Return to Alexandria:

Cultural Revivalism and the Alexandria Project

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September 2003
ABSTRACT

My thesis is primarily addressed as a critical dialogue with museology and heritage theory and focuses on a contemporary project of cultural revivalism, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, headed by the Egyptian government and supported by UNESCO. The objective of the scheme is to revive the ancient Mouseion/Library on what is believed to be its original site, in Alexandria, Egypt. My interest in this revival project is that it marks a dramatic inversion or reversal of the usual flow of translations and transmissions of the Alexandria’s mythology into modernity, which historically, has been dominated by Western writers who have laid claim to city and archive as part of an epic vision of ancient origins and odyssey of homecoming. As I demonstrate in the first part of my thesis what has become known as the Alexandria project and its particularisation by the museum/heritage culture as the Alexandrina paradigm characterises both city and archive as sites of trauma and rebirth. The impulse to build the Alexandrina ‘on the ruins’ has subsequently seen the ancient Alexandrina provide the template for Western museums/archives from the Renaissance onwards and is present in the universalising ethos of cultural redemption which continues to characterise UNESCO interventions.

My thesis explores how the contemporary revivalist project has destabilised the traditional Western purchase on the Alexandria project by opening it up to crossings-over and hybridisation. My central concern is to argue that an investigation of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s contemporary odyssey of homecoming offers a means to engage in a fundamental re-conceptualisation of museology/heritage theory based upon a more grounded, ethnographic approach. My major intervention is therefore to draw upon contemporary debates on cosmo-politanism and actor-network theory to provide me with conceptual and operational frameworks from which to engage in field-work analysis of the contemporary context of cultural revivalism. In my conclusion I argue that the contemporary recasting of the Alexandrina paradigm crystallises the need for the centring of a re-worked intellectual-operational ‘cosmopolitics’ and as part of attempts to create a more relevant, responsible and responsive North-South museological/heritage dialogue.
RETURN TO ALEXANDRIA:
CULTURAL REVIVALISM AND THE ALEXANDRIA PROJECT

VOLUME ONE
TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Abstract 2
Table of Contents 3
Acknowledgements 7
List of Figures 8

INTRODUCTION 11

Preludes: Founding Myth and Archive
Research focus
Thesis Argument
Thematic Approaches
An Ethnographic Approach

Chapter One

The ‘Alexandria Project’ in the Western Imagination 36

Introduction: Recovery and Transmission
Section One: Critical Return to the Museological Imagination
Section Two: Platonic Alexandria and Eternal Returns
Section Three: Museum and Archive as Metaphysical Mirrors
Section Four: ‘Writing to Return’ – Alexandria as Literary Muse and ‘Writing Cure
Conclusion: The End of Western Dream-worlds
Chapter Two

‘On the Ruins’ - Postcolonial Heritage Metamorphosis

Introduction: Vantage Points
Section One: Egypt as Origin and Redemption - ‘Writing Back’
Section Two: Metaphysical Destabilisations – ‘Egypt’ as Deconstruction
Section Three: Echoes, Enigmas and Disturbances of Memory
Section Four: Literal and Figurative Archaeologies - ‘Besieged Identities’
Section Five: Egypt ‘Writes’ Egypt – Elite and Popular ‘Voices’

Conclusion: More Egyptian, Less Greek

Chapter Three

Contemporary Return to Alexandria - International Sacred Dramas

Introduction: Revivalism’s ‘Gate-keeper’
Section One: The Aswan Meeting - Inaugural Scenes of Transformation
Section Two: Aswan as Stage Set – Script, Performance and Players
Section Three: Nation-State Sovereignty – ‘Soil of Aswan, Soil of Alexandria’
Section Four: UNESCO as Redemptive Cosmopolitics
Section Five: Voices of Aswan – Celebratory Chorus

Conclusion: Aswan’s Unchallengeable Statements

Chapter Four

‘Revivalism Between Worlds’ - UNESCO and GOAL

Introduction: ‘Behind the Scenes’ – Bureaucratic Worlds
Section One: The GOAL Vision – Alexandria’s Urban Dramas
Section Two: Construction Site ‘On the Ruins’ – The Alexandrina’s ‘Materialisation’
Section Three: Revivalism’s Official Memory-Work
Section Four: The UNESCO Vision - ‘Grand Designs’
Section Five: Contested Origins – ‘Meltdown into the Environment’
Conclusion: Operational Border-Crossings

Chapter Five

‘Meltdown’: Revivalism’s ‘Time of Anxiety’

