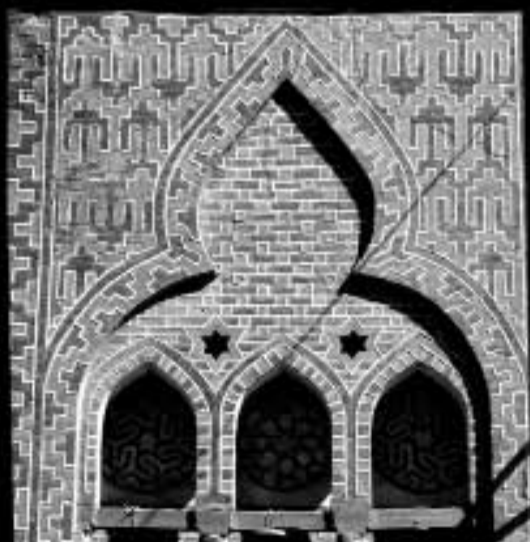
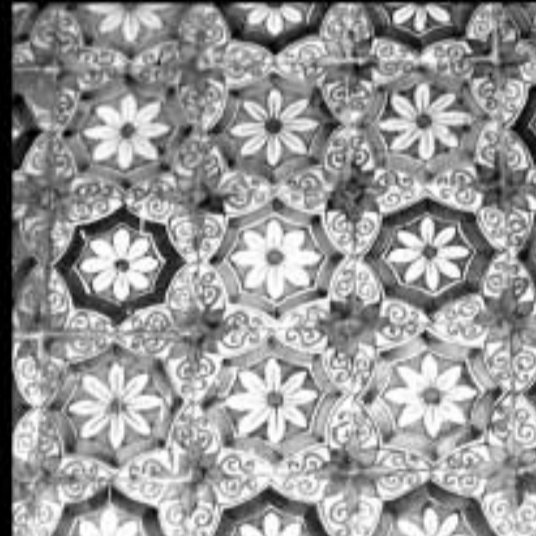


May-July 2006

Issue 3

■ Onassis Foundation ■ Mediterranean Handicrafts ■

Isis in the USA ■ Mario Botta ■ Hypatia in the Modern World



■ Hassan Fathy's Unpublished Article ■ Biennale 2007 ■

Alexandria's Ottoman Heritage ■ Alexandria's Old Cinemas



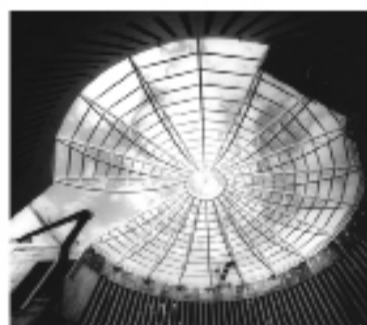
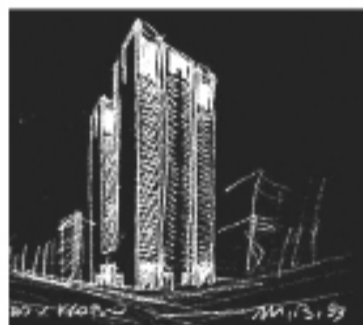
Mario Botta's visit to the Bibliotheca

Edward Lewis

"Work, work and work!" This was the eminent Swiss architect's response when asked how to get to where he is today. Whilst hard work is an obvious ingredient, it takes a great deal of talent and determination to light up the world of architecture and achieve what he has during his career. Born in Mendrisio, Switzerland, in 1943 Botta has worked worldwide, created inspiring examples of modern architecture and received numerous awards. The Bibliotheca Alexandrina, in collaboration with the International Friends Associations of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, organized a lecture entitled "Recent Projects", on 13 February 2006 and was a chance for students, professionals and interested members of the public to attend a lecture given by one of the world's leading architects.

Botta has not just contributed with his designs; he has been one of the leading figures in promoting the role of the environment and surroundings when designing a building:

"Each work of architecture has its own 'environment', which, for the sake of convenience, may be defined as its territory. Between architecture and territory a constant mutual dependency is established right from the earliest stages of design. The first thing to be done when creating a piece of architecture is to get to know its territory."



Due to this interpretation Botta has often been linked with the Italian Neo-Rationalist movement, the *Tendenza*, whose philosophies address the issue of reconciling traditional architectural symbolism with modern ideology.

Although his early career saw him work almost exclusively in Ticino, the Italian canton of Switzerland, Botta has worked extensively in Europe, Asia and America and created such impressive buildings as the Theatre alla Scala in Milan, the Museum of Modern Art in Rome, Kyobo Towers in Korea and the TCS Offices in New Delhi, all of which were displayed and commented on during the lecture. In addition to his practical work Botta teaches worldwide giving lectures, seminars and courses in architectural schools including the Architecture Academy Ticino in Mendrisio, which he founded in 1996.

For more information:

www.botta.ch



'Philosophy in Alexandria' Conference

Academics from all over the Mediterranean converged on the Bibliotheca Alexandrina for the philosophical conference entitled "Philosophy in Hellenistic Alexandria." Such a diverse and unfathomable subject is hard to present over two days yet the conference managed to cover numerous topics allowing the audience to learn about Alexandria's strong philosophical history and its far reaching effects.

Alexander the Great's education and background ensured the city of Alexandria was founded with philosophy as one of its core values. The Library of Alexandria and the Museion encouraged this tradition to flourish and Alexandria's neo-Platonic and Gnostic schools later heavily influenced significant movements such as the Renaissance and Enlightenment of Europe.

In his opening speech Dr Mohamed Awad, Director of the Alex-Med Research Center, highlighted the role of philosophy today and stressed the importance and need "for reason, moderation, tolerance and dialogue between civilizations in these troubled times confronting our present world. Philosophical dialogue is, and will, remain the course to consciousness, enlightenment and reason for a more civilized and peaceful future of our planet."



The Catalan Library

CELEBRATES HER 100 YEARS AT THE BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA

Ramez Farag

On the 10th and 11th of December 2005, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina welcomed a delegation of the municipality of Olot on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Maria Vayreda Library, established by the Mayor of Olot in 1905. The objective of the visit was to make a donation of books and documents to the Bibliotheca in celebration of the occasion. The donation was supported by the parliament of Catalonia and the cultural department of Catalonia's government.

On the margin of the book donation was a cultural event organized by the Institut Ramon Llull and Institut Europeu de la Mediterrània (IEMed) in collaboration with Alex-Med.

The cultural event started on the 10th of December with a roundtable on "Dialogue between Cultures in the Mediterranean Area". Invited to the discussion were Dr. Sayed Yassin, first director of Al Ahram Center for strategic studies and author of, among other books, *Al-hiwar al-hadari fi asr al-awlama* (Dialogue of Civilizations in the Age of Globalisation, 2002). Dr. Victor Pallejà, researcher in history of religions at the Sorbonne University and lecturer at the Alicante University attended as did Dr. Ahmed Morsi, professor of Egyptian & Arabic folk traditions at the Faculty of Arts, Cairo University and adviser to the Ministry of Culture. Dr. Josep Giralt, the specialized historian of Islamic archaeology in Catalonia and director of cultural activities of IEMed was also present.



The roundtable discussed the shared cultural factors among Mediterranean countries and the cultural, linguistic and religious pluralism that exists in this area. It raised the question of the chances to develop a real dialogue between cultures in the Mediterranean in the present context, bearing in mind the long common historical experiences.

The second roundtable, "The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Mid-term perspectives", was an assessment of the main results of the Euro-Mediterranean Summit (Barcelona + 10) that took place in Barcelona. Special emphasis was made on the issues that Catalonia and Egypt felt were crucial to their interests and expectations within the Summit. Also, some of the results of the Barcelona + 10 Survey, conducted by IEMed, were presented in the library to an audience for the first time.

The roundtable discussants were Dr. Mohamed Awad (director of the Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Centre of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and head of the Egyptian national network for the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation) and Dr. Gemma Aubarell (researcher of political sciences, director of programs at the IEMed and coordinator of *Afkar/Ideas Journal* and *Anuari de la Mediterrània - Mediterranean yearbook*).

In the evening, a poetry reading entitled Half-moon: Invoking the Arabic world and poetry in modern Catalan verse gathered three Catalan poets who read their writings, inspired by the Arabic tradition of lyrical poetry:



Jaume Pont, poet and literary critic, author of many poetry volumes, such as *Vol de cendres* (1997) and *Llibre de la frontera* (2001).

Josep Piera, poet, novelist and narrator. Author of *Dictats d'amors* (Full poetry collection 1971-1991), *En el nom de la mar* (1999) and *Cants i encants* (2004). Also author of *El jardí llunyà* (2000), devoted to the memory of the Arab poets from Andalusia.

Manuel Forcano, poet and translator of Ibn Battuta's book of travels (*Els Viatges*, 2005), author of: *Com un persa* (2001) and *El tren de bagdad* (2003).

The next day, Saturday 11th of December, the Catalan delegation led by H. E. Ms. Caterina Mieras, Minister of Culture of the Catalan Government, donated a series of 150 books on Catalan history and culture to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in an official ceremony.

The Catalan delegation was formed by representatives of the Catalan ministry of culture, the Catalan parliament, Olot city hall, Institut Ramon Llull and Institut Europeu de la Mediterrània.

The donation comprised basic volumes on Catalan culture, including dictionaries, general and thematic encyclopedias, historical essays on Catalan culture, literary work of Catalan classic authors, translated books of Arab authors as well as Catalan music CDs.



IEMed.
Institut Europeu de la Mediterrània

BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA
مكتبة الإسكندرية

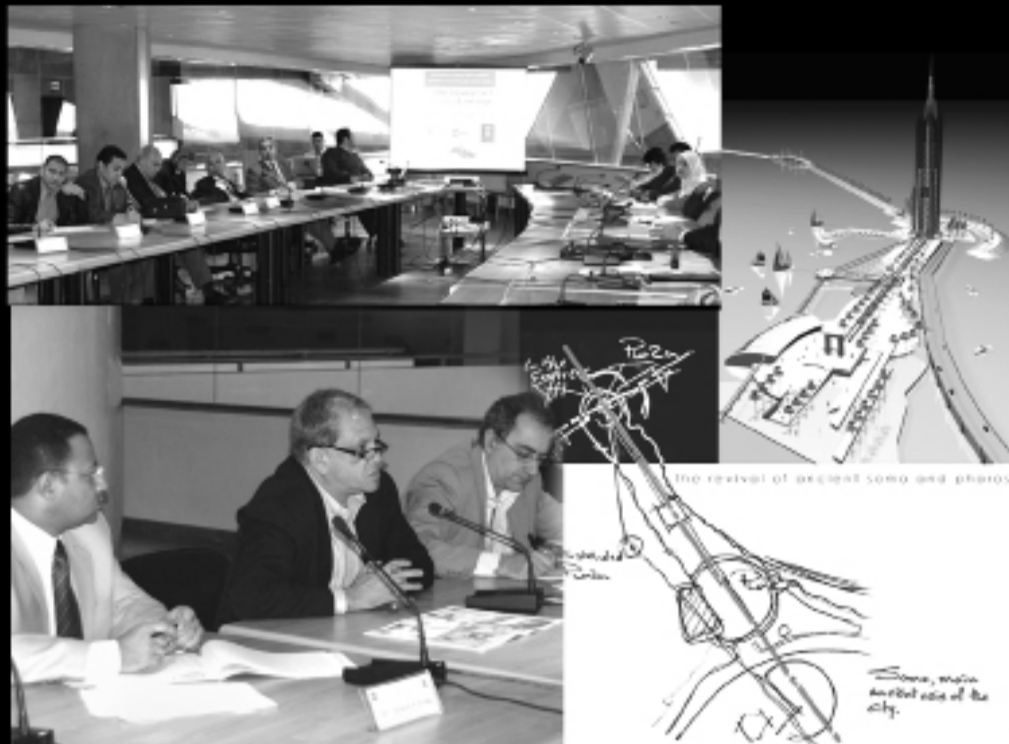
ALEX MED
BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA

institut ramon llull

Generalitat de Catalunya

World Bank

Conference on Alexandria's Development



Following the announcement in December of Alex-Med's partnership with the Alexandria Governorate (ADA), another important step was taken with the 'Alexandria City Development Strategy: Creating Tools for Local Economic Development' conference held in the BA in March 2006. The event was initiated by the Alexandria Governorate in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities and Ministry of International Cooperation and included a number of important debates, discussions, presentations and case studies regarding city development. Also present were members of the World Bank who have heavily invested and begun to implement the Alexandria Growth Pole Project.

