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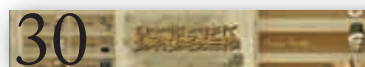
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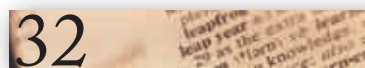
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By: Dr. Khaled Azab



Words to Remember



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WE ARE SEVEN!

Ismail Serageldin

Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina

On 16 October 2002, the ancient Library of Alexandria was reborn in its modern recantation, the Bibliotheca Alexandria (BA), dedicated to recapture the spirit of openness and scholarship of the original library.

Yes, we are now seven years old, and indeed, we have come a long way.



On its seventh birthday, the BA became the recipient of the most generous gift ever received in the history of the world. With the help of our International Friends' Association in France, headed by Professor Gerald Grunberg, the BA received by the end of November the first shipment of 500 thousand books and 160 thousand journals in French, making it the sixth most important Francophonic library in the world, outside of France. This unprecedented gift is the latest recognition from the international community for the success achieved by the BA in its commitment to multilingualism and openness to all cultures.

But the BA is not just a library, it is a large and multi-faceted complex which encompasses six specialized libraries for arts, multimedia and audio-visual materials, the visually impaired, children, the young, microforms, and rare books and special collections, in addition to eight academic research centers and nine permanent exhibitions.

In our continuous endeavors to promote pluralism, openness, understanding, nationality, dialogue and learning, we now welcome over 1.2 million visitors a year, with over 400 thousand reader visitors. Our websites are receiving over 300 million hits per year, with an average of 23-24 million hits a month. We have had more than 700 events last year including conferences, lectures, concerts, international gatherings, and the annual book fair, in addition to around 23 educational courses, and 316 arts school activities.

The Library has developed rapidly during a short period of time, the number of its employees doubled, new research centers were established, and its activities increased. We are starting this new year with a grand

outreach program that includes building our own TV Studio and FM Radio Station, in addition to the establishment of the first Street of Museums, which will dedicate a whole floor to the four museums of the Library: the Antiquities, Manuscripts, Sadat and the History of Science museums.

I can say that the BA left a great impact on the cultural scene in Egypt and succeeded in attracting a positive international attention for its role in spreading learning and knowledge, as well as for its beautiful building whose design at the architectural and structural levels merits the attention of the world.

A Modern Vision

I am absolutely a lover of books and like Borges, I do think that paradise is some kind of a library. To me, books themselves are valuable as beautiful objects as well as for their content, some of them have great value as works of art, above and beyond the value of what is written on their pages. But I must acknowledge that I also recognize and admire the new technology for what it is going to do for the world and to the world.

Libraries as we know them are great depositories of books, with vast reading rooms and huge shelves of books where knowledge was introduced in

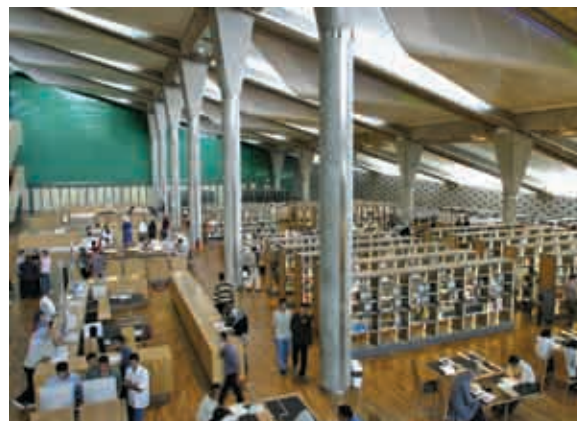
individual volumes. The modern version of libraries has continued much in the same tradition, but gradually welcomed carrels of computers that spread in the reading rooms of libraries. The material is now presented in a more convenient manner, and the old card catalogs have given way to the new catalogs which one can use to find a specific publication among thousands of books and journals, just by typing a few words.

Given the knowledge explosion, digital libraries seemed to be the strategic instruments of choice, to create knowledge hubs for access to the enormous wealth of information provided on the Internet, as well as becoming the nodes for virtual networks of centers of excellence. From the first day, the Library of Alexandria had to take that into account, and was mandated from its birth to be an institution devoted to this role.

The Library has a very special role in the World Digital Library (WDL) which was developed by a team at the US Library of Congress with technical assistance from the BA. The WDL is a visionary initiative by James H. Billington, Librarian of Congress, which provides information to the public in a seven-language hub, with an aim to create a meeting point of cultures around the world and make available cultural material for free on the Internet.



Bibliotheca Alexandrina



Inside view of the BA



I believe in the role of libraries as beacons of information, and their new role as organizers of knowledge. Information management is changing rapidly in this new century in which we live, and libraries have to be in the forefront of finding ways to manage such information, for we are in the dual role of being custodians of the past and inventors of the future, and we are there for a marvelous role; to play a sort of mediator between knowledge and those who seek it.

In our efforts in making organized information available, we have digitized and put online over 138 thousand Arabic books. Currently, we are preparing the Arab Union Catalog, the effort of standardizing Arabic librarianship so that we have proper authority approved by all libraries in the Arab world.

We are currently working with the Swiss Development Corporation (SDC), and Carnegie Mellon University on reissuing the classics of Islamic books, a project that will bring forth the best and enlightened tradition of Islamic thought in the 19th and 20th centuries. The books will include modern forewords with information on the author, the book and its impact when it first appeared, in addition to its importance that persists till date. The actual texts will be translated from Arabic into English and French and will eventually be presented both online and in a printed edition of 100-150 volumes in three languages.

Born Digital

In the digital realm, the BA provides all the basic services for a truly hybrid library, with our Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) and e-resources, and the proper management of the institutions from security to an Oracle-based Enterprise Resources Planning System that covers all aspects of our transactions and our records.

We have a large and ambitious program of digital work that distinguishes us from most libraries and most other cultural institutions. In 2005, the prestigious Digital Library Federation (DLF) officially invited the BA to become a strategic partner of the group. The Digital Library Federation, founded in 1995, is a partnership organization of academic libraries and related organizations that are pioneering the use of electronic information technologies to extend their collections and services.

As the new digital technology is transforming the world, I believe the Internet has been one of the most innovative transformations in history. It has had an explosive growth and its penetration is everywhere, transcending the boundaries of politics and nations. Out of this importance, the BA is the custodian of a copy of the Internet Archive, providing a complete snapshot of all web pages on every website since 1996 till date.

Committed to access to all information for all people at all times, the BA is now the owner of the High Performance Computing cluster (HPC), also known as the Supercomputer. Aiming at reinforcing the scientific research development, the Supercomputer cluster will be deployed for specialized applications that require immense amounts of mathematical calculations.



BA Supercomputer

Due to the significant speed of its processors and its storage size that reaches up to 36 Tbytes (36,000 gigabytes), it is considered a valuable tool for researchers seeking optimum and accurate results.

I believe we have completed our infrastructure for science; we have a hybrid library of 45 thousand scientific journals, in addition to our Virtual Immersive Science and Technology Applications (VISTA); a data analysis facility that includes 3D virtual reality simulations.

We are today a part of a huge network of global scientific knowledge, after launching the “BA Science Supercourse” project which provides educational scientific content in the form of online PowerPoint presentations. We now get 90 million hits per year in previewing the project’s presentations. The scientific lectures are starting to expand to all sciences, after

starting out with only Epidemiology and health fields. Recently, we printed a DVD of the lectures in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), for people who do not have online access, and provided five thousand copies for medical students around the world.

In 2009, we celebrated a year of rich scientific initiatives and activities around the world with the grand re-opening of our largest science facility, the BA Planetarium Science Center (PSC), providing it with the latest tools and equipment, and enhancing its role as an educational foundation dedicated to increasing public awareness, interest and understanding of science and technology.



BA Planetarium

In this manner, the BA will provide the platform for the collaboration of young scientists from Egypt and the region with their peers in Europe and elsewhere. It will be a hinge between two communities of scientists, and a hub for their interactions. The BA will keep actively equipping itself with important tools for tomorrow’s research needs, in order to develop its role and mission, to be a center of excellence for the production and dissemination of knowledge and for the dialogue between peoples and cultures.

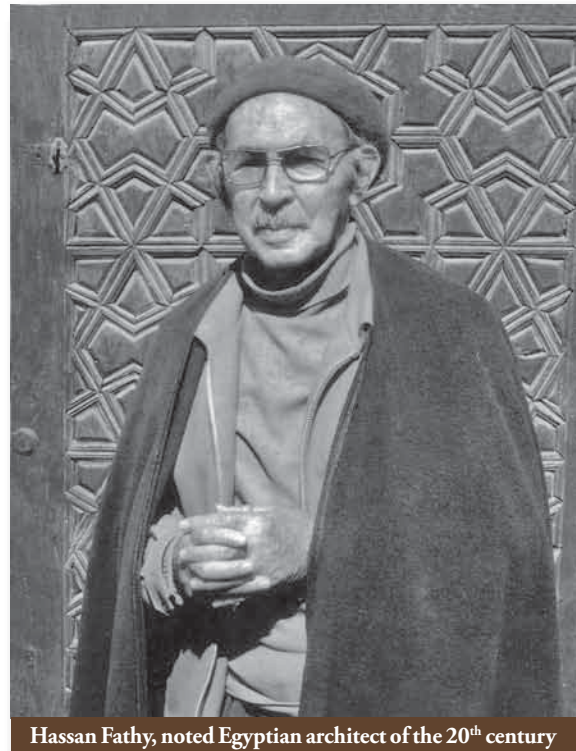
In seven years, much has been accomplished and there will be much more to come!

