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Mohammed Ali et le destin de l'Egypte

Compte-rendu du colloque organisé sur son règne

par Habib Tawa

"L'Egypte est un don du Nil" disait Hérodote et l'on pourrait ajouter : l'Egypte moderne est la fille de Mohammed Ali. Et comme l'on célèbre cette année le bicentenaire de son accession au pouvoir, le ministère de la culture et la nouvelle Bibliothèque d'Alexandrie ont décidé de consacrer une semaine à la redécouverte de l'époque et de l'œuvre du grand bâtisseur. Du 12 au 17 novembre 2005, une centaine de savants et de chercheurs Egyptiens, Arabes et étrangers ont scruté et éclairé les divers aspects du demi siècle qui vit l'Egypte émerger de sa gangue moyenâgeuse et féodale, pour entrer de plein pied dans son époque et la féconder. Cette floraison de communications, de débats, de tables rondes et d'échanges a débuté par trois jours de rencontres au haut conseil de la culture au Caire et s'est achevée par trois autres journées bien remplies à l'Alexandria. Une grande partie des conférenciers a participé aux deux sessions.



Au Caire, l'essentiel des travaux s'effectua en Arabe et l'on vit de distingués orientalistes, tels les professeurs Paolo Branca (Milan) ou Giuseppe Conte (Cagliari), présenter dans un arabe très pur, l'un l'intellectuel Tahtâwî (à la fois élève d'al Azhar et du Paris de 1830) et l'autre, des archives de cette époque. Néanmoins, si l'absence de traduction simultanée rebuta quelques uns des étrangers, elle évita les malentendus qu'elle suscite parfois : "traducteur traducteur". Elle permit surtout à une jeune garde d'historiens Egyptiens de déployer ses ailes ; et l'on ne peut que se féliciter de cette pléiade de nouveaux talents, venus parfois du plus profond de la province (Beni Souef, Minieh, Assiout, Mansourah, etc.) qui, en conjonction avec leurs collègues issus des deux capitales du Pacha, ont apporté des contributions et des éclairages féconds et précis sur certains aspects parfois peu connus du règne.



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محمد علي باشا
والعالم
مؤتمر و معرض
إحتفالية ٢٠٠٥-٢٠٠٥

MOHAMED ALI
AND THE WORLD
CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION
CELEBRATION 1805-2005



Les campagnes d'Arabie et leurs extensions face à la stratégie de la compagnie des Indes, Mohammed Ali confronté aux ambitions françaises autour de la conquête de l'Algérie, le rôle clef des Arméniens dans son entourage, l'évolution de la communauté copte, les données démographiques à notre disposition furent, parmi tant d'autres sujets, abordés par ces érudits.

A Alexandrie, ancienne cité cosmopolite, la diversité linguistique reprit le dessus, confortée par une traduction simultanée arabo-anglo-française et un public en partie polyglotte. Les universitaires arabes et étrangers ne furent pas, là non plus, en reste. Si les Libanais, les Jordaniens, les Syriens et les Palestiniens s'étaient imposés au Caire, ce furent là les Soudanais, les Qataris, les Français, les Grecs et les Italiens qui apportèrent leur riche contribution, avec toujours la significative présence Egyptienne. Mohammed Ali et Napoléon, Soliman Pacha, Clot bey, Omar Makram et tant d'autres de ses contemporains surgirent alors sous nos yeux, tandis que s'affichait sur l'écran la Kavala natale du conquérant ou son nouvel urbanisme à Alexandrie. Parallèlement, des aspects aussi divers que l'introduction de l'imprimerie à Boulaq, le rôle de la communauté grecque, la nature patriarcale du pouvoir, l'influence des Saint-simoniens, le jeu des grandes puissances, la conquête du Soudan et bien d'autres, furent abordés. Leur diversité même manifeste l'ampleur de l'œuvre accomplie.

Comment donc résumer une telle richesse, une si grande diversité de points de vue, que ne restituera véritablement que la publication des actes ? Eh bien, en tentant d'en saisir l'enjeu. Car, derrière ces débats académiques, au cours desquels se sont manifestées une grande honnêteté et une remarquable courtoisie, se profile une interrogation essentielle qui a été résumée par le Docteur Mohammed Awad, à l'heure où l'Egypte se retrouve à la croisée des chemins : "Avons-nous tiré toutes les conclusions que nous impose l'observation de l'expérience de Mohammed Ali ?" Autour de cette question centrale, deux lignes de clivages se sont dessinées au fil des discussions. D'abord s'est posé le problème des orientations adoptées par Mohammed Ali, puis, ceux-ci étant considérés comme du domaine de l'histoire, on s'est interrogé sur les paramètres de son action.

En abordant la première ligne de clivage, on s'interrogea sur son autoritarisme, la concentration d'une grande partie des richesses entre ses seules mains, son pouvoir absolu et l'énorme coût social et humain de son projet.

Ils furent mis à son débit et certains lui opposèrent l'apparent réveil de la société égyptienne, laquelle semblait éclore lors de son arrivée. Aurait-il tué dans l'œuf une émergence sui generis de l'Egypte, qui se serait effectuée à son rythme propre ? Le prix payé n'était-il pas exorbitant ? Les débats furent longs, parfois houleux, mais toujours riches et féconds. On convint finalement que si Mohammed Ali était bien un autocrate, il avait agi en despote éclairé, sous l'effet des contraintes propres à son époque. Et l'on peut penser que le "réveil", qui semble l'avoir précédé, aurait probablement été sans lendemain, comme le furent bien d'autres sursauts sous les Ottomans. En revanche, c'est une véritable Renaissance que son règne a provoqué, qui a largement dépassé les frontières de l'Egypte.

La seconde ligne de clivage, résulte du bilan que l'on peut établir en recensant les grands axes de la politique révolutionnaire de Mohammed Ali. Tous convinrent qu'il encouragea l'immigration et l'établissement de techniciens étrangers, destinés à encadrer le pays, qu'il établit les structures d'un Etat moderne (en particulier des écoles formées selon le modèle européen), une armée puissante et une industrie compétitive et qu'il envoya des missions en Europe, afin d'y former les Egyptiens les plus doués, appelés à constituer une élite de pouvoir. La divergence se manifesta sur l'évaluation de l'importance relative de ces actions ; certains se sont même interrogés sur la profondeur de leur impact sur la société civile. Or il apparaît qu'en dépit du démantèlement de plusieurs des institutions d'Etat, à la fin du règne de Mohammed Ali ou après lui, la société civile, stimulée par la présence des communautés étrangères, a perpétué son projet de modernisation et a permis à plusieurs reprises des remontées en puissance de l'Egypte. Le débat est encore ouvert.

En bref, des échanges passionnés, sur un sujet passionnant.



Dr. Jaffar el Marghari, Directeur Général de L'Institut de la Civilisation du Soudan

ذاكرة المصريين و محمد علي

بقلم دكتور جابر عصفور

الأهرام الإثني ٢٨ نوفمبر ٢٠٠٥ ص ١٢



لم يكن من المعقول أن تحتفى الذاكرة المصرية - منذ سنوات - بذكري الحملة الفرنسية على مصر، و ما خلفته من آثار سلبية و إيجابية، ولا تحتفل بمرور مائتي عام على اعتلاء محمد علي عرش مصر، في شهر مايو من سنة ١٨٠٥. و بقدر ما كان استدعاء ذاكرة المصريين لذكري الحملة الفرنسية مناسبة جليلة لاستعادة إرادة النضال المصري ضد الإستعمار، واستعادة إرادة التحدى التي انتبخت في نفوس المصريين لمواجهة الغزو الاستعماري، و ذلك غير بعيد عن جدلية العلاقة المتوترة مع الأخر الغربي الذي غزا العالم القديم بسلاحه الجديد و علمه المتقدم، كان استدعاء ذكري اعتلاء محمد علي عرش مصر مناسبة موازية متعددة الدلالات. فهي استعادة لإرادة القوى الشعبية التي أوصلت محمد علي إلى الحكم، و فرصته على السلطان العثماني الذي لم يملك سوى الاستجابة إلى الإرادة القاهرة للقوى الشعبية في مصر، و هي القوى التي نجح بها معها قائد البناي، أدرك ببصيرته ما لم يدركه غيره، و رأى بعيني المستقبل إمكانات تحديث البلد الذي صار له و طناً، فصاغ له رؤية مستقبل يتحدى شروط الضرورة، و يضع مصر على الطريق الصاعد للحداثة و التحديث.

و لم تكن المؤتمرات و المطبوعات سوى الجانب الأول من جوانب استعادة ذاكرة المصريين لزمن محمد علي، و تقدير حضوره الإسهالي الذي تولدت منه كل حركات النهضة اللاحقة، فقد وسعت وزارة الثقافة من سياق الاحتفال بعصر محمد علي، وأسهمت أجهزتها و مؤسساتها في الاحتفال، فأتت البيت الفني للمسرح مسرحية تتناول زمن محمد علي، و شرع المركز القومي للسينما في إعداد فيلم توثيقي تسجيلي. و تولت الوزارة ترميم قصر محمد علي في شبرا، و هو القصر الذي سوف يفتحه رئيس الجمهورية قريباً، و يكمل بافتتاحه سياق الاحتفالات الضخمة التي تستعيد بها ذاكرة المصريين جهود محمد علي التي نحن بعض غرسها، و قد استمر ترميم القصر الذي تهالك أكثر من خمس سنوات، و شمل الترميم كل شئ: اللوايق، الحدائق، اللوحات و الأعمال الفنية، و إزالة ثلاثة وخمسين مبنى أقيم عشوائياً حول القصر، و شوهت حدائقه. و قد أعد صندوق الترميم الثقافي مجلدين ضخمين عن ترميم القصر، أولهما تاريخي يضم كل المعلومات التاريخية اللازمة، و ثانيهما تقني يضم التفاصيل الهندسية و العلمية الخاصة بترميم هذا الأثر العظيم الذي تكلف ما يقرب من خمسين مليون جنيه، و أصبح تحفة لا نظير لها بعد ترميمه، و دلالة رائعة على أن ذاكرة المصريين لا تنسى لحظات مجدها، و لا رموز هذا المجد.

و إننا من المجلس الأعلى للثقافة لأهمية موقع عصر محمد علي في ذاكرة المصريين، بل ذاكرة العالم الذي اقتحم هذا المحارب الجسور علاقته، تعاون مع سفارات فرنسا و إيطاليا و اليونان و البانيا و مقدونيا و كوسوفو، سواء في دعوة الباحثين المهتمين بهذا العصر من أقطار الدول التي كان لها علاقة بمؤتمرات عصر محمد علي، أو في إقامة عدد غير قليل من المعارض الفنية التي جمعت ما بين صور الوثائق و المصورات القديمة والأعمال الفنية الحديثة. و كان حضور سفراء هذه الدول مع باحثيها و باحثيها أثره الكبير في تأكيد عالمية المؤتمر الضخم عن عصر محمد علي في القاهرة، و المؤتمر الموازي عن "محمد علي والعالم" الذي أسهمت به مكتبة الإسكندرية في سياق احتفالات ذاكرة المصريين بمحمد علي.