Among the presentations given in the 'Cluster Development: Channeling the Alexandria Competitive Potential' workshop was the presentation given by Dr Mohamed Awad (Director of Alex-Med) entitled 'Cluster Development: Tourism and Heritage'. The presentation focused on Alex-Med's commitment to heritage within a development framework and three examples of proposed development projects regarding the regeneration of Alexandria were outlined.



- Eastern Harbor Development. The Eastern Harbor has a rich concentration of archeological remains, including the royal palaces of Cleopatra and the Pharos of Alexandria. Through the construction of an underwater archeological museum it is hoped to not only to allow visitors to see these sunken ruins, but to ensure these remnants of Alexandria's past are not lost forever or destroyed by additional development. A museum dedicated to the Pharos and an eastward extension of the library are also proposed as well as various leisure facilities, such as hotels and parks.



- Horreya Avenue Horreya Avenue was formerly the Canopic Way and formed the most important thoroughfare in ancient Alexandria. Many of the old and important buildings of the cosmopolitan era are located on, or around this area and the renovation and recording work carried out by Alex-Med was highlighted (including the 'Moroni Project') as were future projects. The library's acquisition of the Villa Antoniadis and the proposed design and plans for its conversion in to a Mediterranean research center were displayed.

- City Tour Maps Public awareness of Alexandria's endangered buildings is a priority and this, combined with tourism, prompted Alex-Med to create a series of city tour maps. The collection of seven maps, each with its own theme (Ottoman town, city center, archeology, architecture, east of the city, west of the city and a one day tour), guides the visitor around parts of the city that are usually overlooked, thus giving a greater picture of the city and its history.

The conference provided an excellent opportunity for debate and exchange amongst members of both the private and public sectors concerning the development and regeneration of Alexandria, something Alex-Med will be at the center of

alex.med@bibalex.org



Greece again in Alexandria

During the recent visit to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (BA) by the President of Greece, HE Karolos Papoulias, a protocol agreement was signed by Dr. Ismail Serageldin, Director of the BA, and Mr. Antonis Papadimitriou, President of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation.

The Onassis Foundation will contribute to the renovation of the Villa Antoniadis in Nouzha, as well as the establishment of a Hellenistic research unit within the Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Center (Alex-Med) under the direction Dr. Mohamed Awad, for the study of Hellenistic art, culture, literature, philosophy, history and civilization.

The collaboration between Greece and Egypt will revive the historical role of Alexandria as a meeting point of cultures and a space for pluralism, diversity and tolerance. In his address Mr. Antonis Papadimitriou said "the Villa Antoniadis is international, it is Greek and Egyptian" thus reflecting the very history of Alexandria



The signing of the agreement between Dr. Ismail Serageldin, Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, and Antonis Papadimitriou, President of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation

Dr. Ismail Serageldin and Antonis Papadimitriou



Dr. Mohamed Awad, Mrs. Petralia Greek Minister of Tourism, the President of Greece, HE Karolos Papoulias and Dr. Ismail Serageldin



The Rebirth of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate

Ever since the apostle St. Mark arrived in Alexandria in AD 43 bearing the gospel of Christ, Alexandria has been at the center Middle Eastern Orthodoxy. This position was reiterated by the completion of the renovation of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria. The newly restored and visually stunning complex lies directly behind the Evangelismos Church and shares a great deal with its sister building. Both buildings were founded on the same date, both are built on land donated by Mikhail Tozitsas and both were restored and inaugurated on 2nd April 2006. The Patriarchate was originally used as the Greek Community School forming one of the core Greek institutions of the city and was financed by Mikhail Tozitsas.



The Patriarchate as the Tozitsas School

The school operated for 114 years before closing in 1968 and housing the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and all of Africa. As with the Evangelismos Church, the building has witnessed gradual deterioration and was in need of essential repair and restoration. Overseeing the task was Dr Mohamed Awad, director of Awad Enterprises and himself descended from a Greek family (a small chapel in the center of the courtyard was constructed and dedicated to his Greek grandmother's memory). The large cream columns, open courtyard, water features and statue of Tozitsas create an air of tranquility and peace despite being in the center of one of Alexandria's busiest districts. The building boasts a number of facilities including offices, a throne hall, chapel, meeting rooms, dining halls, a kitchen and suites for visiting dignitaries. Many of these rooms contain striking icons of biblical figures, intricate tapestries and various religious antiques reminding the visitor of Egypt's incredibly rich Christian history. Perhaps the most impressive element will be the Patriarchate Library, currently under construction. The library will be spaced over two floors and not only accommodate the large number of books of the Patriarchate but will also host a museum on rare maps and documents as well as various reading rooms.

The value of the building regarding Alexandria's history has been further enhanced with the surprise discovery of a large cistern complex located directly beneath the Patriarchate. It was whilst making a bed for a lift shaft that builders broke through into an expansive underground water system. The cistern, thought to be from the Roman Period, was filled with sand and took six months of excavation before its beauty was fully revealed. Stairs leading to a jagged hole in the present day floor enable visitors to walk around the impressive high arches and cold grey columns. Dr. Awad and his team plan to turn this fortuitous find into a museum for the Patriarchate and would prove a stunning addition to what is already one of Alexandria's core institutions.

Alexandria's Greek community celebrated another historical event as they gathered for the inauguration and 150 year anniversary of the Evangelismos Church of Alexandria.

Originally built in 1856, this majestic church celebrates the announcing of the incarnation, made by angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary (Annunciation) and belongs to the Greek community of Alexandria. Alexandria's nineteenth century Greek community was already well established due to its strong history, tradition and the influence of the Kavala born Mohamed Ali, whose pro-Greek sentiments led him to encourage Greeks to settle in Egypt. It boasted a community school and hospital but lacked a central church for common worship. A new church was proposed by the community but in order for it to become a reality the then president of the Greek community, Mikhail Tozitsas, had to rely on private and public donations as well as official permission.

Mohamed Ali sent a letter with a firman approving the church's construction and asked for "a church as grand in order that I myself will be filled with joy when I look upon it." The final step was taken when Tozitsas gave the land that, at that time, was at the edge of the city and on 1st September 1847 the first foundation stone was laid signaling the beginning of construction that was to last almost ten years. The church's original architect was Ermetes Pierotis and it displays several fine frescoes designed by Matsakis and icons by El-Greco when he was still signing his work as Theotocopoulos. The stained glass windows were brought from Venice and the clock was designed and constructed by Dent of London (also responsible for the famous clock of Big Ben) making it not just a place for worship but a beautiful feat of architecture.



The newly renovated Evangelismos Church in Alexandria

During its 150 year history the building has been exposed to weathering and everyday use causing structural damage. Restoration was essential and in August 2002 the late Patriarch of Alexandria and Africa, Petros VI, implemented a program for the church's restoration. Backed by large donations from the Onassis Foundation, the restoration was realized and completed on 2nd April 2006 under the architectural guidance of George Tsoutsouras and Panalotis Panagioteopoulos. The Foundation, which regularly makes bequests to scientists, artists and writers, funded a complete overhaul of the basilica to remedy damage incurred at a cost of \$600,000 thus making it a focal point for Alexandrian Greeks once more. Attending the opening was the head of the Onassis Foundation, Anthony Papadimitriou (originally from Alexandria), Theodore II (Patriarch of Alexandria and Africa), the Archbishop of Zimbabwe, His all Holyness Bartholomy and various government officials from Greece, Egypt, South Africa and other African nations including the President of Greece, HE Karolos Papoulias and the Governor of Alexandria, HE General Mohamed Abdel Salam Mahgoub.



The inauguration ceremony of the new Patriarchate



The impressive façade of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and Africa after the renovation

« Le souffle de Platon et le corps d'Aphrodite » Sur les traces d'Hypatie

Carole Escoffey

Parmi tous les noms qu'évoque la ville mythique fondée par Alexandre le Grand en 331 av.J.-C., parmi tous ceux qui ont contribué à faire d'Alexandrie un grand centre de rayonnement hellénistique, il y a un nom de femme qui n'a cessé de fasciner écrivains, poètes et historiens. Nommée diversement « héroïne païenne », « martyre », et « mythe littéraire », ou encore « première femme universitaire de la tradition occidentale », au fil des siècles Hypatie (v.355-415 ap.J.-C.) est devenue une icône polyvalente. Or, d'où cette fascination ? Pourquoi cette femme du monde antique a-t-elle symbolisé, et symbolise-t-elle toujours, des idées aussi diverses ? Sans prétendre répondre en quelques lignes, l'on peut néanmoins retracer certains éléments qui ont contribué à la légende attachée au nom de cette éminente Alexandrine.



Hypatia of Alexandria, par Juliana Vigdal De Vinco

L'on discerne un écho de ce portrait dans les paroles du poète Alexandrin, Palladas. Lui aussi fut son élève, et chanta ses éloges dans cette épigramme :

*Hypatie, ô grande dame, adepte du savoir
D'en haut, en ces moments où ta voix grave et claire
Nous démontre les cieux et leur divin mouvoir,
Je m'émerveille, ô vierge sage, et je crois voir
Briller au fond des nuits l'autre Vierge, stellaire.*

Nous savons donc qu'Hypatie fut la fille de Théon d'Alexandrie — un mathématicien, géomètre, philosophe, astronome et membre éminent du Musée d'Alexandrie, le Mouseion. Très vite, sous le tutorat de son père la jeune fille montra un vif intérêt pour toute forme de connaissance, et bientôt elle le surpassa et devint à son tour enseignante.

Elle publia un commentaire des *Arithmétiques* de Diophante, une édition des *Tableaux astronomiques* de Ptolémée, et un commentaire sur les *Sections coniques* d'Apollonius de Perge. Ses travaux en mathématiques seront, de nombreux siècles plus tard, repris et développés par Descartes, Newton et Leibniz. Selon Synésios de Cyrène, Hypatie enseignait non seulement la philosophie, l'astronomie, la géométrie, et les mathématiques y compris la musique — considérée alors par les Grecs comme de la mathématique appliquée — mais aussi la science expérimentale. C'est ainsi, par exemple, qu'à la demande de Synésios, Hypatie fabriqua un hydromètre, et qu'elle l'aida à faire construire un astrolabe. Certains historiens vont jusqu'à affirmer que ce fut elle l'inventrice de ces deux instruments, en dépit de l'absence de preuves conclusives. Il est fort probable, cependant, qu'elle contribua au développement de l'astrolabe.

Les élèves d'Hypatie furent issus de familles éminentes de tous les coins de l'empire : d'Égypte, de Syrie, de Constantinople et ailleurs. Nombre d'entre eux occupèrent plus tard de hautes fonctions dans le gouvernement ou l'Église. D'ailleurs il est à noter que, bien

que païenne, nombreux de ces élèves furent chrétiens. Synésios lui-même fut nommé évêque de Ptolémaïs. Outre l'influence qu'Hypatie avait sur ses anciens élèves répartis à travers l'empire, elle exerça aussi un rôle non négligeable auprès du pouvoir puisqu'à cette époque, les hommes du pouvoir avaient souvent recours aux conseils des philosophes renommés. De surcroît, son vœu de chasteté et sa modestie, contribuèrent également à faire d'elle un modèle de comportement qui s'ajouta à la renommée intellectuelle de la philosophe.

Hypatie vécut à une époque où les tensions politiques et religieuses secouaient l'Empire romain : en 391 le temple de Sérapis à Alexandrie fut pillé et détruit. En 412 la situation s'aggrava dans la cité, attisée par un fort sentiment anti-romain et anti-païen. C'est alors que son influence auprès des hommes du pouvoir, ne fut pas sans attirer des soupçons. Redoutée par certains pour son soutien du préfet romain de la ville, Oreste, contre les ennemis de celui-ci, la philosophe serait devenue elle-même l'objet de diffamations. Ses détracteurs auraient fait courir la rumeur qu'elle était une sorcière, exploitant la crédulité populaire qui distinguait alors peu entre astronomie, mathématiques et philosophie d'une part, et astrologie, sorcellerie et magie de l'autre. Bien que les sources historiques varient sur les détails précis de sa mort, la plupart s'accordent sur le fait qu'un jour en 415, Hypatie fut attrapée par une foule violente, traînée dans les rues de la ville et brutalement assassinée, écorchée vive par des coquilles de mer, ou par des tuiles selon la version.