HASSAN FATHY AWARD RECALLS IDENTITY IN MODERN ARCHITECTURE

Sherihan Aref

Prominent figures are commonly remembered and honored, but individuals who have presented to the world significant achievements become associated with rewarding their talented followers. The name of Hassan Fathy, one of the most remarkable architects of modern and contemporary Egyptian architecture of the 20th century, has become a reward for current designers.

The *Bibliotheca Alexandrina* (BA) organized the *Hassan Fathy Architectural Award*, in cooperation with the *Architecture Committee of the Egyptian Supreme Council for Culture* on 28 October 2009. The award ceremony was held at the premises of the BA as part of an international symposium. Participating projects were evaluated by the international jury committee members: Soha Ozkan, Rasem Badran, Salah Hegab, Salah Zaki, Khaled Asfour, Seif Abulnaga, Mamdouh Abdelkerim and Head of the Committee; Dr. Ismail Serageldin, Director of the BA. Serageldin announced the winner of the *Hassan Fathy Award for Architecture*;



Hassan Fathy, noted Egyptian architect of the 20th century

Al Alayli Villa in King Mariut, designed by “Awad and Partners-Design and Planning Consultants”. Dr. Mohamed Awad and Architect Gamal Samaan received a certificate and a medal award bearing the name of Hassan Fathy. Three other projects were given certificates of appreciation; Wadi El Gemal National Park Visitors’ Center, Marsa Alam; Center of Architecture and Planning Studies, Cairo; and El-Gouna Resort, the Red Sea.

Al Alayli Villa received the award due to fulfilling the theme of this year’s competition; “Identity in Contemporary Egyptian Architecture.” In general, the villa maintains Egypt’s unique architectural design.



Dr. Ismail Serageldin presented the award to Dr. Mohamed Awad and Architect Gamal Samaan



The award: A certificate and a gold medal

The entrance reminds one of the typical traditional homes reflecting Hassan Fathy's architectural taste. A long planted pathway leads to the villa doors. In the interior, the court is designed with diverse space arrangements integrating the reception, dining and living rooms while offering the historical role of the court which is providing privacy and comfort, divided by curved arches. Creating an interactive atmosphere with the exterior, the court is provided with an indoor heated pool area adorned with indoor plants. Pergolas, loggias and balconies are built to connect the court with the various external landscapes including an organic cactus desert, a green lawn surrounding



Al Alayli Villa, winner of the Hassan Fathy Award

a pool, a rose garden and a tennis court. The flow between the inside and the outside of the villa was created by making use of natural light that is diffused from the top center of the court from a pyramid glass roof that plays the role of a natural ventilator. It also prevents the court from the common winter hazards that Alexandria experiences. Overall, the villa demonstrates meaningful and original architecture.

Although Al Alayli Villa illustrates the integration of distinctive local identity with a contemporary sense fulfilling the modern lifestyle needs, all other designs presented in the *2009 Hassan Fathy Award* were encouraged to participate in future competitions as themes differ in every round. All projects were displayed in an exhibition that was held along with the event. Serageldin also announced that the BA will assemble all the participating projects in a book to portray their architectural and intellectual values. He added that the committee encourages arranging similar competitions targeting the architecture of Egypt.

This competition provides a connection between the different generations of architects. Moreover, it liaises between architects and the society, creating dialogue between designers and scholars concerning architectural ideologies. The symposium featured discussions on ways of preserving Hassan Fathy's heritage in addition to approaching his followers, humanism and legacy. While promoting contemporary Egyptian architecture, the award aims at commemorating the leader of current architectural theories of sustainable development; Hassan Fathy.

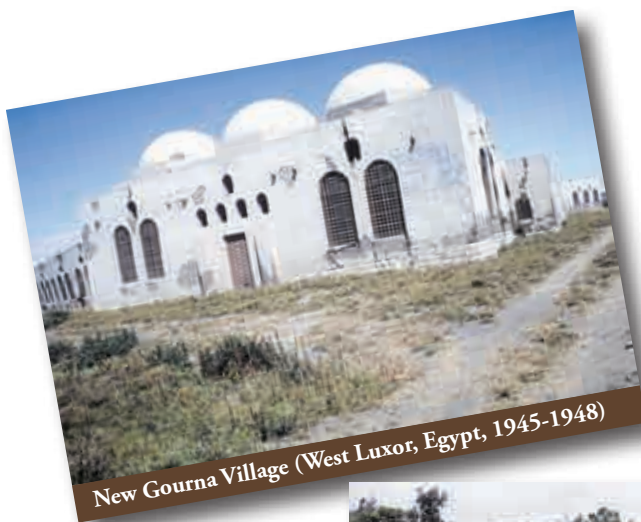
Reviving the phenomena of the Egyptian heritage, Hassan Fathy presented innovations in architecture. He was the first Egyptian architect in the 20th century who, rather than importing architectural ideologies from the West, exported to the world new architec-

tural ideologies carrying the Egyptian identity. He made use of traditional resources and materials of construction and the art of adobe, evoking ancient design methods and adding the sense of village architecture. For instance, he integrated dense brick walls. Fathy's designs also relied on other factors such as weather conditions, public health concerns, and ancient expertise. Likewise, designers of Al Alayli Villa took into consideration the weather of Alexandria and modern day facilities. Fathy tended to incorporate the advantages derived from ancient buildings such as the use of dense brick walls and providing passive cooling in the courtyard. Hence, Fathy is signified by his ideas more than his designs.

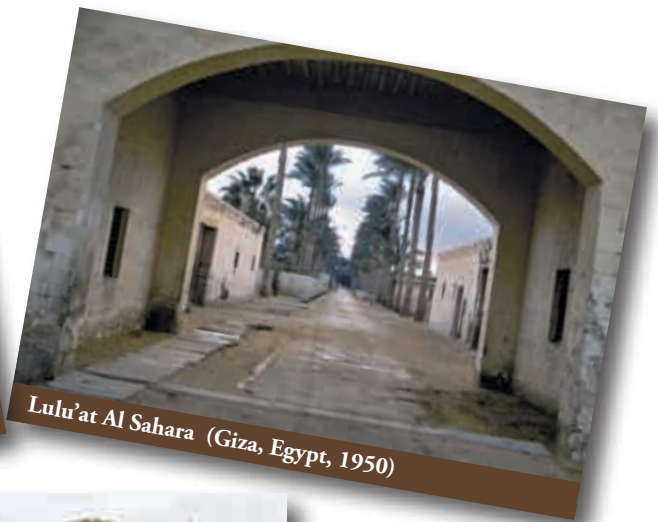
Fathy expressed cultural legitimacy as the main concept upon which his designs were based. He was against internationalism that would eventually replace the unique identities of nations. However, he was open to deriving what is suitable from the West

and the use of new technologies as long as they were conforming to architectural concern measures such as energy efficiency, prices, space and most importantly human beings and their usage.

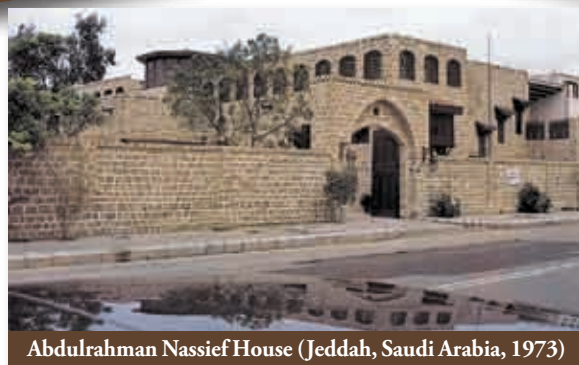
Fathy's concepts were clearly expressed in his architectural designs. His masterpiece *New Gourna* is a model village in Luxor, built from sun-dried bricks and designed providing natural transmission of cool air. He also designed the *New Bariz*. However, both projects were public commissions that faced socio-economic problems. Moreover, he illustrated his ideas in private commissions including *Lu'luat Al-Sahara*, which was built for the Egyptian elite Hafiz Pasha Afifi and the currently under-construction Islamic Community effort in the United States. Generally, all projects portrayed the traditional identity that Fathy had been grasping from the treasures of ancient Egypt.



