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Honoring the Past... Promoting the Future
This newsletter hopes to reach a wide public, both locally and internationally. It brings to you news about Alex Med and Alexandria. If you would like to send your views, comments or contribute topics related to Alexandria and the Mediterranean please use the contact details. Regular features include an article on an Alexandrian personage, another on an Alexandrian building or neighborhood, a page of photography that captures scenes from the life and sites of the city, and a gastronomical section on Mediterranean cuisine. 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.

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Once upon a time….”—we are all familiar with this phrase, aren’t we? It is the conventional beginning of many fairy tales and bedtime stories with which our mothers and grandmothers often regaled us as children. “[But my mother] never told me fairy tales, or any kind of tales, nor is she a good storyteller in the least”, says Sahar Hamouda in the Preface to her book, Once Upon a Time in Jerusalem, which was launched at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina on 25 February 2010 under the aegis of the Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Center. The event was remarkable for the amount of emotion it imparted to the audience. If many of them were literally moved to tears, it was on account of Hamouda’s heartfelt feelings as she talked about her homeland, her family members, the family home, or dar, in Old Jerusalem, and above all, her mother to whom she dedicates her book. With an ambiance charged with nostalgic recollections, both painful and joyous reminiscences, genuine feelings of love, reverence and gratitude, and a moving mother-daughter relationship, the event was a highly memorable one.

Busy as she is, being Dean of the Faculty of Languages and Translation at Pharos University in Alexandria, Director of the Alexandria Center for Hellenistic Studies and Deputy Director of the Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Center, Hamouda set her heart upon writing this book, spending hours in libraries and bookshops, and tirelessly trying to collect the material that such an undertaking would entail. Ultimately, her dream came to fruition with the publication of the book, which she describes as not only “a social document of one family living before the Nakba of 1948”, but also “a recording of [her] mother’s memory”. Heralding the event was a speech given by the Assistant to the Secretary General of the Arab League, Mohamed Sobeih, who underscored the invaluable importance of publishing a book about a family home in Old Jerusalem at a time replete with atrocious acts of demolishing centuries-old Jerusalemite houses. Having it published by Garnet in England, beyond the borders of the Arab world, makes it all the more seminal in foregrounding what the West has long been unaware of, he told the audience. Interestingly, and as Mohamed Sobeih has remarked, Hamouda’s wearing the traditional Palestinian costume on the day of the event emblematized the age-old marriage of Egyptian and Palestinian cultures and emphasized her sense of belonging to both. If the audience were enchanted by the writer’s attire, they were even far more spellbound by her charismatic demeanor; the socially and historically illuminating, though oft-poignant content of her book; and the captivating photos that her presentation featured.

Standing on the podium while reading out excerpts from her book and commenting on them both in English and Arabic, Hamouda rendered the book launch an unforgettable event with the emotions she evoked in all the attendees. A wide array of people attended that day: Egyptians, Palestinians, scholars, intellectuals, culture and heritage lovers, university students, among many others. Though this is not Hamouda’s first book, for she has published articles and books on English, comparative and postcolonial literature, and also on the modern history of Alexandria, Once Upon a Time in Jerusalem, as she highlighted at the outset of her talk, is the “closest to her heart”. In writing this book, Hamouda pays tribute to Palestinian mothers in general, and her own mother in particular, “an angel among humans”, as she hails her. “But throughout my childhood and well into my adulthood…the stories [my mother] told

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Mrs Hind Al Fitiani, the mother of the author and whose memory is recorded in the book, and Dr. Sahar Hamouda

Hind Fitiani with Sahar Hamouda (standing) and Ayman Hamouda on stouh al sultanieh 1963

Sahar Hamouda, the author of Once Upon a Time in Jerusalem
and retold about her family and those stone walls that enclosed them were the only food with which she supplied my imagination”, Hamouda recalls. However, more than merely being a personal narrative about “family” and “stone walls”, and more than merely being the saga of a Palestinian family living in Jerusalem during the British mandate and in the wake of the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, Once Upon a Time in Dar al Fitiani, who was a child living in 1930s Jerusalem, and the daughter, Sahar Hamouda, who comments on the mother’s narrative and sometimes adds extra information. Throughout the book, the two voices alternate to weave a tapestry of family members and personal reminiscences, as well as social and historical anecdotes; a tapestry interspersed with photos of the various members of their extended family, its inhabitants to create a timeless tale of family life that was long held in the grip of occupation.

Finally, the event was crowned with Hamouda leaving the podium to pay homage to her mother, seated among the audience, thereby enacting her image as “an angel among humans”. It was a touching scene that moved many of the attendees to tears and unleashed a torrent of applause.

Jerusalem transcends its personal dimension to become, as the writer explains, a universal tale of “ordinary people leading extraordinary lives as the forces of history crashed upon their world and brought it to an end forever”. Firmly believing that “it is the small stories of our inconsequential lives that make up the larger mosaic of country and history and monumental past”, Hamouda decided to “preserve their past, and not let their family history be washed away by the daily business of living”. In so doing, she has captured the trials and tribulations of not only her family but also of an entire population living under occupation and against a turbulent backdrop of violence, injustice and usurped rights.

Having revealed the impulse for writing such a saga, Hamouda set out to read extracts from her book, highlighting how it unfolds via two narrative voices: the mother, Hind al Fitiani, photo of the manuscript of al Fitiani genealogy and finally the al Fitiani family tree.

Unconventionally, the typical narrative opening “Once upon a time...” first occurs almost ten pages from the beginning of the book, where the writer describes its real hero: the family home in Old Jerusalem, or more accurately the dar, which connotes, as Hamouda explains, “both meanings of ‘house’: the actual building and the family”. Dar al Fitiani was built in the fifteenth century and still stands today, thus testifying to the family’s roots in the holy city: “So let us start afresh. Once upon a time in Jerusalem, there was an ancient house within the walls of al Haram al Sharif inhabited by the Fitianis … so that it grew to be known as Dar al Fitiani: the house of the Fitianis”. The rest of the book depicts the flux of changes that the dar witnessed and charts the odyssey of Gamal Abdel Nasser and Taher al Fitiani. Cairo
Cycling is healthy, environmentally friendly, affordable and fun, yet it is only practiced by a few in Alexandria. It is not, however, uncommon seeing a flock of cyclers along the Corniche on Friday mornings. The Alexandria Cyclers Club is a cycling club for the people of Alexandria: anyone can join. We aim to replace as much as possible the use of cars with bicycles, hoping to see Alexandria less crowded and less polluted. To achieve this, we ride our bikes in large groups to spread the idea.

