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ALEXANDRIAN STUDIES II
In Honour Of
MOSTAFA EL ABBADI

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ALEXANDRIA 2000

ALEXANDRIAN STUDIES II
In Honour Of
MOSTAFA EL ABBADI

CONTRIBUTIONS BY HIS FRIENDS



MOSTAFA EL ABBADI

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Foreword

In the summer of 1997, the idea occurred to a number of former students and friends of Professor Mostafa El Abbadi to issue a Festschrift in his honour on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. To honour Mostafa El Abbadi, in this way is to express the feelings of many who have known and appreciated him as a dedicated scholar and devoted teacher. No sooner did we announce this project in Egypt and abroad, than we received immediate and enthusiastic response. While proceeding with the preparation for the Festschrift, we were gratified by the happy coincidence that, in recognition of Professor El Abbadi's outstanding contribution to scholarship and culture, the Supreme Council for Culture, granted him the prestigious National Award for Merit in the Social Sciences.

El Abbadi deserves to be honoured for various attainments he has achieved in a diverse number of spheres throughout his life. As regards his scholarship, he counts among the topmost historians in Egypt and the Arab world as well as attaining international recognition due to his outstanding scholarly work and research in the history of Egypt and the Mediterranean in Greek and Roman times. His published work in both English and Arabic is distinguished by a remarkable ability to apply a rigorous historical method from an attitude of strict objectivity and scientific humanism. His sharp analytical mind has enabled him, in a number of cases to reach remarkably original conclusions and sound historical judgments. Another feature of El Abbadi's academic work is his interest in points of interaction between successive cultures in the lands of ancient Egypt and the Near East, namely, Pharaonic, Hellenistic and Arab.

It is not our intention here, to embark on a lengthy description of El Abbadi's list of publications that reveal his full command of classical literary sources, his thorough knowledge of papyrological documents as well as relevant modern scholarship; we merely wish to highlight the principal stages into which his academic work can be divided. In the sixties, he concentrated mainly on Hellenistic and Roman Egypt when he attained international recognition by his publication on the "*Alexandrian Citizenship*", "*The Gerousia in Roman Egypt*", "*The Position of Egypt in the Roman Empire*". In the seventies and eighties, he embarked upon a new track in historical studies, namely the transition from Byzantine to Arab times, a field in which he was able to reach remarkably original conclusions as in "*Historians and the Papyri on the Finances of Egypt at the Arab conquest*", "*Egypt in Transition from Byzantine to Arab*", "*Nessana, Before and in Early Islam*", "*Annona Militaris & Rizk of Nessana*" and "*The Poll Tax of Sergius of Nessana*". In the nineties, El Abbadi turned his attention to a field long neglected in Egyptian Universities, namely the history of science in which he tried to emphasize aspects of exchange and points of interaction between Ancient Egyptian and Hellenistic culture as for example, "*Geographical Explorations in East Africa and the Indian Ocean in Antiquity*", "*Alexandria and Ancient Egyptian Learning*", "*Alexandria, Crossroad of Cultures*".

One of the main features of El Abbadi's personality is his wholehearted devotion to his students. As a committed teacher, he has succeeded over the years in creating an academic school in the field of Greco-Roman studies. His numerous pupils, who worked with him on their M.A. and Ph.D. dissertations, fully appreciate his inspiring guidance and unflinching care and patience. The attachment that binds this great teacher to his pupils is not limited by the attainment of academic degrees, the friendship that unites them is lasting and he always continues to show keen interest in their work.

A glance at the details of El Abbadi's curriculum vitae, will reveal the wide range of his academic activities. Due to the high quality of his published work, he has, over the years, been invited to lecture at various universities spread over four continents, Africa, Asia, Europe and America. In addition to his brilliant academic achievement, El Abbadi also showed a keen involvement and commitment to the cultural development of the environment he lives in. This is evident in his well-known role in the initial creation and promotion of the project of the revival of the ancient Library of Alexandria. After a careful study of the nature, formation and history of the ancient edifice, El Abbadi, came forward with the proposition of resuscitating the ancient Library on modern lines. His aim was to create a cultural environment capable of embracing the bulk of human intellectual legacy as well as to provide the necessary library equipment for modern research. This suggestion was first embraced by the University of Alexandria in 1974, later on, it was accepted by the government of Egypt as a national project and adopted by Unesco in 1986. Ever since the inception of the project, El Abbadi has devoted every effort to promote it by writing and lecturing on the subject at home and abroad. These efforts culminated in his composition of a comprehensive book first published in English by Unesco in 1990 under the title of "*Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*". The book was well received and has already been described as a classic on the subject; it has now run into its third edition besides appearing in five different versions, Arabic, French, Japanese, Spanish and Greek.