New Gourna Village (West Luxor, Egypt, 1945-1948)



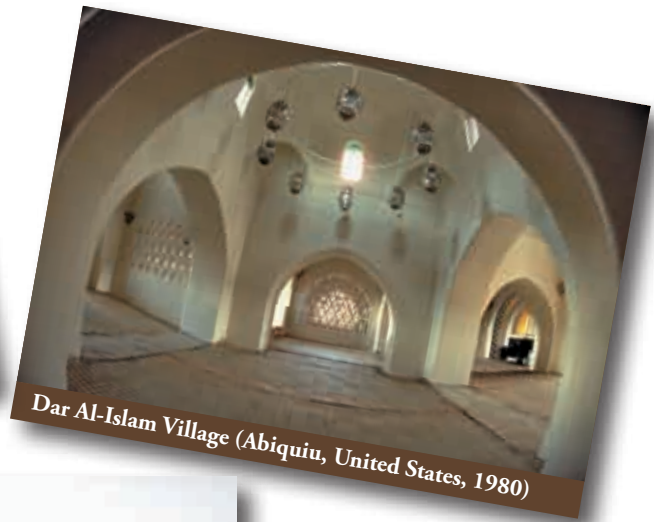
Lulu'at Al Sahara (Giza, Egypt, 1950)



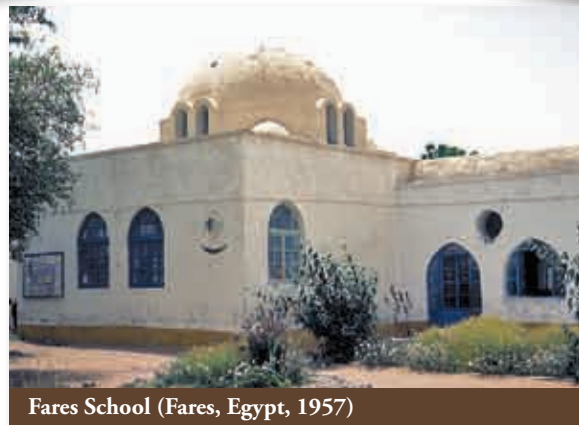
Abdulrahman Nassief House (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 1973)



El Sadat Presidential Resthouse (Garf Hoseyn, Egypt, 1981)



Dar Al-Islam Village (Abiquiu, United States, 1980)



Fares School (Fares, Egypt, 1957)

As well as benefitting from the surroundings to decide upon a design, Fathy was able to benefit the society. Fathy was concerned with the development of rural areas and therefore dedicated designs to housing the poor. Fathy worked to offer inexpensive homes with the original Egyptian atmosphere in an attempt to help improve the standard of living in rural areas. Additionally, he trained local inhabitants to build their own homes with materials they can formulate.

Growing up with the talent of drawing, Fathy was able to use his skill not only in architecture but in related social and economic issues. He was concerned with the poor although he was born to a wealthy family in Alexandria. On 30 November 1989, at the age of 89, he passed away leaving behind a record of achievements and recognitions. He was the Director of the Educational Buildings Depart-

ment of the Ministry of Education, then the Head of the Architecture Department at the Faculty of Arts of Cairo University. He also experienced working abroad at the Doxiadis Organization in Greece. Not only were his ideas expressed within his job positions, they were also portrayed in his published writings; the most remarkable of which was "Architecture for the Poor" which has been re-issued in the West. Fathy gained international fame and respect. He received a special chairman's award from the *Aga Khan Award for Architecture*; the competition in which he participated as a judge. He also received the *Gold Medal of the International Union of Architects* and was the first architect from a developing country to receive it. Hence, the BA launched the *Hassan Fathy Award* in 2008. Hassan Fathy had been globally honored and today he is symbolically recognizing the coming generations of significant architects.

HIGHLIGHTS ON ARMENIAN CULTURE

Kholoud Said

“Arab-Armenian relations are deeply-rooted. When the Kingdom of Armenia adopted Christianity in the early years of the fourth century, Armenians very much elevated the city of Alexandria as the center of knowledge and wisdom...

Alexandrian clergymen had a deep impact on religious thinking in Armenia. Several Armenians studied there and traveled to Jerusalem through Egypt, leaving behind engravings on rocks in Sinai.” Kevork Bardakjian.

Attended by the Ambassador of Armenia to Egypt, the BA External Relations Sector held on Saturday, 7 November 2009, a lecture entitled “A Quick Glimpse on Ways to Disseminate Knowledge and Culture in Arabic and Armenian Literature”, given by Dr. Kevork Bardakjian, Professor of Armenian Language and Literature, Far Eastern Studies Department, Michigan University.

Christianization

“Historically, Christianity was imposed in Armenia when King Tiridates III adopted it and made it the state religion in AD 301, becoming the first officially Christian state in the world,” said Dr. Kevork Bardakjian.

“Unsurprisingly, the Church of Alexandria greatly influenced the Armenian Church, especially when it came to the doctrine of Trinity. Some of these writings are even unavailable except in Armenian,” he added.

However, the Armenian Church was independent in its doctrine. This is perhaps why it later became a distinct church, an independent religious organization.

Armenians believe they are the direct descendants of Noah’s son Japheth, for Mount Ararat, the national symbol of Armenia, is the resting place of Noah’s Ark. The Bible records that Noah’s Ark came to rest on this historic mountain and there are many references of the descent from the mountain after the Great Flood.



Khorvirab Monastery with Mountain Ararat in the background.
Photo by Andrew Behesnilian.

Since it was here that humans came to life again after the Great Flood, some also believe that Paradise, where Adam and Eve lived before they descended to Earth, was in Armenia. Armenia is thus the birth place of all humans.

Armenian Language

Bardakjian pointed out that although Christianity entered the country as early as AD 40, it spread slowly because there was no Bible in Armenian, an unwritten language until then.

“To overcome that, a monk named Mesrop Mashtots invented the Armenian alphabet in the beginning of the fifth century, after traveling all over Armenia to gather the sounds of Armenian speech,” Bardakjian stated.



Statue of Mesrop Mashtots with the Armenian alphabets.

This eventually led to spreading Christianity in the country, and to the Armenian Church being an independent entity. It was then that an active wave of translation started, mainly from Assyrian and Greek.

There was no written Armenian literature before Christianity, for there was no written language. But there definitely were oral narratives. Among these, Classic Armenian, or Grabar, came to stand for the

word of God; it was the tool to represent sacred things.

Oral narratives, however, continued to embody traditional accounts and non-religious poetry. “One vivid example of this is *David of Sassoun*, an epic accounting for four generations of heroes, dating back to the seventh century when Arabs colonized Armenia,” Bardakjian argued. “It was only preserved through oral narrative, for it was not documented until the nineteenth century.”

Classic Armenian existed, on the contrary, only in written form as of the seventh century or even earlier. It dominated as the language for literature.

Most Armenian writings, including religious and historical writings, in addition to several philosophy, science and rhetoric books, were written in Classic Armenian until the eleventh century.



David of Sassoun (Oil on Canvas)

From then onwards, Middle Armenian was used in non-religious topics, while the Classic form continued to dominate religious writings. It is the language used to this day by the Armenian Church.

Manuscripts: A Nation's History Revealed

Since spreading religion was a main objective, manuscripts had a special significance. The oldest Armenian manuscript was written in the fifth century, after the invention of the alphabet. "Unfortunately, only very little came to us out of these first written in the following three centuries," Bardakjian stated.



"The first complete manuscript that reached us dates back to the ninth century. Now, around 30,000 manuscripts exist in different world libraries," he added.

The Matenadaran (Institute of Ancient Manuscripts), located in Armenia's capital Yerevan, houses an extraordinary collection of 14,000 complete manuscripts, fragments and miniatures. There are around 4,000 manuscripts in the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Venice. Smaller collections are found in France, Great Britain and the United States.



The first manuscripts were written on rolls. However, the usage of paper increased after the ninth century, replacing rolls. A rare manuscript on papyrus with a Greek text written in Armenian letters was found in Fayoum, Egypt, and dates back to the fifth or sixth century.

The majority of manuscripts are research works of ancient scholars on theology, astronomy, astrology, alchemy, geography, history, medicine, poetry and music.

Ideally, manuscripts are footnoted with the names of the owner and the copier, and sometimes including names of family members, relatives and everyone who helped in the copying process, in addition to the date and place in which this manuscript was copied, besides details about the original document.

Armenian manuscripts, beautifully illuminated with miniatures, combine Armenia's literary and illustrative traditions. They are famous for including additional information about historic accounts related to the place manuscripts are copied in, a great documented value by itself. These footnotes also urged readers to respect and take good care of the manuscripts, cursing whoever misused or stole them.

Manuscripts were copied in special rooms in monasteries. More often than not, Armenian copiers had to escape wars, invasions and tyrants, copying their manuscripts over periods of time.

Mostly, manuscript copiers were trained in monasteries, for manuscripts were copied for educational purposes, usually free of charge. There are some incidences in which manuscripts were copied by women, for copying religious manuscripts was considered a form of piety.

When the Arabs arrived to Armenia in the seventh century, it was already an established country with literary, artistic and architectural heritage.

And the Arabs Came...

“Arabs did not impose Islam on Armenians. They considered them *the people of the Book*, for the country was completely Christianized by then,” Bardakjian affirmed.