و لم يقصر الإعلام المصري في متابعة هذه الاحتفالات التي سوف تكتمل دائرتها بافتتاح السيد الرئيس قصر محمد علي بعد ترميمه، فنقلت القناة الثقافية في التلفزيون المصري وقائع الجلسة الافتتاحية للمؤتمر الدولي في القاهرة، كما نقلت على الهواء مباشرة وقائع الجلسة العلمية الأولى. وشاركتها في النقل والتعريف الفضائيات العربية و العالمية المختلفة، ووصلت المتابعات الصحفية إلى عدد ضخم، يستحق أن ينشر في مجلدين. ولم تخل هذه المتابعات من تنوع الاستجابة بالطبع، و تراوحها بين عيني الرضا و عدم الرضا، و هو أمر طبيعي تماماً، فهناك من اندهن لاحتفالنا بزمن محمد علي الذي قضت الثورة على حكم أسرته في الثالث والعشرين من يوليو ١٩٥٢، و هناك من عاب على المجلس كثرة عدد الباحثين و حشدهم الضخم الذي تحول إلى مظاهرة. لكن أطرف هذه الاستجابات في تقديري هو ما كتبه صديق عزيز عن محمد علي و ذاكرة المصريين، متهما المجلس الأعلى للثقافة بإقامة "ندوة متواضعة" بمناسبة ذكري مرور مائتي عام على تولي محمد علي حكم مصر. و أوضح أن هذا الصديق العزيز - أكمل له الله عاقبته المستعادة - شغلته ظروفه الصحية عن حضور المؤتمر الدولي الضخم، و مساهمة المعارض والعروض الفنية، و متابعة الكتب العديدة المؤلفة و المترجمة التي لم يطلبها استكمالاً لما فاتته من حقيقة أن ذاكرة المصريين لا تنسى، حتى لو نسيت ذاكرة فرد منها، أو عجزت عن المتابعة.

محمد علي، بوصفه زمن الانطلاق و التأسيس و انطلاق الشرارة التي أضاعت القضاء لجيوبولتيكي المحيط، فشملت بضونها عالماً رحباً يمتد من المورة إلى كريت، و يصل ما بين الشام و شبه الجزيرة العربية، في دولة عرفت كيف تصنع جيشاً قاهراً، و صناعة غير مسبوقه، و تغييرات جذرية، امتد نفوذها، و اتسعت موجات تأثيرها بقوة المدفع و المصنع و المعهد، واصلت ما بين مؤسسات العلم الحديث و التنظيمات السياسية الجديدة، و الإصلاحات الاقتصادية و الزراعية، فضلاً عن التجديد المتجارب الأبعد في مجالات الثقافة و الفنون و الأدب. و كان ذلك كله في زمن شهد انتبخت المطبعة و الصحيفة و تدافع البعثات التي هدفت إلى عبور الهوة العميقة المتسعة ما بين التقدم الأوروبي و التخلف الشرقي.

و لم يكن من المعقول أن يكتفى المجلس الأعلى للثقافة بإقامة مؤتمره الدولي الضخم عن عصر محمد علي، وإنما أضاف إلى ذلك ترجمة و نشر عدد مهم من الكتب التي تناولت هذا العصر و التحليل التفصيلي لجوانبه المختلفة، و تعاون المجلس الأعلى للثقافة في هذا الإتجاه مع دار الكتب و الوثائق القومية التي أصدرت و تائق عصر محمد علي في كتيب باللغة الأهمية، فوصل عند الكتب المترجمة و المؤلفة عن محمد علي و عصره إلى حوالي عشرين كتاباً. و لذلك لم يكف المجلس بنشر مجلد ضخم، ضم عشرات الأبحاث التي قدمها أعضاء الجمعية التاريخية المصرية عن عصر محمد علي، في مؤتمر احتضنه المجلس منذ سنوات قليلة، تمهيداً للمؤتمر الدولي الضخم الذي أقامه، بل قام بالتنسيق مع مكتبة الإسكندرية و مساعدتها في عقد مؤتمر دولي مواز عن محمد علي و العالم، يتولى استضافة الباحثين الغربيين المهتمين بعلاقات محمد علي الدولية، فضلاً عن تأثيره بالصراع الذي دار داخل هذه العلاقات، و لم ينته بمعاهدة لندن في الخامس عشر من يوليو ١٨٤٠.



Med-Voices

Closing Conference

By Edward Lewis

The protection and promotion of intangible history has never been more important as globalization, densification, environmental change, religious conflict and various other factors threaten the invaluable cultural and traditional links we have with our past and therefore current identity. As defined by UNESCO, our intangible history

"provides people with a sense of identity and continuity, and its safeguarding promotes, sustains, and develops cultural diversity and human creativity."

The recording of our cultural heritage as the practices, skills, expressions and knowledge of communities and individuals that have been passed down through generations within natural, historical, political and environmental contexts demands a complex and exhaustive methodology.



Claudio Cimino - European Commission

Attempting to encapsulate and document such a history creates many problems, not least of which is, how does one display an oral history that is not covered in the history books and ensure it is accessible, objective and displays the emotions, feelings and atmosphere of the individual, group or space?

This and many other questions were asked and explored in the closing conference of the ambitious MedVoices project that was held in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in November 2005. In addition, the diverse number of participants had the chance to share and display their various projects, findings and problems – the first chance since the project began three years ago.

The MedVoices project began in June 2002 as a major ethnographical investigation into the cosmopolitan oral and social histories of 13 historic cities; Alexandria, Ancona, Beirut, Bethlehem, Chania,

Ciutat de Mallorca, Granada, Marseilles, Nicosia North, Nicosia South, La Valletta, Istanbul, and London. The Alexandria partner has been the Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Center, which researched Alexandria's cosmopolitan past and the oral and visual documentation of its foreign communities as both the foreigners and Egyptians remembered it. The Med Voices project aimed to promote awareness of the intangible or live cultural heritage within the Mediterranean in such areas as folklore, family histories, memories of places, mobility and displacement, rituals and customs, festivals and holidays and everyday life in the various cities and neighborhoods. The material collected from the vast number of centers, institutions, museums and universities made for a lively and visually impressive three days.

A highlight of the conference was the striking films that covered various themes including immigration, relocation, religion, local traditions and reminiscing of childhood places and the changes that have taken place in their neighborhood over the years. Among others, Lebanon's contribution, *Wish You Were Here*, followed a series of elderly locals as they described Ras Beirut in the 'golden age' and the subsequent changes that have taken place as a result of Lebanon's recent turbulent history and development. One local, Victor Shibli, the keeper of the lighthouse, gave a touching insight into what the region, and particularly the building, means to him as he retold his and the building's history. He continues to keep the lighthouse operational despite it being decommissioned long ago. Valletta's *Ilhna Beltin* (Voices of Valletta) focused on a renowned street, Straight Street, and the activities of the locals that frequented the bars, clubs and cafes during the Second World War. During the 1940s Chania's Jewish population was nearly completely wiped out and their film, *Etz Hayyim-Tree of Life: Voices Surrounding a Synagogue*, portrayed the history of the only remaining Jewish synagogue on the island, its restoration and interviews with the synagogue's present keeper. The difficulties of adjusting to a foreign country as an immigrant and the unbreakable ties with the homeland were the main focus of London's film as several Turkish nationals retold their memories of their early days in London in the 1970s.

In tandem with the visual presentations were a series of lectures from each city that gave an insight into their areas of study. The three main sections (institutional/public agendas, layered pasts and divided spaces, memories and disciplinary and methodological dialogues)



Costas Constantinou, Yasser Aref, Margaret Hart, Christiane Nasser, Suzanne Abou Ghaida, Aila Zoghaby discuss topics at the closing conference.



gave an opportunity for the various centers to give an in-depth account of their research and findings.

The lectures varied from 'Fragmentation and Change in Space and Belonging in Districts of Istanbul: an oral history documentation study' to 'Places and Memories in Cosmopolitan Alexandria' and 'Euro-Med Heritage: Culture, Capital and Trade Liberalization in the Mediterranean'. In addition, a photographic presentation by the visual anthropologist Christos Varvantakis entitled, *Studying the People of Chania through Photography*, gave a valuable insight into the role of photography in portraying individual's stories, life trials and expressions.

The final part of the conference consisted of four roundtable discussions – Living Cities, Intangible Heritage in Education, Exhibiting Intangible Heritage and Tourism and Festivals. Among the many topics discussed was the role of oral history in museums and the ever present problem of how to attract the community and visitors and keep them stimulated and involved in cultural affairs. The differing roles of the public and private sectors in museums was debated as was the question of website sustainability, on-line museums and funding. Education was debated and it was agreed that there is a need for new approaches, especially in the discipline of history, in countries where war, occupation and conflict have occurred – the Mediterranean has its fair share. The role of borders and space prompted many to reflect on a period when there was little restriction and the Mediterranean symbolized an 'open border'. The ever present problems of ensuring historical buildings remain protected in the face of urban development and homogenization also formed an integral part of the open discussions and was a topic that many cities shared.

The conference, above all, demonstrated the value of recording our oral histories and heritage as they become increasingly threatened. The amount of work conducted has been overwhelming and this was echoed in the closing session by Claudio Cimino of the European Commission who praised the project for its commitment and results in an area that is often overlooked and under funded. The large interest generated and initiatives set up as a result, such as the University of Malta's degree program, highlight the value of such a project. If the intangible history of the Mediterranean is to survive, it is imperative that this conference does not signify the end of a three year project but the beginning of an indefinite one.

<http://www.med-voices.org>
Intangible Heritage
www.portal.unesco.org/culture

The Aga Khan Returns to the Library

By Edward Lewis

As a former recipient of the The Aga Khan Award for Architecture, it was fitting that the Bibliotheca Alexandrina hosted a public lecture in conjunction with the The Aga Khan Trust for Culture in November 2005. Organized by Alex-Med, the event was attended by several distinguished guests, current architects and students of the Faculty of Architecture. A series of lectures, discussions, and presentations took place and provided food for thought for architects and non architects alike as well as a chance to see cutting edge architecture in the Muslim world.

Established in 1977 by His Highness the Aga Khan, the Aga Khan Award for Architecture identifies and encourages building concepts that successfully address the needs and aspirations of societies in which Muslims have a significant presence. Previous successful designs have not only inspired but also accommodated for their physical, social and economic expectations as well as using resources and technology in an innovative manner. Although there are no fixed criteria as to the type, nature, location or cost of projects to be considered for the award, eligible projects must be designed for or used by Muslim communities, in part or in whole, wherever they are located. Previous winners of the prestigious award include the Water Towers of Kuwait City, Azem Palace in Syria, Institute du Monde Arabe in Paris, Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the Nubian Museum in Aswan, Egypt. Four key themes are looked at:



- How the complexity of history and memory can be expressed in architecture.
- How private initiatives are integrated into emerging public spheres.
- How to express individuality in complex social settings.
- How power and authority in the global domains of technology, culture, economics might be expressed through architecture.

The award is based on a three year cycle and governed by a steering committee who appoint an independent master jury who in turn select the projects deemed worthy of awards. Each jury is multidisciplinary and brings together specialists in such fields as history, engineering, philosophy, architectural conservation, and contemporary arts, as well as practicing architects, landscape architects and urban planners. Since its initiation, the award has completed nine cycles, documented over 7,500 building projects around the world and selected 92 projects for awards.