In connection with his keen interest in public cultural aspects, Mostafa El Abbadi continues to be involved in the promotion of recent archaeological discoveries, notably in the new area of underwater excavations. Last but not least, the city of Alexandria will not forget El Abbadi's role in promoting the interests of the internationally well-known Archaeological Society of Alexandria (founded 1893) during the last forty years as active member, twice secretary general and finally president since 1995. Under his presidency, the Society has advanced further and has become a dynamic centre of cultural activity where distinguished scholars both, Egyptians and foreigners meet and lecture about their most recent discoveries in the fields of archaeology, history and culture. The premises have been enlarged and the Society is now capable of receiving larger numbers of students and scholars to benefit from its activities and specialized library. Furthermore, a newsletter is issued three times a year with the latest information about archaeological discoveries and reviews on recent publications. In recognition of both his achievements and services, it is not surprising that the Archaeological Society of Alexandria has decided to issue this Festschrift as volume 46 of its "Bulletin".

In conclusion, in the name of the Archaeological Society of Alexandria, and of his colleagues and pupils, we hope that Professor Mostafa El Abbadi, will enjoy good health for many more years and continue to contribute to the scholarly community and cultural life of the country as he has done so far.

Mostafa A. H. El-Abbadi

Professor Emeritus of Greek and Roman Studies
Faculty of Arts, University of Alexandria
Alexandria, Egypt.

I. Career :

Born, Cairo 10/10/1928; married with two children.

Education:

- 1951 B.A. Hons. In Ancient History, University of Alexandria.
- 1952 Granted Egyptian Government Scholarship to Cambridge University.
- 1956 B.A. Classics (affiliated special degree) Cantab.
- 1960 Ph.D. Cantab. Ancient History.

Professional Career:

University of Alexandria

- 1951 Demonstrator.
- 1961 Lecturer.
- 1966 Associate Professor.
- 1972 Professor of Greek and Roman Studies.
- 1973 Chairman of Dept. of Greek and Roman Civilization.
- 1976-1979 Vice-Dean of Faculty of Arts.
- 1990- Professor Emeritus.

Beirut Arab University, Lebanon.

- 1966-9 Associate Prof., Greek and Roman Studies (Seconded).
- 1980-4 Professor and Chairman of Dept. of History (Seconded).

Kuwait University, Kuwait.

- 1986-1990 Professor of Greek and Roman History.

II. Honours :

- 1-1997, The Cavafy Award for Classical Greek Studies.
- 2-1998, The National Award for Merit in the Social Sciences.

III. Membership of Learned Societies:

- 01- Membre titulaire de l'Institut d'Egypte (since 1992).
- 02- President of the Archaeological Society of Alexandria (since 1994).
- 03- Société Internationale de Papyrologie, Bruxelles.
- 04- American Society of Papyrology, N.Y.
- 05- Society of Roman Studies, London. (1956-1962).
- 06- Egyptian Society of History, Cairo (1970-).
- 07- Egyptian Society of Greek and Roman Studies, Cairo (1985-).
- 08- Egyptian Society of Coptic Archaeology, Cairo (1974-).

- 09- National Committee to record the history of the “July 23, Egyptian Revolution”. (1978).
- 10- Preparatory & National Committee for the Revival of the ancient Library of Alexandria (1974-1986).
- 11- Conseil International de Philosophie et Études Humaines, Unesco, Paris (observer) 1986.
- 12- Union of Arab Historians. Cairo 1992-
- 13- Supreme Council of Culture, Cairo 1993-
- 14- Comité de Direction du Projet “La Bibliothèque d’Alexandrie”, La Sorbonne- Paris I. 1994-
- 15- Supreme Council of Archaeology, Cairo. 1997-

IV. Academic Visits and Lectures:

- 01- 1969-70, Cambridge, England, to participate in the “Prosopography of the later Roman Empire”.
- 02- 1976, Baghdad and Mossul, Iraq.
- 03- 1977, Vienna, Austria.
- 04- 1978, Rostock, Germany.
- 05- 1980, U.S.A.: George Town; Columbia; Yale ; Harvard; Michigan; Stanford; Berkley; Utah ; Arizona.
- 06- 1982, 1986-90, 1992, Kuwait
- 07- 1985, Dammam, Saudi Arabia.
- 08- 1986, Algiers, Algeria.
- 09- 1988, Qatar.
- 10- 1993, Kosut, Hungary.