With the Arabs, he added, hundreds of Arabic words found their way to the Armenian language. “These were not only confined to Islam and the Qur’an, or even the Islamic way of thinking; they had a general aspect.”

Similar to monasteries in Armenia, mosques were not just places for prayers; they were centers for literally activities that developed in the Islamic world.

In mosques, meetings were held, official orders announced, legal declarations enacted, and basically all aspects of cultural life took place. They also functioned as schools and meeting places for scientists.

The parallel institution in Armenia was, as previously mentioned, the monastery, but it only focused

on learning and, naturally, manuscripts. “In both cases, there was a varied syllabus including philosophy, astronomy, grammar, rhetoric, calligraphy, beside the normal attention given to religion and theology,” said Bardakjian.

There are studies concerned with the political aspects of the Arab-Armenian relations, especially during the Arab colonization of Armenia from the seventh to the tenth century.

Dr. Kevork Bardakjian declared that there are good researches about Egyptian Armenians, but further studies are needed, especially in the cultural aspect.

“We owe those Armenian and Arab teachers; we owe them our memory, identity, basic aspects of our culture and what we could have of knowledge and wisdom across the ages,” he concluded.



Al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo, Egypt

REVISITING VOLTA'S LEGACY

Ayman Elsherbiny



Dr. Ismail Serageldin at the Volta event inauguration

The Italian physicist Alessandro Volta (1745-1827) fundamentally contributed to various areas of natural science, of which electricity figured prominently.

Key terms of present-day electrical science, for instance “voltage” and “photovoltaic”, recall Volta’s name and acknowledge, thus, the seminal importance of his achievements. The “voltaic” battery which he invented in 1799 boosted science as it opened the new unexpected domains of electrochemistry and electromagnetism.

Commemorating his legacy, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s (BA) Planetarium Science Center (PSC), in cooperation with the University of Pavia in Italy and the Istituto Lombardo, Accademia di Scienze e Lettere, organized an exhibition entitled “The Legacy of Volta: From the Battery to Photovoltaic Electricity”, from 9 November to 3 December 2009.

The exhibition was one of the highlights of the Egypt-Italy Science Year (EISY09), which was part of Egypt’s Decade of Science and Technology announced in 2007. It aimed to give an idea of the electric seeds laid down by Volta and of the way they yielded fruit in subsequent science.

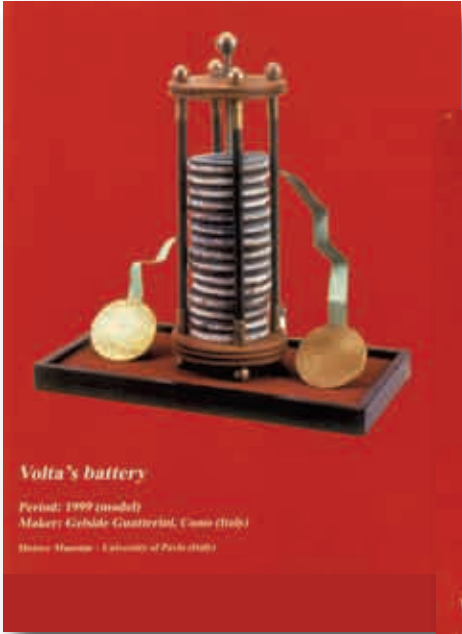
“The exhibition is a kind of comprehensive historical journey across Alessandro Volta’s life, scientific activity and impact on subsequent science,” said Prof. Roberto Schmid, Director of the School for Advanced Studies (Istituto Universitario di Studi Superiori-IUSS), in Pavia.

“The instruments shown in the exhibition—in part constructed by Volta himself, and in part bought by him during his scientific tours across Europe and paid with blank cheques granted by the Empress of Austria, Maria Theresa—recreate the atmosphere of that time, so rich with scientific creativity and diffused interest for scientific discoveries,” Schmid added.

“Also, the manuscripts and correspondences with the scientists of his time help the visitor to capture the vivacity of the scientific debate in the age of Enlightenment.”



Visitors to the Volta exhibition



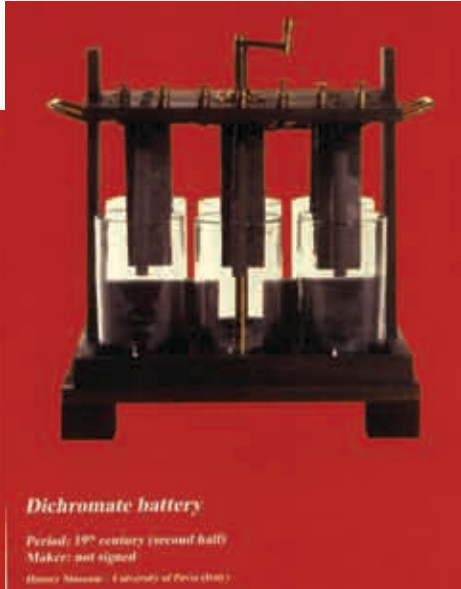
Volta's battery

Period: 1999 (model)
Maker: Gabriele Guatterini, Como (Italy)
History Museum - University of Pavia (Italy)



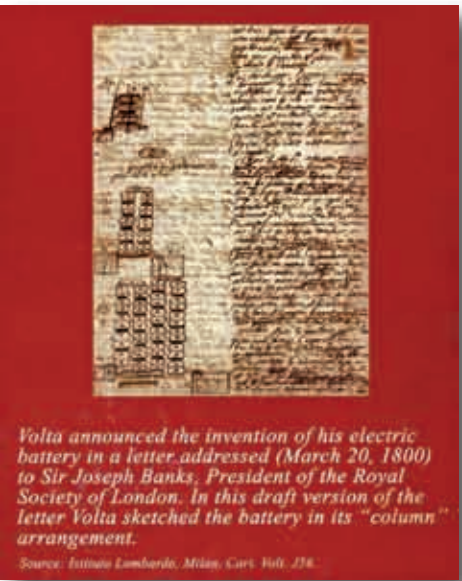
Voltmeter

Period: ca. 1871
Maker: not signed
History Museum - University of Pavia (Italy)



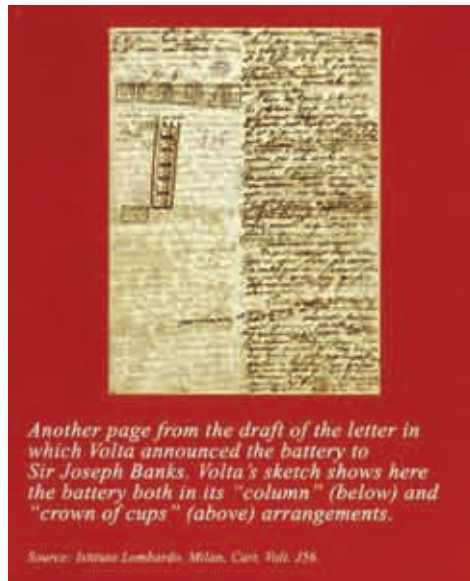
Dichromate battery

Period: 19th century (second half)
Maker: not signed
History Museum - University of Pavia (Italy)



Volta announced the invention of his electric battery in a letter addressed (March 20, 1800) to Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society of London. In this draft version of the letter Volta sketched the battery in its "column" arrangement.

Source: Istituto Lombardo, Milan, Cart. It. 338.



Another page from the draft of the letter in which Volta announced the battery to Sir Joseph Banks. Volta's sketch shows here the battery both in its "column" (below) and "crown of cups" (above) arrangements.

Source: Istituto Lombardo, Milan, Cart. It. 338.

Additional modern objects illustrate some of the recent useful applications of the "Volta effect". Modern hands-on exhibits enable visitors to restage various of the historical steps illustrated in the exhibition.

discoveries in the history of science and humanity. The city of Milan offered the ideal surroundings for his studies and researches," argued Dr. Letizia Moratti, Mayor of Milan.

"Alessandro Volta was an innovator, a genius who amused himself with curiosity and creativity exploring the world of nature, and achieving revolutionary

Volta was the first president of the Lombardy Academy of Arts and Sciences (Istituto Lombardo, Accademia di Scienze e Lettere) established by

Napoleon in 1797 with the purpose of gathering information on new findings and inventions, thus enriching arts and sciences.

“The Lombardy Academy preserves Volta’s important documents, as do the Sormani Central Library and other Milanese libraries which keep some other significant texts and manuscripts,” Moratti stated.

During the inaugural ceremony of the exhibition, the Italian Consul donated several books to the BA in Italian and English, including Electra Marconi’s book *Marconi, My Beloved*.

Volta at a Glance

In 1745, Count Alessandro Volta was born in Como, Italy, into a noble family. He became Professor of Physics at the Royal School in Como in 1774. A year later, he improved and popularized the electrophorus, a device that, once electrically charged by having been rubbed, could transfer charge to other objects. His promotion of it was so extensive that he is often credited with its invention, even though a machine operating in the same principle was described in 1762 by Swedish Professor Johan Carl Wilcke.

In 1776–1777, Volta studied the chemistry of gases. He discovered methane by collecting the gas from marshes. He devised experiments such as the ignition of methane by an electric spark in a closed vessel.