An introductory speech by Bibliotheca Alexandrina Director Ismail Serageldin, himself a master juror in 1995, preceded a documentary focusing on the buildings of the 2002 – 2004 cycle (Bibliotheca Alexandrina, B2 House in Canakkale Turkey, Gando Primary School, Al-Abbas Mosque in Yemen, Sandbag Shelter Prototypes, the Old City of Jerusalem Revitalization Programme, the Petronas Towers of Kuala Lumpur).

The floor was then opened for discussion between the various architects from both Cairo and Alexandria, as well as the numerous architectural students. Among the topics discussed was the role of the contemporary Egyptian architect since the Bibliotheca, despite being erected on Egyptian soil, was designed by a foreign firm.



Dr. Mohamed Awad, Dr. Abdallah Abdel Aziz, Dr. Abdel Fattah el Moussi, Dr. Aisha el Kholy, Dr. Dalila el Kardani

Cultural identity and tradition was a very important theme and the panel differed on how much this should be reflected in the design of the building itself. The danger of creating a universal style was highlighted as traditions and societies merge in a shrinking world. It was suggested that the Muslim world must continue to have two levels of architecture; one for the universal stage and one that reflects the traditions and values of the Islamic world; identity is seen as a core component of future architectural development. The overall lack of eligible buildings was also commented on and highlighted.

Arriz Hassam of 3rd Uncle Design, Toronto, gave a presentation on his company's alternative approach to architecture using four of his projects as case studies. Established in 1993, the company has a reputation for innovative design and often works in collaboration with other artists. One such project was the award winning Drake Hotel where the company revitalized, redesigned and renovated a rundown hotel in a renowned deprived area with stunning effects. The hotel's existing spaces were reconfigured and new instrumental elements were introduced such as a stage, a blackboard and an electronic information and entertainment network. The 6 million dollar renovation involved restoring the original 1890s décor whilst incorporating modern touches. In addition, existing objects were refurbished and altered to invoke new uses but were retained for their traces of the hotel's past.

Their approach to the design of corporate, retail, hospitality and custom residential spaces has brought them numerous architectural awards and projects range from studios and offices, retail stores, restaurants and bars to the design of exhibitions and furniture. Mr. Hassam provided a valuable lesson to the gathered students and stressed the importance of diversity, the need to learn from other disciplines and cultural significance in architecture and design. In addition, the value of taking risks was emphasized as failure should not always be viewed as negative, but a catalyst for advancing techniques and one of the most valuable learning tools in architectural design. Questions and answers from the floor concluded what was an inspiring lecture.



Arriz Hassam of 3rd Uncle Design Inc.



3rd UNCLE design inc



A cafe in the newly renovated Drake Hotel, Toronto.

Links

- The Aga Khan Development Network - www.akdn.org/index.html
- Aga Khan Award for Architecture - www.akdn.org/agency/aktc_aka.html
- 3rd Uncle Design Inc. - www.3rduncle.com

Isis of Pharos

and her influence on Paris

By Robert G. Bauval

The cult of the goddess Isis is extremely ancient. It goes back to at least the Pyramid Age in Egypt, where the name of the goddess is mentioned in the Pyramid Texts (c. 2300 BCE), and many believe that it has its origins deep into prehistory. The name Isis, of course, is the Greek rendition of the ancient Egyptian name Aset. Isis was regarded as the 'mother' of the Horus-kings (the pharaohs) of Egypt, and her role as the sister-wife of the god of resurrection and rebirth Osiris gave Isis a very prominent – indeed supreme – role in the ancient Egyptian pantheon and, especially, in the royal funerary rituals.

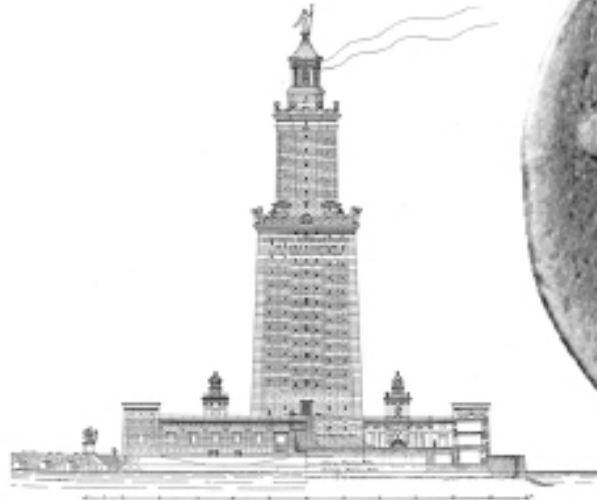


The coat of arms of Paris commissioned by Napoleon in 1811. Isis and her star are at the front (left) of the boat.

The cult of Isis survived throughout the whole of the pharaonic civilisation, and was especially strong after the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great in 332 BCE. The so-called Ptolemaic queens of Egypt often identified themselves with Isis (or her alter ego, Hathor), and Isis was particularly venerated in Alexandria and throughout the whole Hellenic world. In Ptolemaic Alexandria the goddess Isis became the protecting goddess of the Eastern Harbor and its famous lighthouse, the Pharos. In this capacity, Isis was known as Isis-Pharia, the protector of mariners, and there was a temple dedicated to her near the Pharos. Apparently a giant statue of Isis-Pharia had once stood outside the Pharos, and it is not improbable that it was perceived as part of the lighthouse complex.



The Goddess Isis - One of the key figures in the ancient Egyptian pantheon, her influence lasted long after the demise of the Pharaohs.



The reconstruction of the Pharos of Alexandria by Hermann Thiersch (1909).

She was depicted as a woman on a sailboat navigating near the Pharos. These depictions can still be seen today on many public buildings in modern Alexandria, such as the old Chamber of Commerce and the Municipality on Fouad Street.

The influence of Isis of Alexandria was far and wide. Indeed, according to the great British mythologist Sir James Fraser:

"To Isis in her later character of patroness of mariners the Virgin Mary perhaps owes her beautiful epithet of Stella Maris, 'Star of the Sea,' under which she is adored by tempest-tossed sailors. The attributes of a marine deity may have been bestowed on Isis by the sea-faring Greeks of Alexandria. They are quite foreign to her original character and to the habits of the Egyptians, who had no love of the sea. On this hypothesis Sirius, the bright star of Isis, which on July mornings rises from the glassy waves of the eastern Mediterranean, a harbinger of halcyon weather to mariners, was the true Stella Maris, 'the Star of the Sea.'"

Also as French Egyptologist Bernard Mathieu pointed out:

"Isis was named Pelagia 'of the sea', or Euploia 'of safe navigation' and Pharia 'of Pharos', and was said to have invented the sail and had a temple on the island of Pharos. She was so famous in the whole Mediterranean world that we find her even in 17th century manuscript, comfortably installed on the prow of the boat on the coat of arms of Paris which Napoleon commissioned in 1811"



Alexandrian coin showing Isis Pharia. This image is still used today in modern Alexandria

After his return from Egypt in 1799, Napoleon was to develop a rather curious fascination with the goddess Isis. Indeed so strong was his interest that he eventually set up a special commission, headed by the scholar Louis Petit-Radelin, to confirm an ancient legend that Isis was the true and ancient tutelary deity of the city of Paris. Napoleon expressed a specific interest in the so-called "boat of Isis" and its alleged connection with the "boat of Paris" found in the coat-of-arms of the city. After a year or so of research into this matter, the special commission was able to report to Napoleon that there was, in fact, much evidence to support the claim that the boat of Isis was the very same as the boat of Paris. Highly impressed by these findings, Napoleon issued instructions on 20th January 1811 that a figure of the Egyptian goddess and her star should be included on the coat-of-arms of Paris. In Napoleon's own words:

"We have previously authorized and do also authorize now by these present signed documents by our hand, that our good city of Paris will bear the coat-of-arms as shown and colored on the attached drawing, at the front of the ancient ship, the prow loaded with a statue of Isis, seated, in silver on a sea of the same, and lead by a star also of silver."

A drawing was attached to Napoleon's letter, and both are today kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris. On this drawing can be seen the red, gold and silver coat-of-arms surrounded by a wreath of wheat. The whole is surmounted by a golden crown on which is perched the imperial eagle. The crown is transpierced by the Hermetic caduceus, the entwined winged-snakes. The main image is the silver boat floating on a silver sea. On its prow is the goddess Isis seated on a throne and guided by a five-pointed star hovering in front of the boat. Above the boat are three golden bees, symbolizing divine solar rule.

This bizarre connection between the 'boat of Paris' and 'the boat of Isis' (clearly the Isis-Pharia of Alexandria) can be traced as far back as the 15th century, for there exists several old etching kept at the Bibliothèque National in Paris. In these rare medieval documents we can find miniature drawings showing the goddess Isis dressed as a French noblewoman arriving by boat in Paris, where she is greeted by French nobles and clergymen bearing the title "the very ancient Isis, goddess and queen of the Egyptians."

It is the "boat of Isis" that is striking in these medieval miniatures for it bears an uncanny resemblance to the boat that was also placed on the medieval coat of arms of the city of Paris. And during the same period we know that Parisians believed the name of their city to have been derived from the name of Isis. For example, a 14th century Augustine monk called Jacques le Grant wrote that,

"In the days of Charlemagne [8th century CE]... there was a city named Iseos, so named because of the goddess Isis who was venerated there. Now it is called Melun. Paris owes its name to the same circumstances, Parisius is said to be similar to Iseos (quasi par Iseos), because it is located on the River Seine in the same manner as Melun."

In 1512, another French historian, Lemaire de Belge, reported that an idol of the goddess Isis had been worshipped in a temple immediately outside the southern gate of Paris, where now stood the Abbey of St. Germain-des-Pres. The same was reported by many other contemporary writers, notably the 16th century Parisian historian Gilles Corrozet, who is reputed to be the first historian ever to produce a comprehensive guide to the city of Paris. In 1550 Corrozet also published a history of Paris titled *Les Antiquitez, Histoire et Singularitez de Paris*, in which he wrote that

"coming to the imposition of the name [of Paris], it is said that there, where stands St. Germain-des-Pres, was a temple of Isis of whom it is said was the wife of the great Osiris or Jupiter the Just. The statue [of Isis] having come in our times, of which we recall... This place is called the Temple of Isis and, for the nearby city, this was called Parisius... meaning near the temple of Isis."

The early 17th century French editors Pierre Bonfons and Jacques du Breul republished Corrozet's book under their own names and titled *Les Antiquitez et choses plus remarquables de Paris, recueillies par M. Pierre Bonfons et augmentees par Frere Jacques du Breul*, Paris 1608. Jacques du Breul was a Jesuit monk from St. Germain-des-Pres, and thus presumably conversant with the records kept at that Abbey. It is therefore of great interest to find him writing as follows:

"at the place where King Childebert [5th century CE] had constructed the church of St. Vincent now called St. Germain, and to which he donated his fief of Issy, the consensus was that there was there a temple of Isis, wife of Osiris, also known as Jupiter the Just, and from whom the village of of Issy got its name, and where can still be seen an ancient edifice and murals which are believed to be from the castle of Childebert."

