despite this, I swore not to change it as long as I live. I don't want to disobey my parents, who gave me this name, and God Almighty has prohibited us from disobeying parents, which is a major sin like murder, adultery, false testimony, and consuming the wealth of orphans. Many Italians I know have tried to convince me to change my name and have offered me a variety of Italian names... but I refused categorically." (Lakhous, 2006, p 129)

Abdallah is a model of positive character who takes pride in his affiliation with the Islamic religion and Arab culture, and he looks down upon those who do otherwise. He has not changed his name despite the difficulty Italians face in pronouncing it, nor has he forsaken his prayers or his language. "I will not change my skin, my language, my country, or my name, no matter what happens. I am proud of myself, unlike immigrants who change their names to please Italians... I cannot stand anyone who denies their origin. Do you know the story of the donkey that was asked about his father and replied that the horse was his uncle? Do you remember the crow that tried to imitate the walk of the dove after unsuccessful attempts but decided to return to its original walk, only to discover that it had forgotten it?" (Lakhous, 2006, p 130)

Furthermore, Abdallah compares the life of immigrants to that of fish that rots after three days. "I find no difference between the life of a fish and the life of immigrants. There is a saying that Italians often repeat: 'A guest is like a fish; after three days, it rots.' An immigrant is a guest, no more or less. Just as fish is eaten fresh and thrown away if it loses its original color, immigrants are divided into two types: there is the fresh type that is exploited in the factories of the north or in the fields of agriculture in the south, which is the ugliest exploitation, and there is the frozen type that fills refrigerators and is consumed only when necessary." (Lakhous, 2006, p 133)

What drives characters to resent and reject their homeland is the harsh reality, the confusion between right and wrong, and the inability to distinguish between the killer and the killed. This is illustrated by the advice given by the wise man in the novel to "Amedeo" to remain silent and neutral: "My son, if you are walking and armed men block your way and force you to judge: who is right and who is wrong, Cain or Abel? Never say Cain or Abel. Never say Cain is right and Abel is wrong, for the armed men might be Abelites and you will perish. Moreover, never say neither Cain nor Abel is wrong and Abel is right, for the armed men might be Cainites and you will perish. My son, never say neither Cain nor Abel is wrong, for you will perish. The space in this narrow chest

cannot accommodate neutrality. My son cut your tongue and swallow it. My son, run! Run! Run! Beware of the fire of sedition, for it is more dangerous than the fangs of wolves.” (Lakhous, 2006, p 142)

This illustrates that the negative view of a homeland mired in corruption and decay, lost in the maze of darkness and delusion, is what drives some characters to reject it entirely for its inability to embrace and protect its children. This compels them to emigrate and flee the country as a last resort. For them, the homeland has become nothing more than a graveyard for everything, with their share of it reduced to a travel bag, and it has become an unknown entity with no place in the hearts of its children. However, some chose to emigrate without abandoning their sense of belonging and attachment to their identity by holding on to their language, religion, name, and Arab-Islamic culture in general.

3. The Italian Rejection of Migrants

The novel "How to Suckle from the She-Wolf Without Being Bitten" portrays the reality of migrants and foreigners in a foreign land, united by a single building and different concerns in a strange country. It reveals the truth about some bigoted and racist Italians and the spread of bureaucracy. These individuals harbor hatred for foreigners and refuse to rent houses to them. They couldn't believe that Amedeo was a migrant and not an Italian like them. This sentiment is expressed by the Italian Sandro Dandini: "Don't say Amedeo is a migrant; this matter gives me a headache" (Lakhous, 2006, p 109), as they viewed him as an exceptional Italian through his relationships with people, his lack of contempt for foreigners and migrants, and his good relations with everyone: "Signor Amedeo is an exceptional Italian; he is not a fascist who hates foreigners like the Gladiator, who used to abuse and humiliate migrants in every possible way. That scoundrel got what he deserved." (Lakhous, 2006, p 49)

However, once the truth about "Amedeo" being a migrant named "Ahmed" spread, their perception of him changed. He was accused of killing the Italian "Gladiator," who was found murdered in the elevator, and the newspapers began publishing and exaggerating the news, reflecting their absolute rejection of any foreigner and attaching accusations to them: "Don't you see what the newspapers are saying about Ahmed, full of lies? When they discovered he was a migrant and not Italian, they didn't hesitate to accuse him of murder. Ahmed made a mistake when he swam outside the pond." (Lakhous, 2006, p 135)