Volta also studied what we now call electrical capacitance, developing separate means to study both electrical potential (V) and charge (Q), and discovering that for a given object they are proportional. This may be called Volta’s Law of Capacitance, and likely for this work the unit of electrical potential has been named the volt.

In 1779, he became Professor of Experimental Physics at the University of Pavia, a chair he occupied for almost 25 years. In 1794, Volta married the daughter of Count Ludovico Peregrini, Teresa, with whom he raised three sons, Giovanni, Zannino, and Flaminio.

When Luigi Galvani’s experiments with “animal electricity” were published in 1791, Volta began experiments that led him to theorize that animal tissue was not necessary for the conduction of electricity. The Galvani vs. Volta debate was one of the most interesting episodes in the history of science.

The proof of Volta’s theory was the battery, which he invented in 1800. He built the first electrical pile, or battery: a series of metal disks of two kinds, separated by cardboard disks soaked with acid or salt solutions. The voltaic pile, a forerunner of the electric battery, produced a steady stream of electricity.

In honor of his work, Volta was made a Count by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1810. He retired in 1819 in his estate in Camnago, a municipality of Como now called Camnago Volta after him, where he died on 5 March 1827.

Volta’s legacy is celebrated by a temple on the shore of Lake Como in the center of the town. A museum in Como, the Voltian Temple, was built in his honor and exhibits some of the original equipment he used to conduct experiments. Near Lake Como stands the Villa Olmo, which houses the Voltian Foundation, an organization which promotes scientific activities.

The electrical unit “volt” that we know today was named after Alessandro Volta in 1881 in honor and memory of him.

DEATH AND LIFE STUDIES: VIEWS FROM EGYPT AND JAPAN



Sarah Elhaddad

Let us beware of saying that death is the opposite of life. The living being is only a species of the dead, and a very rare species. Friedrich Nietzsche

The word “life”, whether human life or other forms of life on earth, has a variety of meanings and implications, deeply mixed with philosophical and religious conceptions. Life studies are known to be an interdisciplinary approach to life, death, and nature; with an attempt to acquire organized knowledge and intellect that help humans live their limited lives without regret, by connecting philosophical wisdom with academic research, and the researcher’s own life.

Some scholars describe life and death as inevitable as the two sides of a coin, describing death as the termination of the biological functions that define a living organism. However, the study and understanding of death and dying became evident as more researchers started to seek a better understanding of the human encounter with death.

From the 1970s onward, there has been a growing concern for how to care for the dying and the bereaved, leading to the emergence of Death and Life studies as a new academic field, based on previous studies of humanities and social sciences.



Professor Susumu Shimazono

Accordingly, the University of Tokyo initiated the “Development and Systematization of Death and Life Studies” program as part of its Global Centers of Excellence (COE) program for International Education and Research Projects.

The goal of Death and Life studies is to strive towards creating a thorough understanding of the matter of death and life by addressing the needs of those practitioners working in medicine, life sciences, and health care; all who are currently struggling with questions concerning palliative care and bioethical issues.

Interest in Death and Life studies in Japan, China, and Korea is currently on the rise, and is starting to find its way to North American and European countries.

In the United Kingdom, Durham University established the Centre for Death and Life Studies to foster and conduct research on life-values, beliefs, and practices that relate to living and dying. It seeks to

encourage and facilitate interdisciplinary approaches wherever possible between the humanities, the social and life-sciences and medicine.

According to Professor Susumu Shimazono, leader of the Death and Life Studies of the global COE program; Death and Life Studies have a close relationship with studies of religion and bioethics, and also with other areas of applied ethics and practical philosophy.

Shimazono reveals that death and life research is focused on three main areas: a comparative study of death and life across cultures, philosophical and theoretical inquiry into the ethics and praxis of death and life, and the involvement of the humanities in contemporary sites of practice.

Bibliotheca Alexandrina's (BA) Calligraphy Center took the initiative of introducing the new field of study in Egypt and the Middle East by organizing the "Dialogue on Death and Life: Views From Egypt" international symposium on 2-3 October 2009.



Dr. Khalid Azab and Professor Susumu Shimazono during the symposium

The dialogue was hosted by the Global COE program, in cooperation with the National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU) Program of Islamic Area Studies in Japan, the Supreme Council of Culture in Egypt, and the Center for Social Researches and Studies of the Faculty of Arts at Cairo University.

The symposium presented an approach to discussing researches conducted by Egyptian and Japanese scholars, which address death and life issues; including rituals, the architecture of the cities of the dead and the views on death and life around the world.

Dr Louay Saied, Projects Manager at the BA Calligraphy Center, explained that the research concerning life and death rituals in Ancient Egypt revealed that the interest in death and its rituals, which is evident in Egyptian monuments, does not represent an appreciation of death, but a fear of annihilation in the hereafter, or to lose all or some of the power, influence and wealth enjoyed in the first life.



Dr. Louay Saied

Tomoko Morikawa, Associate Professor at Hokkaido University in Japan, introduced a further interpretation of death rituals in her research "Pilgrimage of the Dead". Morikawa traced the last journey Iranian corpses make being transferred from Qajar Iran to Najaf, Karbala, Kazimain and Samarra in Iraq.

"The pilgrimage is yet another form of ritual which was believed to guarantee entrance of the dead into paradise, being buried in those four Shiite shrine cities in Iraq," affirmed Morikawa.

Researchers also explored the rich vitality of the cities of the dead and their symbolism, which is clearly reflected on the building environment, or what is known as "Architecture of the Dead". Dr Khaled Azab, Director of the BA Calligraphy Center,

showed the political and religious aspects reflected by the buildings of the dead in Egypt, by investigating the symbolism of mausoleum domes in Cairo and the chain of their architectural development.

As the most outstanding domes were built by Muslim architects to cover shrines, the analytic study of the remaining mausoleum domes in Cairo revealed the rulers' desire to draw the attention of passers-by to their shrines and gain the sympathy of the public to offer prayers for them; a function achieved by domes even many years after the ruler's death.

Professor Kana Tomizawa from the University of Tokyo, argued that monuments of the dead can be reduced to a political analysis, in her research "Commemoration of the Dead and Modern Obelisks in British India". Tomizawa found that the high mortality rate of the British in India was due to the hard climate, and their precarious position in India in the 17th and 18th centuries.



Professor Kana Tomizawa

"The conditions led them to establish something monumental to commemorate the dead and face the fear of death, in addition to employing Oriental designs for expressing sorrow and condolence, creating examples of obelisk designs that embody the relationship between mourning, imperialism, and orientalism" said Tomizawa.

The symposium "Dialogue on Death and Life: Views From Egypt" also enumerated the different views on death and life in different countries, religions and cultures.

Professor Soho Machida from Hiroshima University in Japan illustrated the sharp contrast in the aesthetics of the heritages of countries, especially Egypt and Japan. He clarified that Egypt admires the beauty of eternity, which is typically represented by magnificent pyramids and great pantheons.



Professor Soho Machida

"They symbolize the culture of stone, which stands solid and never perishes. In contrast, Japan admires the beauty of perishability, which is embodied by the culture of wood, which is fragile and easily decays," he explained.

Machida called for the establishment of a new aesthetics in search of the beauty of interfusion between life, death, humans, nature, religion, and science. "Both Egypt and Japan share the great responsibility to lead the global community to this new aesthetics of interfusion from two polar ends, eternity and perishability." concluded Machida.

PLAZA... WHEN THE LOCATION BECOMES THE HERO

Kholoud Said

Overlooking the Alexandrian Corniche Road and Port Said Street, the BA Plaza connects the three main elements of the BA complex, namely: the Main Building, the Planetarium and the Conference Center. It is open and inviting, with olive trees providing a powerful symbol of the BA underlying premise of peace, openness to the other, dialogue, rationality and understanding. The Plaza also comprises works of art and statuary. A soaring statue of “Prometheus Bearing Fire” is standing amidst the olive trees, and the colossus of Ptolemy II stands tall at the entrance on the Port Said street side.

During summer, the Plaza is turned into an open air theater holding musical concerts and theatrical performances. It has also witnessed several of the BA events including the annual Science Festivity.

Yet, the Plaza has inspired another idea to the BA Arts Center. The *Plaza* Project is all about producing short narrative films that take place entirely there.

It is an initiative from the BA Arts Center in order to play a more direct role in supporting independent cinema industry in Egypt, and Alexandria in particular. It has decided to take the first step towards achieving this goal by using the BA's landmark building, hoping that young artists would find the Plaza inspiring, leading to produce films that would, in a way or another, document this magnificent location.

The idea is, however, not only limited to the Plaza as a location. It extends to the concept of “Plaza” in our daily life, since it is a place where different categories (age groups, cultural backgrounds, social classes) of the society meet, either BA visitors (Egyptians and foreigners) and staff, students of the University of Alexandria (facing the BA), or passersby from the Corniche Road to Port Said street.