In 1612 yet another French historian, Andre Favyn, reported that the Cathedral of Notre Dame des Champs also once possessed an idol of Isis similar to the one found in the nearby Abbey of St. Germain-des-Pres:

"I believe this was due to another idol, for the proximity that there is with [Notre Dame] and the Abbey of St. Germain-des-Pres where was venerated Isis."

It comes, therefore, as no surprise that in 1773, sixteen years before the French Revolution of 1789, the influential scholar Court de Gebelin wrote:

"No one ignores that Paris was originally enclosed in the island (Ile de la Cite). It was thus, since its origins, a city of navigation...As it was in a river rife with navigation, it took as its symbol a boat, and as tutelary goddess, Isis, goddess of navigation; and this boat was the actual one of Isis, symbol of this goddess."

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An illustration showing the statue of Isis at the Bastille, Paris (1793).

Court de Gebelin was echoed by the famous Parisian historian Charles Dupuis who, in 1794, wrote that,

"This famous Isis was the goddess of the ancient French or the Sueves who joined to her cult the symbolic boat, known as the boat of Isis. This boat still exists on the coat of arms of Paris, the city of which Isis had become the tutelary goddess. It is Isis, mother of the God of Light, to whom the people [of Paris] make offering and light candles at the New Year and even during the rest of the year, in memory of the Feast of the Illuminated Ones."

The matter was to go much further than this. Thus it was that on 10th August 1793, in the aftermath of the Revolution, a group of patriots ceremoniously installed a large statue of the ancient Egyptian goddess Isis where the Bastille had formerly stood. Depicting the goddess seated on a throne flanked by two lions, the statue had been conceived by Jacques-Louis David, the famous artist and propagandist of the revolution. Apparently the sculptors Suzanne and Cartelier did not have sufficient time to cast the statue in the preferred medium of bronze so they simply molded it in plaster and colored it with bronze paint. From the bare nipples of the goddess Isis could be seen water being ejected into an open basin below the statue.



*Cy apres senlunt de la tres an
aerme ysis deesse et royne des
egypaens. La .x. rubriche*

A 14th century drawing showing Isis on her boat, arriving in Paris.

Known as the "Fountain of Regeneration", the general idea was for the crowd of people to pass in procession in front of Isis and drink "from her fertile breasts the pure and salutary liquor of regeneration."

The connection with Paris is most intriguing. Some more speculative authors have even been suggested that Paris owes its name to Isis. There is a long history to this. According to the French classicist Jurgis Baltusaitis, this idea gained popularity when a 17th century writer called Jean Tristan claimed that the name of the city of Paris was derived from Isis-Pharia or, more precisely, an acronym of Pharia Isis leading to Paria Isis and, finally, to Paris. Tristan based his hypothesis on ancient coins found in Paris dating from the time of the Roman Emperor Julian that depict his wife, Helen, as Isis-Pharia. It is well known that the Emperor Julian had governed Gaul, ancient France, for five years and had resided in Lutecia (ancient Paris) for three years between 358 and 360 CE. He and his wife, Helen, were devotees of the Egyptian-Alexandrian god Serapis and his consort, the goddess Pharia-Isis. It is thus not impossible that Julian may have imposed, or at the very least encouraged, the Alexandrian cult on the inhabitants of Lutecia. At any rate, the 17th century writer Jean Tristan concluded that:

"The Parisian received their name of Paria Isis, because of the cult of this goddess which had been introduced in Illyria and in Gaul, in the region next to the river Seine and in Lutecia, called 'Lutecia of the Parisians' or Parisians because of this."

Baltusaitis, Jurgis. *La Queste D'Isis*, Flammarion, Paris 1985, p. 55; 63.
Baltusaitis, op. cit., p.54-5.
Baltusaitis, op. cit. p. 55, see also planche III.
Bibliothèque Nationale ms. Fr. 12420 c. 1402 AD fol. XVI. ms. Fr. 598, c. 1403 fol. XVI.
Baltusaitis op. cit. p. 63.
L.M. Tisserand, *Les Armoiries de la ville de Paris*, Paris 1874, Chap. III, formation du socau ou des armoiries de Paris, p. 61; also Baltusaitis, p. 63.
Jacques le Grant, *Sophologium*, Paris 1475; also see Baltusaitis p. 61.
L. de Belge, *Les Illustrations de Gaule et Singularitez de Troye*, Paris 1512; also see Baltusaitis p. 59.
Baltusaitis op. cit. p. 60; pl. 1, 9.
Jacques du Breul, *Theatre des Antiquitez de Paris*, Paris 1612.
Andre Favyn, *Histoire de Hevare*, Paris 1612.
Court de Gebelin, *Monde Primitif analyse et compare avec le Monde Moderne*, Paris 1773.
Charles Dupuis, *Origine de tous les Cultes ou Religion Universelle*, Paris 1794, Vol. II p.50; Also Baltusaitis, op. cit., p.24-30.
Baltusaitis, Jurgis. *La Queste D'Isis*, Flammarion, Paris 1985, p. 24. Arslan, Ermanno. *Iside*, Electa ed, Milano 1997, pp. 642-4. See also Humbert, Jean-Marcel, *L'Egyptisme dans L'Art Occidental*, ACR Edition, Paris 1989, p. 38.
Arslan op.cit. p.643.
Jurgis Baltusaitis, *La Queste D'Isis*, Flammarion, Paris 1987.
Baltusaitis op. cit. p. 75.

Next issue will feature Isis' influence in the USA

The Barcelona Process Ten Years On

By Edward Lewis

"We need a new and better understanding of the dialogue between cultures which allows each individual and social group full enjoyment of the internationally agreed human rights. Non-discrimination along origin, gender, race, language, religion or any other belief must be understood as a positive objective of fostering cultural self-determination and the recognition of multiple and dynamic cultural identities of each human being."
Traugott Schoefthaler, Executive Director of the Anna Lindh Foundation.

Such a sentiment was echoed by all of the 35 Member States present at the first Summit since the Barcelona Declaration was signed ten years ago. The Declaration, signed in November 1995, marked the beginning of the



Andreu Claret, Traugott Schoefthaler, Gianluca Solera

However, it is the drive to strengthen dialogue between governmental and non-governmental organizations across the Euro-Mediterranean region that is likely to have the most immediate effect in Alexandria, especially since the launch of the Anna Lindh Foundation in the Bibliotheca and Swedish Institute. Under the third (social, cultural and human affairs) basket of the Euro-Med Partnership, the Anna Lindh Foundation was established by the sixth Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in The Hague on 30 November 2004 as a "network of national networks", with one institution or organisation in each country acting as Head of a national network for involving civil society and public institutions in the dialogue between cultures. During their meeting in Barcelona on 27 November, hosted by IEMed, the head of the Spanish Network, the heads of the 35 national Anna Lindh networks agreed on principles of their work, including autonomy and openness to other actors fostering the participation of citizens in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, and the task of representing the Anna Lindh Foundation in their countries.

As well as partially sponsoring the Alexandria Biennale in December, the Anna Lindh have partaken and initiated key events aimed at exactly what the Barcelona Process demands. Among them have been a round-table on faith and violence and preparation of an academic network on the dialogue between cultures, the training for the Palestinian and Egyptian national networks in project development and management and a conference in Naples focusing on the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Encounter on overcoming gender stereotyping.

www.euromedalex.org



The gate at La Pedrera, Barcelona

Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Barcelona Process) - a wide framework of political, economic and social relations between the Member States of the European Union and Partners of the Southern Mediterranean. The leaders of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership pledged their renewed commitment to peace, stability and prosperity in the Mediterranean region through ongoing dialogue, exchange and co-operation.

For many, the attention and time dedicated to terrorism was disappointing, especially since much of what was agreed had been specified elsewhere, around other conference tables. The important issue of cultural dialogue was somewhat overshadowed by the insistence of agreeing to condemn acts of terrorism without qualification and reject all attempts to associate any religion or culture with terrorism. Among the many other collective commitments was a call for peace in the region, with particular regard to the Middle East. The implementation of the Road Map and a need to encourage the parties to continue on a path of direct dialogue and negotiation was stressed. In addition, a continued drive to achieve a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area by 2010 was discussed as was the need to implement a feasible timetable to de-pollute the Mediterranean by 2020. Illegal immigration, human trafficking and counter measures were also highlighted.

The recent Summit welcomed the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation as the youngest of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the British Prime Minister and Chairman of the Summit, Tony Blair, stressed the need to improve intercultural dialogue *"through the work of the Anna Lindh Foundation and in support of the United Nations Alliance and civilizations."*



Gaudí's Sagrada Família, Barcelona



Le bonhomme d'Alexandrie

Ramez Farag

Port-Saïd, le vendredi 7 octobre 2005

Dix heures du matin, mon portable sonne. Je regarde l'écran lumineux : C'est Raed qui appelle. Je viens d'arriver à Port-Saïd la nuit dernière pour passer un week-end au calme. Je laisse sonner, je continue à dormir, je le rappellerai plus tard. Vers midi, le portable sonne de nouveau. J'entends ma femme répondre : Cette fois c'est Shindi qui appelle. J'entends sa voix s'exclamer : « Quoi ? C'est arrivé quand ? ». Echange de quelques phrases de condoléances, puis elle raccroche. Je saute du lit, je me dirige au salon : « C'est Favez ? ». Oui, c'est Favez. Il se sentait fatigué la nuit dernière, il est allé se coucher tôt. A sept heures du matin, le Père Adel est allé voir comment il allait, il l'a trouvé par terre dans sa chambre. Il avait rendu l'âme.

Je n'ai pas besoin de discuter avec ma femme. Nous commençons à ramasser nos affaires pour retourner à Alexandrie tout de suite. C'est bien pour ça que Raed a du m'appeler ce matin. Je regarde l'index de mon portable pour voir à qui d'autre dois-je porter la mauvaise nouvelle. La moitié des gens sur ma liste ont connu Favez d'une manière ou d'une autre. Je passe des coups de fil, commençant par Alexandrie et finissant à Paris. On l'a aussi connu, même en venant de Paris.

Dans la voiture, je demande à ma femme de conduire. Je ne suis pas dans un état qui me permet de le faire. Trois heures de route sans un mot. Devant moi défilent des centaines d'images. Elle aussi, certainement. Tous les deux, on a travaillé au Centre Culturel Jésuite d'Alexandrie, que le Frère Favez Saad le Jésuite avait fait revivre en 2000 après cinquante ans d'hibernation. C'est là bas que l'ai rencontrée. Et quand on a décidé de se marier, il n'y avait pas mieux que l'église des Jésuites pour célébrer, à vingt mètres du terrain de la rencontre, dans la même chaleur des lieux.

On arrive à Alexandrie. Les funérailles ne se tiendront que demain matin, pour permettre aux gens qui l'ont connu de gagner Alexandrie des quatre coins de l'Égypte. Mais instinctivement, nous nous dirigeons vers le « couvent » des Jésuites à Cléopatra.

Dans l'église, il est là. Le cercueil est posé au centre de l'église. Je le regarde de loin. Je ne m'approche pas. Je ne peux pas m'approcher.

De Favez à Frère Favez Saad s.j.