V. Participation in Congresses and Symosia:

- 01- 1971, Symp. Cairo “Land and Peasant in Egypt”.
(Land & Peasant in Roman Egypt).
- 02- 1973, Symp. Alexandria “Taha Hussein”.
(Taha Hussein and the Classics).
- 03- 1974, Oxford XIVth Int. Cong. of Papyrology.
(P. Flor. 50, Reconsidered)
- 04- 1974, Symp. Cairo “The Historian Ibn Abdel Hakam”.
(Ibn Abdel Hakam & pre-Islamic Egypt).
- 05- 1975, Symp. Alexandria “Alexandria through the Ages”.
(Roman Alexandria).
- 06- 1977, Symp. Catania, Sicily “Sicily of the Arabs”.
(Sicily, Island of Commerce and Culture).
- 07- 1978, Symp. Alexandria “Studies to Archaeologist A. Fikry”.
(Phoenician immigrations in the Western Mediterranean).
- 08- 1979. Symp. Alexandria “Homeric Studies”.
(Alexandria and Homer).
- 09- 1980, N.Y. XVI th Int. Congress of Papyrology.
(Finances of Egypt at the Arab Conquest).
- 10- 1983, Riyadh, II nd Int. Congress of the History of Arabia.
(The Papyri and the History of Nessana).

- 11- 1983, Napoli, XVII th Int. Cong. of Papyrology.
(Annona Militaris and Rizk of Nessana).
- 12- 1984, Dublin, Int. Cong. of Classical Societies.
(Egypt in transition from Byzantine to Arab).
- 13- 1985, Delphi, Athens, II nd Int. Cong. of Greek & Arabic Studies.
(A code of Navigation on the Nile in Greco-Roman Egypt).
- 14- 1985, Amman, II nd Int. Cong. History of Syria.
(Papyrological evidence on the early Arab Administration).
- 15- 1985, Washington, Annual Cong. of Am.Philological Association.
(Source material on Greco-Roman Alexandria: discussion).
- 16- 1986, Athens, XVIII th Int. Cong. of Papyrology.
(Grain Supply of Alexandria in Byzantine Times).
- 17- 1987, Athens, III rd In. Cong. of Greek & Arabic Studies.
(The Arabs and Greek Heritage).
- 18- 1987, Amman, III rd Int. Cong. History of Syria.
(Taxes of Nessana under early Arab Administration).
- 19- 1987, Bologna, Int. Colloquio, "Egitto e Storia Antica".
(Arabic Contributions to the Study of Greco-Roman Egypt).
- 20- 1989, Paris, Unesco, Seminar on the ancient Library of Alexandria.
(The Universality of the ancient Library of Alexandria).
- 21- 1989, Cairo, IX th Int. Cong. of Papyrology.
(*Phoros Probaton* : Rent or Tax ?) .
- 22- 1991, Granada, Int. Seminar on Mediterranean Civilization.
(Alexandria and the Mediterranean in Antiquity).
- 23- 1991, Cairo, Seminar "India and Egypt".
(Geographical Explorations in the Indian Ocean in Antiquity).
- 24- 1991, Cairo University, Seminar " Life in Egypt in the Light of Papyri".
(The Arabs and Alexandrian Scholarship).
- 25- 1992, Copenhagen, XX th Int. Cong. of Papyrology.
(The Poll-Tax of Sergius of Nessana).
- 26- 1992, Alexandria, "Centenary of the Greco-Roman Museum of Alexandria".
(The Water-clock : Pharaonic and Alexandrian).
- 27- 1993, Alexandria, "Centenary of the Archaeological Society of Alexandria".
(A Festival Day in Ptolemaic Alexandria).
- 28- 1993, Malibu, California, J.Paul Getty Institute, "Alexandria & Alexandrianism".
(Alexandria and ancient Egyptian Learning).
- 29- 1994, Alexandria, Int. Cong. of Mediterranean Civilizations.
(Intellectual Life in multi- Cultural ancient Alexandria).
- 30- 1994, Alexandria, Sem. The School of Alexandria through the Ages.
(A Philosophic Episode in Alexandria, early 1st cent. B.C.).
- 31- 1994, Alexandria, Symp. Europe and Egypt, Cooperation in Archaeology.
(The Papyri as Evidence on Egypt in Early Arab Rule).
- 32- 1995, Rome, Int. Con. "l'Egitto in Italia".
(Philosophic Dispute within the Academy, centred in Rome & Alexandria).
- 33- 1995, Cairo, Ann.Con. of Union of Arab Historians.
(The Fate of *Ancient Books* during the Crusades).
- 34- 1996, Cairo University, Anthropology of Egypt.
(Marriage in Greco-Roman Egypt in the light of Greek Papyri).
- 35- 1996, Alexandria, Alexandria and Mediterranean Civilization.
(Synesius of Cyrenae and his connections with Alexandria).