Introduction: Risk-Taking
Section One: Asserting Autonomy – Alexandria’s ‘MOUSEION’
Section Two: The ‘Birth’ of Underwater Archaeology
Section Three: ‘Meltdown’s’ Emergent ‘Critical Chorus’
Conclusion: Towards Critical Repossession

Chapter Six

‘Spirit of Aspiration’ - Archaeological Revivalism and Recuperations

Introduction: Archaeological Disturbances
Section One: Spirit of Aspiration
Section Two: Alexander Before Alexander
Section Three: Department of Underwater Archaeology – All-Egyptian Mission
Section Four: SARCOM International Workshop – Revivalism’s Recuperations
Conclusion: ‘Memory of Humanity’ and Revivalism’s ‘Ghostings’
Chapter Seven

Urban Shock Therapy: Alexandria’s ‘LasVegasisation’

Introduction: ‘Three Tributaries’
Section One: Inside the Governorate
Section Two: ‘Las Vegasisation’ – Critical Chorus Response
Section Three: Revivalism’s ‘Urban Myths’ – Mahgoub ‘The Beloved’
Section Four: Cosmopolitanism as an ‘Entente with the Recent Past’
Conclusion: Revivalism’s ‘Old’ and ‘New’ Cosmopolitics

CONCLUSION

‘Windows onto Contemporary Worlds’

Introduction: Journey’s End
Section One: Inaugural Cancellations and Clashes
Section Two: Final Field Work Return – Coming Full-Circle
Section Three: Recasting the ‘Alexandrina Paradigm’ Contemporary Crossings-Over
Conclusion: ‘Homecoming’s Implications for Museology and Heritage

Bibliography

Includes List of Interviews
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to give my acknowledgements to Dr Nick Merriman for his help and support in supervising this thesis and also to the Institute of Archaeology UCL for financial assistance in the form of grant funding and in terms of covering the costs of my fieldwork visits and attendance at the various conferences and meetings that have been vital in underpinning and shaping this piece of research. I owe a special and very great debt of thanks to Professor Mike Rowlands for his input into this thesis and for his intellectual direction, enthusiasm and constant encouragement: thank you. I am also very grateful to Jo Dullaghen, Barbara Brown, Judy Medrington and Paul Kirkby at the Institute of Archaeology; Katie Meheux at the Institute library and Chris Hagisavva at the Department of Anthropology for their particular advice and help.

In Alexandria my special debt of thanks goes to Ahmad Omar and to Professors Mostafa Abaddi and Azza Kararah. While I would like to express my thanks to all those who feature in this thesis I would like more specifically to give my acknowledgments to Hala Halim, Adel Abu Zahra and Mohammed Awad; to Ahmad Fattah, Mervat El-Din and the staff of the Greco-Roman Museum; to Ibrahim Darwish, Mohammed Mostafa and all the members of the Department of Underwater Archaeology and to the staff of the Union Hotel. At UNESCO-Paris my particular thanks goes to Aziz Abid. I am also grateful to Penelope Lively, Adhaf Soueif, Michael Wood and to Erica Davies at the Freud Museum, London. I would like to express my particular and profound thanks to Edward Said who I had the great privilege of meeting during the writing of this thesis and whose intellectualism, generosity and humanity have been such an inspiration.

My thanks also go to friends: Shireen Shah, Helen Walasek, Prem Poddar, Vivek Nanda, Nat Hensby, Nick Sargeant, John Coupland and Kevin Littlewood: comrades all; and to Hero and Roly Granger-Taylor. In a thesis that pursues the motif ‘homecoming’ my final and sincere debt of gratitude and my love goes to my family: to mum, dad, Rachel, Debra, Tony, Claire and Adam. I would like to dedicate this thesis to the memory of Norah and Frank Butler and to Joanna Parrish.
LIST OF FIGURES

Volume One

Fig. 1. Model of Bibliotheca Alexandrina (source: UNESCO 1990: 2) 17

Fig. 2. Re-emergent heritage, object lifted by archaeologists at the Qait Bey/Pharos site
(source: Compoint in La Riche 1998: 17) 19

Fig. 3. Past in the present, object lifted by archaeologists at the Royal Palaces site
(source: Delafosse in Foreman 1999: 182) 19

Fig. 4. Plato’s Obelisk, Old Heliopolis, Ain Shams, Cairo (photo: B. Butler) 97

Fig. 5. Mary’s Tree, Old Heliopolis, Al-Matariyya, Cairo (photo: B. Butler) 97

Fig. 6. Alexandria: view along the Corniche
(source: Compoint in La Riche 1998: 39) 133