Two years ago on 3 August 2008 a group of Alexandrians decided to take action and bring about some change. At that time we were about 6 members who met in Clay Café to discuss the group strategy and our first ride which was to take place at 8:00 am on Friday 8 August. A day before the ride we met at Mishou’s bike shop in Attarine district to rent the bikes in advance. A truck was also rented to transport the bikes from the shop to the meeting place. On Friday, around 30 people showed up and we cycled from Stanley Bridge, along the Corniche, to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. This distance gradually increased over the weeks. The second ride took place from Stanley Bridge to Qaitbey Fort, and the third from Montazah to Qaitbey Fort.

So far, our rides had taken place only early on Friday mornings, and along the Corniche. However, we were not satisfied... We had not yet achieved the group’s aim of attracting as many people as possible and of proving that cycling is possible in the midst of the busy Alexandrian traffic. So we changed our strategy: the next ride was to take place on a Saturday afternoon, starting in Attarine district, through the downtown area, along the tramway crossing through to Sidi Gaber district, turning off to El Horreya Avenue and finally arriving at Kafr Abdou Street.

Ahmed El Heity, the 20-year-old organizer, faces considerable difficulties with the military police, the tourism police, the traffic police and even the security police! It is extremely difficult to organize such rides on a limited route like the Corniche: several trucks have to accompany the cyclers in order to transport the bikes and fix or replace any damaged ones during the ride. Ahmed El Heity has tried to establish official status for the cycling club but admits that “the authorities have not been very cooperative”. Nevertheless, he is optimistic, “I have dedicated my time to this group and I have big plans for the future: who knows, one day we may even be granted separate lanes for safer riding!”

For some tourists, cycling in Alexandria has become just as important as visiting the Catacombs or Pompey’s Pillar. The club has also organized rides to Kafr El Sheikh, Rashid and Cairo. It has been sponsored by Bridgestone, which offered 300 free T-shirts with the CYCLE EGYPT logo printed on them.

The Alexandria Cycling Club still seeks sponsors and needs considerable funding. It has started gaining recognition on both the national and international level. The question remains however: can bicycles replace cars in Egypt as they have in the Far East?

You can join the group on Facebook: Cycle Egypt.

For more details concerning joining the weekly ride please contact Ahmed El Heity: 0125745034.
Recreating the Atmosphere of Days of Yore: The Launch of *Seven Days at the Cecil*

Carole Escoffey

“*To my Alexandrian friend, Mohamed Awad, whose love for the city inspired some of the pages of this book.*” It was perhaps by reading out this dedication from his own copy of *Seven Days at the Cecil* that Mohamed Awad best summed up the inspiration for the whole book: a deep love for the city and its inhabitants. Dr. Awad, the Director of the Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Center which organized the book launch, then looked up and smiled at the audience gathered in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s auditorium on 8 April 2010, adding... “He has an architect who is in love with his city in his book.”

English, the first being a book of short stories, *Farewell to Alexandria*. Both of these, and a third, *Drunken Seas*, are inspired by their author’s memories of his native city. Abdel Meguid also noted that during the ten-year period between *Seven Days at the Cecil’s* first publication in Greek in 2000, and the new English edition, Alexandria had undergone many changes, and several buildings and people mentioned in the book had disappeared, whereas new ones such as the Bibliotheca Alexandrina had appeared: “Only the sea does not change...”

The book follows seven days in the lives of a small group of characters: the narrator who, like Harry Tzalas himself, is returning to the city of his childhood, Sorial the Alexandrian architect who knows every nook and cranny in the city, William Traver, the English writer who was a pilot in Alexandria during the war,...

Harry Tzalas, the author of *Seven Days at the Cecil*

Harry Tzalas’ *Seven Days at the Cecil*, the English translation of which is published by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, is an especially evocative example of a genre which is rapidly gaining in readership: Alexandrian literature of nostalgia. However, as Dr. Awad pointed out in his opening speech, its author’s connection with Alexandria is manifold: “Harry has come back to Alexandria not only for nostalgic reasons, but has also contributed considerably to the rediscovery of the history of Alexandria and has been dedicated over the last couple of years to underwater archeology.... I think he is one of the most learned and distinguished scholars when it comes to Alexander the Great.... But today we are celebrating another aspect of the city: literary Alexandria....”

 Appropriately, the first guest speaker at the book launch was an eminent example of contemporary literary Alexandria: the Alexandrian novelist Ibrahim Abdel Meguid. Abdel Meguid began by giving a brief introduction in Arabic about the author: Alexandrian-born Harry Tzalas, who left the city in 1956, when the exodus of foreigners from Egypt was at its peak. He emigrated to Brazil where he worked for a shipping company, later settling in Athens, as a marine consultant. In addition to his professional activities, Harry Tzalas, as Mohamed Awad stated in his opening speech, has for many years been active in marine archeology and research into the topography of ancient Alexandria, publishing numerous articles and studies in both fields. Moreover, in 1997 he founded the Hellenic Institute for Ancient and Medieval Alexandrian Studies.

*Seven Days at the Cecil* is Harry Tzalas’ second literary work to be translated into
and two female characters, ex-Alexandrian Princess Cécile Ali Toussoum and her niece Miléna. Ibrahim Abdel Meguid pointed out that it is Sorial, the architect in the story, who best personifies the true Alexandrian. Each day these characters visit different parts of the city, entering shops and restaurants which they knew from decades ago, but whose original owners have left or died. The reader discovers the nostalgia experienced by the four older characters, each reliving memories from the past. Abdel Meguid also noted that Seven Days at the Cecil has a wealth of historical information, citing for example the fourth chapter—“The Lost Warriors’ Day”—in which the group visits the cemeteries of El Alamein, and during which William Traver, once a Second World War pilot stationed in Alexandria, gives a vivid account of the Battle of El Alamein.