Favez naît le 17 Juin 1962 à Alexandrie, la ville où il vivra, et qui « vivra en lui ». Il la portera en lui, la connaîtra comme la paume de sa main, et finira par marquer son visage autant qu'elle a marqué le sien. Il me confirme que le pont de Stanley est la réplique parfaite du petit pont des jardins du Montazah : « J'ai tellement eu d'amourettes, là bas, je le connais par cœur ». Impossible de le déconvaincre !

Il passe son enfance et sa scolarité à l'école Saint-Marc à Chatby, et puis rejoint la Faculté des ingénieurs où il se spécialise en architecture. Là où il allait, Favez était premier : Premier en classe, premier sur le gouvernement d'Alexandrie au Bac, premier à la faculté des ingénieurs : « un petit génie », dira-t-on. Élève brillantissime, homme exceptionnel, copain dévoué, Favez attirait l'admiration de tout son entourage.

Après la fin de ses études universitaires, la curiosité de Favez l'emmènera aussi loin que le Soudan, où il effectuera une mission caritative. Une aventure relativement courte, mais qui marquera sa vie à jamais. L'intensité et la richesse de l'expérience, la découverte de la misère et la faiblesse de ce pays qui se déchirait, bouleverseront la vie du jeune bourgeois alexandrin.



LA QUÊTE

Rêver un impossible rêve
Porter le chagrin des départs
Brûler d'une impossible fièvre
Partir où personne ne part
Aimer jusqu'à la déchirure
Aimer, même trop, même mal
Tenter sans force et sans armures
D'atteindre l'inaccessible étoile
Telle est ma quête
Suivre l'étoile
Que m'importent mes chances
Que m'importe le vent
Ou ma désespérance
Et puis lutter toujours
Sans questions ni repos
Se damner
Pour l'or d'un mot d'amour
Je ne sais si je serais ce héros
Mais mon cœur sera tranquille
Et les vagues
S'éclabousseront de bleu
Parce qu'un malheureux
Brûle encore
Bien qu'ayant tout brûlé
Brûle encore
Même trop, même mal
Pour atteindre
A s'en écarter
Pour atteindre
L'inaccessible étoile

Jacques Brel

Extrait de «Le Bonhomme de la Mancha»

Et ce sera la révélation : Favez découvrira en ce moment sa mission au « service de l'homme, l'intégralité de l'homme, et l'intégralité des hommes ». Après son retour du Soudan, et en 1985, il rejoint la « Compagnie de Jésus » – ou les Jésuites – où il fait le choix, rare dans la compagnie, de devenir un frère et non pas un père Jésuite. Un choix basé sur une conviction profonde et une volonté confirmée de mettre le service de la société au devant.

Il commence ses études de théologie à Minieh, en haute Égypte. Puis de Minieh au Caire, et du Caire à Paris, et de Paris de nouveau à Minieh. Et c'est à partir de là que commencera l'aventure : Favez, maintenant formé et convaincu de l'importance ultime de la culture et de l'éducation, lancera séminaire sur séminaire sur des thèmes variés, programmera conférence après conférence en coopération avec les professeurs de l'université, et ne finira pas avec les activités culturelles et artistiques – ateliers, performances, concerts, expositions, ... – encore vivantes du même élan aujourd'hui.

Pendant mes voyages à Minieh, je m'étonnais de découvrir à quel point c'était « leur » Favez, là bas. Et moi qui croyait qu'il était « notre » Favez, d'Alexandrie. Comment faisait-il ?

Minieh était le début de la vie du rêve, mais elle sera aussi le début de la fin de l'homme : C'est ici, qu'en 1997 Favez se découvrira leucémique.

Alexandrie, ou Du garage au « Garage »

En 1999, Favez retourne à une Alexandrie qui, vivant « à l'écart » depuis trente ans, s'est assoupie, et sa vie culturelle ralentie. Le Centre Culturel Jésuite – où, dans le temps, lui-même venait suivre des activités variées de qualité – s'était endormi à son tour. Favez a envie de bousculer, non seulement le Centre Jésuite, mais aussi la ville elle-même.

Pour réaliser cet « éveil », Favez rêve un espace qui permette « la rencontre libre de la jeune création dans le domaine du théâtre et des arts en général ». Un espace « en dehors des lieux imposés par les institutions pour permettre l'ouverture, la rencontre et l'échange d'expérience ». Un espace d'ouverture et de qualité, conjuguant éveil artistique, formation, réflexion et rencontre avec le public.

C'est ainsi qu'en récupérant un terrain – situé dans l'enceinte du Centre Culturel Jésuite – qui était jusque là loué au Ministère des Affaires sociales et utilisé comme un garage, que le rêve prend forme. Avec l'aide de Tarek Aboul Fetouh*, le garage est transformé en une salle de spectacle capable d'accueillir le plus grand nombre de scénographies différentes : danse, théâtre, expositions, ateliers et autres. Le « Garage », première friche d'Égypte, premier théâtre modulable de la ville, naîtra en Octobre 2000 au 298 rue

Port-Saïd, avec un événement culturel intitulé « It's Happening in the Garage » conjuguant spectacles, rencontres d'artistes et ateliers engageant les jeunes alexandrins.

Et depuis le premier jour, l'intention était de marquer ce lien important à la ville d'Alexandrie et cet engagement à son éveil : l'inauguration est accompagnée d'un atelier intitulé « Le droit à la ville » questionnant les problématiques de l'identité des citoyens alexandrins.

Quatre mois plus tard, suivra la première semaine de spectacles, conférences et expositions dédiée à la Ville d'Alexandrie : « Alexandrie de mes pensées », qui deviendra désormais annuelle.

Jour après jour, et année sur année, l'homme infatigable qu'était Favez construit pierre par pierre son rêve. Le Garage va révolutionner la vie culturelle alexandrine en cinq ans, avant même – et ouvrant le chemin de – la Bibliothèque d'Alexandrie.

Cinq années impossibles à résumer ou à dire, sans une minute d'arrêt pour que nous puissions nous rappeler, ou qu'il puisse se rappeler lui-même, qu'il était malade.

Alexandrie, le samedi 8 octobre

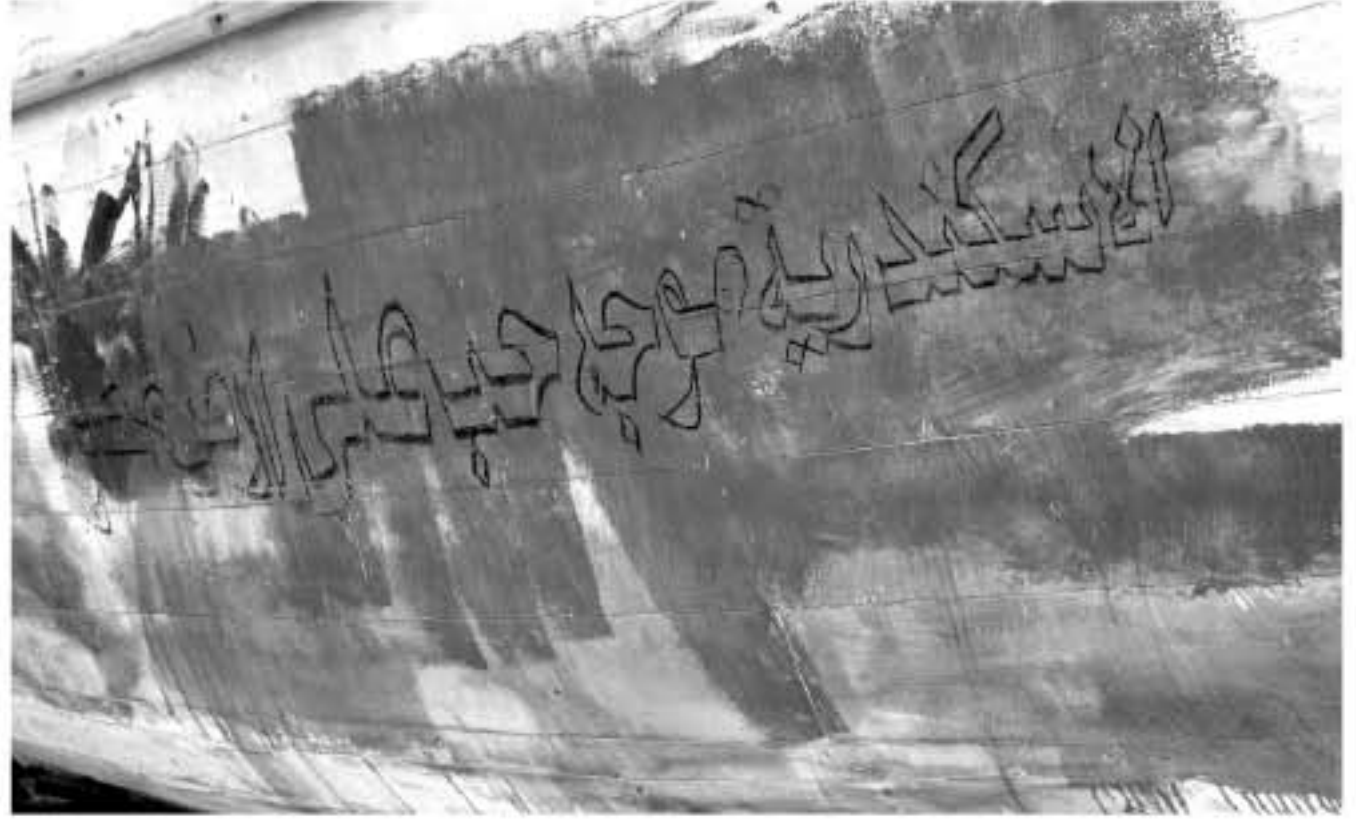
Dix heures du matin. L'église des Jésuites est pleine jusqu'au bout. Je regarde les visages : artistes, académiques, religieux, jeunes, venus la veille du Caire, de Minieh, de Bruxelles... Tous évitent de se regarder dans les yeux pour éviter que des larmes échappent. Mais les larmes échappent. Pleurent-ils l'homme ou le symbole ? L'homme explosant d'amour, dévoué à l'infini, qui n'a jamais fait de compromis dans ses convictions – même quand nous étions tous contre lui ? Ou le symbole du Don Quichotte, qui combattait tous les ténèbres de la terre et tous ses maux, « sans questions ni repos », qui lutte même contre sa propre mort, et qui meurt debout sur le champ ?

Dans mes oreilles résonne Brel. La quête de l'inaccessible étoile. Les rêves impossibles et les chagrins des départs. Les malheureux qui brûlent pour un mot d'amour, pour nous. Oui Favez, tu as été ce « héros ». Que ton cœur soit tranquille.

*Architecte et scénographe égyptien. Fondateur et directeur du Fonds du Jeune Théâtre Arabe – Young Arab Theatre Fund (YATF).

SPIRIT OF ALEXANDRIA





Photos by Abdallah Dawestashy

ADA

The Creation of Alexandria Development Agency: A New Future for Alexandria



Dr. Mohamed Awad, General Abdel Salam el Mahgoub and Dr. Ismail Serageldin

The cooperation between the Governorate of Alexandria and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina for the creation of the Alexandria Development Agency (ADA) was established by signing the Memorandum of Understanding on 8th December 2005 with the sponsorship of the World Bank.