The Project has fruited three films by three filmmakers from Alexandria; *Setta fi Tes'a* (6x9), directed by Belal Hosni, 11 min; *Ashya' Mushabeha* (Resemblances), directed by Sherief Zohairy, 6 min; and *Terahen?* (You bet?), directed by Mark Lotfy, 16 min.

Plaza films premiere took place on Wednesday, 11 November 2009 at the Small Theater, the 242 seats of which could not accommodate a larger group of cinema lovers who had to wait for another chance to see the three films. A seminar with the filmmakers followed the screening, moderated by Ahmed Nabil, Film



Program Coordinator at the BA Arts Center and a filmmaker himself, and attended by Director Saad Hendawy who has been helping out with the production of the three films.

Setta fi Tes'a (6x9) explores the idea of the framework in an air of fantasia. A security employee strives to communicate with another young BA staff member, in an aim to break the monotone and silence of his daily routine, but this other just doesn't care. Belal Hosni doesn't believe his film is confined to the Plaza per se. The security employee could have also been employed in a bank or any other building. He also refused to complicate things for his audience. He used the simplest image to convey his message. The film was about the idea of a framework, and he resolved to a framework to show this.

"Films, like dreams, are to be seen not narrated," believes Sherief Zohairy. *Ashya' Mushabeha* (Resemblances) revolves around this dream/reality dichotomy while discovering the psychological state of an actress just before the premiere of her film. During these moments, she examines her role in the film and her role in life. Zohairy does not believe in symbols when it comes to cinema. All the visual elements used in his film were used for their aesthetic image on screen, he says.

Terahen? (You bet?) features established actors Youssef Dauod and Lotfy Labib. It compares and contrasts black and white by using the bet scheme. The ending song left the viewers overwhelmed with questions that they need to think about.

Two of the three films were produced by the BA, while *Terahen?* (You bet?) was co-produced by the BA and Fig Leaf Studio, which also aims at supporting independent cinema industry in Alexandria by providing the needed devices and assisting in all stages of filmmaking.

After the screening, Ahmed Nabil announced the second edition of the *Plaza* Project, under the supervision of renowned Director Daoud Abd El-Sayed. Results are to be announced by the end of January 2010.

Historically, the city of Alexandria witnessed the birth of the seventh art in Egypt. It saw the first screening of a motion picture in Egypt and second worldwide back in 1896 by the Lumière Brothers, the first cinema hall, first studio, first production company, the Chamber of Cinema Industry, and the list goes on.

However, gradually due to the course of events that took place at the time, cinema industry moved to Cairo, the capital in which everything was centered. It was only a couple of years ago, with the Jesuits Cultural Center, that the city has witnessed attempts of the industry. Hence, the significance of such an initiative from the BA emerges. It is an endeavor to revive the glory of the past with the tools and facilities of the present and the future. Alexandria deserves no less than this.



Ashya' Mushabeha (Resemblances)



Setta fi Tes'a (6x9)



Terahen? (You bet?)

“I REGARD MYSELF AS ALEXANDRIAN”

DAVID WARDROP, ALEXFEST 2009 COORDINATOR

Ayman Elsherbiny



David Wardrop

The ancient city of Alexandria features the Mediterranean's second largest harbor. Visitors are attracted to its history of scientific discovery, conquest, earthquake, drama and intrigue as well as its culture.

AlexFest 2009 is the city's first annual cultural festival, bringing together the themes of the many continuing festivals and symposia held here every year.

And only Alexandria can successfully blend together ideas and activities which relate to Africa, Europe and the wider Arab world. AlexFest offers you the opportunity to enjoy all these during an event-packed 15 day period in a pleasant climate as guests of a city which has welcomed new ideas for more than two thousand years.

Welcome note of the AlexFest 2009 website (www.alexfest.org.eg)

He is British in nationality, but Alexandrian at heart. He worked very early to support the idea of rebuilding the ancient Library of Alexandria. In 1993, he established the British Friends Association of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (BA), and he was elected in 2008 as President of the International Friends Association of the BA, headquartered in Greece.

His contributions to the new Library of Alexandria did not stop at that point. He brought up an idea in 2008 to organize an annual cultural festival in Alexandria to attract the Egyptian community to the city and to promote it internationally by drawing people's attention to its historical, cultural, heritage and social characters that make this city unique.

He gathered officials, civic society organizations, cultural institutions, foreign consulates in Alexandria, prominent Egyptian figures, and Alexandrians themselves behind his idea.

On 18 October 2009, the idea came true. The BA witnessed the inauguration of the 1st Alexandria International Cultural Festival (AlexFest 2009). The opening ceremony of the two-week festival, which embraced

100 events spread at various places in Alexandria, featured a number of spectacular performances such as a Spanish musical performance, traditional dancing by Egyptian and Russian troupes, and an astounding guitar recital by Spanish guitarist Fernando Perez.

The BA Quarterly Newsletter had the privilege of interviewing Mr. David Wardrop, President of the International Friends Association of the BA, and Coordinator of AlexFest 2009.

AlexFest 2009, how did you get its idea?

The international friends of the Bibliotheca Alexandria have been meeting here for 6 or 7 years, and our views of the city have been totally through the eyes of the BA.

The BA is located in Alexandria because of historical reasons. But it is not a virtual library; it must relate to the community. We have watched the BA develop its international links with prominent libraries, universities, and institutions around the world. However, we question whether it developed links within its own city.

Therefore, we asked ourselves a year ago, what the international friends can bring to this library, because we were important in the 90s when the library was just an idea. Our role as part of the BA family is to bring our international links-not links based on bilateral protocols, which the BA has done and is still doing-but on actual people to people contact.

Thus, at the end of last year's meeting, I led the BA international friends through a virtual tour of the 2009 meeting of the friends. I said that is what is going to happen, imagine this might happen and lots of other discussions, including one with Mr. Zuhair Garanah, Minister of Tourism of Egypt, in London. Based on these discussions I wrote a paper, and that paper has been really quite closely followed by the AlexFest 2009 festival.

That was the original vector. And as my colleague James Edgar, AlexFest Co-Convenor, and I have worked in organizing AlexFest 2009, we discovered that the city of Alexandria is like a collection of islands, and they do not know about each other. Hence, somebody must take the opportunity to try to reconcile these distances between different factors, and say let us for once work together and make a greater impact for the city.

This library is an important institution for Egypt. I remember people from different countries here in the BA Plaza saying "this is happening, the rebuilding of the ancient library." I said a man in London, Moscow, Beijing, or Los Angeles will say "so what!" We have to go out and make the news, only if we make the news, can get into the news.

So, whilst the BA has its cultural program, the Alexandria Opera House and other institutions and cultural centers have their own, let us have a festival where everyone tries to get together and then we make a bigger bang.

The energy of actually concentrating our activities in two weeks, will bring attention of TV stations as it did, thanks to the BA Media Department, Anna Lindh Foundation, and others. But it is only if we work together that we can have an impact, and that is what a festival is. And that is why we brought out the program and website (www.alexfest.org.eg) to have that impact.

Next week (9–12 November 2009), the world travel market will meet in London. I have visited it every year in the last 18 years. The Egyptian stand has promotions for Luxor, Aswan, Red Sea resorts, air lines, cruises, etc. Alexandria is never mentioned. Why is that?! Why is the second city of Egypt never mentioned?! Sometimes it is easier for a foreigner to shout and scream saying "we can together do better." Having come here for seven years I feel I am part of the family.

What is your evaluation of AlexFest 2009?

Well, it was exhausting. There were youth volunteers helping us, the BA has been wonderful with designing and launching the AlexFest 2009 website which is a credit to Alexandria. It is much better than many official websites, and of course it is attractive to sponsors because their names can go on it. It was designed not just for the festival but also as a legacy, and this gives us a good platform for 2010. So much of that energy has been invested and we can use it for 2010, but we still need the cooperation of not only institutions and officials, but of the Alexandrians themselves also.

Generally speaking, with the festival, it is up to performers or agents to promote concerts. Many people thought that we would actually promote their events, but I know in AlexFest 2009 we did it, but we have to think of a more comprehensive way of getting persons into the community.

Here is a specific target to think about; how to make the 2010 festival the Alexandrians' festival also. These are observations that we got to think about.

What about your future plan of the AlexFest 2010?

I am thinking of having 6 to 7 flagship events of AlexFest 2010, some might be 2 or 3 nights and then we would build the event around that.

We need more theater space, and art exhibitions. The weakness of AlexFest 2009 is that many people wanted to display art, but there was no space to display it.

There is also a new facility which is a cruise ship terminal, and I got permission from the chairman of the Ports Authority to use it. We want to make a shot window for Alexandria, working with many partners, to show the thousands of cruise ship passengers that there is more to Alexandria than what they are shown at the moment.

Some people do not get off the boat to take the one-day tour of Alexandria. So, for those people, we want to make the cruise ship terminal itself a destination where they get a better view of the city.

I have talked with the Alexandria Business Association, the Industrial Modernization Center, and the National Museum. The point about cruise ship passengers, unlike airplane passengers, is that they can take with them whatever handicrafts they want; a chair or anything. The size of the terminal is so large, so, you can display in it all the handicrafts. We can have art there as well.