Professor Azza Kararah

The second speaker at the book launch was the author himself, Harry Tzalas, who began by remarking that “This book was written in Greek but it is not to be read by the Greeks only. It is to be read by the Egyptians, the French, the Italians… all the Alexandrians of the past years—my generation—but also by the Alexandrians of today.” Tzalas observed that he had especially wanted the English version of Seven Days at the Cecil to be published in Alexandria. He noted, in response to Mohamed Awad’s opening remarks, that the character of Sorial had indeed been inspired by Mohamed Awad, although the book is not a biographical work. He further explained to the audience the intended word play in the character Cécile’s name, and the name of the Cecil Hotel where she is staying.

Harry Tzalas then spoke briefly about literary Alexandria and nostalgic Alexandrian literature, explaining that during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the city became a source of inspiration for poets and writers. Then, in the decade of 1956–1966, the exodus of the foreign nationals which spelt the end of cosmopolitan Alexandria, sparked a particular brand of nostalgic literature. In the years preceding the exodus, Alexandria counted a number of important poets such as Cavafy and Ungaretti, writers such as E.M. Forster, Fausta Cialente, Lawrence Durrell and Stratis Tirkas. In the years following the exodus, several Egyptian writers such as Naguib Mahfouz, Edwar El Kharrat and Ibrahim Abdel Meguid who was present, had written about the city. Tzalas added that “Alexandrian nostalgic literature, with only a few exceptions, concerns amateur writers who go through their personal experiences and rarely escape the narrow boundaries of their own community…. These writers want to leave a mark of their passage.” After reading some of the works, Tzalas read an extract from Seven Days at the Cecil, Harry Tzalas ended with a passage from the book poignantly evoking this feeling of nostalgia, “You know, the older we get, the more we become like this city. The more we realize what irreparable damage time is doing to us, the more we take refuge in the past. Alexandria is like that. For years she has been a city of memories.”

Finally, Professor Sahar Hamouda, Deputy Director of the Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Center, welcomed the third speaker at the event, the Shakespearian scholar and professor of English literature, Azza Kararah, informing the audience that, “If you haven’t heard Professor Azza Kararah reading poetry or prose, you have missed a lot, and this is your opportunity to make up for that…” Professor Kararah began by explaining how the characters in the story find themselves, after decades of absence, back in the city which “is… and is not the same” as they once knew it, each character relating whatever memories he or she has brought with them. She then read out an episode taken from the sixth day of their sojourn in the city: “The Bald Singer’s Day” where the reader finds the quintet seated at a table in the restaurant and patisserie, Athineos, (spelt Athinaios in the book), which during the 1950s had also become a dance hall.

Here, the narrator once again finds himself confronted by the present-day reality of a place, compared to his childhood memory: “How long it’s been since I last came to the ‘Athinaios’! It used to seem such a big place, enormous. Now I see it in its true dimensions, rather cramped, a bit on the small side for a dance hall. Although there may have been some changes made since then… Perhaps they’ve made it smaller?”

The episode unfolds, each of the four older characters recalling memories associated with the place, “Yes, I remember it as if it were yesterday, too, said Cécile…” As the narrator points out further on: “So, the ‘Athinaios’ dance hall held a special memory for each of us, except for Miléna, who sat quietly, trying to visualize what life must have been like in those days, when everything was more romantic, less stressful.” Azza Kararah’s lively and evocative reading of the episode in Athineos continued, “Time passed. We had abandoned ourselves to our memories. Each of us related nostalgic anecdotes from the past. We paid little attention to the brave efforts of the middle-aged singer who was attempting to render the songs of Frank Sinatra and Nat King Cole in a Lebanese accent.” It is at this point that a new character unexpectedly enters the scene: a “slightly-built old woman” who appears “from out of nowhere” and begins to sing songs from the past… “songs we all knew, songs we had all sung, songs that brought back a bygone era”. Then as Kararah continued to read how this elderly singer, Madame Flora, began to sing “Les Feuilles mortes”, a great hit from the 1950s which was sung by Juliette Greco, Édith Piaf and Yves Montand, the sound of Édith Piaf’s voice suddenly filled the auditorium of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, singing “Les Feuilles mortes”. As the song died down, the reading continued with the small fictional audience in Athineos calling out “Encore! Encore!” and Madame Flora began to sing the song once again, just as, in the real live auditorium, the sound of Yves Montand singing “Les Feuilles mortes” began to fill the air in front of a mesmerized live audience!

Then as the fictitious singer in Harry Tzalas’ book recounts to Sorial and his companions sitting in Athineos the songs which she used to sing to the Allied troops during the war, so Azza Kararah broke off her reading to the present-day audience for all to listen to recordings of three of those selfsame popular songs: “Lili Marlene” sung by Marlene Dietrich, “It’s a long way to Tipperary” sung by John MacCormack in 1914, and thirdly, another great hit from the Second World War, “We’re going to hang out our washing on the Siegfried Line”. Azza Kararah explained, “I would like you to hear these three songs to help to recreate the atmosphere of days of yore that compliment what Harry Tzalas has attempted to do with the written word”. And indeed many members of the real modern-day audience sang along to the vintage recordings, just as in Seven Days at the Cecil, Madame Flora relates to her companions that “when the bombing stopped… everyone in the night-club would sing along with me until dawn”.

The evening of reading and song finally came to a close. Sahar Hamouda once again thanking Harry Tzalas for the “gift” of his book, and many of those in attendance came forward, copy in hand, for signing by the author.
During the course of the fourth and fifth centuries, the Christian community of Alexandria increased considerably, especially after the prohibition of pagan religion by the Emperor Theodosius which was marked by the destruction of the Serapeum in 391 CE. Churches were built all over the city, while a number of pagan temples were converted into churches, including the Caesareum.