- 36- 1996, Alexandria, Archaeological Society, Engineering and Archaeology.
(Ctesibius and the Water-Clock).
- 37- 1996, Cairo, Symp. Supreme Council of Culture, Terrorism in History.
(The Conspiracy of Catilina).
- 38- 1997, Cairo University, Hellenim in the Arab World.
(The Arabs and the Sciences of Alexandria).
- 39- 1997, Alexandria, Symp. Submarine Archaeology & Coastal Management.
(*The Greatest Emporium in the Inhabited World*).
- 40- 1997, Budapest, XXXV th Int. Con. On Asian and North African Studies.
(Papyrological Evidence on the Water-Clock).
- 41- 1997, London, Int. Con. Images of Alexandria.
(The Alexandria Library in History).
- 42- 1997, Alexandria, Int. Con. Alexandria: Dialogue of Cultures.
(Alexandria: Interchange between Egyptian and Greek Cultures).
- 43- 1998, Cairo University, II nd Con. Anthropology of Egypt.
(Synesius of Cyrenae in an Age of Transition, Paganism to Christianity).
- 44- 1998, Cairo, Supreme Council of Culture, Southern Frontiers of Egypt through
the Ages.
(Egypt's Southern Borders in the Greco-Roman Period).
- 45- 1998, Alexandria, Supreme Council of Culture, The Northern Coast of Egypt.
(Ancient Alexandria at the Cross-roads of International Sea Routes)
- 46- 1999, Cairo, Supreme Council of Culture, Role of Coptic Church in Egyptian
History. (Early Arab Administration and the Copts of Akhmim).
- 47- 1999, Paris, Colloque, " Des Alexandries, du Livre au Texte " .
(Alexandria, Cross-road of Cultures).
- 48- 1999, Alexandria, Supreme Council of Antiquity, " Underwater Archaeology
at Qaitbey & the Eastern Harbour of Alexandria " .
(On the Future Development of Underwater Arch. Sites at Alexandria).
- 49-1999, Alexandria, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, II nd Int. Symp. Colloque " Des
Alexandrines, Les Metamorphoses du Lecteur " .
(Readers and Texts in Greco-Roman Egypt, the Testimony of the Papyri).

VI. Books :

- 01-Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria. Unesco 1990, 2nd ed. 1992.
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Building Culture In Egypt The Historical Debate And Contemporary Realities In View Of The Alexandrian Experience

Mohamed Awad

In search of a local expression or national identity in contemporary Egyptian architecture the narrative favours an analysis that transcends the simplistic notions of so-called architectural “styles” to the wider and more complex debate on those socio-economic, political and environmental influences responsible for shaping the general character of the Egyptian, and specifically the Alexandrian built-environments, consequently bringing about their change.

It is often debated, for example, that the social power of religion and its clergy, the economics of class, the political the built environment. implications of colonisation, the cultural impacts of modernisation or other environmental factors, such as climate and topography, are among the underlying factors responsible for implementing those cultural meanings often expressed in architectural language, represented in the state of its art, its building science and technology and therefore determining the character and morphology of the built environment

Egypt over its long history of building traditions has developed its building culture primarily from two distinctive sources. The first originates from within the Egyptian environment, and is exclusively representative of the culture of its land and people. Under such a categorisation are Pharaonic monuments, testifying to this very day to the greatest achievement of ancient Egyptian civilisation. These remain as eternal symbols of Egypt’s national identity, or what may be regarded as exclusively Egyptian, in spite of attempts at their re-interpretation or re-integration in world culture in the form of exotic Egyptomania.

Other forms of authentic local expression are experienced in the traditional unspoiled ethnic and folk architecture of local primitive settlements, for example, those of the Nubians or Bedouins. Such vernacular expressions have inspired more recent neo-vernacular trends, such as those promoted by Habib Gourghi and Ramsis Wissa Wassef in the Haraneyeh centre for traditional arts and crafts, or in Hassan Fathi’s approaches in search of an architecture for the poor as applied to his Gournah project in Luxor.

The second category of sources is identifiable with those where Egyptianity mediates in the presence of some external regional or global influences. Within such an experience, Egypt brings in its own share, contribution and experience. The resultant emerged, borrowed and adapted model, moulded to suit the local context, is often described as hybrid, while still identified in its own right as Egyptian.

Egypt, with its geographic situation at the crossroads of east and west, its inexhaustible riches and wealth, has had throughout its long history a repeated tradition of contact with other cultures and civilisations. Such a contact more often than not was contaminated by colonial imperialism. Under such conditions a wide range of hybrid historic subcultures emerge. Ptolemaic, Roman and Coptic Egypt demonstrate in their Egyptianity a divergence from Classical Athens, Imperial Rome or Byzantine Constantinople. Similarly, one can distinguish

Islamic Egypt among other experiences of Islamism, such as those of the Far East or even, for that matter, North Africa.