Il est curieux de noter que la légende qui se tissera autour d'Hypatie au fil des siècles n'est pas sans rappeler le mythe qui recouvre la vie d'une autre Alexandrine dont le destin fut exceptionnel : quatre cents ans auparavant, la reine Lagide — Cléopâtre VII — devint, elle, de son propre vivant le sujet de multiples légendes. Symbole de corruption et de décadence, parfois vilipendée par poètes et historiens, Cléopâtre devint l'objet de multiples fantasmes. Sa vie et sa mort ont inspiré peintres, dramaturges et cinéastes, si bien qu'aujourd'hui l'on distingue difficilement la réalité du mythe. De même, la vie et la mort d'Hypatie avaient tous les ingrédients pour faire d'elle une figure de légende. Et peut-être leur condition de femme dans un monde antique dominé par l'homme, a-t-elle contribué quelque peu à la fascination que ces deux Alexandrines exercèrent sur des générations d'artistes et écrivains ? Toujours est-il qu'Hypatie devint à son tour une icône polyvalente, le symbole de multiples causes : son charisme et son intellect d'une part, sa beauté, sa chasteté et son assassinat brutal de l'autre, furent source de maintes inspirations.

Hypatie fut très appréciée au siècle des Lumières où elle symbolisa surtout la cause rationaliste contre le fanatisme et l'intolérance religieuse. Le libre-penseur irlandais John Toland écrivit en 1720 un essai historique sur Hypatie. Personnage très controversé, suscitant de nombreuses polémiques, Toland fut un défenseur ardu de la liberté d'expression et un critique des religions instituées. Il est donc aisé de comprendre pourquoi le destin d'Hypatie symbolisa



Astrolabe persan, 1722
British Museum, Londres.

Mais tout d'abord, qui était Hypatie ? Aucun de ses écrits n'a survécu. Toutefois, quelques documents précieux nous sont parvenus parmi lesquels les lettres de son élève Synésios de Cyrène (v.370-v.413) : des lettres qui témoignent du grand estime et du dévouement qu'éprouvait l'élève pour son professeur.

Dans une autre source importante, *l'Histoire ecclésiastique* de l'historien Socrate le Scholastique (v.380-450), l'on trouve le portrait suivant :

« Il y avait à Alexandrie une femme nommée Hypatie, fille du philosophe Théon, qui a si bien mené ses études qu'elle a devancé tous les philosophes de son époque. Elle a entrepris l'étude de la pensée de Platon telle que comprise par Plotin, et elle pouvait expliquer à n'importe qui voulait l'entendre toute la science de la philosophie. Ceux qui voulaient apprendre la philosophie accouraient de partout dans le monde. [...] Elle n'éprouvait aucune gêne à s'aventurer au milieu d'hommes : à cause de sa vertu extraordinaire tous l'admiraient et l'estimaient encore plus... »



Hypatie et Oreste. Une des illustrations par R. Tache pour la version allemande du roman de Charles Kingsley, *Hypatie* (1853).

pour lui les excès de l'intolérance religieuse. De même Voltaire, un an après la publication de son *Traité sur la tolérance* (1763), lui consacra un article dans son *Dictionnaire philosophique* (1764) où il fait l'analogie entre le sort d'Hypatie et les excès de l'intolérance de son époque. A son tour, l'historien anglais Edward Gibbon, dans son *Histoire du déclin et de la chute de l'Empire romain* (1776) lie l'assassinat d'Hypatie à la fin de la liberté de pensée dans le monde antique.

Pour les écrivains du dix-neuvième siècle, la mort d'Hypatie marquait surtout la fin du monde hellénistique et le passage à une autre époque. Charles-Marie Leconte de Lisle, fervent admirateur de l'Antiquité, publia en 1852 un poème intitulé *Hypatie* où il exprime sa nostalgie d'un âge d'or et s'extase devant l'intelligence et la beauté de cette femme:

*Tu faisais, sur la nuit moins sombre des vieux âges,
Resplendir ton génie à travers ta beauté !*

Selon lui, l'assassinat d'Hypatie signale la fin de la culture grecque :

*L'homme en son cours fougueux l'a frappée et maudite,
mais tu tombas plus grande ! Et maintenant, hélas !
Le souffle de Platon et le corps d'Aphrodite
sont partis à jamais pour les beaux cieux d'Hellas !*

Pour ce poète, le meurtre de la philosophe déclenche l'ère du silence, de la laideur... un véritable âge des ténèbres :

*[...] l'impure laideur est la reine du monde,
Et nous avons perdu le chemin de Paros.
Les Dieux sont en poussière et la terre est muette :
Rien ne parlera plus dans ton ciel déserté.*



Portrait d'Hypatie (1882) par l'artiste tchèque Alfred Seifert (1850-1901), sans doute inspiré par le roman de Charles Kingsley.

L'année suivante, le romancier et réformateur socialiste chrétien anglais Charles Kingsley, auteur du célèbre conte pour enfants, *Les Bébés d'eau* (*The Water Babies*), publia un roman intitulé *Hypatie, ou le triomphe de la foi* (*Hypatia, or the New Foes with an Old Face*). Dans cette version très romancée de la vie d'Hypatie, le cadre historique sert surtout de décor aux idées de Kingsley. Son rejet de l'individualisme et sa conviction comme membre du clergé anglican que l'Église devait contribuer activement à la réforme sociale se traduisent dans l'œuvre. L'Hypatie de Kingsley s'implique activement dans les problèmes de son temps au lieu de les subir. Dans son roman, le romancier anglais dépeint le gouverneur amoureux de la belle philosophe, qui elle, accepte de l'épouser pour protéger son culte et sa philosophie. Apparemment peu soucieux de véracité historique, le romancier va jusqu'à convertir Hypatie au Christianisme juste avant sa mort. Sans doute ces divergences sont-elles un moyen par lequel Kingsley, l'homme de foi et d'action, chercha à se réconcilier avec son héroïne.

Ensuite en 1888, l'écrivain et homme politique français Maurice Barrès publie dans son recueil *Sous l'œil des barbares* une nouvelle intitulée *Désintéressément* où il peint Hypatie sous la forme d'un double nommé Athéné. Comme Kingsley, Barrès s'écarte à son gré des faits historiques connus puisqu'il fait coïncider la destruction du Sérapéum avec le meurtre d'Hypatie. Dans cette nouvelle, republiée séparément en 1904 sous le titre de *La Vierge assassinée*, Hypatie est devenue « la vierge du Sérapéum », l'« auguste vierge », « la vierge du Sérapis » ou encore « la jeune fille ». L'on remarque donc que si Barrès, au contraire de Kingsley, a maintenu ici la chasteté de la philosophe, il l'a par contre beaucoup rajeunie, faisant d'elle une sorte de prêtresse païenne, voire d'héroïne romantique :

« Au milieu des huées d'un peuple, il y avait une rare dignité dans cette vierge si jeune et si belle, déployant, comme un riche linéol, l'apothéose de la mort. »

Or, comme dans le poème de Leconte de Lisle, dans la nouvelle de Barrès la mort d'Hypatie marque la fin de l'hellénisme : ici la jeune héroïne proclame à ses disciples, « moi, qui suis Hellas », et à la fin, le narrateur conclut « Ainsi mourut pour ses illusions [...] la dernière des Hellènes. »

Toutefois, chez cet écrivain français il s'agit de bien plus qu'une nostalgie du monde antique : pour lui, Hypatie incarnait ses propres préoccupations. Comme Barrès, un fervent individualiste, son héroïne lutte pour sa liberté d'expression :

« Je jure, dit-elle, je jure d'aimer les nobles phrases et les hautes pensées, et de dépouiller plutôt la vie que mon indépendance. »

Une liberté pour laquelle elle doit faire face à l'ignorance et l'intolérance :

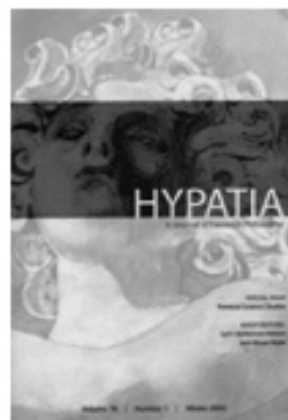
« [...] vous aimez et comprenez trop de choses, que la foule vous hait, comme elle hait le Sérapis pour ce qu'elle ignore... »

et en dépit de tout rester fidèle à sa première ambition :

« Ne pas sommeiller dans l'ordinaire de la vie, être curieux de l'inconnaissable, c'est toute la douloureuse noblesse de l'esprit... »

Et c'est enfin au vingtième siècle que l'on entend le nom d'Hypatie prononcé surtout par des voix de femmes. En effet, le mouvement féministe semble avoir trouvé en elle le symbole des siècles de répression masculine, et en son martyre, l'ultime acte misogyne. Sa réduction au silence aurait marqué l'exclusion des femmes, une exclusion qui culminera des siècles plus tard avec les chasses aux sorcières.

À l'époque actuelle le nom d'Hypatie est adopté par diverses revues et associations. En 1986, l'on créa la revue *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* publiée par l'Indiana University Press. Selon ses fondatrices, le choix du nom d'Hypatie servirait à rappeler aux lectrices que bien qu'elles soient souvent les premières philosophes femmes de leurs universités, elles ne le sont pas de l'Histoire.



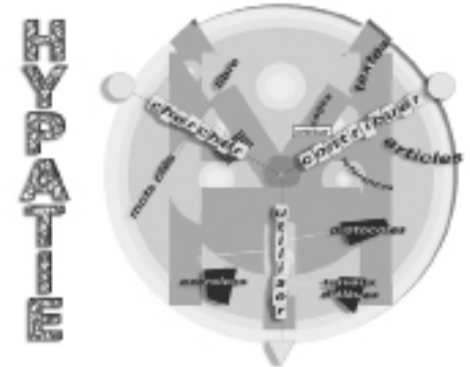
De même, en 1998 l'on assiste à la fondation du Hypatia Trust⁵ en Angleterre : une société dont le principal objectif est l'acquisition et la diffusion de documents y compris d'inédits sur les accomplissements des femmes dans tous les domaines. L'on compte parmi les activités de cette société la création de sa propre maison d'édition, Hypatia Publications.

De plus, Hypatie a laissé son empreinte toute récente sur Internet. Le site web The Hypatia Institute⁶, dédié aux biographies de femmes de science telles Hypatie et Marie Curie, offre de nombreuses ressources pour étudiants, professeurs et scientifiques.



The HYPATIA INSTITUTE

Et aux sites web s'ajoutent les moteurs de recherche : en 2004 le Département de l'Instruction Publique du canton de Genève crée le moteur de recherche éducatif Hypatie, qui donne accès à des documents variés enregistrés dans une base de données. Toutefois, ce site ne comporte pas d'objectifs spécifiquement féministes.



En fin de compte, loin de s'éteindre au fil du temps, le mythe d'Hypatie continue son destin, son nom porteur de mille lumières. Toutefois écrivains et historiens, philosophes et scientifiques, hommes et femmes... tous, n'ont-ils pas quelque part partagé le sentiment du poète ? Si la belle Alexandrine, elle, dort depuis des lustres, n'éveille-t-elle pas toujours les cœurs et les esprits ?

*Dors ! mais, vivante en lui, chante au cœur
du poète
L'hymne mélodieux de la sainte Beauté !*

*Elle seule survit, immuable, éternelle.
La mort peut disperser les univers tremblants,
Mais la Beauté flamboie, et tout renaît en elle,
Et les mondes encor roulent sous ses
pieds blancs !*

Leconte de Lisle



Dessin par Gasparo publié dans *Little Journeys to the Homes of Great Teachers* par Elbert Hubbard, 1908.

1 John Thorp, "À la recherche d'Hypatie", allocution prononcée le 30 mai 2004 au Congrès de la Fédération des sciences humaines et sociales, à l'Université de Manitoba, Winnipeg.