The history of the Monastery or Church of Saint Saba in Alexandria dates back to the early seventh century. It is situated on part of the original site of the Roman forum, in front of the Caesareum, built possibly on the ruins of a pagan temple dedicated either to Dionysus, Mythra or Apollo. It is the only church of Alexandria that is mentioned in the twelfth century records such as the Abu Makari account of Christian shrines. Representations of the monastery include the aerial view of Alexandria by Bassili Barkij (1731), the well-known print of the Voyages of the Count of Forbin (circa 1823) and the map of Frederik Norden (1731) which was reproduced with Russian annotations by Konstandios in circa 1798, published in Moscow in 1803.

The church, named after Saint Saba the Sanctified during the course of the last three centuries, was originally dedicated to Saint Mark. This perhaps explains the existence of the small Chapel of Saint Mark behind the Church of Saint Saba. Also, several travelers and pilgrims refer to the monastery as the Church of Saint Catherine, due to the altar of Saint Catherine situated in its precinct.

In addition to being a church, Saint Saba has played a number of other roles throughout its history. The monastery was also a *hospitium* where Christian pilgrims of all denominations could find shelter in case of illness. From about the eighth or ninth century until the thirteenth century, it served as the patriarchal seat and cemetery until the seat was transferred to Cairo. During the fifteenth century it became the Greek School and a training center for the Greek Orthodox clergy. One of the most prominent patriarchal figures of this period was Meletios Pegas, who studied classical philology, philosophy and medicine in Padua. Meletios became the first teacher of the school. Later, he participated in the Synod of Constantinople in 1593, where the Patriarchate of Moscow was officially recognized. Other distinctive patriarchal scholars of this period were Metrophanes Kritopoulos (1589–1639), who studied at the University of Oxford, traveled to Europe mingling with the greatest scholars and theologians of his day, and made Orthodoxy known in the West, and Matthaios the Cantor (1746–1766) who dedicated his life to education and missionary activity in several parts of Africa. Hence, at the most difficult time in its history, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate seems to have retained an international perspective inherited from the Greco-Roman and Byzantine periods.
It is worthy of note that during the Ottoman period, Saint Saba was used as a Maritime Consular Office for stamping maritime documents of vessels of Greek and other Eastern nationalities, which did not have their own consulate in Alexandria.

From the fifteenth century until very recently (1990 to the present), Saint Saba has undergone a series of renovations which have considerably changed the church. Today, the floor level of its nave is two meters below the present street level. Six large ancient red granite monolithic columns support the nave, although they do not have their original ancient capitals.

Endnotes


See also: www.greekorthodox-alexandria.org
Stanley was a British subject who campaigned to restore a small temple in the vicinity on the Corniche. In honor of his efforts, the area and the bay were named after him by the Municipality. The temple perished when the Corniche was extended towards Montazah in the 1920s.
To bestow upon an artist the epithet “The People’s Artist”—فنان الشعب—is to acknowledge his/her ability to gauge the people’s sentiments, striking a chord in each and every one of them. To no other artist is this designation more aptly given than to the Alexandrian lyricist, singer and composer Sheikh Sayed Darwish (1892–1923), whose name has become synonymous not only with Egyptian popular music, but also with Egypt’s national anthem, the words of which were taken from a famous speech by Mostafa Kamel, a national Egyptian leader with whom Darwish maintained close ties. Setting his ingenious artistic sensibilities to work, Darwish composed its music, not knowing it was eventually to become the national anthem in 1979. Coincidentally, on the very day of his death, 15 September 1923, the national Egyptian leader Saad Zaghloul returned from exile, whereupon the Egyptians sang Darwish’s new song My Homeland, My Homeland, My Homeland. However, before it was officially proclaimed as Egypt’s national anthem, Darwish died at the age of 31 of an overdose of cocaine.

Although his musical career reached its pinnacle in the early decades of the twentieth century, his fame waned in the wake of his death. Despite his early death at an age of 31 of an overdose of cocaine, Darwish’s musical compositions became timeless emblems of the trials and tribulations, as well as the thwarted dreams and hopes of the oppressed, marginalized and impoverished classes. It is in this regard that Darwish’s seminal contribution is most visibly manifested: his music foregrounded a long-forgotten class of workers, farmers, laborers, beggars and waiters, bespeaking their plight in the language they themselves employed in their daily lives. At a time when art was merely a means of entertainment, tackling issues appertaining to love and passion, Darwish shook the musical realm to its foundations by probing into and extolling the mundane lives of the oppressed, among the most notable of whom were: the simple woman who wakes up at dawn to bake while the rooster is singing cuckoo-cuckoo; the waiters who are fed up with the tedium of their job; the porters who are looking forward to the day when their lives take a turn for the better; the workers who embark on an arduous daily mission to earn their living; and the early risers who celebrate the dawn of a new day and set out to milk the cow that led the herders to a sanctuary, a means of sustenance that imbued his life with meaning and enabled him to survive the hostility of the surrounding world. He thus found himself irresistibly gravitating to, and regularly frequenting, all the venues that could satisfy his penchant for music. During that time he was enrolled in the religious institute of the famous Abu El Abbas El Mursi Mosque, and all his attempts at pursuing an artistic career were doomed to failure. Ironically, however, it was only when he had given up on his long-cherished dream and succumbed to a soul-destroying job as a bricklayer, that he managed to embark on the path that would eventually lead him to realize this dream: having overheard Darwish singing at work, the building contractor by whom he was employed decided to capitalize on the way he entertained his co-workers and by their surrounding milieu, Darwish was brought up in a family that disapproved of marriage and forced into marriage by his family when he was not yet sixteen, he was mercilessly victimized and denied many of the basic amenities of life. In the midst of this repressive milieu, art became his sole sanctuary, a means of sustenance that imbued his life with meaning and enabled him to survive the hostility of the surrounding world. He thus found himself irresistibly gravitating to, and regularly frequenting, all the venues that could satisfy his penchant for music. During that time he was enrolled in the religious institute of the famous Abu El Abbas El Mursi Mosque, and all his attempts at pursuing an artistic career were doomed to failure. Ironically, however, it was only when he had given up on his long-cherished dream and succumbed to a soul-destroying job as a bricklayer, that he managed to embark on the path that would eventually lead him to realize this dream: having overheard Darwish singing at work, the building contractor by whom he was employed decided to capitalize on the way he entertained his co-workers and
invested them with enthusiasm by offering him the same payment to sing daily for them instead of the backbreaking jobs he used to do. This enabled Darwish to indulge his passion for singing while at the same time providing him with the money needed as the sole breadwinner for his family.