The eclectic occidentalisation trends of 19th and early 20th century Egypt also fall within the same category. It is often debated that excessive occidentalisation in Egypt occurred as a direct consequence of colonisation and western penetration. Others may argue that it was as a result of a natural process of development or modernisation. Still, it remains a fact that Egypt was politically an Ottoman province and British protectorate, economically tied to Europe as a major producer and exporter of cotton. The strong presence and dominance of a pro-European cosmopolitan community fostered and promoted such occidentalisation, while itself striving towards modernisation.

Inevitably, in the study of 19th and 20th century history one comes across the phenomena of the hegemony of the Occident over the Orient. The illusive, mysterious, incapacitated, and often described as backward, Orient is always confronted with a rational, scientific and modern Occident. In Egypt such a hegemony, though resulting in a one-way process of occidentalisation, was not necessarily an even process. Its intensity, a product of confrontation between local and foreign influence, varied, and resulted in diverse experiences. The resultant dichotomy of the urban built-environment is a good example of such heterogeneous consequences. The tale of two cities, experienced in the dual morphology of the Egyptian urban and built environment, is the product and heritage of the 19th and early 20th century cosmopolitan experience.

The Turkish towns, with their narrow irregular lanes, reduced open spaces and densely built housing districts, harmoniously integrated with other public buildings, such as mosques, hammams and “okales”, reflected a retained social network and urban order, characteristic of traditional Middle Eastern societies and Islamic cities. The process of borrowing and adaptation by the local populace following Ottoman tastes seemed to develop in accordance to what was useful, attractive and adaptive to socio-economic needs. Nevertheless, it was implemented by the traditional building guilds in a local context, using local labour and materials.

The process of modernisation involved, for example, few models and rather limited structural innovation. While retaining traditional building techniques for the lower floor walls, the upper floors adapted lightweight sandwich panels permitting higher structures. The traditional open court lost its function to be replaced by stairs and access corridors. Glass windows and Venetian shutters replaced lattice mashrabeya. In architecture the blend of Islamic and European styles projected an inevitable hybridisation of Turkish styles.

By the late 19th century the invaded Turkish districts in Egyptian cities experienced increased occidentalisation. In the urban context, the demolition and widening of streets were familiar practices, destroying its traditional fabric. Further damage to its character occurred with the introduction of the European high-rise and apartment block of considerably larger volume. Architecture became more lavishly ornamented and pastiched with European motifs. The degentrification of the Turkish districts, which accelerated around the turn of the century, was due to the adaptation of new European life styles, and the waves of migration of the Turco-Egyptian elite and bourgeoisie to the new European districts. This process left these traditional old centers to the urban poor, consequently leading to their degradation and decay.

In sharp contrast to the order set in the Turkish towns, the emergence of the new European districts, laid out in a regular blocks, grid-plan street patterns and high style architecture significantly marked the beginning of a different order. The European style symbolised the extent of the wealth and power of the vice regal family and, moreover, their determination to modernise Egyptian cities to rival those of Europe. The new enforced regulations, *el tanzim*, were meant to introduce reform and modernisation, ensuring, for example, better health standards and freedom of circulation. In Alexandria such reforms were introduced by *El Ornato*, the first planning commission in Egypt in 1834, which was modelled on a similar *commissione d'Ornato* already functioning in Italian cities such as Milan and Venice.

The newly created urban settings, embellished with fountains, music kiosks and greens, were surrounded with buildings that housed bourgeois accommodation, hotels, restaurants, theatres, café-concerts, etc., typical of European cities and a European way of life. While the large blocks accommodating the growing commercial activities retained the traditional typology of the “okales”, they were reintroduced in a new Neo-Classical language, outlining therefore the *lingua franca* of the nascent cosmopolitan city. And yet, the most cosmopolitan of Egyptian cities, Alexandria, was not considered as totally Europeanised: “Alexandrie est une ville à demi européenne”, recounts the experienced French traveller Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire in 1857¹, while Cairo’s Hausmanisation came later, around the late 1860s, prompted by Egypt’s impatient Europeaniser, Khedive Ismail.