- The Bibliotheca Alexandrina will support the Governorate of Alexandria in establishing a semi-autonomous and financially independent ADA.
- The Bibliotheca Alexandrina, who will constitute an integral part of the ADA, will take the lead in finalizing the proposed structure and functions of the Agency.
- The Bibliotheca Alexandrina will be a partner in the development and management of the Policy and Planning Department and the information and Databases Department of the proposed Agency.
- The Bibliotheca Alexandrina will be responsible for the specific conservation and management of the Heritage and Tourism clusters within the framework of the ADA structure and functions, in coordination with Government agencies and relevant stakeholders.
- The Governorate of Alexandria will delegate to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina the responsibility for the design, implementation and negotiations with public and private partners for the development of the Eastern Harbor.
- The Bibliotheca Alexandrina will collaborate with the Governorate to promote new projects for development, and will be a partner in raising necessary investment resources for the projects of mutual interest.
- The Governorate and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina will collaborate to develop their respective database and information systems, relevant to the city's development.

The agreement will see the Bibliotheca Alexandrina being heavily involved in a major overhaul of the city's development through capitalizing on the city's rich heritage and promoting sustainable development. The Bibliotheca Alexandrina, with its sophisticated state of the art technology and expertise is well qualified to be the main promoter in the area of cultural preservation and development. In addition, it has been actively involved in recent plans for the comprehensive vision for the development of the city.

The specific objectives of the development of the area surrounding the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, including the Eastern Harbor and the water front are:

- To create and expand a cultural nucleus for Alexandria around the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, that would promote the city as a Capital of Dialogue in the region.
- To develop the Eastern Harbor's water front, creating new public spaces and pedestrian experiences together with new facilities such as hotels and restaurants around the marina.
- A series of mega-projects including the creation of an archaeological park, underwater museum and an aquarium.



BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA
مكتبة الإسكندرية



Dr. Salomé, Dr. Awad, Gen. El Mahgoub, Dr. Hamouda & Dr. Serageldin



General Abdel Salam el Mahgoub and Dr. Ismail Serageldin

Artists of Alexandria



By Edward Lewis

Magdi Habachi

As one of the organizers of this year's Alexandrian Biennale, Magdi Habachi has played a pivotal role in developing and promoting art in Alexandria and Egypt. However, his efforts are not confined to this year or the Biennale alone. Since his first involvement in 1986 he has exhibited his work both in Egypt and abroad and been an ambassador for many upcoming Egyptian artists.

Born in Ibrahimieh, Alexandria in 1962, Habachi attended St. Marc's College first devoting himself, not to the arts, but to science. He graduated from the University of Alexandria with a Bachelor degree in dental medicine and surgery in 1986. A year later he completed his training as a medical reserve officer in the ministry of defense before being released during the second gulf war three years later. His dental studies continued – indeed he has a Masters in public health sciences – but his artistic talent came to the fore not long after he first graduated and he has been involved in artistic projects ever since.

His work, at times bordering on the provocative, has attracted both attention and praise from the Egyptian art community. His paintings have been displayed, among other places, in Geneva, Madrid and Rome as well as in numerous exhibitions in Alexandria and Cairo. In addition, Habachi has embarked on an ambitious and highly impressive multi-media project. His idea to create a multi-media 'book' that displays images and progresses within a theme has proved incredibly effective. Since 1980 he has amassed 10 'notebooks' and describes them as "small vehicles of ideas".



Photomontage of Habachi's 2005 book

He has been involved in numerous workshops and training initiatives including calligraphy, sounds and multi-media workshops in Marseilles and Naples and exhibitions in Rome and Valencia. Habachi believes that developing image and sound technology will allow artistic productions to carry their content to new dimensions and carve out new shapes of human relations.



A Habachi painting, oil on canvas

He has been instrumental in organizing and coordinating cultural projects on national and international levels. Since 2004 Magdi Habachi has been a delegate from the *l'Atelier d'Alexandrie* responsible for the participation and artistic structure with the Biennale of the Young Creators in Europe and the Mediterranean.

Magdi Habachi



"ElMa7roussa" Ink on paper



لوحة لقنان صعد عبد الوهاب سحر - جائزة لجنة التحكيم



كستور دويغ - نابولي

حقه الوجب من الرعاية و الدعم.. فهل نحى اليوم ذكراه.. ذكرى خمسون عاما من الإبداع الجميل الخلاق.. لم تبدأ مع هذه الذكرى بداية جديدة جدية بهذا البيئالي لأن يستمر وأن يعطل حيا و حميما في مسيرتنا الإبداعية. و قد دعم هذه الدورة قطاع الفنون التشكيلية الذي ينظم البيئالي و محافظة الإسكندرية و مكتبة الإسكندرية و مركز دراسات الإسكندرية و حضارة البحر المتوسط و مؤسسة أنا ليند لحوار الحضارات. انطلقت الدورة الثالثة و العشرون المواكبة لليوبيل الذهبي للبيئالي و الذي تأخرت بعض توراته لظروف مختلفة.. انطلقت أول ديسمبر ٢٠٠٥ و تستمر لمدة ثلاث شهور حتى ٢٨ فبراير ٢٠٠٦ من متحف الفنون الجميلة الذي افتتح عام ١٩٥٤ قبل البيئالي بعام و لحد ينطلق في احتفالات رسمية و شعبية بمدينة الإسكندرية بهذه المناسبة.

شاركت في هذه الدورة التذكارية ١٥ دولة من دول المتوسط هي فلسطين - لبنان - سوريا - ليبيا تونس- المغرب - إيطاليا - تركيا - قبرص - اليونان - فرنسا - اسبانيا - كرواتيا - البوسنة بالإضافة إلى الدولة المضيفة مصر بحوالي ٧٥ فنانا و فنانة من دول البحر المتوسط و صاحب العرض الرسمي للبيئالي المخصص له خمس جوائز (منار الإسكندرية الذهبية مع جائزة أحسن جناح) معرض ضيوف الشرف و الفائزين بالجوائز الذهبية في التورات السابقة بمكتبة الإسكندرية مع معرض وثائقي شامل لتراث هذا البيئالي العريق و كتاب عن تاريخه في خمسين عاما من إعدادي .. و بدأت في اليوم الثاني من افتتاح البيئالي جلسات الندوة الدولية للمصاحبة بعنوان (شفاقية الكون-سحر المتوسط) التيمة الأساسية لهذه الدورة و استمرت الندوة الدولية يومين حول ثلاث محاور أساسية (الأسطورة و الفلسفة- خصوصية روح المتوسط بين العلم و الفن- البيئالي في خمسين عاما و آفاق المستقبل) اشترك بها نخبة من النقاد و الباحثين من الدول العربية و البحر المتوسطية و مصر مع إقامة معرض كبير لنتائج ورش العمل المصاحبة للبيئالي في فنون (رسوم الأطفال- الفوتوغرافيا- الفيديو-السيرفيساء-الورق-التحت على الأحجار الصلبة-الجرافيك) و معرض لغذاتي محافظات مصر و الخط العربي و معرض ضيوف الشرف بمكتبة الإسكندرية. لأنها دورة استثنائية فقد أعد قوسمير عام البيئالي احتفالية شعبية تشمل كل المراكز الثقافية و الحدائق و القلاع الأثرية بمدينة الإسكندرية من معارض و ندوات و عروض سينمائية و مسرحية و غنائية طوال ثلاث شهور فترة عروض البيئالي مع خريطة ثقافية فنية شاملة لمدينة الإسكندرية عروض هذا الحفل.



لقنانا ليزي كاتجاي - اليونان، تتسلم الجائزة من د.محمد عوض



القواء إيهاب فاروق و القغان محسن شعلان و القغان د.سعيد بدير و د. احمد نوري لقاء افتتاح معرض ورش العمل في ليلية الإسكندرية



بيئالي الشباب نابولي



لجنة التحكيم جان إيفر مارتين، برنارد هيلر، محمد جوسر كايف كاز، بيد نوار، مهدي بللار، إيفيل الصعرا



كارثة شولامسي- تحت اسبانيا



كثيرة تونسي. تحت اسمها حفرة أمن جناح

سحر المتوسط في بينالي الإسكندرية و بينالي الشباب نابولي

بقلم عصمت داوستاشي قومسبير عام البينالي

المتوسط و كانت تضم في ذلك الزمن نخبة من فناني المتوسط جعلوها موطنهم الفني الأول... كما كانت تضم أكبر مجموعة فنية لإبداعات مدارس المتوسط القديمة و الحديثة تضمنها المجموعات الخاصة للجاليات الأجنبية و الأمر المصرية الثرية.

و من الناحية الاجتماعية و مع إنشاء متحف حديث للفنون الجميلة بمنطقة محرم بك يضم مجموعة فنية عالمية مهداة إليه من أحد مواطني المدينة الأختاب (الوارث-فريداهم) كان و لابد من إقامة أنشطة تمثل هذا المجتمع المتعدد الجنسيات و الهوية و من هنا كانت فكرة معرض يجمع فنون و إبداعات فناني دول المتوسط و هي الفكرة الأنسب و الأشمل لتمثل هذا المجتمع السكندري في بدايات النصف الثاني من القرن العشرين.



محافظ الإسكندرية أثناء افتتاح البينالي

فأما لوحات ضخمة أو صغيرة في حجم الكسوف و قدمت عروض للأزياء و فنون معمارية و أعمال كرتون (رسوم مسلسلة) و عروض مسرحية تجريبية و عروض موسيقية و غناء و رقص. و من أهم ما قدم هو عروض ورش العمل المشتركة مثل ورشة (إسكندرية-مرسيليا-نابولي) و ورشة (الجزائر-المغرب-تونس) و مشاركة كل الدول العربية المطلة على البحر المتوسط و شاركت أيضا إسرائيل و هي للعلم ليست عضوا في منظمة هذا البينالي و شارك فيها شباب فلسطينيون من عرب 48 بفيلم فيديو رائع ضد جدار العزل الإسرائيلي.

و نحن نحتفل اليوم بمرور خمسون عاما على افتتاح الدورة الأولى لبينالي الإسكندرية لفنون دول البحر المتوسط ذلك البحر الذي يمثل قلب العالم و حضارته. يجب أن نطرح على أنفسنا السؤال الملح... هل انتهى دور هذا البينالي العريق... و هل عليه أن يخلق أبوابه في ظل المتغيرات العديدة المحلية و الدولية في المنطقة... أم علينا أن نجعله يستمر بروح تجديد حقيقية و بهدف واضح و متلق لنصف قرن قائم.

فيعد أن كان البينالي الوحيد في مصر و المنطقة العربية و الثاني على مستوى العالم بعد بينالي فينسيا أصبح في مصر العديد من البيناليات و المعارض الدولية و العالمية و أمثالات البلاد العربية من المشرق إلى المغرب بمعارض متشابهة و حتى العروض العالمية العريقة تراجمت أمام عروض عالمية أحدث سرقت منها الأضواء و الأهمية و طالت المتغيرات حتى المفهوم السياسي لبينالي معنى بدول البحر المتوسط بعد ظهور العولمة و نظامها الجديد الذي يجربنا جرا ورائه شستنا أم أبينا.