The year 1909 was a turning point in Darwish’s life, when Amin and Selim Atta, two Syrian managers of a theatrical troupe, overheard him singing to his fellow labourers, and hired him on the spot. They arranged for him to travel to Syria where he became acquainted with an invaluable musical heritage that continued to bear its imprint on him after his return. In 1912, he travelled once again to Syria to indulge his insatiable thirst for music. Upon his return to Egypt in 1914, he pursued his musical career as a singer in different Alexandrian cafés, but instead of singing other composers’ songs, he set out to compose and sing his own musical pieces. Much to his elation, he attracted the attention of Sheikh Salama Hegazy, one of the foremost Egyptian musicians of the time, who had great faith in Darwish’s musical talent, notwithstanding the scathing remarks he was subjected to at first encounter with an audience in Cairo. In spite of the cleverness of his compositions, he was disadvantaged by his relatively mediocre voice in comparison with such stars of his time as Salih Abdel Hay and Zaki Mourad. Dismayed at such a tepid reception, he went back to Alexandria and stayed there for a year.

The year 1918 was another turning point in his life: after so many aborted trials to establish his reputation as a café singer, he decided to follow in the footsteps of Sheikh Salama Hegazy and gravitated instead towards theatrical compositions whereupon he got acquainted with the leading companies of the time, particularly Nagib El Rihani’s for whom he composed seven operettas, among the most popular of which was The Ten of Diamonds in 1920. Darwish also worked for El Rihani’s rival troupe, Ali El Kassaar’s, and eventually collaborated with the legendary singer and actress of the time Munira El Mahdiya, for whom he composed several operettas. Concurrently, he started an opera, Cleopatra and Mark Anthony, which was to be played in 1927 with Mohamed Abdel Wahab in the leading role.

In the early twenties, he reached the peak of his success to become the most sought-after artist of the time. Just as he excelled in capturing the day-to-day life of the downtrodden classes, he equally excelled in evoking the nationalistic sentiments of the people at a time when colonial domination was taking its toll on Egypt, either with his own lyrics and melodies, or by breathing life into other lyricists’ words. He sometimes went as far as putting music to sentences he came across in the newspaper without even knowing their author. Chief among his nationally charged works are I am the Egyptian، Rise, you Egyptian، Salama ya Salama، and Salma ya Salama in which he hails his homeland as the best place, outshining America and Europe: لا أمركا ولا أوربا بل أصلكي أحسن من بلدٍ

Having established his reputation as a musician, Darwish took the unprecedented step of writing about music, contributing different articles to the magazines of the time. In so doing, he was primarily motivated by his desire to invest his readers with knowledge about the domain he devoted his life to and revered the most. Sufficient to know that he used to publish these articles under the name of «Sayed Darwish, the Servant of Music». However, his fame subsided relatively when he started his own company, whereupon he was forced to compose again for other companies from 1922 until his premature death in 1923.

To pay homage to their cherished bard and composer, many Alexandrians, of disparate ages, classes and professions, joined hands on 26 March 2010 to celebrate the memory of his birthday. In fact, this is not the first time for Alexandrians to hold such a festival; for the fifth consecutive year, Eskenderella Association for Arts and Cultures organized the Street Festival Parade of the Birth of Sheikh Sayed Darwish in Kom El Dekka, in collaboration with the neighborhood residents and cafés, young artists, musicians and with the support of Farag’s Café and Abdel Moneim’s Café in Kom El Dekka, Studio Hi Hat, the Egyptian Charity Organization, and Naseej-Community Youth Development Initiative. This year’s festival included a host of activities: song recitals given in a number of streets and cafés; exhibitions and documentaries on his life and work; and finally an eclectic concert next to Farag Café in Sayed Darwish Street in which a medley of bands acknowledged the impact Darwish had indelibly wielded on Egyptian popular music by singing some of his unforgettable songs. Inspired by the title of one of his most famous songs, the festival was entitled Visit Me Once a Year، a rallying call for all Darwish’s fans to pay tribute to the person who revolutionized Egyptian music by making it more attuned to the people’s nationalistic sentiments and imbued it with a true Egyptian identity.

March in Alexandria was also teeming with other festivities in celebration of the memory of Darwish’s birthday. Under the tutelage and supervision of Engineer Hassan El Bahr Darwish, Sayed Darwish’s great grandson, the Alexandria Children’s Choir enchanted its audience with two performances: one held at Sporting Club and the other at Sayed Darwish Theater, the Alexandria Opera House.

In short, though almost 87 years have passed since his death, Darwish’s prolific legacy of 22 operettas, 50 taktoukas, 17 muashahhs and more than 200 plays, immortalizes him as an iconoclastic artist who knew how to address the people’s needs and to strike a different chord in each and every one of them.

Endnotes

1 Atakouka is an oriental musical genre originating from Morocco. It follows a particular scheme in its musical notes and poetic compositions. A muashahh is also an oriental musical genre that uses Arabic poetic texts for its lyrics, and is comprised of an ensemble of oud (lute), kamancha (fiddle), ganun (zither), darabukkah (goblet drum), and daf (tambourine). The ensemble often performs as a choir, with the soloist performing only a few chosen lines of the selected text.
Aperçu des fouilles sous-marines à Alexandrie