Although the occidentalisation of Egyptian cities was introduced by Egypt’s reforming rulers as a form of modernisation, it was the growing presence and wealth of a European cosmopolitan community that ensured its continuity and propagation. The hybrid pro-European culture that had emerged during the 19th century and had continued up to the mid-20th century occurred in a climate of political favouritism, administrative reform and sustained economic growth. The stabilisation of wealth of a Franco-Levantine comprador bourgeoisie, which Albert Hourani so critically describes as “slavishly imitative of Europe at least on the surface and more often than not disposed to Oriental life around them... with interest to imitate French or English way of life... adapted French language as their own and conceived a hopeless love for the French civilisation” (1947)², was to reflect spatially on the urban and built-environments. The Neo-Revivalist historic and eclectic styles adopted post the destruction of the city in 1882 and following the British occupation were symbolic of pluralism, representative of the multi-ethnic composition and cosmopolitan mix of its society.

For an architecture *face à l'orient*, the local expression was rather suppressed, yet it still found its opportunity in the motivated socio-economic and political climate of rising nationalism. The revolutionary independence movements of Mustafa Kamel (1908) and Saad Zaghloul (1919) and, earlier, the Pan-Islamism of Gamal el Din el Afghani (1897), Mohamed Abou (1905) and Abdallah el Nadim (1896) inspired the need for an assertion of a national identity. The Neo-Islamic and Neo-Pharaonic revivalist architecture applied to Saad Zaghloul’s mausoleum in Cairo (1928), to the Islamic El Erwa El Waska technical schools (1898) and to the school of Wakf Hussein Kamel in Gabbari, Alexandria, by A. Lasciac (1908) projected such national symbolism.

¹ Cited in G. Weit’s *Mohamed Ali et les Beaux-Arts*. Société d’études historiques, Cairo, p. 56.

² A. Hourani, cited in *The Alexandria We Have Lost* in The Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora, vol. X, 1983.

Other opportunities for expressing a national identity appeared in the context of exotic Orientalism, with such revivalist exoticism certainly more responsive in Cairo than in cosmopolitan Alexandria. The palace of Count Patrice de Zogheb (1900) by Herz and the pavilion of Prince Amr Ibrahim in Zamalek are among the many examples of Neo-Islamic Revivalism. But it still remains a fact that the most eminent experience in exotic Orientalism was associated with the development of the Heliopolis Oasis suburb near Cairo by Baron Empain in 1905. On the other hand, the astonishing archeological discovery of King Tutankhamen's tomb by Howard Carter in 1923 inspired Neo-Pharaonic exotic trends. The villa Matossian by the French architect Naphilian in Alexandria may be noted as a good example. Orientalism (Neo-Pharaonic or Islamic) was extensively expressed in the post-first world war period. Such local language applied to public buildings, industrial fairs and exhibition pavilions symbolised the rise of an independent state, an autonomous Egyptian economy and an agro-industrial renaissance. International competitions brought the French architects Azema, Hardy and Edrie to design the new tribunals in Cairo in decorative Neo-Pharaonic style in 1923. Then there are the Neo-Islamic experiences of the Bank Misr branches by Loria in Alexandria (1925) and by Antoine Lasciac in Cairo (1927), which stand as symbols of a national banking system created by the Egyptian financier Talaat Harb. The orientalised public buildings is particularly noted in the works of the leading Egyptian architects Mustafa Pasha El Mimar and Mustafa Fahmy. The episode of local Revivalist expressionism is manifested in the Faculty of Engineering of Alexandria University (1947-51), designed by Kamal Ismail of the Ministry of Public Works and commissioned by the national Revivalist preacher Osman Pasha Moharam, then Minister of Public Works.

The Neo-Revivalist local experience inspired by the eclectic and decorative trends was superficial in context. The local language was solely expressed in decorative applications, while the building form remained occidentalised or rationally modernised. This approach is justifiable as a reaction *face à l'occident*, and although considered local in expression, yet still inscribed in its own context of modernity.

The New and Decorative Art movements applied since the early 20th century became more frequently popular in the post war period, replacing the historicist Revivalist trends and featuring mostly in the bourgeois apartment buildings which increasingly became the most favoured building type dominating the urban environment. The emergence of Early Modern International styles in Egypt coincided with a stronger Egyptian economic participation, the decline of foreign influences following the abolition of capitulations at the Montreux Convention of 1936, and the rise of a technocratic and industrial bourgeois society, whose tastes and needs were more sympathetic to the rational modern and international culture.

The Early Modern implanted models were introduced by foreign non-resident architects in Alexandria, for example, Auguste Perret in the villa Aghion (1926) or Clement Busiri Vici in the Littorio Italian schools (1935). The trend continued in the 1930s and 40s. Jean Walter designed the Kozzika Hospital (1938) and Ernest Koop the Moassat hospital and research facility (1931-34), suggesting closer ties with a scientifically advanced and industrialised occident.