Fig. 7. Aswan Meeting 1990 (source: UNESCO 1990: 4) 148

Fig. 8. Snohetta Model of Bibliotheca Alexandrina (source: GOAL 1990: 3) 178

Fig. 9. Snohetta Model of Bibliotheca showing exterior wall with ‘universal’ scripts
(source: GOAL 1990: 3) 178

Fig. 10. Early construction phase - preparing the foundations at Bibliotheca Alexandrina
site (photo: B. Butler) 186

Fig. 11. Later construction phase - Mohammed El Qot directing work on exterior roof
of Bibliotheca Alexandrina (photo: B. Butler) 186
Fig. 12. UNESCO Paris Head-Quarters with view of Eiffel Tower
  (photo: B. Butler)  

Fig. 13. Snohetta Model of Bibliotheca Alexandrina on black background as seen in GOAL Alexandria and UNESCO Paris Offices
  (source: UNESCO 1990: 3)  

Fig. 14. Greco-Roman Museum - reprint of 'old' postcard
  (undated/ unsourced: authors' own)  

Fig. 15. Greco-Roman Museum – contemporary postcard
  (undated/ Attalla Cards, Egypt)  

Fig. 16. Building work on Bibliotheca site with adjacent maternity and children’s hospital
  (photo: B. Butler)  

Fig. 17. Map of Eastern Harbour with Qait Bey/ Pharos and Royal Palace site
  (source: based on Foreman 1999: 163)  

Fig. 18. Underwater archaeologists working at Qait Bey/ Pharos site
  (source: Compoint in La Riche 1998: 33)  

Fig. 19. Archaeologists from CEA and DUA at Qait Bey/ Pharos site
  (source: Compoint in La Riche 1998:117)  

Fig. 20. Underwater archaeologist working at Royal Palace site
  (source: Delafosse in Foreman 1999: 173)  

Fig. 21. Archaeologists from IEASM and DUA at Royal Palace site
  (source: Delafosse in Foreman 1999: 165)  


Fig. 22. Qait Bey/Pharos site (source: La Riche 1998: 38) 279

Fig. 23. Excavated object transported through streets of contemporary Alexandrina (source: La Riche 1998: 115) 286

Fig. 24. Excavated object in desalination tank (source: La Riche 1998: 121) 286

Fig. 25. Governorate Head-Quarters, downtown Alexandria (photo: B. Butler) 293

Fig. 26. 'Greek' vase sculpture sponsored by local Alexandrian businesses (source: undated/Attalla Cards, Egypt) 299

Fig. 27. 'Greek' boat sculpture sponsored by local Alexandrian businesses (source: undated/Attalla Cards, Egypt) 299

Fig. 28. Statue of Alexander the Great, downtown Alexandria (photo: B. Butler) 311

Fig. 29. New Mosaic featuring Alexander the Great, downtown Alexandria (source: undated/Attalla Cards, Egypt) 317

Fig. 30. Posters of the Spice Girls and Mecca for sale, downtown Alexandria (photo: B. Butler) 317

Fig. 31. 'Egypt's Fourth Pyramid' – the completed building showing the planetarium (photo: B. Butler) 324

Fig. 32. The Four Muses installed in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (photo: B. Butler) 325

Fig. 33. Statue of Demetrius of Phaleron, front entrance Bibliotheca Alexandrina (photo: B. Butler) 325
RETURN TO ALEXANDRIA:  
CULTURAL REVIVALISM AND THE ALEXANDRIA PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

PRELUDES: FOUNDING MYTH AND ARCHIVE

After Alexander had conquered Egypt, he was anxious to found a great and populous Greek city there, to be called after him ... As he lay asleep he dreamed that a grey haired man of venerable appearance stood by his side and recited these lines from the Odyssey.

Out of the tossing sea where it breaks on the beaches of Egypt
Rises an isle from the waters: the name that men give it is Pharos.

Alexander rose the next morning and immediately visited Pharos... he declared that Homer, besides his other admirable qualities, was also a very far-seeing architect, and he ordered the plan of the city to be designed so that it would conform to this site.

(Plutarch, Life of Alexander, 1973: 282)

Alexandria, which is our birthplace, has mapped out this circle for all Western language: to write was to return, to come back to the beginning to grasp again the first instance; it is to witness anew the dawn. Hence, the mythical function of literature to this day, hence its relation to the ancient: hence, the privilege it has granted to analogy, to similarity, to all the marvels of identicality. Hence, above all, a structure of repetition which indicated its very existence.