Yasmine Hussein

Dans les années soixante, Kamal Abu El-Saadat, un plongeur égyptien, a trouvé l’existence d’anciennes ruines immergées face au port Est d’Alexandrie et dans le golfe d’Aboukir. Il a découvert en 1961 des vestiges devant le fort de Qaitbey ainsi que dans la zone de Selsela. C’est à cet endroit qu’un an plus tard, avec l’aide de la marine égyptienne, il a remonté à la surface une statue romaine en granit. Kamal Abu El-Saadat a poursuivi ses investigations et a fait de nombreuses découvertes. En 1965, il a localisé la position des épaves de la flotte de Napoléon. Il a ainsi élaboré deux cartes afin répertorier et de situer ses découvertes. La première comprenait trois lieux : la zone de Qaitbey (Pharos), le port de l’Est (un petit port avec plusieurs quais) et la zone de Selsela où ont été découverts près de la rive de nombreux sarcophages et pièces de monnaie. La seconde carte matérialisait le golfe d’Aboukir, où il a précisé les lieux des épaves de plusieurs navires de la flotte napoléonienne, Heraclium et l’île Nelson. Kamal Abu El-Saadat a ensuite aidé, en 1968, le chef de mission de l’UNESCO, Honor Frost, pour les recherches dans la zone de Qaitbey. Ces recherches ont mené à un relevé cartographique très détaillé du site. Il a mené ses recherches en tant qu’amateur et a financé lui-même ses explorations. Son travail s’est révélé précieux à terme, servant de base aux missions archéologiques postérieures.

Enfin au début des années 90, la connaissance de la multitude de monuments immergés a suscité un vif intérêt au sein des organisations de recherches archéologiques. Depuis, des missions étrangères ou égyptiennes procèdent à des fouilles sous-marines à Alexandrie et dans ses environs. Nous allons présenter un bref survol de leurs travaux de recherches, qui concentrent chacune de ces missions dans l’existence d’anciennes ruines immergées face au port Est d’Alexandrie et dans le golfe d’Aboukir. Il a découvert en 1961 des vestiges devant le fort de Qaitbey ainsi que dans la zone de Selsela. C’est à cet endroit qu’un an plus tard, avec l’aide de la marine égyptienne, il a remonté à la surface une statue romaine en granit. Kamal Abu El-Saadat a poursuivi ses investigations et a fait de nombreuses découvertes. En 1965, il a localisé la position des épaves de la flotte de Napoléon. Il a ainsi élaboré deux cartes afin répertorier et de situer ses découvertes. La première comprenait trois lieux : la zone de Qaitbey (Pharos), le port de l’Est (un petit port avec plusieurs quais) et la zone de Selsela où ont été découverts près de la rive de nombreux sarcophages et pièces de monnaie. La seconde carte matérialisait le golfe d’Aboukir, où il a précisé les lieux des épaves de plusieurs navires de la flotte napoléonienne, Heraclium et l’île Nelson. Kamal Abu El-Saadat a ensuite aidé, en 1968, le chef de mission de l’UNESCO, Honor Frost, pour les recherches dans la zone de Qaitbey. Ces recherches ont mené à un relevé cartographique très détaillé du site. Il a mené ses recherches en tant qu’amateur et a financé lui-même ses explorations. Son travail s’est révélé précieux à terme, servant de base aux missions archéologiques postérieures.

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La mission russe d’archéologie subaquatique à Alexandrie (Institut russe d’égyptologie au Caire)

Ce n’est qu’en 2003 que les chercheurs ont commencé d’explorer les eaux côtières de la baie d’Anfushi jusqu’à Agami. L’objet principal de la mission russe sont les fouilles proche des côtes submergées à partir de la baie jusqu’au point appelé la roche Al Aramil, pour rechercher les vestiges décrits par Jonet en 1916. Ainsi en 2007 sont découverts les restes d’un barrage brise-lames qui était destiné à protéger le port antique d’Eunostos des vents du large. Sur le site, plus près des côtes ont été retrouvées nombre d’amphores grecques et de poteries entières ou cassées. Ces objets servaient au stockage des denrées alimentaires et témoignent de l’activité du port qui faisait d’Alexandrie un partenaire actif dans le commerce notamment avec la Grèce. Selon la mission archéologique, concentrer les recherches sur le port d’Eunostos devrait fournir des informations plus importantes sur le rôle joué par les échanges de la cité en Méditerranée Orientale et sur les routes commerciales aux époques ptolémaïques et romaines.

Le Centre d’Études Alexandrines

En 1993, le gouvernement égyptien a commencé à construire un brise-lames autour du fort Qaitbay, mais le béton utilisé risquait d’endommager les vestiges immergés dans cette zone. Le Conseil suprême des antiquités égyptiennes a confié la fouille sous-marine de l’Est du fort Qaitbay au Centre d’études alexandrines, fondé en 1989 par Jean-Yves Empereur pour évaluer l’importance archéologique du site. Ensuite, le Centre d’études alexandrines a été chargé de cette mission de sauvetage. Devant l’intérêt scientifique et la richesse de ses découvertes, relayées fortement par les médias, le Centre d’études alexandrines a entamé des fouilles systématiques. Alors, s’est mise en place une équipe élargie, composée d’archéologues, d’égyptologues, de topographes, d’architectes, de plongeurs, de photographes… Les travaux de recherches s’effectuent selon une approche scientifique suivant un protocole rigoureux, passant par les phases de planification, de fouilles, d’analyses, et de restauration jusqu’à la publication. Environ 2500 fragments ont été trouvés, provenant de colonnes, de leurs bases et de leurs chapiteaux, de sphinx, mais aussi d’immenses blocs de granit et de statues ainsi que de quatre obélisques. Certaines de ces pièces ont été remontées à la surface puis ont fait l’objet d’un travail de restauration. Elles sont depuis exposées en plein air dans le musée de l’amphithéâtre romain de Kom el Dikka. Une d’entre-elles, la statue presque entière d’un des derniers pharaons Ptolémées, se trouve devant l’entrée de la Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

La mission grecque d’Alexandrie (Hellenic Institute for Ancient and Medieval Studies)

Depuis 1998, cette mission a effectué une vingtaine de campagnes de fouilles sous-marines à Alexandrie, sous la direction de Harry E. Tzalas. La zone couverte s’étend de Selsela à l’est jusqu’à la péninsule de Montazah. Les différents sites ont été détectés par des plongées préliminaires et après par un travail de détection à l’aide de sonar. La zone de Sidi Bishr, délimitée par deux îles — Gezira el Dahab et Gezira Gabl el Kour — et par Bir Massaoud, était dans l’Antiquité le site d’une grande nécropole. Cette dernière est actuellement immergée, à l’exception de sa partie située à Bir Massaoud ainsi que certaines sépultures sur Gezira Gabl el Kour. À environ 150 m de cette île, connue aussi comme l’île de Miami, plusieurs ancrages de pierre datées de l’époque médiévale ont été retrouvées.