2 Pallas, traduction Marguerite Yourcenar, in *La Couronne et la Lyre*, Gallimard, 1979, p.452.

3 En fait, ce roman avait déjà été publié en feuilleton dans le journal *Fraser's Magazine* en 1851.

4 <http://muse.jhu.edu/about/publishers/indiana>

5 <http://www.hypatia-trust.org.uk/>

6 <http://www.hypatiamaz.com/>

7 <http://hypatie.ge.ch/>

The Contribution of the Mediterranean Countries in the Promotion of the World's Culture

Unpublished article by **Hassan Fathy**
 Courtesy of Nawal Hassan

The Mediterranean basin has been the field in which the major part of the world's culture germinated and flourished over the millennia to give form to our modern civilization and culture.

It seems by its geographical position to have worked as a mediator between the cultures of the North and the South, and of the East and the West.

In ancient times we can mention Egypt, Greece and Rome; and in the Middle Ages, Byzantium, Islamic Egypt and North Africa; each having its role in promoting the sciences and the arts that constitute the global body of our modern culture.



Fathy's private house at Sidi Kreir (1971)



Hassan Fathy at work

We can name among these sciences and arts in which the Mediterranean countries excelled: astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, geometry, psychology, theosophy, aesthetics, politics, law, administration, poetry, architecture, sculpture, painting, philosophy, and so many others.

Being an architect myself, I choose to talk about some of the concepts that ruled the architecture of the Mediterranean in the past which are as valid

today as they were yesterday, and which we hope will guide our steps in the search for an architecture for the future, and bridge the gap that lies between archaeology and the living architecture.

Architecture is one of the most important elements of culture. One of the best definitions of culture is that it is the outcome of the interaction between the intelligence of man and his environment in satisfying his needs; both physical and spiritual. We have a tangible proof of the veracity of this definition in the plastic arts. A painter will paint what he sees in his environment as landscape, fauna, flora or human beings, and an architect will try to make his building harmonize with this environment; climate, landscape, building materials, etc., and to satisfy the spiritual and psychological needs of man, and express his aspirations by the architectural form.

The Greek architect chose the leaf of the acanthus, which grows in Greece, for the capital of his Corinthian column, while the Egyptian chose the lotus or the papyrus, which grows in Egypt, for the capital of his column. But, neither the Greek nor the Egyptian architect made his choice just for the form, but for what this form symbolized and did say to him as a link between the earth and the sky.

The symbolism did not stop at the capital and was extended to the whole body of the temple in one way or another according to the specific nature of

the environment in each country.

In democratic Greece the temple is placed high on the Acropolis, like a piece of sculpture open to the outside and facing the agora by its façade, telling all the people what it is meant to say to them, unlike the Pharaonic temple which is closed to the outside with the parts hierarchized with the sanctuary at the climax where only Pharaoh and the High Priests were allowed to enter. In this way, the Greek architecture is one of façades and the Egyptian is one of space.

If we take the Parthenon and the temple of Amenophis III in Luxor as an example, we shall find that the symbol of man as microcosm lies behind the architectural design in both, though the two are different in concept. In the Parthenon this microcosmic man is standing and is symbolized by the column carrying the entablature in the façade, while in the temple of Luxor this man is projected on the plan, lying on his back with the geometrical basis ruling his body deliberately applied to the architecture of the temple.

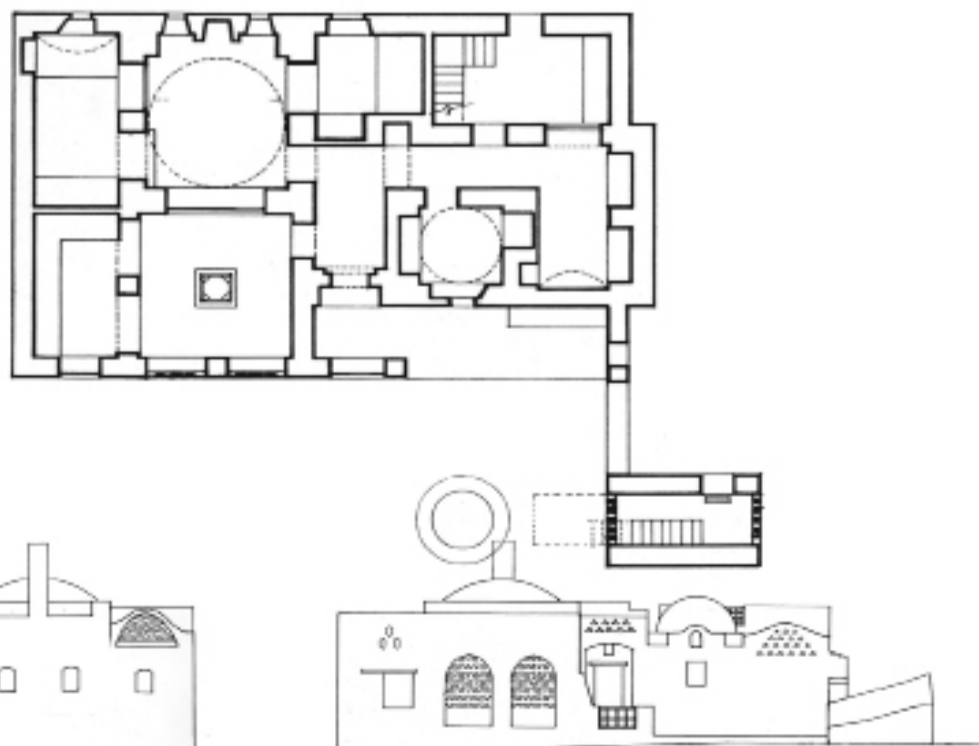
It is hard to believe that the architect conceived this image from high up in the air. The resemblance came out from the geometry being true to the living form.

In this way we can say that man acts as a catalyzing agent in the process of harmonizing the specific with the universal.

These canons of sacred architecture seeped down to the Middle Ages, in Byzantium and the Islamic countries of the Mediterranean in different ways. The Byzantine church is designed as a microcosm complete in itself with the middle part, square in shape, representing earth with the four cardinal points and the dome on pendentives above symbolizing the sky. So the church represented a microcosm with earth and sky enclosed within.

In Islamic architecture the earth joined the sky symbolically by the courtyard with its four sides symbolizing the four columns carrying the dome of the sky. We find the courtyard house concept prevailing in all the countries of the Mediterranean from Syria and Egypt in the East to Morocco and Spain in the West, because it is most suited to the climate.

This courtyard concept was not limited to the countries of North Africa; it extended to include Greece and Italy with the patio and the cortile.



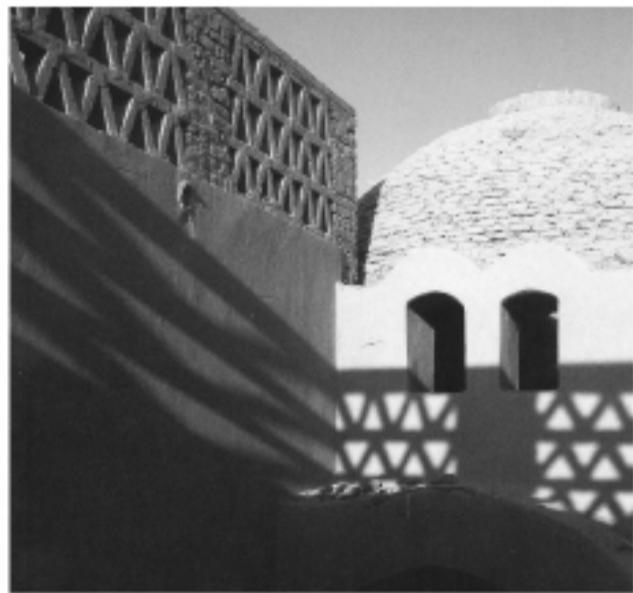
Plans of his house at Sidi Kreir (1971)

The geometrical basis in the design was not limited to the sacred architecture. Some recent studies have shown that the dimension of the main living rooms in the medieval houses of Cairo are ruled by the golden number (Φ) and by (π) effecting harmony and pleasant rhythm in the process of feeling the space.

This can be proved scientifically by the fact that, psychologically speaking, the eye does not perceive a line instantaneously at one time, but point after point, sending the experience to the brain where the image is perceived; as in music, we hear it note after note and the ear sends the experience to the brain where the melody is conceived.

So by subjecting the dimensions of the lines of the intersection of the planes to harmonic rules we shall have introduced rhythm in the form, or musicality we can say.

In ancient times, the Mediterranean architect was more than a technician, and he related his work to the whole body of knowledge about the natural world.



He applied to man's creation, in architecture, the same laws that gave order and shape to the natural world of God's creations, and thus, he solved for himself the problem of finding a point of reference in his endeavor to reach truth through architecture. His temple became an interpretation of the spiritual through the natural.

Imhotep, the architect Zoser; Senmut of Hatshapsut; and Amenotep, son of Hapu who built the temple of Luxor, were all divinized, as shown in the temple of Deir-el-Bahari, for their profound understanding of the widest implications of architecture. But they reached such a degree of sanctity only when they attained absolute knowledge. This implied that the architect had to be at the same time an astronomer, biologist, mathematician, physicist and philosopher before becoming a planner and architect.

Here we have to say that in the past the temple was not just one building in the city, different from the houses and commercial buildings. It was a symbol subject to the sacred and eternal laws of the universe, and not to the profane pressures of everyday life. In the future, as scientific knowledge grows and covers an ever-widening field, it will eventually have the same universality of the meta-physical knowledge of the ancients.

As man's consciousness evolves more and more into harmony with the cosmos, so holiness will more and more become the quality of everyday life.

The temple will merge with the other buildings of the city; then, the city will become the temple, with every street and building charged with sanctity as men go about their holy purposes.

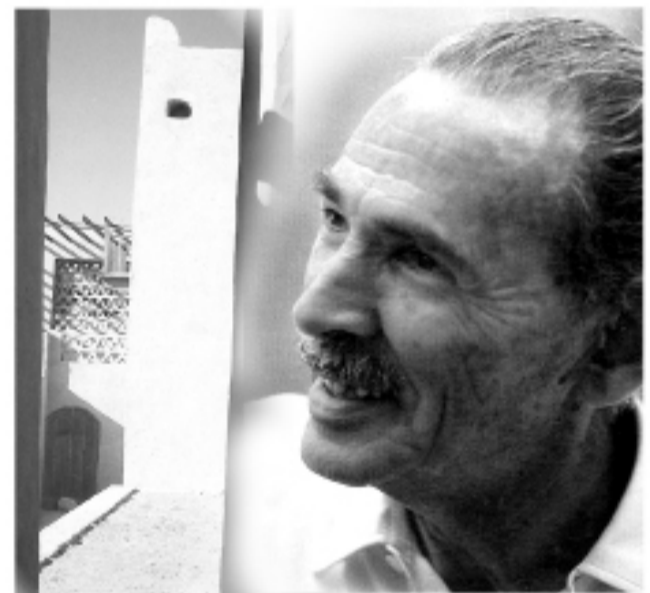
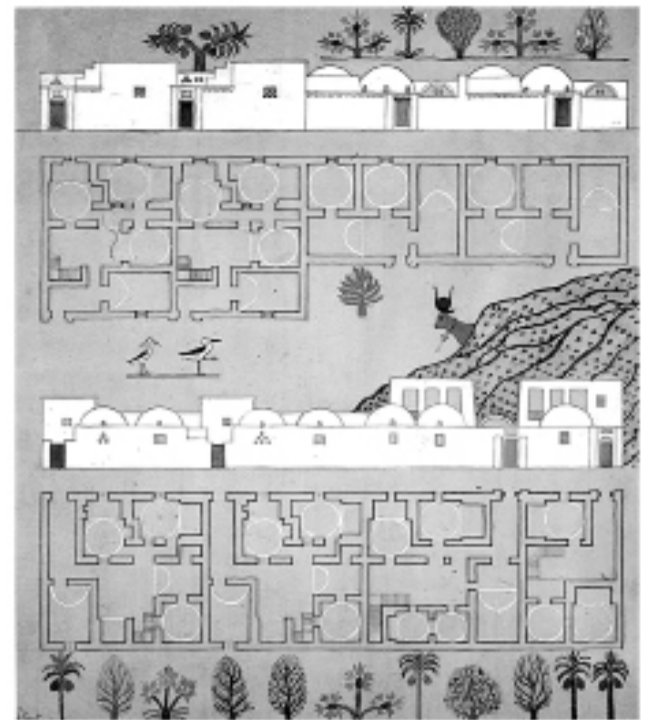
In its form the city too will comply with the eternal laws of order that govern the universe as did the ancient temple.

