

## Catalan cultural activities in Alexandria (Egypt)

On the occasion of the book donation at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina

December 10 and 11, 2005

### Saturday, December 10

Place: Middle Hall, Bibliotheca Alexandrina

#### *Morning*

– 11:30-13:30 Round table: **“Dialogue between cultures in the Mediterranean area”**

Discussion of shared cultural factors among Mediterranean countries and the pluralism (cultural, linguistic, religious) of this area. In the current context, and having into account the large historical experience, what are in the mid term the chances to develop a real dialogue between cultures in the Mediterranean area?

Coordination: Institut Europeu de la Mediterrània (IEMed) / Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation, with the collaboration of the Institut Ramon Llull.

Participants:

**Dr. Sayed Yassin** was the first director for Al Ahram Center for Strategic Studies, a leading Egyptian research institute. He is the author, among other books, of *Al-Hiwar Al-Hadari fi Asr Al-Awlama* (Dialogue of Civilisations in the Age of Globalisation, 2002).

**Dr. Victor Pallejà** is PhD in History of Religions, University of Paris (Sorbonne). His main research interests are in Islam's History of Thought and Medieval Philosophy. He is lecturer at the Universitat d'Alacant and has translated into Spanish an abridged edition of *Al-Futuh al-Makkiyya* (Meccan Illuminations), by Ibn Arabî (1996).

**Dr. Ahmed Morsi** is professor of Egyptian and Arabic folk traditions (Faculty of Arts, Cairo University) and adviser to the Ministry of Culture. He has been Chairman of the National Library and Archives, Cairo (Egypt).

**Dr. Josep Giralt**, director of cultural activities of the Institut Europeu de la Mediterrània (IEMed), is a historian specialised in islamic archaeology in Catalonia and Spain. He has developed most of his career in the management of Catalonia museums.

Moderator: **Dr. Carles Torner**, director of the Department of Humanities and Science, Institut Ramon Llull.

13:30-15:30 LUNCH

– 15:30-17:00 Round table: **“The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: mid-term perspectives”**

Assessment of the main results of the Euro-Mediterranean Summit (Barcelona + 10), that has taken place in Barcelona (Spain, on the 27th and 28th of November, 2005). A special emphasis will be made on the issues that Catalonia / Spain and Egypt feel are crucial for their interests and expectations. Some of the results of the BCN + 10 Survey will also be exposed. Since the recently created Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures (with its headquarters in Alexandria) is a response to the structural challenges of the cooperation

framework created in 1995, it is presented as one of the ongoing outcomes of the Barcelona Process.

Coordination: Institut Europeu de la Mediterrània (IEMed) / Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation, with the collaboration of the Institut Ramon Llull.

Participants:

**Dr. Mohamed Awad** is director of the Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Centre, located at the Biblioteka Alexandrina. He is also Head of the Egyptian Net of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation.

**Dr. Gemma Aubarell** has a degree in political science and is the programs director at the Institut Europeu de la Mediterrània (IEMed). Her fields of research are euro-mediterranean relations and immigration. She coordinates the journal *Afkar/Ideas* and the *Anuari de la Mediterrània* (Mediterranean Yearbook).

Moderator: **Dr. Traugott Schoefthaler**, Executive Director of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures, Biblioteka Alexandrina, Alexandria (Egypt)

– 17:30-18:30 Poetry reading: “**Half-moon. Invocating the Arabic world and poetry in Modern Catalan verse**”

Three poets in Catalan language will read their own poems inspired in the Arabic tradition of lyrical poetry.

Coordinator: Manuel Forcano

Participants:

**Jaume Pont**, poet and literary critic, is the author of, among others, poetry books such as *Vol de cendres* (1997) and *Llibre de la frontera* (2001). This last work is a good example of the survival of the arabic-andalusi poetry tradition till present days. He has lectured in universities of different countries and his poems have been translated into several languages.

**Josep Piera** is poet, essayist and narrator. After collecting his poems in *Dictats d'amors* (poesia 1971-1991), he has published *En el nom de la mar* (1999) and *Cants i encants* (2004). He is the author of *El jardí llunyà* (2000), devoted to the memory of the Arab poets from Xarq Al-Àndalus.

**Manuel Forcano**, poet and translator, has translated into Catalan poems by Arab and Hebrew authors. Together with Margarita Castells, he has translated Ibn Battuta's 14<sup>th</sup> century book of travels (*Els Viatges*, 2005). Among his recent poetry books: *Com un persa* (2001) and *El Tren de Bagdad* (2003).

## **Sunday, December 11**

Place: Bibliotheca Alexandrina

### ***Morning***

#### **– 11:30: Donation of books on Catalan culture**

The Catalan delegation, led by Ms. Caterina Mieras, Ministry of Culture of the Catalan Autonomous Government, will donate a series of 150 books on Catalan history and culture. The Catalan delegation is formed by representatives of several institutions: Departament de Cultura de la Generalitat de Catalunya (Ministry of Culture, Catalan Autonomous Government), Parlament de Catalunya (Catalan Parliament), Ajuntament d'Olot (Olot City Hall), Institut Ramon Llull and Institut Europeu de la Mediterrània.

After the ceremony of book donation, a guided tour for the library premises will follow.

Coordinació: Departament de Cultura de la Generalitat de Catalunya i Ajuntament d'Olot.