According to Plutarch, the city of Alexandria, Egypt, was revealed to Alexander the Great in a dream; his mentor, the philosopher Aristotle (the 'grey haired' 'venerable' man') is said to have appeared before Alexander guiding the hero to what was to become Alexandria's famous promontory: the Isle of Pharos. Alexander's map or guidebook was The Odyssey. This famous ancient epic account of a heroic homecoming was subsequently positioned as the city's founding text, an act which afforded Homer the
accolade of the city’s ‘architect’ in the epic visionary sense (Plutarch 1973: 282). Accompanying this epic drama of the city’s foundation were further ‘preludes’ and ‘heroic precedents’ accomplished by Alexander which accentuated the ‘predestined’ nature of the city’s creation (Polignac 2000a: 33). Plutarch’s focus turns to Alexander’s pilgrimage to Siwa Oasis and his consultation with the Oracle of Zeus-Ammon. The Oracle subsequently legitimated both hero and city. Not only was Alexander ‘proclaimed son of god’ and thus conferred with ‘divine origin’ but his project of ‘world conquest’ was endorsed which drew him further East (Polignac 2000a: 33).

A long-line of inventors and promoters of legend spanning both ancient and modern worlds have engaged in ‘reviving and reformulating’ Alexandria’s myth and memory (Polignac 2000b: 214). It is, however, those of the West, as self-appointed heirs of the ‘Greek’ tradition who have dominated the scene and whose ‘monolithic transmission’ (Jacob and Polignac 2000: 18) of Alexandria’s legacy into modernity claimed possession of Alexandria’s foundational dramas and its motif of homecoming as part of the West’s own odyssey: its epic search for origins, for an ancient homeland and, crucially, for metaphysical roots. The accompanying desire to stage modernity’s march of civilisation in the footsteps of Alexander also saw the Westernisation of Alexandria’s potent lexicon of ‘signs and images’ (Polignac 2000b: 212) and its ‘ready canon’ of ‘myths and icons’ (Halim 2002a: 5). A claim is thus made both to the monumental heritage of this iconic, marble city and its associated set of values. Not only then does the Pharos Lighthouse (one of the Wonders of the ancient World), the Ptolemies royal palaces site (synonymous with the seductions of Cleopatra, Mark Anthony and Caesar), the Serapeum (the famous temple complex) and Alexander’s Tomb feature within this vision but it is extended by the West to encompass Alexandria’s potent characterisation as the New Athens and as the ‘meeting point of East and West’ and to use these as a entry point to lay claim to the city’s foundational values: as the ‘birthplace’ of cosmopolitanism, universalism and the scene of intellectual, humanistic philosophical inquiry (see Polignac 2000b and Klibansky 2000).
Significantly for this thesis, which is primarily addressed as a critical dialogue with museology and heritage theory, it is Alexandria’s ancient archive – the Mouseion and Library - that as Strabo, and other ancient authors make clear, emerges at the locus point of the city and its mythologisation (Polignac 2000a). Built in the third century BC by Ptolemy Soter the Mouseion/Library has been cast as an ‘enigma’ (Abbadi 1990: 15). Although little is know about the institution it is best understood as a composite of: a Temple of the Muses, a ‘universal’ library, a philosophical academy and a planetarium. The ancient Alexandrina brought together texts, learned men and artefacts in an attempt to fuse ‘Greek’ heritage with aspirations of acquiring ‘universal’ knowledge (Abbadi 1990: 15). Writ larger, the archive and wider city’s mythologies merge powerfully to cast the city as both ‘microcosm of the world’ and as ‘memory of the world’ (Polignac 2000a: 42). A series of metaphors have been mobilised to define Alexandria further as ‘a museum town, a mirror town which would reflect the entire world at the same time as the glory of the dynasty’ (Jacob and Polignac 2000: 14).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, amongst the many historiographers and writers reflecting on a vision of themselves within Alexandria’s ancient heritage, the ancient Alexandrina has provided a mirror for the retrospective gaze of traditional museum historians intent on (re-) possessing a desired or imagined ancient ancestor (cf. Burcaw 1997 [1921]: 25-6; Bazin 1967). The museological/ heritage purchase can be seen as part of wider acts of empathetic identification (often bound up in a narcissistic, colonising trope) which more generally have claimed possession of Alexandria’s ‘signs and images’ and its ‘myths and icons’ as exclusive ‘self objects’ (cf. Kohut 1978) and resources by which the West’s identity and memory-work can be managed, mediated and manipulated. As such Alexandria has come to serve as the point of origin for the West’s cultural identity, many of the West’s cultural institutions, and with more depth still, its foundational values.