The Modernist trends become even more popular with the wider contribution and participation of Egyptian professionals. The early Egyptian Modernists Ali Labib Gabr, Ali Rafaat, Sayed Karim, Abou Bakr Khayrat, as well as Antoine Nahas among other foreigners such as Henry Bernau, Max and Claude Zollikofer, Michel Voyazis, Zoulias, etc. were all

strong advocates of the international language. Early Modern styles coincided with the introduction of new garden suburbia and also with industrial towns movement. In Alexandria, the new Smouha district in 1925³ was conceived as a garden and villa suburb, developed around a sporting club, catering to a new rising bourgeois clientèle. Similarly, the industrial towns such as Beida Dyers and Kafr El Dawar in the 1930s were conceived under the same Modern influences.

The Modern international experience remained influential from the officers' coup of 1952 until the late 1950s, after which the radical socio-economic and political changes in Egypt marked their effects on the urban and built-environments. The early period of the revolution was dominated by decolonialisation and state socialism. This meant the sequestration and nationalisation of foreign and Egyptian elitist property which was transformed into government offices and public institutions such as schools, hospitals, etc., consequently suffering degradation and decay due to ill-use, lack of maintenance and ill-conceived additions and remodelling.

The Egyptianisation of land and building companies was part of the capital restructuring process, fundamental to the political economy of Nasserism. Big capital allied to foreign capital was to be transformed into national capital, meaning a state-controlled public sector. Only middle and petty capital was allowed to intervene in development, and in the absence of effective planning this has had the gravest of consequences on the process of urbanisation and the development of Egyptian cities.

Socialisation of the housing sector meant such government interventions as imposing a so-called fair rent. Devaluation and freezing of rents meant subsidising exploited tenants on account of their exploiting owners. The miserable rents, not covering even the trouble and expense of their collection, has, for decades, deprived the building stock of maintenance and repair, consequently leading to its degradation.

The role of private sector investment in the provision of housing diminished as a result of shocks from the state's socialist policies. The government, in an effort to provide housing for the poor, embarked, beginning in the late 1950s, on a policy of constructing subsidised public housing "El massaken el shaabieh" along soviet models. And yet the provision could not meet with demand. Urban demographic pressures from population explosion and massive migration to urban centres has led to an acute shortage of accommodation and resulted in a permanent housing crisis.

Deficit state financing, post-1967, made that external borrowing played an important role in the country's economy, and while its effect on urbanisation is not easily predictable from internal source analysis, it can be fairly concluded that financing in the form of aid from donor countries and international finance institutions was mostly directed to the improvement and the restructuring of urban services, i.e. water, electricity, sewer systems, road and communications, etc. The other form of finance in this dependency model was in the form of remittances from the expatriate nationals, the *nouveaux riches* working in the oil-rich Arab states, whose demands and purchasing power created a speculative housing market that was not necessarily qualitative in nature. Poor workmanship, the lack of technical supervision, and the use of defective materials, etc. went as far as resulting in structural failures and the

³ The first prize of the international design competition going to the French architect M. Clauzier.

collapse of high-rise apartment buildings, burying their unfortunate tenants under the rubble, a phenomena not uncommon in both Alexandria and Cairo.

The decline of the state's role in organising the building activity, planning and enforcing zoning regulations has contributed to the further degradation of the built-environment. Beside the depletion of the old building stock in the historic cities, the new dynamics of urban change were experienced in two major phenomena:

First, the densification of the built-environment experienced in high speculation on land was coupled with the sacrifice of villas and gardens in favour of high-rise apartment buildings. The collective character of the new residential quarters reflected in their owners and professionals' unions (syndicates of professionals such as engineers, lawyers and the military, etc.) more of an egalitarian socialist rather than nationalist ideology. The creation of a common urban or conventional "local modern" style was expressed in a mutated form of early modern architecture, sometimes with incomplete external finishing, especially in the case of lower income groups, where the "architecture of bricks and concrete" became the most expressive urban character.

The second phenomenon is related to the growth and expansion of the informal and squatter settlements. The urban poor, unable to have access to affordable accommodation, has relied on informal access to agricultural or public land located at the fringes of cities. Urban squatters have occupied roofs of buildings. In what is known as the "second city", roof-toppers in Cairo are estimated to exceed half a million. Others found security of tenure living in the cemeteries of "the City of the Dead".

Informal settlements represent the highest share in building activity, approximately over 80% of the total private investment since 1973 and accommodate over 32% of the total urban population.⁴ They experience the least infrastructure where access to drinking water is limited, electricity is shared between settlers, disposal of refuse is usually in the streets or other available places. Such settlements are not solely characteristic of poor urban districts. They are also experienced in the "expensive slums" of such unplanned resort developments around, for example, the North Coast areas of Alexandria in the districts of Agamy, Abu Talaat, Hannoville, etc., where high density, infiltration of commercial and industrial activity, lack of sewer disposal and pollution due to intense traffic constitute serious health hazards.