We want to make Alexandria a destination city, the whole image of tourists about the city is determined by the tour company. We want to have tourists choose to come here knowing that there are things happening here to entertain them. AlexFest can help in making Alexandria a destination city.

One of the ideas of AlexFest is in our programs, which will be available in the world travel market 2009; it is to persuade travel planners in America, in Europe, and elsewhere that Alexandria has events taking place which could turn its identity into a destination city.

Don't you think it is strange that two foreigners were the ones who coordinated this event?

In my case, I have responsibility because the BA friends have been involved with the Library when it was just an idea. I started the BA British Friends Association in 1993. So, I am part of the tapestry of the Library.

And because of my position as the chairman of the international friends, I am allowed to say things which other people may not dare say, but because I am allowed to say it, this means also that I have responsibility to say it. I regard myself as Alexandrian, which I take very seriously, because I regard Alexandrians as people who look at the evidence and make the statement. That is what an Alexandrian is, it is



not a person who just lives in the city, it is something more important.

As far as James is concerned, he is a resident here, and he was a very good partner in organizing the Alex Fest 2009, but it is a pure coincidence that we are both British.

What is your main role as chairman of the BA international friends?

We had previous annual meetings, and we come here at our own expense, which is a big investment. We try to improve the BA links with international organizations. My job is to work with the Mexican, Russian, American, French, and other friends to see how we can work together as a catalyst to improve the links between the BA and our own countries.

What are the main points that have been raised during the 12th meeting of the BA international friends, which was held in October 2009?

How we can use our type of contacts in our own countries more effectively. But going back to Alex Fest for a moment, because it involves Alexandrians more than anyone else, I was very pleased by the

much greater input by the BA Alexandrian friends than we have ever had before.

It was a breakthrough in our meetings, and I believe Alexandrian friends will be playing a leading part in the AlexFest 2010. I am very pleased, and this bonds us “BA friends” all in a much more cohesive family.

Last comment?

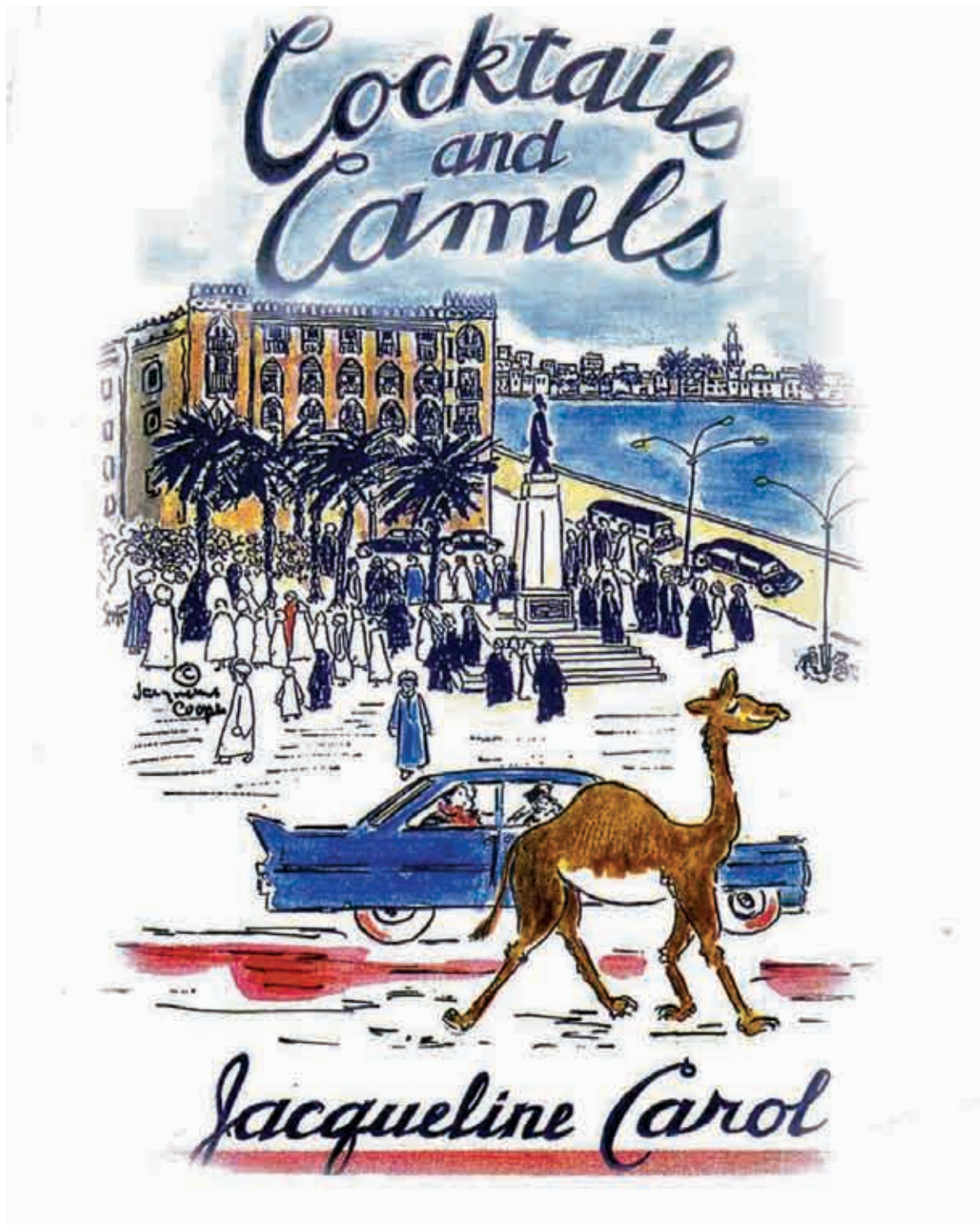
We are a unique international network that is civic society-based, there is no other institution in the world which is civic society-based. So, we are in a way, in the test tube. Library friend groups divide normally into two groups; one which is controlled by the librarian, and the other when they fight the librarian. However, the BA is not just a library as we know, and the international friends of the BA is a unique institution, so, we have got to look after it, by making it relevant and making it contributing.

The idea of AlexFest was to make it contribute, and to make its contributions visible, tangible, and sustainable.

COCKTAILS AND CAMELS

THE LIFE OF AN ALEXANDRIAN MICROCOSM

Sarah Elhaddad



Cosmopolitan Alexandria, an extremely multi-cultural city, where nationalities did not matter, and the only language that brought people together was believing they were citizens of a city, "I am Alexandrian."

A number of non-Egyptian Alexandrians started writing autobiographies and memoirs about the years they had spent in the comfortable little city on the Mediterranean. Recognized by the Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Center in its continuous efforts to document the social history of cosmopolitan Alexandria that came to an end in the 1960s, the Center affiliated to Bibliotheca Alexandrina recently reprinted "*Cocktails and Camels*", by Jacqueline Carol which was originally published in New York in 1960.

The book portrays the life of Jacqueline Carol in Alexandria during the 1930s and 1940s, giving an enjoyable detailed description of the lifestyle of Alexandrians, and capturing the spirit of the foreign society, which constituted a minority in the big city. "*There was no place like it on Earth, I used to think, and now, on looking back, I am quite sure there wasn't.*" says Jacqueline.



Jacqueline Klat Cooper is the daughter of distinguished notables of the Lebanese community in Alexandria. Her father was Jules Klat Bey, President of the Alexandria Stock Exchange and the Cotton Futures Exchange. Her mother, Née Abouchanab, was active in charitable work.

Jacqueline's book was the first of a genre, which is sometimes referred to as literature of nostalgia that became particular to Alexandria. As Jacqueline started to write her book – considering her social status – she decided to go by the nickname "*Jacqueline Carol*". She sat down under the mimosa tree in the garden of her family's house, writing a detailed, humorous, and light narration of her life in Alexandria, mocking the surroundings, customs, people, and even herself.

A sketch of the front door of Jacqueline's house in Alexandria, drawn by herself.

“Considering the circumstances of my life at that time, I do not know why I found everything so funny as to want to write about it. The Suez Canal had been nationalized, Egypt was being bombed and my husband and I had separated,” explains Jacqueline.

The diverse nationalities, religions, cultures and social classes in Alexandria gave it a mixed character, reflecting a nice and friendly atmosphere, with tolerance that surpasses all differences between communities. Jacqueline draws in her book an image of her own community, the Lebanese, *“Those charming hospitable people who lived in little villas of twelve bedrooms, threw intimate dinner parties for sixty, and talked so softly that they could be heard in Peru.”*

In the hilarious but exact description, Jacqueline pretty much sums up the character of non-Egyptian Alexandrians in the golden age of Alexandria. The community found peace in movie premieres and cocktail parties in a country of uneven social classes and war; a contradiction that appeared in the title *“Cocktails and Camels”*.

Chauffeurs, suffragis, governesses and even beggars, appeared to have a very important impact on the lives of non-Egyptian Alexandrians, which is manifested in their memoirs and particularly this book, as girls in Alexandria were strictly chaperoned and were not allowed to take so much as a step on their own. The chauffeurs, suffragis came from the working Egyptian class and governesses came from France and England, adding to the mix of backgrounds that Alexandria enjoyed.