La mission a découvert à Chatty les vestiges immergés des quartiers royaux ainsi que des ruines du temple probablement d’Isis Lokhias. L’ensemble est remarquable grâce notamment à ses entrées monumentales construites à l’époque ptolémaïque et situées en face de temples imitant le style architectural pharaonique. Ils ont retrouvé quelques 400 éléments architecturaux, surtout en granit et en quartz avec des colonnes brisées, leurs chapiteaux, des dalles ou encore des sarcophages. Immédiatement après ce site, de nombreux tessons de poterie y ont été retrouvés, la plupart datés de l’époque romaine tardive, ainsi que des morceaux de marbre et de granit. À Ibrahimieh, ils ont retrouvé une concentration importante d’ancre. Juste à côté, des éléments de granit, de basalte et de marbre constituent les vestiges d’un ensemble architectural. Après avoir pris des photographies aériennes, l’équipe a identifié une vaste zone de bâtiments immergés, dont les fondations auraient visiblement été taillées dans la roche à Sporting. Une exploration préliminaire au récif d’Al-Hassan, à 500 m du cap de Selsela, a révélé la présence d’une épave romaine, avec une cargaison d’amphores brisées et dispersées, et datées du IIe et IIIe siècles apr. J-C. De même, les plongeurs ont découvert une énorme quantité de poteries brisées sur l’ensemble du récif.

La zone de Sidi Bishr, délimitée par deux îles — Gezira el Dahab et Gezira Gabl el Kour — et par Bir Massaoud, était dans l’Antiquité le site d’une grande nécropole. Cette dernière est actuellement immergée, à l’exception de sa partie située à Bir Massaoud ainsi que certaines sépultures sur Gezira Gabl el Kour. À environ 150 m de cette île, connue aussi comme l’île de Miami, plusieurs ancrages de pierre datées de l’époque médiévale ont été retrouvées.
La mission de la Direction générale de l’archéologie sous-marine égyptienne

Les archéologues travaillent à Maamoura où ils ont découvert les épaves et les cargaisons de navires romains, avec notamment beaucoup de pièces de vaisselle. La mission a établi une carte très détaillée de ce secteur.

La mission de l’Institut européen d’archéologie sous-marine (IEASM)


Le Centre d’archéologie maritime de l’Université de Southampton, en collaboration avec le Département des antiquités sous-marines du Conseil suprême égyptien des antiquités et avec l’Université d’Alexandrie Entre 2004 et 2009, la mission a mené des recherches sur les rives ouest du lac Mariout. Celui-ci mesure actuellement 17% de sa taille originelle et seule sa partie ouest, à environ 40 kilomètres d’Alexandrie, n’a pas subi de modifications importantes. L’objectif des fouilles est de mettre en lumière les anciennes activités commerciales et maritimes de cette région. De nombreux sites archéologiques ont ainsi été découverts, comprenant dans leur majorité des pièces de céramiques. Ils ont retrouvé également des constructions maritimes tels que des ports, des quais, des jetées ainsi que des installations probablement ayant servi au stockage de marchandises. Grâce aux pièces de céramiques, les scientifiques ont pu dater les sites de la période gréco-romaine jusqu’au VIIe siècle de notre ère.

Endnotes

1 L’archéologie sous-marine concerne les fouilles effectuées dans la mer, elle se distingue de l’archéologie subaquatique, pratiquée dans les eaux intérieures.


5 Return to Egypt, Pages of the History of Russian Egyptology, The Russian Academy of Sciences Centre for Egyptianstudies, Moscou, 2009


تستخدم الطواحين بشكل أساسي في طحن القمح والحبوب الأخرى، وقد عرفتها بلدان العالم الإسلامي وعلى رأسها مدينة الإسكندرية، فعرفت الطواحين التي تدار بواسطة الخيول أو الحمير، وكان هذا النوع يستعمل الأغنياء، كما عرف الطواحين ذات ذراع (الرحاه) تدار باليد، وهو النوع الذي كان متاحاً. وأخيراً الطواحين الهوائية، ويعتقد الباحث للفقراء أنها ربما كانت من المنشآت العامة التي تنشأها الدولة أو مشاريع استثمارية ينتفع بها أحد الأشخاص.

تاريخ طواحين الهواء:

من Wind Mills

يعد ابتكار الطواحين الهوائية أفضل نماذج استعمال الطاقة الهوائية، إذ من المحتمل أن ظهورها لأول مرة كان في القرن الخامس الميلادي في إقليم سيستان في إيران، إلا أنها لم تخلو من قصورها، ومن المرجح أن العرب عرفوا، ثم ما الطواحين الهوائية نتيجة اتصالهم مع الفرس، إذ انتشرت في بعض أنحاء العالم الإسلامي، كما عرفتها أوروبا عن طريق الاحتكاك مع الشرق، ومن ثم فقد انتشرت طواحين الهواء في العالم الإسلامي، وأصبحت سمة رئيسية لكثير من المدن الإسلامية وذلك لتلبية احتياجات الأعداد المتزايدة من السكان.

أيمن جمال الجوهري

أولًا: طواحين الهواء الرأسية

عرف هذا الطراز ببلاد فارس أولاً، ثم انتشر بعد ذلك في جميع بلاد المسلمين، وكانت هذه الطواحين من النوع المقام على محور رأسي، هذا وله علماء المسلمين دوراً مهماً في تطوير هذا النوع، وكان هذا النوع يبنى على أفرع ثلاث أو على أفرع أربع، ولهذا النوع من الطواحين النسيج، وهي تحتفظ بتسمية علوية وسطية، وهي تحتفظ بتسمية علوية وسطية، وهي تحتفظ بتسمية علوية وسطية.