كان لميلاد بينالي الإسكندرية عام 1955 دوافع منطقية و ضرورية عديدة. فمن الناحية الفنية كانت مدينة الإسكندرية مزالت تلك المدينة الكوزموبوليتانية التي تجمع روح و سحر شعوب البحر الأبيض

الطلقت البعثة المصرية المشاركة في بينالي شباب الأورو متوسطي في دورته الثانية عشر إلى مدينة نابولي فجر الأحد الموافق 18-9-2005 يرأسها الدكتور محمد رفيع خليل رئيس أتيليه الإسكندرية المشارك رسميا في منظمة البينالي و الفنان مجدي حبشي قومسبير المجموعة المصرية المكونة من الفنانين و الفنانة (محمد نبيل بأربع لوح جرا فيك - كارم محروس بثلاث لوحات تصوير - هنيل نظمي بعرض فيديو مع مجموعة من المشاركات و مجموعة للموسيقى و الغناء و الرقص التعبيري التي تم تكوينها خصيصا للمشاركة باسم (ع) من ميادة الكتكتي عازفة عود و قانون و محمد نمرز عازف إيقاع و محمد صيام عازف جيتار و محمد عزالة و عماد ميروك أصال فيديو و ليلي سامي غناء و فاليريا نبيل رافعة بالية). كما شارك عدد كبير من الفريق المصري في ورشة العمل المصاحبة و التي أقيمت قبل البينالي بإتيليه الإسكندرية مع شباب من دول أوروبا و المتوسط ثم انتقلت إلى مرسيليا و قدمت عرضها الرابع في البينالي يوم 22-9-2005 بنابولي و معهم الإعلامي على البارودي و سافرت معهم بصفتي المشراف العام على هذه المشاركة و معنا الفنانة فلورا كافورا ممثلة لمكتبة الإسكندرية نائبة عن المهندس د. محمد عوض و بقدر المعاناة للصعود إلى مقر البينالي في قلعة سانت أنيمو التي تتوسط مدينة نابولي في قمة الجبل، بهرتنا هذه القلعة المنحمة و المجهزة بأحدث التجهيزات الفنية التي لا تخطر على بال في قلعة أثرية كان يمكن أن نظل أطلالا مهمة.

تحت عنوان (أشباح و محاور) اجتمع أكثر من سبعائة فني و فنانة تحت سن الثلاثين يمثلون 28 دولة من 80 مدينة أورو متوسطية داخل جدران قلعة سانت اليمو و في أرجاء مدينة نابولي مع ضيوف البينالي في الفترة من 19-9-2005 إلى 29-9-2005

وكان أهم ما في هذا اللقاء هو حوار و تلاقى الحضارات و الشعوب. إن أجمل و أهم أفكار بينالي الشباب هو لقاء المبدعين الشباب الذين يمثلون قلب العالم الحقيقي البحر المتوسط و دول أوروبا في تلاحم صميم قوامه الإبتكار و الإبداع و الفن الجديد و طرح روح المستقبل. لقد قدم الشباب كل صنوف الإبداع المتعارف عليها فيما يطلق عليه (ما بعد الحداثة) و كانت للتوساط المتعددة من عروض الفيديو و الجرافيك الكمبيوتر و الفوتوغرافيا البطولة الحقيقية في حين اختفى فن النحت التقليدي الذي كان البطل الأوحده في فنون الحضارات القديمة. و اختفى فن التصوير و الرسم (متوسط الحجم)



بوستر بينالي الإسكندرية الثالث والعشرون

و على المستوى السياسي يتم تقديم بينالي الإسكندرية كواجهة ثقافية و فنية ثورية بوليو الوليدة التي يمكن أن تحتضن فنون دول البحر المتوسط بما فيه من الدول العربية من مشرقه إلى مغربه لذلك حرص زعيمها جمال عبد الناصر على افتتاح دورته الأولى بمتحف الفنون الجميلة يوم 26 يوليو 1955 و هو تاريخ احتفالات ثورة يوليو بالإسكندرية كل عام منذ ذلك الوقت.

لقد واكب هذا البينالي متغيرات المنطقة طوال نصف قرن كامل... و تألق في بعض دوراته عندما كانت الظروف السياسية في المنطقة هادئة و مستقرة و تدهور في معظم دوراته عندما اشتعلت الحروب و تفاقمت الخلافات بين دول المتوسط حتى أن حسين صبحي راعي و منشئ هذا البينالي و معه الصحفي الأثري كمال الملاح مستشاره الفني والإعلامي أتخلوا دول أخرى من خارج البحر المتوسط في بعض دوراته و كأنها محاولة لجعله بينالي عالميا و إنما كان الهدف لتغطية غياب كثير من دول المتوسط.

الآن بعد مرور نصف قرن هل فقد بينالي الإسكندرية مصداقيته ؟ هل من الإنصاف أن نعلن توفقه ؟ أم نبعث فيه روح جديدة لتطويره و تفعيله في إطار المتغيرات العالمية الجديدة ؟

لقد استفاد من هذا البينالي دون شك فنانون مصر و الدول العربية و كان بمثابة مدرسة عظيمة لهم خاصة في دورته الأولى. و كان رائدا لكل من فكر في إنشاء بينالي آخر في منطقة المتوسط و كذلك في بقية الدول العربية و الأفريقية.

و لكن هذا الرائد الجليل تأخر كثيرا عن أبنائه الجدد و لم يعد يأخذ



د. أحمد عبد الفتاح د. أحمد نور الفنان محسن شعلان د. محمد رفيع الفنان عصمت داوستاشي

The Lost Generation

“The soldiers’ graves are the greatest preachers of peace”
(Albert Schweitzer, Nobel Peace Prize laureate).

By Edward Lewis

It is hard to imagine the events of October 1942 amid the concrete façades of the numerous Mediterranean resorts strewn along the Marsa Matruh road. In fact, if it were not for the signs directing you to the war cemeteries of the fallen Allied, German and Italian soldiers, you would think nothing of the vast desert landscape or realize that it was the theater for one of the most decisive battles of World War Two.



One of the many corridors containing the remains of 4,634 Italian dead.

Despite the passage of sixty three years and the relative isolation of the area, these El Alamein cemeteries continue to attract large numbers of visitors including veterans from both sides of the conflict and their families, many of whom will pick up the baton of remembrance when their loved ones finally fall. Every year services are held and the ceremonies of October 2005 only differed from their predecessors in the ever dwindling numbers of veterans able to attend the solemn act of remembrance.

Wreaths laid by the representatives of Governments such as Pakistan, Italy, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Greece, Poland, United Kingdom, Bangladesh, and Slovakia testified to the all inclusive nature of a war that will be remembered most poignantly by those who participated in and were affected by its many campaigns and individual battles. In many respects, they, the active participants of the Allied and Axis powers and those non-combatants caught up in the conflicts can justifiably be regarded as the ‘lost generation’ of the twentieth century; El Alamein contributed its share of them.

Control of North Africa was considered of vital importance by both the Axis and Allied powers and in the years between 1940 and 1942 fierce fighting surged back and forth over thousands of kilometers of Egyptian and Libyan desert. Whoever mastered this tract of land could control the lines of communication afforded by the Mediterranean Sea and the Suez Canal, and gain greater access to and control over the vast Middle Eastern oil supplies.



A veteran of El Alamein placing a wreath at the grave of a friend

The consequence of this race for strategic predominance is manifested in every letter and symbol that records the dead of both sides who now lie entombed in the sands of the Western Desert. Each national monument attempts to cause the visitor to reflect on the historical event and consider the consequences (the German word for monument, *denkmal*, means “think about it”). But each nation achieves this common goal in very different styles. At El Alamein, where the dead of victor and vanquished lie in close proximity to one another, the immediate visible comparisons of national monuments signal the very different styles attributed by each to the manner in which they commemorate the sacrifices made by their sons and daughters.

Architect Sir Hubert Worthington’s use of white grave stones and large open spaces in the Allied cemetery, combined with the inscriptions of the headstones themselves, give a sense of glorification of war and heroic death on the battlefield. Such traditional, grand iconography is evident in the Allied cemeteries of Normandy, Gallipoli and in many Commonwealth countries.

In contrast, the German cemetery, like many others in Europe, is a large, enclosed structure reminiscent of a vault with characteristics akin to a medieval castle. The somber black angels, crosses, eagles and imposing obelisk within the fort echo remorse, loss, despair but also defiance. Such architecture reflects the conscience of a post-war Germany trying to come to terms with the devastation and destruction of a pointless conflict - it symbolizes a feeling of remorse and agonized soul searching.



The imposing façade of the German monument, El Alamein



The Italian cemetery, El Alamein

At odds with the simple contrasting of victor and vanquished is the impressive white octagonal tower of Paolo Caccia Dominioni’s Italian cemetery, himself an El Alamein veteran and the man responsible for the forbidding task of searching and exhuming the scattered bodies. It signals pride and a clear message that not only will the 4,634 fallen ever be remembered, but that the events leading to their deaths will never be allowed to happen again. The powerful and moving words of Father Alexander Negroni at this year’s ceremony encapsulated the feelings of all nationalities who were so humbled when walking through the seemingly unending corridors of names, many of which simply recorded the word *ignoto* - unknown.

For those who fought and survived at El Alamein the cemeteries provide a clear focus for life and serve as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made, the friendships made and lost and in many cases the incessant nightmares that have become a part of life. Was it worth it? Eighty-six year old British war veteran William Humphreys thinks so. As a member of the Royal Army Service Corps, who served under Field Marshall Montgomery in 1942, he summed up why there continues to be a strong desire to support and remember the veterans and events of World War Two:

“At long last they [the younger generation] have seen the errors of their elders’ ways. They trust politicians far less than we used to and we are winning the battle of moving away from war as a means of achieving stability.”

For many veterans this year’s memorial services at El Alamein represented the last chance for them to walk not only amongst their fallen friends, brothers and comrades-in-arms but also through the ranks of their dead foes - an ever increasing measure of the drive towards reconciliation.