When we consider the movement of the sun in orientating our buildings to control insulation, and the wind movement in securing ventilation, we are introducing a cosmic and a geodesic element in our design. When we consider human needs, both somatic and spiritual, we are forcibly relating our building to this cosmic order on a still higher level than that implied by the functional, and we shall be relating it to that wider universe embodied in man as a microcosm.

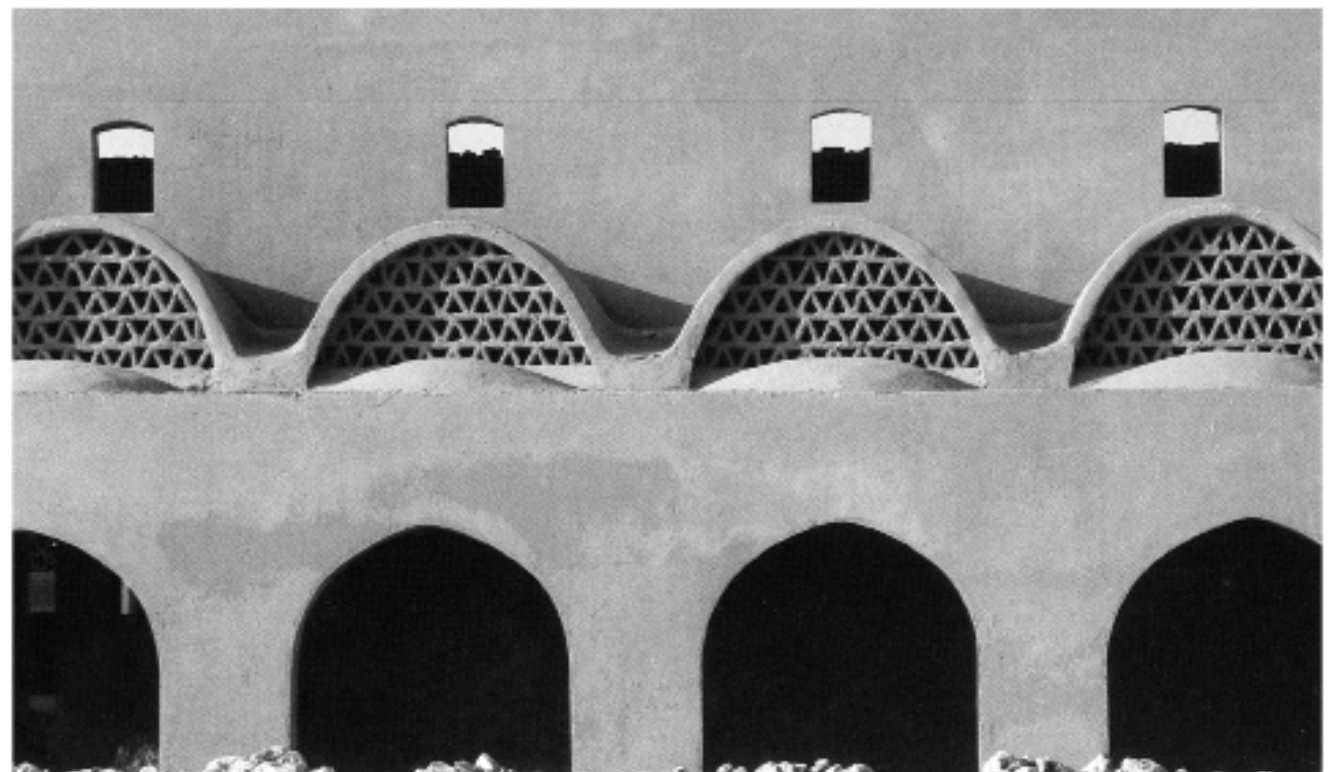
Today, we shall be approaching this end if we apply our scientific knowledge to the problems of securing the welfare of man, and tend to bring our buildings to the measure of man, not only from the aesthetic point of view, but from the spiritual aspect.

When our buildings and cities are designed to the scale and needs of man as a microcosm, the city will be a projection of this man; and the dwelling and the city will become the temple in man.

In the future, for the holy task of building the city, we need sages who can go beyond where the ancient architects reached. Our modern sage will have to combine the disciplines of architect, biologist, psychologist, astronomer and mathematician as did the ancients, together with modern studies such as sociology, economics, politics, and so on, with the addition of the sensitivity of the artist.



Hassan Fathy was born in Alexandria in the Moharem Bey district in 1900 and graduated from the High School of Engineering, Architectural Section, University of King Fuad I (now Cairo University) in 1926. He devoted himself to housing the poor in developing societies and worked to create an indigenous environment at a minimal cost, and in so doing attempted to improve the economy and the standard of living in rural areas. His best known work is the design and building of the El Gourna Village at Luxor where he utilized natural resources using mud-brick and features of Egyptian vernacular architecture, such as mashrabiya, enclosed courtyards, domes and vaulted roofing. He worked with the local people training them to make the materials to construct their own buildings. His work took him to many countries. In 1957 he joined Doxiades Associates in Athens and undertook projects for Iraq, Pakistan and New Mexico. Among his awards are the Chairman's Aga Khan Award for Architecture and Gold Medal from the Union Internationale des Architectes. Hassan Fathy died in 1989 but his ideas and vision continue to provide inspiration for architects.



Archeological Alexandria



Chatby Necropolis, Chatby



Pompey's Pillar, Karmouz



Moustafa Kamel Catacombs, Roushdy



Philoxenite, Borg el-Arab



Ras el-Soda Temple, Bab Sharki



Monastery of St. Menas, Borg el-Arab



Ptolemy Soter, Bibliotheca Alexandrina



Greco Roman Amphitheater, Kom el-Dikk



Philosophy School, Kom el-Dikk



Roman Villa, Ikingi Mariut



Temple of Osiris, Taposiris Magna



Abusir Funerary Monument, Taposiris Magna

alex.med@bibalex.org

Alexandria to host the 13th edition of the BJCEM – Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean

Alia Elaskalany

Alexandria's restored historic buildings, its Corniche and new Bibliotheca Alexandrina demonstrate the city's recent commitment to changing its position and role in the Mediterranean. With this urban renewal has come a cultural renaissance and the renovation of the beautiful Sayed Darwish Theater (now the Opera House), the National Museum (formerly the Bassili house) and the new archeological discoveries demonstrate that Alexandria is once again a force in the Mediterranean. In particular, its two themes as an "Innovator in cultural and artistic interaction" and a "Meeting point for dialogue and understanding between people" make it an ideal venue for the 13th Edition of the Biennale 2007.

The BJCEM team visited the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in December 2005 to propose the 13th edition of the Biennale 2007. The proposal was successful and it is the first time that this event will take place in a southern Mediterranean city. In its twenty year history, the Biennale has provided young people with a concrete opportunity for dialogue and cooperation through art. Since the first edition in Barcelona in 1985, it has presented almost 10,000 artists and received 2 million visitors. The Governor of Alexandria, His Excellency General Abdel Salam Mahgoub, has expressed his pleasure that such a Steering Committee of partners, such as the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alex Med, the Alexandria Governorate, Anna Lindh Foundation and the BJCEM, will organize this international event in the historic city of Alexandria.



The Fine Arts Museum

Dr Yehia Halim Zaki, Head of the Cultural and Academic Sector in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and Head of the Steering Committee of the 13th Edition of the Biennale 2007, confirmed that dialogue and understanding among people is one of the missions of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Dr Mohamed Awad, Director of Alex Med and Coordinator of the Organizing Committee, believes that art speaks one language across different cultures and that both the city and artists will benefit from this interaction, a sentiment echoed by Dr Traugott Schoeffthaler, Executive Director of the Anna Lindh Foundation.

This edition of the Biennale is foreseen to be quite different from any other as it will offer new ideas and themes. The theme will be "Our Creative Diversity. Culture in Everyday Life: Kairos". The Greek word Kairos indicates a point in time where change is possible. In addition to the main theme a series of other events will take place including a juried "best show" for the professional workshops or master

classes in fields of art, such as painting and sculpture, and a craft fair as an off site program with input from Egypt and the other participating countries.

During the ten-day festival, proposed between 10-20th of July 2007, Alexandria will receive up to 1,000 young artists from more than forty Euro-Mediterranean countries and the public spaces of the city will come alive with the creations of young artists. The list of art categories for the Biennale is a long one. It includes visual arts, industrial design, photography, graphic arts, architecture, video art, sculpture, comics and cyber art. This is in addition to shows and performances in theater, dance, fashion and gastronomy. Others include readings for narrative texts and poetry.

Holding the Biennale in a southern Mediterranean city will enhance inter Mediterranean relations between the North and the South, thus allowing freedom of expression, open dialogue and the sharing of heritage and culture through the unifying action of art. Alexandria, as well as Alex Med has already built some strong relationships with these south Mediterranean countries, especially with its corresponding coastal cities. These ties, and the ties already built up by previous Biennales, will be enhanced through practiced networking techniques that will encourage permanent bonds among the participating countries.

Alexandria's culture and rich heritage offer a variety of arenas for the guest artists working in different fields to display their work. Proposed venues include the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (museums, halls, conference centers and the plaza), Sayed Darwish Opera House, National and Fine Arts Museums, Fort Qait Bey, Le Garage at the Jesuits Cultural Center, L'Atelier, the English Girls College and much more.

Dr Ibrahim Spahic, President of the International Association for the BJCEM asserted the need for



Fort Qait Bey

creation of a new space for young artists to express themselves with freedom and in a spirit of respect for cultural diversity.



Further information :

BJCEM : www.bjcem.org, email : info@bjcem.org

Bibliotheca Alexandrina/Alex Med : www.bibalex.org, email : alex.med@bibalex.org

Anna Lindh Foundation : www.euromedalex.org, email : secretariat@euromedalex.org



Sayed Darwish Opera House, one of the proposed venues for the Biennale 2007

How the Pharos came to Washington and Isis became 'Liberty'

Robert G. Bauval

In 1777, when the Freemasons in the American colonies sought to form a united Grand Lodge independent from England, they offered the position of Grand Master to George Washington, but he modestly declined saying that he was not qualified for this high office. In 1788, however, he accepted to become Master of the Alexandria lodge, today known as the Alexandria Washington Lodge No. 22, which is situated on the south side of the Potomac River near the city of Washington DC in the district of Alexandria (Virginia). Since 1932 this famous lodge has been engulfed within a huge monument modelled on the ancient Lighthouse of Alexandria in Egypt, the Pharos, and bears the official name of 'The George Washington Masonic National Monument'. According Mr. Helme of the firm Helme and Corbett of New York who designed this monument, this ancient design was selected because:

'...the Pharos was erected to guide the ancient mariners safely to shore; what would be more appropriate than a facsimile of that lighthouse in Alexandria Virginia on top of the highest hill and overlooking the Potomac River?'



The George Washington Masonic National Monument

Both Mr. Elmle and Louis A. Watres, the latter who represented the 'client', were Freemasons, and as such would have known that the ancient Pharos of Alexandria had been dedicated to Isis. As a matter of fact, it would not be the only time that the Freemasons would evoke this Egyptian goddess as she became the inspiration for America's most famous landmark. According to author Bernard Weisberger, 'Isis' was in the mind of the designer of the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbour:



A modern interpretation of the Pharos of Alexandria



The Statue of Liberty, New York

"The sculptor who made the great statue was Italian. His name was Auguste Bartholdi. His work was greatly influenced by the ancient sculptor Phidias who made gigantic statues of the ancient goddesses, particularly Athena, the "goddess of wisdom" and Nemesis (another name for Venus), a goddess who held a cup in her right hand. Before beginning the statue of liberty project, Bartholdi was seeking a commission to construct a giant statue of the goddess "Isis," the Egyptian Queen of Heaven, to overlook the Suez canal. The statue of Isis was to be of "a robed woman holding aloft a torch."