For the majority of the built-environment, the character remains crowded with the anonymous apartment block as the dominant form where concentration and densification are standard features of the urban morphology. The integration of rural and urban life is expressed in the new migrant culture of the organic disorderly informal settlements, a dilemma that characterises the growth patterns of most Egyptian cities where environmental degradation, ecological pressures, chaos and misery have become an integral pattern of life in the new urban metropolis.

Sadat's open door policy or "El Infitah" post-1973 has had mixed blessings on the quality of the built-environment. On one hand it promoted conspicuous consumption, while on the other hand it introduced Egypt to new worldwide markets with the expansion in international

⁴ Alexandria Statistics Report, Center of Information and Decision-Making, Governorate of Alexandria, July 1999.

tourism, new towns experiences and the introduction of new industries and technologies. The expansion in the development of vacation resorts on the Mediterranean coast, the lake districts of Fayed, along the Red Sea and, more recently, second homes in trendy condominiums around golf courses and other sports clubs, reflected such conspicuous consumption. Moreover, in most cases, it has demonstrated poor management of resources and the lack of safeguards for the natural environment.

The international language experienced in a few isolated examples is linked to the management or the direct involvement of multi-national or international co-operations, in such developments associated with tourism: airports, hotels and in a few examples of office buildings, banks, hospitals and medical centres. Post-Modern Expressionism manifested in the architecture of resort developments in the Red Sea and Sinai, such as Michael Greaves' Neo-regionalist language in "El Gouna", seeming to cater to the tastes of an international clientèle, is unmatched in terms of quality in other local resort areas like the North Coast of Alexandria.

The erection of the "Cotton Palace" in Alexandria, a curtain-wall office block by Volani Architettura in 1984, remains to the present and for over two decades unoccupied while disturbing with its monolithic scale and outdated architecture the city's panorama, is symbolic of the lack of planning as of economic mismanagement. Another noted international experience worth mentioning is the rather disappointing performance of Egyptian architects in the competition for the design of the Biblioteca Alexandrina in 1989, with the first prize going to the Norwegian team Snohetta. Out of the 524 presentations none of the 21 Egyptian entries received any prize or special mention. Even the construction of the high-tech building was the privilege of joint-venture contracting.

At the moment contemporary Egyptian architecture seems to be in deep crisis. The prevailing "anti-architecture" expressed in the vernacular character of both urban and rural built-environments is phenomenal to the extent of its inability to contain modernity in its technology or state of arts; further, it appears incapable to exhibit regionalism whereby its "crossbreed" or local component may integrate with universal culture. Undoubtedly also, for the major part, the mediocre production of the built-environment is so deeply rooted that it has become a tradition in itself. The building industry dispossessed from the qualitative aspects of its traditional values and crafts was also long isolated from progress and modern technology associated with international culture.

Egypt today mirrors the cultural values of two epochs, its *ancien régime* expressed in both its Ottoman or pro-European/Occidental heritage, symbolic of the prevailing capitalist, elitist and pluralist values of its society. In contrast, the post-revolution era is representative of the egalitarian collectivism of its socialist society and whose cultural identity seems to be overshadowed by other prevailing socio-economic and political determinants. It seems, then, that the cultural component of the built-environment is in urgent need of assertion, directed towards the improvement of the aesthetic and qualitative aspects of its existing and future development, aimed at the safeguard of its traditional values and heritage, while containing modernity, therefore ensuring its progress and synthesis with the Universal.

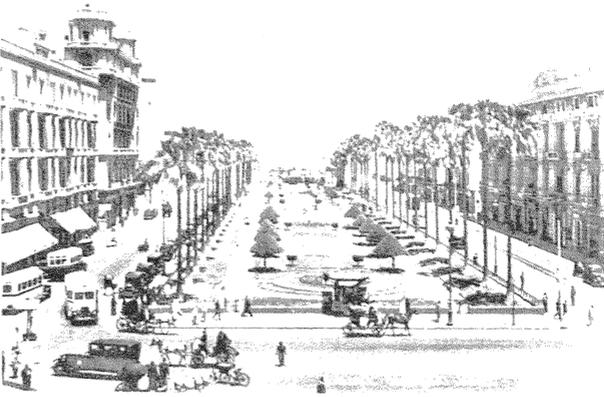


Fig 1 a



Fig 1 b

Order



Fig 2 a



Fig 2 b

New Order (No Order ???)