The same observation was made with the investigator searching for the real criminal, asserting that migrants are delinquents who falsify their personal information to avoid detection: "It didn't take long for us to discover he was a migrant and that his real name was Ahmed Salmi. I told you before that it is common for criminals and delinquents to falsify personal information. Thus, as investigators, we faced a double challenge: collecting evidence to prove he was a migrant and confirming his involvement in the murder." (Lakhous, 2006, p 145)

However, upon obtaining his documents, they were surprised to find that he had not falsified his personal information and that his ID card still bore his real name, indicating that he had not completely abandoned his identity and personality despite the negative perception of Italians towards Islam and Muslims: "Italians do not know Islam as they should. They believe Islam is a religion of prohibitions: no drinking alcohol! No eating pork! No sex outside of marriage! One day, Sandro, the owner of Dandini Bar, said to me: How many wives do you have? I told him: I have one wife. He thought for a while and then said: You are a fake Muslim; you won't go to heaven because a true Muslim is required to pray five times a day, fast during Ramadan, and marry four women". (Lakhous, 2006, p 51) This stance expressed in the novel reveals the negative view of Islam in the West without understanding the true values that our noble religion advocates. It highlights the refusal to integrate migrants into Italian society as they are seen as foreigners in their own country.

Amedeo, in his speech, acknowledged this, though it did not bother him. His main concern was how to suckle from Rome by mastering its language, learning its history, and spiritually integrating with Italy without causing harm: "Montanelli's words made me seriously consider the rhetoric calling for the integration of migrants into Italian society. I genuinely wonder if there is truly an Italian society that allows migrants to integrate into its ranks? Currently, I don't care about integration. What truly matters to me is to suckle from the she-wolf without being bitten and to indulge in my favorite pastime: howling! Ooooooo!" (Lakhous, 2006, p 94)

The novel "How to Suckle from the She-Wolf Without Being Bitten" represents a narrative of migration, reflecting the concerns and pains of the Algerian individual despite their distance from their homeland. The author

maintained his identity and native language by writing the novel in Arabic and then rewriting it in Italian, a language he masters better than the Italians themselves. Despite this, he did not abandon his Arab culture. The author excelled in weaving the events using the technique of multiple narrative voices through eleven characters, each expressing their stance on certain issues, their views of other characters, and their perspectives on various subjects. Each character narrates the event in their unique way, offering individual viewpoints. These characters, mostly migrants from different countries, were brought together by fate in Italy. The author used a standardized language, the novelist's language, since the characters are foreigners from various countries, and he chose Classical Arabic as the unified language.

Undoubtedly, this linguistic diversity refers to the polyphony that Mikhail Bakhtin advocated, where the novelist employs multiple voices, leading to linguistic diversity. However, it is possible to find novels with varying linguistic levels that do not represent true polyphony due to the dominance of the narrator's voice, which conveys the characters' speech. This narrator often expresses the characters' thoughts and opinions in his voice, not theirs, despite the multiplicity of characters. The omniscient narrator is responsible for narrating the events and commenting on them.

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*Amara Lakhous, born in Algiers in 1970, graduated from the Institute of Philosophy at the University of Algiers. He continued his studies and obtained a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Rome. He has been residing in the Italian capital since 1995 and writes in both Arabic and Italian. His first novel, "The Bug and the Pirate," was published in a bilingual Arabic-Italian edition (translated by Francesco Leggio) in Rome in 1999. His second novel, "How to Suckle from the She-Wolf Without Being Bitten," was published in Algeria in 2003 (by Al-Ikhtilaf Publications) and in a second edition in Beirut (in collaboration with Arab Scientific Publishers). He rewrote this novel in Italian, and it was published by E/O in 2006 under a different title, "Clash of Civilizations Over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio" (Scontro di civiltà per un ascensore a Piazza Vittorio). The novel achieved great success in Italy and abroad, being translated from Italian into French, English, Dutch, German, and eventually Korean. It was also adapted into a film directed by Isotta Toso, which was screened in Italian cinemas this year. Lakhous received the International Flaiano Literary Prize in 2006, as well as the Algerian Booksellers Award in 2008. His novel "Little Cairo" was published in Italian in September 2010 by E/O under the different title, "Divorce Islamic Style in Marconi District." See the cover and website: [Amara Lakhous Biography] (<http://www.amaralakhous.com/biography-arabic/>).

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