Frederic-Auguste Bartholdi was born in France, at the city of Colmar in Alsace. He had studied in Paris at the prestigious Lycee Louis Le Grand, and, in 1855, when he was only twenty-one, embarked on a voyage to Egypt with three friends, the Orientalist Léon Gerôme, Auguste Belley and Narcisse Berchère. There, while visiting the ancient temples of Thebes and Abu Simbel, Bartholdi became enchanted by the gigantic works of the ancient Egyptian sculptors. He spent eight months documenting the giant artworks and on his return to France brought back numerous sketches and photographs. It was during his first voyage in Egypt that Bartholdi met the celebrated French engineer Ferdinand De Lesseps, and thus began a friendship that was to last a lifetime. De Lesseps was at the time negotiating with the authorities in France and Egypt the financing of the building of the Suez canal that would join the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea and create a direct maritime corridor between the East and West. Bartholdi was so impressed with De Lesseps's vision that he began to think of a statue of a gigantic woman holding a torch to be placed at the entrance of the canal which would represent 'Egypt Enlightening the East'. At any rate, it seems that Bartholdi did manage to discuss his idea of a giant statue for the Suez Canal with the Khedive Ismail, but nothing came out of it, probably because of the impending bankruptcy that Egypt was facing due to over-borrowing from European bankers. But not in the least bit disheartened, Bartholdi decided to take his project elsewhere. The idea of a 'Masonic' monument to commemorate the friendship between France and the United States for the 100th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence was first discussed during a diner party at the country residence of Édouard de Laboulaye, a professor in law at the College de France and an expert on American culture. It seems that Bartholdi simply 'converted' his original project for Egypt and proposed it instead as a 'Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World' for New York.

For this purpose the Franco-American Union was created in 1875 in order to raise the necessary funds for the project.



Bartholdi's drawing for the Pharos of Suez, presented to Khedive Ismail in 1869

Not unexpectedly, several members of the Franco-American Union turned out to be Freemasons, including Bartholdi's own cousin, who was the French ambassador to the United States. Other Freemasons who were actively involved in this project were Henri Martin, the comte de Tocqueville and Oscar de Lafayette. Bartholdi himself had been initiated into Freemasonry since 1875 in the Paris Lodge 'Alsace-Lorraine', and was raised as Master Mason in 1880. Although Bartholdi was to be the designer of the Statue of Liberty, the actual task of making it fell on Alexandre Gustave Eiffel, the celebrated French structural engineer who was to design and build the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Eiffel too was a Freemason.

There is much dispute whether the face of the Statue of Liberty was in fact modelled on Bartholdi's mother. What is perhaps more certain is that the Statue of Liberty was linked to the 'cult of liberty' of the French Revolution, where "liberty" was represented by a "goddess" which sometimes was modelled on the Egyptian goddess Isis. Interestingly, according to French Egyptologist Bernard Mathieu, Bartholdi referred to the giant statue he designed as the 'Pharos' before it was raised in New York, and he had even designed an orthogonal base for the statue, just like the one believed to have been used for the ancient Pharos of Alexandria. Bartholdi would certainly have known the association of the Pharos with the goddess Isis.

The very intense "Masonic" involvement of this affair was made lucidly evident a century later when, in August 1984, a bronze plaque was fixed at the foot of the statue to mark the centennial of the cornerstone ceremony for the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. It read:

"At this site on August 5th, 1884, the cornerstone of the pedestal of the statue of 'Liberty Enlightening the World' was laid with ceremony by William A. Brodie, Grand Master of Masons in the State of New York, Grand Lodge Members, Representatives of the United States and French Governments, Army and Navy officers, members of Foreign legations, and distinguished citizens were present. This plaque is dedicated by the Masons of New York in commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of that historic event. August 5, 1984. M.W. Calvin O. Bond, Grand Master of Masons; P.W. Robert G. Singer, Deputy Grand Master; M.W. Arthur Markwich, Masonic Anniversary Chairman"

History of the George Washington Masonic Memorial, William Adrien Brown, 1960, p. 8-9. Statue of Liberty: 1st Hundred Years, by Bernard Weisberger, p.30; see also Beyond Babylon, by James Lloyd, p.103. Bernard Mathieu "Le Pharos d'Alexandrie", Egypte, Afrique et Orient, n° 6, Avignon, septembre 1997, p. 14

« Artisanats de la Méditerranée: un dialogue des civilisations au quotidien. »



Né en 1995 d'un regard original sur le bassin méditerranéen et d'une volonté d'y développer de nouveaux thèmes et espaces d'expression et de création, le Programme Méditerranée de l'UNESCO est basé depuis 2003 au Caire. La poursuite et l'intérêt des initiatives mises en place depuis lors dépendent grandement de l'implication des acteurs et des coopérations inter-associatives et inter-institutionnelles à naître. L'idée générale est de faire connaître, protéger et mettre en valeur le patrimoine commun des pays de la Méditerranée, mais également de déceler et de promouvoir, au-delà des différences, les espaces d'échanges de savoir, de culture et d'idées.

Afin d'approcher au mieux ces problématiques multidimensionnelles et de prendre en compte la diversité des acteurs, l'UNESCO a privilégié une approche réticulaire. Sont ainsi nés le réseau des *Fêtes du Soleil*, célébration du patrimoine immatériel des festivals populaires traditionnels en Méditerranée, le réseau de la *Navigation du Savoir* autour des arsenaux historiques de la Méditerranée, le réseau des jardins et paysages de la Méditerranée, et un grand projet d'identification et de révision des stéréotypes négatifs concernant la culture arabo-islamique présents dans les livres scolaires d'histoire européens.

Le petit dernier, qui est amené à prendre le plus d'ampleur en Egypte, le réseau de l'Artisanat et des métiers d'art de la Méditerranée, a été lancé en novembre 2005 à Tunis, autour du thème central du verre, à la fois comme technique ancestrale du pourtour méditerranéen et archétype de l'objet d'art utilisé au quotidien.

En Egypte, l'artisanat a connu de nombreuses ruptures. Un patrimoine riche de motifs et de techniques est en voie de disparition dans un environnement économique et social qui ne privilégie plus la qualité et la formation sérieuse aux métiers traditionnels. Pourtant, l'Egypte reste une destination touristique majeure dont les touristes reviennent bien souvent les valises chargées... de bibelots de qualité très discutables, quand ce ne sont pas les fruits d'un commerce d'import de plus en plus florissant en provenance de l'Asie. Or ces objets que les touristes rapportent, et qui « se comportent en ambassadeurs silencieux », selon l'expression de S.E le Ministre du Tourisme égyptien, ne risquent-ils pas de porter tort à l'image du pays et par là de menacer cette manne essentielle que constitue le tourisme ? Une remarque qui rejoint la perspective du ministère égyptien de la Culture, qui œuvre depuis peu pour une redécouverte de ces savoirs et formes occultées qui ont pourtant façonné le paysage égyptien et méditerranéen.

alex.med@bibalex.org

Fanny Durville

De surcroît, ce type d'activité a la particularité de toucher à de nombreux secteurs de la société, jusqu'aux populations les plus pauvres et isolées auxquelles des formations adaptées pourraient redonner les moyens de leur dignité.

Plusieurs projets sont actuellement en cours en Egypte, mis en place par divers programmes et institutions. L'objectif est à terme de diffuser les connaissances et expertises acquises lors des projets et de coopérer au plus près afin d'éviter les initiatives redondantes. Très récemment, le Programme Méditerranée de l'UNESCO a voulu rassembler les acteurs de l'artisanat en Egypte et dans le monde méditerranéen, pour les encourager à se connaître, à dialoguer, et à exposer leurs travaux et expériences au cours d'un événement pluriel, composé d'une exposition d'objets d'artisanat, de stands d'artisans en activité, de tables rondes d'experts et de spectacles en soirée, tous destinés à montrer le riche patrimoine de la région.

Le lieu choisi pour l'événement comportait une dimension symbolique certaine et un vrai potentiel de développement dans un avenir proche. En effet, le quartier historique du Fustat au Caire tire son nom des premières installations arabes musulmanes, proches de la cité copte établie, et présente par là même des traces visibles de diversité culturelle, au fondement de la cité tentaculaire qu'est devenu le Caire. Et c'est une dynamique similaire qui a incité l'UNESCO à convier les membres de son futur réseau à se réunir dans un lieu du Caire injustement méconnu et peu fréquenté par les touristes : l'installation récente, au cœur du Fustat, de deux magnifiques ensembles architecturaux dédiés à la préservation et la promotion de l'artisanat égyptien. D'un côté, le *Centre de Poterie et de Céramique du Fustat*, sous l'égide du Ministère de la Culture, développe des activités de formation et tient une exposition permanente d'artisanat égyptien ; de l'autre, le *Souk el Fustat*, soutenu par le Ministère du Tourisme (TDA), cherche à promouvoir par la vente cet artisanat et mettre en lumière certaines activités associatives auxquelles il fournit une vitrine.



Dans un avenir très proche, le site verra également la naissance du Musée National de la Civilisation Egyptienne, parachevant un complexe culturel et touristique destiné à redonner au Caire et à la civilisation égyptienne moderne et contemporaine une meilleure visibilité.

Pour son lancement, le réseau a donc bénéficié du soutien conjoint des Ministères de la Culture et du Tourisme, permettant l'exposition dans les espaces du Fustat d'objets d'artisanat provenant de nombreux pays du pourtour méditerranéen (Algérie, Egypte, Espagne, Grèce, Italie, Jordanie, Maroc, Palestine, Portugal, Tunisie et Turquie) et la présentation des divers techniques et motifs ethniques, religieux et/ou géographiques.

Venus du pourtour méditerranéen, avec leurs expériences et cultures différentes mais complémentaires, les experts ont eu l'occasion de visiter les lieux et les comparer à ce qu'ils connaissent. Une visite particulièrement remarquée a été celle du Centre de Poterie du Fustat par Mme Sadika Keskes, artiste et fondatrice du Centre de Réhabilitation des métiers d'Art de la Méditerranée à Tunis. En évoquant les possibilités de soutien et d'échanges d'artistes et d'élèves entre les deux centres, elle a ouvert la voie d'une coopération fructueuse, dans le droit fil de l'esprit de réseau qu'encourage le programme Méditerranée de l'UNESCO. De même, la présence de la Bibliotheca Alexandrina, à travers son centre de recherche Alex-Med, et le soutien logistique et médiatique de CultNat ont renforcé l'espoir d'un travail commun dans les années à venir.

Tous les nostalgiques du patrimoine culturel menacé de l'Egypte contemporaine et les admirateurs de l'artisanat vivant sont invités à se rendre dans ce nouvel espace du Fustat, à honorer de leur visite ces femmes, ces hommes et leurs créations qui rendent hommage à la tradition et lui offrent un futur.



"عايز ارسم اللي أنا حاسه، اللي أنا اعرفه" زكريا سليمان - الفنان الفطري

محمد حافظ

يندمج الناظر لإعمال زكريا سليمان مع ذلك العالم الطفولي الفطري الذي ينتمي إليه هو نفسه،

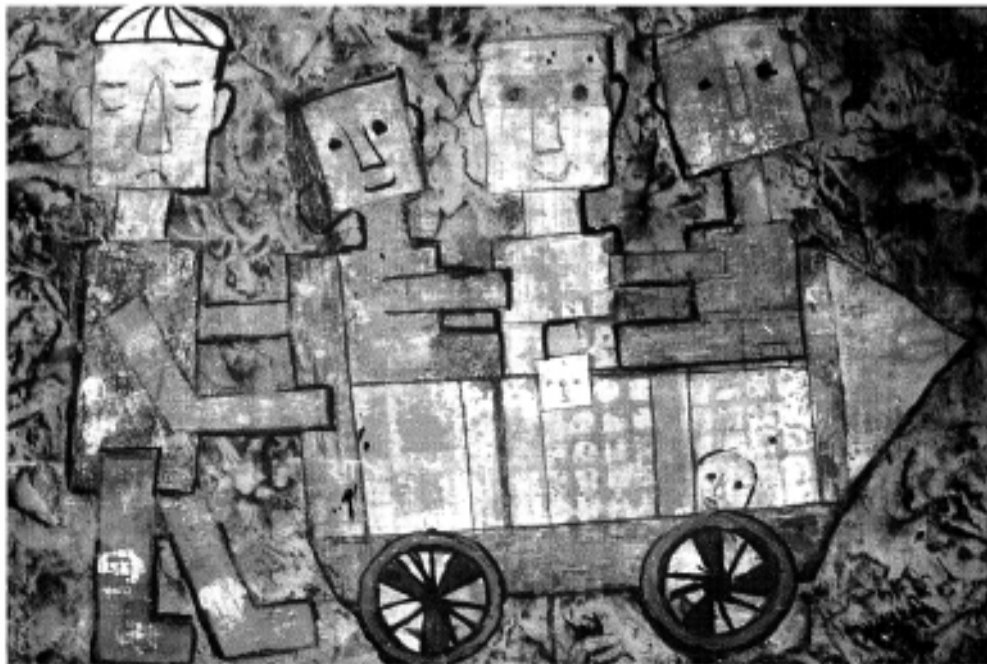
فزكريا المولود في أكتوبر من العام ١٩٧٠ بحي محرم بك بالإسكندرية لم يحصل على أي قدر من التعليم الفني (دبلوم تجارة عام ١٩٨٩)، وإنما هو احد الذين اختارهم الله لمنحهم هذه الهبة الراقية وهي تذوق اللون وتوظيفه.