The Zoghebs

An Alexandrian Saga

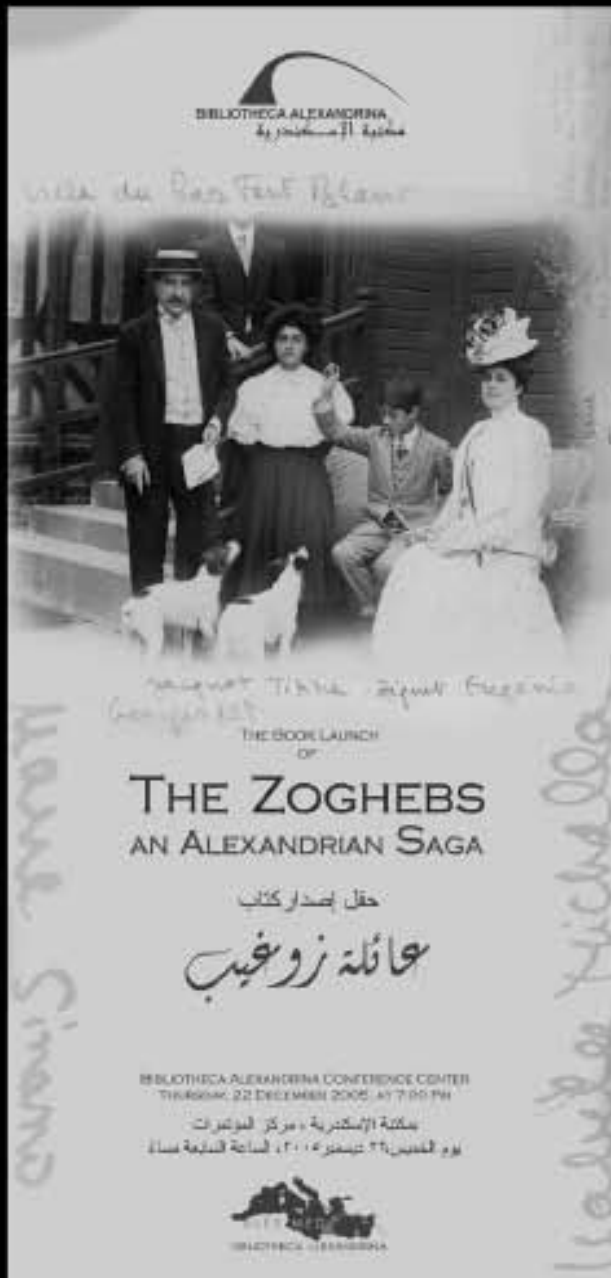
December 2005 saw the launch of the second installment of Alex-Med's monograph series. Entitled *The Zoghebs: An Alexandrian Saga*, the monograph is a testimony to Alexandria's social history during the first half of the twentieth century and gives a highly personal account of an Alexandrian family. The book is comprised of three documents — a narrative long out of print, an unpublished memoir, and a letter, written by different members of the Zogheb family: Count Patrice de Zogheb, Janie Sinano Horwitz and Christian Ayoub. Together, these paint a rich tapestry of the epoch. The monograph is further enhanced by a wealth of original photographs from the period. Many of these provide a unique glimpse of Alexandria's past and are being published for the first time.



Alexandria, 1923-1924



A portrait of one of the family members, Hilde



The Zoghebs were Catholics from Syria, but countless other families have a similar history. Others came from other countries or proclaimed different faiths, but the pattern is more or less the same. For generations they led a life of comfort in cosmopolitan Alexandria, weathering plagues, revolts, the British occupation, two World Wars, nationalism, and wars with the West. Against the backdrop of their domestic dramas, historical events unfolded that inevitably changed their world beyond recognition so that it was theirs no longer. Along with other cosmopolitan families, they left Alexandria for good, and with their departure a whole way of life was lost forever. However, it was not only their lifestyle that came to an end, but the Zogheb family line as well, for no member of the family survived in Alexandria. Some of their houses do still remain standing, mostly in ruins, but who in Alexandria today knows that they were once inhabited by members of the Zogheb family?

In her memoir, *The Zogheb Saga*, written between 1949 and 1959, Janie Sinano Horwitz begins:

"I am going to recount the story of my family to you. Don't pull a face, it's an extraordinary family... But my family is not out of the ordinary just on account of its members; its setting, climate and epoch are also extraordinary."

"Why tell it me?"

"To save from oblivion those grandmothers, aunts, houses, epochs, and antediluvian mentalities."

The action takes place in Egypt. No, not the Egypt of the Pharaohs, but that of the Khedives. However, compared to present day Egypt, it seems just as distant. But that isn't exactly correct: the action does not take place in Egypt, but in Alexandria. It's not the same thing. Alexandria may not be Europe, but it's not Africa either. It's the Levant. It's one of the ports of the Levant, and a gateway to the Mediterranean. This city has been a meeting place for people of all races for twenty centuries or so. It's a city with a renowned past of which there remains nothing, neither Lighthouse nor Library."



The Sinano family 1923. Marie, Janie, Christine, Christian.

The experience of Alexandrian cosmopolitanism was a unique one, the product of a certain time and certain circumstances. The Zogheb family exemplifies this experience: a man of unknown origins, probably from Damascus, arrived in Alexandria during the middle of the nineteenth century. His son married a young Syrian woman who, like his own family, spoke only Arabic and dressed in native Syrian clothes. He amassed a vast fortune and was ennobled. Their children formed the next generation of Alexandrian aristocracy; they spoke French and little or no Arabic, traveled abroad, and lost or spent money as easily as they made it. It is as if nothing of their recent past remained.



Children playing at the Alexandria Sporting Club, 1937

The Moroni Project



Alex-Med's commitment to promoting, documenting and safe guarding Alexandria's rich architectural heritage received a welcomed boost in 2005 with the implementation of the Moroni project. Luciano Moroni, an established Italian photographer, read an article in an Egyptian weekly newspaper about the Alex-Med endeavors to identify, document and raise awareness regarding the endangered Alexandrian architectural heritage. He expressed his interest to financially support the documentation of selected significant endangered buildings in Alexandria and it was agreed that Alex-Med would organize a survey of the selected buildings. Ten buildings were initially photographed before four were selected for the project. These buildings are:

- Villa Lutsato Pasha (now Belqes School)
- Sabil and Kuttab El Kholi
- Wekalet Toussoun
- Villa Count Patrice de Zogheb (now Toushka School)



Preliminary field surveys on each building are currently being carried out by a member of Alex-Med's Heritage Unit and four recently graduated students from the Faculty of Engineering, department of architecture, thus introducing the new generation of architects to the value of Alexandria's cultural heritage. The dimensions have been taken in order to produce accurate plans, sections and elevations and the material will then be published. As a result it is hoped presentations and various seminars will take place as well as public awareness of such buildings heightened. A workshop will be held at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in February 2006 to discuss and evaluate the experience in preparation for future efforts of this nature.



Alex-Med would like to thank Mr Moroni for his interest, commitment and financial support without which the project would not have been possible.

Honoring

Father Maurice Martin and Anahide Méramedjian

On Tuesday 24th February 2004, the Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Center honored two of Egypt's sons and daughters in recognition of their lifelong careers dedicated to books and knowledge. In a small celebration, the Library of Alexandria paid homage to Jesuit Father Maurice Martin and Anahide Méramedjian. Dr. Mohamed Awad, director of Alex-Med, gave two plates of honor to Father Martin (collected by Pere Maçon on his behalf) and to Anahide Méramedjian, in recognition of their careers dedicated to the culture and knowledge:

"... to have offered their whole lives to the culture and knowledge, without awaiting anything in exchange."

For a long time, Father Maurice Martin was the director of the library of the Jesuits in Cairo, which holds bibliographical, documentary, cartographic and iconographic material that today is a treasure for archivists and researchers worldwide. Father Martin is also known as an impassioned orientalist and a famous historian, especially regarding Coptic culture.

The other recipient, Anahide Méramedjian, managed her bookshop, *Vient de Paraitre*, in Alexandria for more than 50 years. For a long time after the departure of the foreign communities from the city, it was the only place where foreign books could be found and accessed.



Anahide Méramedjian and Pere Maçon, receiving the award on behalf of Father Martin, collect their awards from Dr. Mohamed Awad.

Mediterranean Fish Soup

Recipe supplied by Antigone Katsibri

Every port, such as Alexandria, has a traditional seafood soup that takes advantage of the incredibly rich variety of fish found in the waters of the Mediterranean. *Bouillabaisse* (from the French *bouiller* and *adaisser*, "boil" and "reduce") is a dish whose beauty lies in its simplicity and practicality. The dish's origins are in the stews that were typically cooked on the beaches by the fisherman, using what was left in their nets after their catch had been sold in the markets. Whilst ingredients may vary from region to region, the soup is made in one pot and combines flavors and ingredients that have served the region for centuries.

Serves 6

Ingredients

6 Shrimps
1 Crab
3 Red Mullet
1 Sole
1 Sea Bass
4 Carrots
4 Potatoes
1 Onion
2 Bay Leaves
1 Bunch of Celery
1 Big Cup of Olive Oil
3 Lemons
2 Eggs
Salt and Pepper



Method

- 1) Peel and chop the carrots, potatoes and onion and place in a large casserole dish. Add water, bay leaves, celery, seasoning and half the olive oil and bring to boil.
- 2) Place the sea bass, red mullet, shrimps, sole and crab in the casserole dish ensuring there is enough water covering the ingredients.
- 3) When the fish is cooked, remove the sea bass and half of the vegetables and arrange on a separate plate. Serve, spreading the remainder of the olive oil over the fish.
- 4) Take out the remaining vegetables with the red mullet, sole, shrimps and crab and remove flesh (do not throw out the water). Place both the fish and vegetables in a blender until smooth and creamy.
- 5) Take the two eggs and whisk in a bowl whilst slowly adding the lemon juice. Once mixed thoroughly, add two tablespoons of the hot water and continue to whisk until well mixed.
- 6) Slowly add the egg mixture and blended fish and vegetables to the remainder of the hot water, stir and boil before serving.



Alex-Med to Launch its own Website



January 2006 will see the launch of Alex-Med's official website giving the department increased coverage and providing a platform from which to promote projects, events and publications.

Introductory pages giving background information on the department, individuals involved and contact details will precede more in-depth information on on-going projects in the fields of history, archeology, arts and culture, architecture and urban planning and economy and development. The site will also provide information on forth coming events as well as future Alex-Med books, monographs, guides, maps and CDs. The Alex-Med newsletter will be archived and available on line. In addition, there will be a slide show featuring a series of photographs by Alex-Med's photographer, Abdallah Dawestashy, and some clips for the recently completed and highly successful Med-Voices project. The site is due to be up and running at the end of January. For more information please see overleaf for contact details.

www.bibalex.org/alexmed

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ALEX-MED NEWSLETTER

Bringing the Mediterranean Together

This newsletter hopes to reach a wide public, both locally and internationally. It brings to you news about Alex-Med and Alexandria, and encourages you to send your contributions. If you would like to send your views, comments or contribute to topics related to Alexandria and the Mediterranean please use the contact details below. Regular sections include an "Alexandrian Artists Corner" where young Alexandrian artists can publish their poetry or display their art; a gastronomical page to illustrate the diversity and similarity of the Mediterranean cuisine; a page on an Alexandrian personage and another on an Alexandrian building or neighborhood, and a page of photography that captures scenes from everyday life in Alexandria. Our mission is to involve you in our activities and in the making of a new Alexandria – one that honors the past, respects diversity and rises to the challenges of the 21st century.

Credit for the graphics goes to Flora Cavoura and, unless otherwise stated, to Abdallah Dawestashy for photographs.

Forthcoming events

Documentation of Endangered Architectural Heritage in Alexandria
Workshop 5 February 2006

Celebration of the 2nd Congress of the Mediterranean Society of Comparative Education
Conference 4 - 6 February 2006

Philosophy During the Hellenistic Period in Alexandria
Conference 8, 9 & 10 March 2006

La transission des connaissances des savoir et des cultures : Alexandrie, métaphore de la francophonie (in collaboration with Sengor University)
Conference 12, 13, 14 & 15 March

Contact us:

If you want to be added to our mailing list, please fill in the form and either mail or email it to us. If you would like to send a letter to the Editor or to contribute to the newsletter (either an article in Arabic, English or French, or a poem) please send it to:

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or

alex.med@bibalex.org

The chandelier in Abou el-Abbas Mosque
designed by Mario Rossi

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