ثانياً: طواحين الهواء الأفقية

وقد عرف هذا الطراز في بلاد الغرب، وظهرت منه أنواعاً عديدة، وقد حاول الصليبيون أثناء الحرب الصليبية إنشاء هذا النوع، وساهم استخدامه

أنواع الطواحين الهوائية:

أولًا: طواحين الهواء الرأسية

تعتمد الطواحين بصورة أساسية لكي تعمل على قوة سرعات الهواء، يمكن للطاحونة أن تعمل ضمن مجال سرعات هواء (40 ميل في الساعة)، فلا يمكن للطاحونة أن تعمل ضمن مجال سرعات هواء (8 ميل في الساعة). لذا، عندما تكون سرعة الرياح في مجال زراعة السرعة المثلى يمكن استخدامها في القرن 16 لتطبيق سرعة دورانها وإيقافها عن العمل إذا لزم الأمر، وقد روعي في تصميم الطاحونة أن تدور أشرعتها في الطاحونة عكس الاتجاه العام، وهو الذي يلتقي في الحركة. وعندما تكون سرعة الرياح في مجال زراعة السرعة المثلى، يمكن استخدامها في القرن 16 لتطبيق سرعة دورانها وإيقافها عن العمل إذا لزم الأمر.

ومن ثم فقد انتشرت طواحين الهواء في العالم الإسلامي، وأصبحت سمة رئيسية أكبر من الدين الإسلامي، وذلك لامتلاك الأعداد العالية من السكان، وقد انتشرت في مصر والعراق واللبنان، وأيضاً أدى انتشار هذه الطواحين إلى البلاد الأهلية.
الطاحونة: 

تبلغ سرعة الرياح في مدينة الإسكندرية أقصى قوتها عادة في شهور فبراير ومارس ويليو، إذ تصل في المتوسط إلى 13-14 كم في الساعة. وقد أظهرت الدراسات أن الرياح الشمالية الشرقية، والتي تأتي من الشمال، هي الأكثر شيوعاً. وتشمل هذه الرياح أيضًا الرياح الشمالية الغربية، والتي تأتي من البحر، وتكون عادةً أقل قوة.

توجد الطاحونات الهواء في المناطق الساحلية، حيث تكون الرياح أقوى. وتعد الطاحونات الهواء مثالاً على استخدام طاقة الرياح في الماضي.

الطاحونة الداخلية: 

عندما تتألف الطاحونة من برج مستدير الشكل تتخلله بوروس خشبي، ويوجد فيها بابان، أحداهما شرقي والأخر بحري، يعلوها شباكين، وتحملهما غطاء مخروطي خشبي. ويوجد فيها أيضًا ثمانية أجنحة خشبية تتيح لها كسب درجة الحرارة قبل اجتذاب الرياح.

الطاحونات الهواء: 

تستخدم الطاحونات الهواء عادة في الحضر، وتعتبر طريقة فعالة لاستخدام الطاقة المتجددة. وتكون على النحو التالي:

الطاحونة: 

تتمتع بالكفاءة والفعالية، وتستخدم في الصناعات المختلفة. وتستخدم في الصناعات المختلفة. وتكون على النحو التالي:

1. تأتي الطاحونات الهواء من شمال الشرق، وتكون عادةً أقوى في فبراير ومارس ويليو.

2. تكون الطاحونات الهواء معلقة في البرج فوق صينية خشبية، وتحتوي على أربعة أشرعة (ريش) او خمسة او ستة أو ثمانية.

3. تكون الطاحونات الهواء مثبتة على برج مستدير الشكل، وتتكطع بوروس خشبي، ويكون فيها بابان، أحداهما شرقي والأخر بحري، يعلوها شباكين، وتحملهما غطاء مخروطي خشبي.

4. تكون الطاحونات الهواء مثبتة على برج مستدير الشكل، وتتكطع بوروس خشبي، ويكون فيها بابان، أحداهما شرقي والأخر بحري، يعلوها شباكين، وتحملهما غطاء مخروطي خشبي.

5. تكون الطاحونات الهواء مثبتة على برج مستدير الشكل، وتتكطع بوروس خشبي، ويكون فيها بابان، أحداهما شرقي والأخر بحري، يعلوها شباكين، وتحملهما غطاء مخروطي خشبي.

6. تكون الطاحونات الهواء مثبتة على برج مستدير الشكل، وتتكطع بوروس خشبي، ويكون فيها بابان، أحداهما شرقي والأخر بحري، يعلوها شباكين، وتحملهما غطاء مخروطي خشبي.

7. تكون الطاحونات الهواء مثبتة على برج مستدير الشكل، وتتكطع بوروس خشبي، ويكون فيها بابان، أحداهما شرقي والأخر بحري، يعلوها شباكين، وتحملهما غطاء مخروطي خشبي.

8. تكون الطاحونات الهواء مثبتة على برج مستدير الشكل، وتتكطع بوروس خشبي، ويكون فيها بابان، أحداهما شرقي والأخر بحري، يعلوها شباكين، وتحملهما غطاء مخروطي خشبي.

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بكل حال، فإن الطاحونات الهواء هي مثال جيد على استخدام الطاقة المتجددة في الماضي، وتعتبر عنصرًا هاماً في التنوع البيئي.
Andalusian Gazpacho

There are many versions of the refreshing cold soup known as gazpacho. In Andalusia, Southern Spain, it is often highly seasoned and served with separate accompaniments.

Ingredients

- 2 slices white bread with the crumbs removed
- 2 cloves of garlic crushed with a little salt
- 120ml olive oil
- 3 large ripe tomatoes, skinned and chopped
- 1 large cucumber, peeled, seeded and coarsely chopped
- 1 large pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 450ml tomato juice
- 250 ml white wine or water
- 4 tablesp. chopped parsley
- A pinch of ground cumin
- A pinch of cinnamon
- A pinch of sugar
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the garnish

- Chopped spring onions, chopped cucumber and onion, pepper, parsley and snipped chives

Method

1. Place the mixture in a large bowl and stir in the tomato juice, wine or water, parsley, spices, sugar and salt and pepper to taste. Cover the soup and chill.
2. Place a couple of ice cubes in each bowl. Ladle the chilled soup over them and pass the garnishes so that each guest can sprinkle his or her own choice on the top.

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