بدأ زكريا سليمان رحلته الفنية في عام ١٩٩٦ عندما تقدم بأولي لوحاته إلي قصر ثقافة مصطفى كامل وكانت عبارة عن تكوين من الألوان التي قد نسجها من إحساسه وعرف فيما بعد إن هذا هو ما يسمى بـ "تحضير أرضية اللوحة"، ويعترف زكريا أنه كان محظوظاً عندما صادف وجود الفنان عصمت داوستاشي - مدير متحف حسين صبحي وقتها- بقصر الثقافة وإعجابه بمحاولات زكريا الذي قرر تبنيه فنياً لما رأي فيه من بشائر لفنان تشكيلي شاب.

خلقت رعاية الفنان عصمت داوستاشي لزكريا الطموح القوي في الاستمرار بعد أن أيقن أن فطرة زكريا صادقة وأنه متمسك بحقه في رسم ما يعرفه وما يريد به فهو قادر بحق أن يأخذك من خلال تكويناته مرة إلى عالم بهيج من الألوان مثلما في لوحته "الطفولة" و مرة أخرى إلى عالم تعبير مأساوي مثلما في لوحة "الشهداء".

تبسرت موهبة زكريا وأحص أنه قد تخطي مرحلة مجرد العروض في المراكز الثقافية والمعارض الجماعية فتقدم للمشاركة في "صالون شباب الفنانين" ولكن الغريب أنه قد سم رفض أعماله حيث أن - ومن وجهة نظر اللجنة التي أبلغته بالرفض- مسألة القبول والرفض تخضع لقرارات لجان مختصة، من منظور يهيمه مستقبل الحركة التشكيلية!!! وظل الرفض قائماً ولنفس الأسباب التي ذكرت من قبل ولكن يبدو أن لجان التحكيم في سويسرا لها تقييم آخر لأعمال زكريا ففي العام ٢٠٠٠ حصل زكريا سليمان الفنان التشكيلي المصري علي المركز الثالث في المسابقة العالمية الأولمبية للفن والرياضة، وكرمه اللجنة الأولمبية المصرية وسلمته جائزة المركز الثالث ودبلومة دولية.

ليست جائزة لوزان هي الوحيدة التي حصل عليها زكريا وإن كانت الأبرز فمن الجوائز التي حصل عليها زكريا جائزة تشجيعية في بينالي بورسعيد الثالث والرابع، جائزة تشجيعية من معرض الفن التلقائي الثاني والثالث، جائزة د/أحمد نوار في صالون أتيليه الإسكندرية السنوي، الجائزة الأولى في معرض الإسكندرية في عيون أبنائها، جائزة لجنة التحكيم من صالون الشباب الحادي عشر، جائزة ثلاثة تصوير صالون الشباب الثاني عشر، جائزة صالون الشباب باتيليه الإسكندرية ٢٠٠١، جائزة ثانية من بينالي بورسعيد القومي الخامس وغيرها من الجوائز والشهادات التقديرية والتي اثبت بها زكريا استحقاله لمنحة التفرغ التي حصل عليها من وزارة الثقافة في عام ١٩٩٩ وحتى عام ٢٠٠٦ برعاية ودعم من الفنان فاروق حسني وزير الثقافة المصرية.



Alexandria's Ottoman Treasures

Edward Lewis

Alexandria was once described as having more mosques than any other city in Islam¹. The Muslim traveler Ibn Jubayr, who passed through the city in April AD 1183 on his pilgrimage to Mecca, had visited many cities, seen many unusual and wonderful things that would have been unheard of in his native town of Granada, particularly in an era when travel was hazardous and either a luxury or enforced. It is not uncommon or unusual that he mentions the number of minarets, especially since Islam was still a relatively young religion, but what is striking is the complete reversal in observations regarding contemporary travelers. In 1183 the magnificence of classical Alexandria would have been far more visible than today. The Pharos, Alexandria's famous landmark and one of the Seven Wonders of the World, was still standing, albeit a shadow of its original self before its final collapse in 1303. The various necropolises, columns and statues that are now hidden by modern concrete structures or lost to the sea would have very much been part of the everyday landscape and been taken for granted by the city's inhabitants.



The minaret of Terbana Mosque supported by Corinthian columns

Today, despite the archeological silence of the city, visitors are attracted by the nostalgia of the 'first city of the inhabited world'² without being able to reach out and touch it. The lack of physical evidence appears to be the precise reason why it appeals to so many as it enables the visitor to create their own Alexandria as demonstrated by Forster when he wrote 'I would multiply the height of the Fort of Kait Bey by four and so envisage the Pharos which had once stood on the same site. At the crossing of the two main streets I would erect the tomb of Alexander the Great.'³ Whilst there is an undeniable atmosphere regarding the city and its ancient past, very few visitors to the city are aware of its incredibly rich and unique Islamic architecture that lies in the heart of the Ottoman Town. These mosques and residential quarters, testament to a period of Alexandrian history that is largely unrepresented, face a number of threats. Increased awareness, both public and professional, is the key if Alexandria's more contemporary but equally important history is to be preserved and history prevented from repeating itself.



The mosque of Terbana

Alexandria, and the Delta region in general, has always been on the periphery owing to the overwhelming wealth of Islamic architecture and heritage that survives in Cairo. The mosques of Alexandria or other Delta towns such as Rosetta, beautiful and unique as they are, cannot match the sheer splendor of examples in Islamic Cairo such as Ibn Touloun, El-Hakim or Bab Zuwalya. Alexandria's Ottoman heritage slides further down the list when you consider Cairo's pyramids or Upper Egypt's timeless remains; why focus on conserving Middle Age mosques when there are hundreds more older and visually more impressive monuments requiring conservation? However, on closer examination it becomes apparent that the two periods, centuries apart and divided by more than just time, are bridged by a unique architectural style. Many of the mosques incorporate classical elements thus demonstrating the continuity of the city and making them invaluable to Alexandria's cultural heritage.

The Ottoman occupation of Egypt between 1517 and 1805 is not considered Egypt's most prolific in terms of the arts and architecture. As a province under the Ottoman state many of the skilled and talented architects and craftsmen were taken from Egypt to Constantinople thus Egypt witnessed a period of deterioration. Yet art is never static and various mosques, sabils, palaces, bathhouses, and iwans reflect the architectural development in Egypt under their Turkish rulers, some with stunning results such as the mosque of Suleiman Pasha and mosque of Mohamed Ali in Cairo, both of which display typical Ottoman elements such as the cylindrical pencil shaped minarets. The prominent Alexandrian Ottoman mosques, Terbana and Shurbagui, do not share the scale of the Cairene examples but are as equally valuable in terms of our understanding of Ottoman architecture.

Alexandria's location regarding the holy city of Mecca and the west made it an ideal location for pilgrims to stop, rest and recuperate. There was a steady flow of North African and Andalusian communities passing through Alexandria and many decided to permanently settle thus heavily influencing many aspects of the city's culture. Such an example of Maghrebi influence can be seen in Terbana Mosque. The mosque of Terbana lies in the heart of Manshieh amongst the narrow alleyways and busy streets that define the area. This impressive mosque gets its name from the family responsible for its construction, the wealthy Moroccan merchant Ibrahim Ibn Abed Ibn Soliman Terbana, who is said to have made his fortune through gold and wanted to honor his family and his religion by erecting a place of worship. Built in 1097 AH (AD 1685), the mosque demonstrates the simple but beautiful styles adopted in Ottoman Delta architecture, the most striking being the red and black 'Delta style' (or mangur) brickwork that adorns the doorway.



The black and red brickwork, typical of the Delta region, at the entrance to Terbana Mosque

Whilst the patterns and symmetry are visually impressive, these bricks also serve as a practical component. Good quality stone was not readily available in the Delta region and baked mud brick was often a preferred material due to its cheapness, versatility and standard size. The fusion of ancient with more contemporary architecture is evident when ascending the stairs of the main entrance since the mosque's minaret is supported by four large granite Corinthian columns intricately detailed with acanthus leaves. The mosque's arcade and sanctuary also contain a number of ancient columns that are older than the very religion the building serves. As with the mud bricks, the columns are in place for primarily practical reasons, the fact that they are pleasing to the eye can be seen as inconsequential. Recycling antique stone was common practice and the pillars were conveniently shaped and strong enough to be of great use to the Islamic craftsman, just as they had been to Christians before them. The mosque is uncharacteristically colorful due to the beautiful ceramics that brighten the main entrance and mihrab. The blue, green and orange floral designs are from all over the Mediterranean region including Morocco, Turkey and Italy demonstrating Alexandria's wide contacts during the seventeenth century.

Other Alexandrian examples include Shurbagui Mosque, also located in Manshieh amongst the brightly colored fruit and vegetable stalls of the souk. The mosque shares a similar background to that of Terbana and its founder was also of Maghrebi descent.



An example of the beautiful ceramics in Shurbagui Mosque

Architecturally it has the same characteristics, including the red and black bricks and ancient columns, yet the sanctuary is even more colorful than that of Terbana due to the abundant ceramics that cover the walls and entrance as well as the beautifully painted wooden ceiling. Further a field in Rosetta, the Delta style illuminates the narrow streets of the fishing town through the various red and black Ottoman houses and impressive mosques, including Saad Zaghloul and Al-Mahalli.

The actual location of these mosques is not under threat since their role as a place of worship guarantees they are protected. None will go missing over night but the intricate details that make them unique are in danger of disappearing. The very age of these buildings means they are threatened. Alexandria's climate, favorable as it is, is not suited for preserving old materials such as wood or mud brick. The Mediterranean air has slowly but surely worn away original features and a great deal of Ottoman mosques suffer from rising damp, especially on the ground floors.



Shurbagui Mosque surrounded by the souk

Many of the necessary alterations that have been carried out have been executed without the correct supervision, materials or techniques and go undocumented thus erasing the building's history. Even simple procedures, such as painting or plastering, can have negative effects if the original scheme is not adhered to and simply covered over in one color. E. M. Forster highlighted such a point when, in his *Alexandria: a history and guide*, he noted that the Terbana Mosque was 'Well worth visiting, in spite of modern plaster and paint.'⁴ In addition original pieces of the mosque are being replaced without exploring the possibility of restoration. Such an example can be seen in the Ibrahim Pasha el-Sheikh Mosque where the original wooden doors and hinge system were replaced with new wooden doors despite being in good condition and of significant value. Larger restoration work, such as that needed for windows, minarets or roofs pose a greater problem and if not completed properly can cause much larger problems in the future.



A Corinthian Column supporting Terbana's minaret

Terbana's bronze windows, for example, have been completely removed and the cistern has been filled with rubble. The threat does not only come from within the mosque. Decades of development in Alexandria have meant quick high rise buildings now tower over the mosques encroaching on one of the few remaining historic areas. The digging of these vast foundations does irreversible damage and causes severe weakness to the older buildings and their structure.



However there are conservation efforts currently in place. Alex-Med has recently completed a survey of all the Ottoman mosques in the Turkish Town including valuable information that is absent from many books and other sources of information. The book will also contain a number of detailed section drawings and photographs thus creating a thorough documentation of these endangered buildings.

Today, viewing Alexandria from the shore, just as Ibn Jubayr did, there is little evidence to suggest it is a city of minarets, but the few that remain and the surrounding areas remind us that this city's architectural gems are not only confined to those buildings that that have long since disappeared.

¹It has more mosques than any other city of Islam, so much so that men's estimates of their number vary. Some count more, some less, the former reckoning up to twelve thousand. There are others who give different figures, but in short they are most numerous, there being four or five in one place and sometimes they even adjoin each other (Broadhurst (2003). *The travels of Ibn Jubayr* Darf Publishers, London).

²Diodorus Sic. 17.52.5

³Forster E.M (1922). *Alexandria: A history and a guide*. Michael Haag Limited, London.