Jacqueline takes the readers on a journey to the quiet and peaceful Europe where she vacationed every year with her family, to the tiny country of Lebanon where everything was carried out on a large scale, to



A picture of a local Egyptian man carrying cocktails and a French newspaper, drawn by Jacqueline Carol to express the diversity of Alexandria.

Cairo, the melting pot of old and new, and America, where she heard people chewed gum, put their feet on the table, and didn't speak English!

However, Jacqueline always returned to Alexandria, where people were famous for their cocktail parties, and never cared for the events of the world, being quite content to live and let live. *“No one paid much attention to the rumblings both near and far, and the palmy days passed smoothly by, with the only problem of immediate vital interest being what to wear at tomorrow's cocktail party.”*

The first school that Jacqueline joined was the French Convent, where she met her best friends Sima and Rose, who were Armenian twins. The decision of seeking a French education seemed very easy due to the French influence in the region at that time. Before the Second World War, the French language was so widely open and French customs were so prevalent. Wealthy Egyptians studied at French Universities, and France was the leading European power in Egypt in politics, trade, and even archaeology.

The British formed an alliance with Egypt after the Anglo-Egyptian treaty, and Great Britain was permitted to station forces on Egyptian territory. As the French tide ran out and ushered in the English, Jacqueline was transported along with her friends and members of the community to the English Girls' School. *"The British were in. It was now fashionable to be heard speaking English, to collect a few English friends, and to give one's children the benefits of an English education."*

The author takes pride in her English education, which provided her with knowledge and many talents, and most importantly, her ability to think for herself, enjoy more freedom and independence, and make her own decisions and choices. *"I want to live my own life for a change. Everyone is entitled to do that. People fight wars over it."*

Despite mingling with many communities that were more liberated, old customs never vanished from the life of non-Egyptian Alexandrians, especially the Lebanese community, who believed in the Evil Eye, and that having three girls was bad luck, who enjoyed gossiping at cocktail parties and invented the concept of 'Nice Eligible Girls', who were supposed to marry at a young age to wealthy men from prominent communities.

The Second World War broke out and Alexandria was having mild air raids, and a crowd of armed forces. The social life of the non-Egyptian Alexandrians was now concentrated on going to military

hospitals to cheer up the sick and the wounded. Jacqueline formed with her friends a little club to help the sick and the poor, regardless of nationality or religion, and accordingly, 'Nice Eligible Girls' were permitted to entertain at tea groups of convalescents from the Twelfth General Hospital where Jacqueline met her American husband-to-be, Captain William R. Carol "Bill".

The idea of marrying a Lebanese girl of an eminent family to an American officer was horrific to every member of the community, including Jacqueline's parents.

But Jacqueline managed to marry Bill after a relatively short battle with her parents. She had to travel with him to the United States, and spent six years before Bill's job brought them back to Egypt to live in Cairo.

"My friend Zeinap said it was maktoub ("It was written"), for she firmly believed that no matter what you did, your fate had a way of catching up with you. Maybe so, or perhaps it was just that we had, as the saying goes, drunk from the waters of the Nile and so returned." concludes Jacqueline.

In describing *"Cocktails and Camels"*, one can argue that it is a history book, an autobiography, a sheer romantic story or a tale about Alexandria. It is, in fact, all of these, giving a delightful read about a small circle in the lost chain of cosmopolitan Alexandria.

"No one paid much attention to the rumblings both near and far, and the palmy days passed smoothly by, with the only problem of immediate vital interest being what to wear at tomorrow's cocktail party."

THE FUTURE OF HISTORY

Khaled Azab

The science of history is the outcome of the uncountable questions raised by the past, making the many aspects of learning history itself questionable. Until this day, historians rely on books, scientific or cultural journals, and newspapers as means to provide a glimpse of a story that took place in the past, or give a detailed explanation of a historical event. But with today's technological breakthroughs, new ways are to be found to provide a rich substance that draws more attention to history.

In the past, the main purpose of documenting history was to praise a ruler or glorify a state. Therefore, historians did not pay much attention to documenting the daily life of human beings, and history became selective. Today, the definition of the science of history is very progressive, defined as the science that studies the conditions of past communities, or the study of human evolution and the achievements of civilizations and their impact. This contemporary definition was formed out of the need of not only obtaining a documentation of the past, but presenting an interpretation for its events.



The study of history can be conducted for sheer scientific purposes, or examining the positive and negative sides of the history of mankind as a vital cultural component of any population. No matter what the reason, history is a key ingredient in educating societies, and guiding them to understanding the rules of peace and war, the management of state affairs and planning for the future. From this point, and because of its connection to state affairs and its components, the concept of history is transformed from the scope of theoretical sciences to practical sciences.

However, as confusing and unorganized as history can be, the past can be retrieved to the present, and a connection between them can be established. To grasp the idea of linking worlds of the past and present together, we need to understand the transformation caused by various technological inventions in the world of documenting history.

Printing, for example changed the life of mankind, so did the telegraph and television, as they all played a role in increasing literacy and culture, changing the nature of communication between societies, and transmitting events and facts to people no matter where they were located. Eventually, by using such technologies, documentaries came to light, becoming an excellent means of recording and narrating history, especially in World Wars I and II.

I believe that history is somewhat the memory of the community, and that the development of the human skill of documentation emerges out of the will to make use of the accumulated stock of knowledge and human experience. Therefore, the future of history will not rely only on text available in books, but it will adopt a new type of historical books known as *Coffee Books* (surfing for entertainment and knowledge during

free time), which encompass pictures and drawings (graphics), and may include a CD or DVD of a film or a recording of an event related to the subject of the book.

In the past, nations used to keep their historical documents in their national archive centers. But now, each country seeks to provide such documents to everyone, making them available on the internet. In this context, manuscripts will be available through digital libraries on the internet, and every nation will have its comprehensive history website. The role of historians in this case will be confined to academic studies and specialized research, or in helping in the provision of historical material on the internet, in addition to explaining history and looking into its lacunae.

The Library of Congress became interested in this subject, and sought establishing a universal heritage library in cooperation with the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, as a strategic partner, and the UNESCO. This library, named “World Digital Library”, contains the anecdotes of the world heritage of each nation on the internet, where each country participates by submitting its best historical and archival documents.

Establishing history websites, digital libraries, or a historical memory for each country on the internet is a new method with various positive advantages. It copes with youth’s attempts to form their culture and knowledge through digital media and not the previously used forms of transmitting knowledge and science. The variety of historical sources and materials also makes the internet a perfect way to connect materials together and constantly give multi-integrated results for only one search item, from various entries.

Radio and television broadcasting, internet archives, journalism, photographs, films, and documentaries are considered one of today’s best historical sources, in addition to the traditional ones, including



books, periodicals, documents, coins, and stamps. All these means can be used as search items to find targeted search objects on history websites.

Main subjects can also be used as search categories in the homepages of history websites, and such subjects may include political, economic, social, cultural, and scientific affairs, in addition to major events and public figures. The search can also be done according to a selected material, such as pictures, documents, films, audio recordings, speeches, newspapers, magazines, maps, stamps, books, medals, covers, posters and advertisements.

All the above should be enhanced by objective historical data which simply explain all that is related to the country. In addition, a special icon can be added to include articles and studies conducted by historians to explain a certain issue or event.

Reading history from a book might only reflect the views of its writer; it is a way that does not interact with the reader, limited in distribution, and is subjected only to the current generations. A history website gives readers the opportunity to compose their own views through the available material, its information can be corrected and modified, it is interactive and enables readers to add their own material, it is widespread and not limited, and has a variety of applications that serve one subject.

Words to Remember

“There never was a good war or a bad peace.”

Benjamin Franklin

“There is nothing so likely to produce peace as to be well prepared to meet the enemy.”

George Washington

“When the power of love overcomes the love of power the world will know peace.”

Jimi Hendrix

“Imagine all the people living life in peace. You may say I’m a dreamer, but I’m not the only one. I hope someday you’ll join us, and the world will live as one.”

John Lennon

“One day we must come to see that peace is not merely a distant goal we seek, but that it is a means by which we arrive at that goal. We must pursue peaceful ends through peaceful means.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

“Peace is not something you wish for; It’s something you make, Something you do, Something you are, And something you give away.”

Robert Fulghum

“Each one has to find his peace from within. And peace to be real must be unaffected by outside circumstances.”

Mahatma Gandhi

“Peace is not only better than war, but infinitely more arduous.”

George Bernard Shaw

“Let us forgive each other - only then will we live in peace.”

Leo Tolstoy

“It is more difficult to organize a peace than to win a war; but the fruits of victory will be lost if the peace is not organized.”

Aristotle

“Whatever enables us to go to war, secures our peace.”

Thomas Jefferson

“A smile is the beginning of peace.”

Mother Teresa

“If half a century of living has taught me anything at all, it has taught me that nothing can bring you peace but yourself.”

Dale Carnegie