⁴Forster E.M (1922). *Alexandria: A history and a guide*. Michael Haag Limited, London.



سينما سينما

بقلم إبراهيم عبد المجيد

"GONE WITH THE WIND"

The greatest screen entertainment of all time!



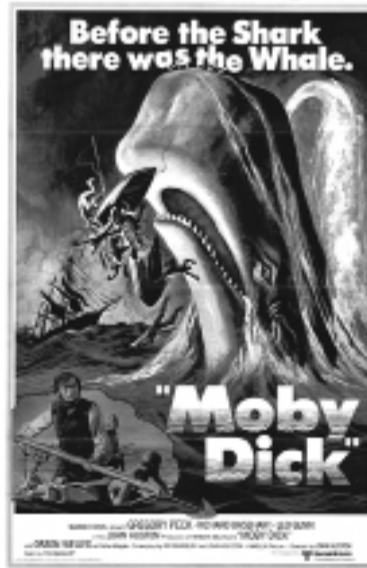
ودستو يسكي بعد أن شاهدت الأخوة كارامازوف. والأساطير اليونانية بعد أن شاهدت هرقل وسلسلة أفلامه وتولستوي بعد أن شاهدت أنا كارينينا و هيمنجواي بعد أن شاهدت وداعا للسلام وهذا الفيلم بالذات رأيت في الثانية عشر من عمري بسينما فؤاد وكانت هذه أول مرة أدخلها. وفي كل فيلم شاهدته في سينمات الدرجة الثانية والثالثة كانت دائما هناك قصة لي ولأصحابي، ابتداء من الهروب من المدرسة أو الشجيرة في الترام أو الحصول على تذكرة من السوق السوداء أو معاكسة الفتيات أو تدخين السجائر لأول مرة، وفيما بعد شراء الكتب من محطة الرمل، ومع التحسن في الأوضاع المالية صار الذهاب إلى سينمات الدرجة الأولى طقسا جميلا يبدأ من اختيار الملابس إلى تسريحة الشعر إلى التعطر بالكولونيا إلى تلميع الحذاء وهكذا.

كان وراء شباك تذاكر سينما بلازا دائما فتاة جميلة لا أنساها، ربما كنت أذهب لأراها هي، وكان فيما بعد وراء شباك تذاكر سينما مترو فتاة أجمل. أين هما الآن؟ كانت سينما الهمبرا ملاذ الطلاب يوم الاثنين وسينما بلازا ملاذ الطلاب يوم الخميس ولم يكن لمسينما ماجيستيك رائحة طيبة أبدا. كانت كل ميزتها لنا ونحن صبية أنها أمام محل محمد أحمد للفول والفلافل. وكان الذهاب إلى سينما رويال يوم عيد لأن الإشاعة كانت تقول أنه لا بد لمن يدخلها من ارتداء بدلة كاملة. لا أعرف من أين أتت الإشاعة. أما سينما أمير فكان دخولها أشبه بدخول بيت جميل لسفر حجمها ولا زلت أشعر بهواء مكيفاتها في الصيف وكان الدخول لسينما مترو يمنحنا إحساسا هوليوديا، كأننا بالضبط في هوليوود نفسها.

كل هذه السينمات وغيرها احتلت مكانا كبيرا في رواياتي، وبصفة خاصة رواية "بيت الياسين" ورواية "طيور العنبر"، وكنت وأنا طالب في الإعدادية أستطيع أن أحصي لزملائي أكثر من مائة عنوان لمائة فيلم وأحيانا مئة وخمسين. لذلك لو لم أكن أديبا لربما كنت مؤرخا للسينما وللأفلام. لكن هذا التاريخ كله وقد سكن في روحي لم يعد له أثر على الأرض للأسف فتم حرمان شعب الإسكندرية ضمن ما حرم منه من متع، من متعة لها تأثيرها الروحي والثقافي الكبير. لم يبق في الإسكندرية إلا ثمان سينمات، راديو ورويال أضيف إليها مجمع سينمات سموحة وسينما بالعجمي لكن الأحياء الشعبية جميعها حُرمت من سينمات رغم اتساع رقعة الأحياء الشعبية وامتداد العمران شرقا وغربا وجنوبا ولم يبق أمام الملايين من سكان الإسكندرية إلا التلفزيون الذي ليس له نفس البهجة ولا المعنى ولا يترك في العقل أثر فشتان بين متعة تصل إليك وأنت جالس في بيتك ومتعة تذهب إليها. الأخيرة تنقد فيها الروح وتشتعل بالبهجة منذ لحظة الخروج من المنزل وعبر الطريق وخلال الروية وبعدها. الأخيرة تبقى محفورة في العقل والروح وتحفزك إلى المعرفة إلى أكثر وإلى الخيال أكثر وتبقى ذكرياتها وتغير من رؤيتك للعالم. وهكذا فعلت السينما معي وتفعل ذلك مع كل الناس في كل وقت المهم أن تكون هناك سينما... من الذي يستطيع الآن أن يرفع شعار سينما في كل حي، ومن يستطيع أن ينفذه في مدينة السينما. مدينتنا الإسكندرية...

وهكذا. معاول الحرام السحراري الوهابي الجيول لا تكف عند المشاعر الإنسانية الدقيقة هذه. كم دارا للسينما تم هدمها في الإسكندرية أكثر من ثلاثين دار. ابتداء من سينما النصر الصيفي في الدخيلة زمان إلى سينما المنتزه الصيفي مروراً بسينما الهلال بالقباري، وسينما مصر بكرموز بشارع النيل وشهرتها سينما النيل، وسينما الجمهورية براغب وسينما ستر بمحطة مصر وسينما التتويج بالأنفوشي وسينما كليوباترا بالفراحة وسينما ركس وريتس والهمبرا والكوزمو والشرق وبارك وماجيستيك بالمنشية ومحطة الرمل وسينما قيس وسينما ليلى بيكوس وسينما سبورتنج ولاجيتيه وأوديون وغيرهما من سينمات الدرجة الثانية والثالثة. هدمت هذه السينمات وتحولت إلى عمارات أو مولات أو تحولت إلى ورش ومخازن في مدينة عرفت العرض السينمائي في مصر قبل غيرها من المدن، بعد عام واحد من عرض الأخير لوميير شريطهما في باريس عام ١٨٩٥، مدينة بدأ فيها أول ستوديو للسينما على يد المخرج محمد بيومي في عشرينات القرن الماضي.

بالنسبة لي ساهمت هذه السينمات في تكويني الثقافي، فبعد إطلاق العنان للمخيلة وراء الموضوعات الأسطورية والأبطال فوق العادة، جاءت المعرفة، فورا كل فيلم تقريبا رواية أدبية كنت أبحث عنها وأقرأها. ففتحت لي السينما باب الآداب العالمية فعرفت مثلا مارجريت ميتشيل بعد أن شاهدت ذهب مع الريح وهران ميلفل بعد أن شاهدت موي ديك



سينما رويال
المصدر: الدكتور محمد عوض

سينما أوديون،
المصدر: مهندس موشيل أرسلانديس

Sham el-Nessim



The annual pharaonic festival of Sham el-Nessim serves as a reminder that Egypt's heritage is not only defined through its monuments. Literally translating as 'sniffing the breeze', this festival falls immediately on the first Monday following the Coptic Easter and celebrates the coming of spring and the passing of winter. Since agriculture was fundamental to the ancient Egyptian's existence, the harvest is honored and customs and traditions are practiced that would have been performed all over the country thousands of years ago. The surroundings of modern Egypt may be a far cry from those of old but the core traditions of this festival do not appear to have strayed too far from their roots.

The first and most telling sign that Sham el-Nessim is upon us are the large number of crowds picnicking on the grassy green patches around the city. Basking in the Mediterranean sun provides an ideal opportunity to do exactly what the title suggests and smell the rich Alexandrian spring breeze (spare a thought for the Cairenes!) Being in an open and green environment reflects the ancient practice of taking the time to visit the countryside once a year and appreciate its value and contribution to life.



Sham el-Nessim is also celebrated through food, the most well known (and potent) being salted fish, *fiseekh*. This specialty is made by salting and pickling fish (mainly grey mullet, buri) and the process can take a number of months to complete. *Fiseekh* is considered something of an art form and the recipes are religiously guarded and passed down through generations orally, just as the ancients did before them. Cases of '*fiseekh* poisoning' are well documented and fatalities are not unheard of (indeed the government has recently set up 48 hour treatment centers especially for Sham el-Nessim and *fiseekh* poisoning!) The smell may prompt people to ask whether the fish is as old as the tradition itself, but the fact remains many Egyptians swear by its taste and associate the festival with little else. The link between the ancients and the fish is not only symbolic. When the German Egyptologist Émile Brugsch sent a batch of royal mummies (including Ramses II, Tuthmosis III and Seti I) from Luxor to Cairo in 1881 the customs official classified the mummies as *fiseekh* owing to their similarities!

The fish's significance is not only in its eating; fish offerings were made to ancient Egyptian gods to ensure a good harvest since salted fish symbolized fertility and welfare owing to their abundance in the Nile as a prominent food source.

Other Sham el-Nessim foods include green onions which are supposedly placed under pillows the night before the festival. On awaking in the morning one should crush the onion, smell it and then go outside and 'sniff the breeze'. Painted boiled eggs also form part of the celebrations and is another tradition thought to be descended from the realm of Horus, Sobek and Anubis. Painted eggs were hung in temples symbolizing regeneration and the cycle of life and are a direct predecessor of modern day Easter eggs.

Sham el-Nessim fell on 24th April this year and is an opportunity for all religions and faiths to escape the 'office', find an open space and celebrate the changing of seasons.

Breakfast

Shakshuka (Fried Eggs with Tomatoes)

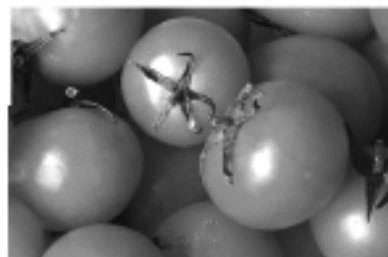
This delicious egg dish is quick, simple and a great way to start the day.

Ingredients:

- 3-6 Eggs
- 1 Onion
- 2-3 Ripe Tomatoes
- Cooking Oil
- Salt and Pepper



1. Finely chop the onion and peel and slice the tomatoes.
2. Fry the onion and add the tomatoes. Cook for 10 minutes.
3. Break the eggs onto the onion and tomato mixture.
4. Add salt and pepper.



Labna (Yogurt Cheese)

Labna originated from the Levant and remains an important dish in Eastern Mediterranean cuisine and of the surrounding countries. Traditionally this dish was made in large quantities (sometimes as much as a whole year's supply in one batch) over a long period and combines some very basic ingredients that produce the thick and creamy texture. In times gone past, goat's milk was the primary ingredient and gave labna a distinctively sour taste. It is best served with bread warmed in the oven.

Ingredients:

- 4 Cups of Yogurt
- 1 Tablespoon of Salt
- Olive Oil
- Cheesecloth Bag



1. Stir the salt into the yogurt and pour into a wet cheesecloth bag. Tie off the opening of the bag and hang for 24 hrs (put a clean container under the bag to collect the whey, which can be used in cooking or for drinking-it is very nutritious).
2. Remove the labna from the bag and place in a jar.
3. Pour olive oil on the top.

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.

Editor: Edward Lewis
Graphics: Flora Cavoura
Photography: Abdallah Dawestashy.

Forthcoming events

Cycle de Conférences "Penser la Méditerranée", la Méditerranée entre les cultures
Lecture: West Hall 9 May 2006, 7pm

De Lesseps: Cet Inconnu, Dr. Ahmed Youssef
Lecture: Coference Hall, 11 May 2006, 7pm

Cycle de Conférences "Penser la Méditerranée", la Méditerranée en récits
Lecture: West Hall 11 June 2006, 7pm

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:

The Alexandria & Mediterranean Research Center, Bibliotheca Alexandrina
Chatby 21526, Alexandria, Egypt.
or
alex.med@bibalex.org

Register with Alex-Med

Name: (First, Father, Middle, Last).....
Title: Mr. Mrs. Ms. Dr.
I.D. number.....
Place and date of issue.....
Address (street, district).....
Postal code, city, country.....
Phone (home).....
Phone (office).....
Phone (mobile).....
Fax.....
E-mail.....
Profession.....
Organization.....