In a final, but equally potent end-note, I argue, that Alexandria as odyssey and as homecoming is underpinned by both a trauma of origin and myth of redemption. It is the destruction of the Ancient Mouseion/ Library which, with some paradox and great effectiveness, secures its status as phoenix institution (Findlen 2000: 176). The event is
read by the West as the traumatic loss of an ancient ancestor and embeds the institution, like the city itself, in an entropic poetics of melancholy, nostalgia and loss. It is also the mechanism which gives birth to the redemptive urge, and repetitive desire to build Alexandria ‘on the ruins’. What has become known more broadly as the Alexandria project and particularised by traditional museologists as the Alexandrina paradigm is bound up in a ‘Myth of Return and Redemption’ (Foucault 1964) in which Alexandria and its archive are positioned as a site of renewal and rebirth. It is here too that the myth holds in tension its initial expression as a literary, metaphorical/ metaphysical project of retrievalism, - as Foucault makes explicit ‘to write was to return’- with acts of material objectification (quoted in Errera 1997: 138).

The latter, for example, has seen the ancient Alexandrina objectified from the Renaissance onwards as a template in the West for its archival institutions (and subsequently mapped into its colonial possessions): more specifically it has been invested as a model for the ‘universal’, encyclopedic, collections synonymous with the Enlightenment period and into the late nineteenth and twentieth century as the blueprint for the cosmopolitan, colonial, public museum. As such the British Museum (Bolton 1939) and the Louvre, amongst others, have claimed a shared ancestry as a ‘latter day Alexandrian mouseion’ (Lewis 1992: 10). It is here too that the ancient Alexandrina, as the casualty of what is understood as an originary act of iconoclasm, is canonised as the icon from which the traditional heritage paradigm of loss and preservation establishes its roots (Lowenthal 1985:109). In the process Alexandria’s wider foundational values – its cosmopolitanism, its universalism and its humanism - have been essentialised as core heritage values and the motivations behind modernity’s on-going ‘heritage crusades’ (cf. Lowenthal 1996).
RESEARCH FOCUS

Despite its loss, or rather because of it, the ancient library has never lost its hold on the European imagination...What had been not the only, but perhaps the most famous library, museum and even garden of the Hellenistic period was banished to the attics of legend and myth...Today, this interest in the past is being encouraged by a vision of the future - the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, an ultra modern library and conference centre, developed under the auspices of UNESCO and the Egyptian government, and rising on the shoreline of Alexandria, near the place where the ancient buildings are thought to have been. The international enterprise is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge, and will attract scholars from many countries. It will celebrate the cosmopolitanism that is the city and culture of Alexandria, and the traditions of internationalism, critical questioning, and freedom of enquiry that were at varying times the hallmarks of the ancient library.

(MyLeod 2002: xi)

My purchase on the Alexandria project and its associated myths of return and redemption forms the central focus of this thesis. My concern is with a new, powerful, intervention into Alexandria’s genealogy. This takes the form of a contemporary scheme initiated by academics at Alexandria University in the 1970s and subsequently developed by the Egyptian government in partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) with the objective to rebuild the Alexandrina ‘on the ruins.’ This contemporary endeavour to reclaim Alexander’s dream is itself of epic, monumental proportions. The Bibliotheca Alexandrina – or more emotively the New Alexandria – has been dubbed as ‘Egypt’s Fourth Pyramid’ and as a ‘Wonder of the Modern World’ (see Mitchell 1998: 107-8) and hailed as Egypt’s millennial cultural project. The New Alexandrina has taken nearly thirty years to emerge and has cost over $220 million.

In a creative conflation of ancient and modern worlds, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s own act of mirroring and reflecting replicate, in modern form, the key components of the ancient third-century institution. Where was once the Mouseion (the Temple of the Muses) are now museums dedicated to science, calligraphy and archaeology. A
planetarium completes another aspect of the ancient ancestor institution, while a vast library space occupies a substantial part of the building and is given over to collections of both ‘real’ and digital texts. In a further creative translation, the hybrid design of the Alexandrina building combines the old and the ultra-modern with the intention of pitching the institution, like the city itself, into future-orientated dreams and visions (fig. 1).

What is of interest to me is that the revival of the ancient Alexandrina marks a dramatic inversion or reversal of the usual flow of translations and transmissions of the archive’s mythology into modernity, and as such, evokes new crossings-over and hybridisations. As MacLeod (quoted above) reiterates, the project marks a shift in terms of opening up the city and archive’s myth and memory from the exclusive hold of the European, or writ wider still, the Western imagination and as such, has the ability to repossess its associated ‘signs and images’ and ‘myths and icons,’ – notably that of cosmopolitanism – for contemporary Egyptian dream-work (MacLeod 2002: xi).

- New Alexandrina, New Museology

My central claim is that the current Alexandria project and its dreams of contemporary cultural revival exact a challenge to the academic engagement with the Alexandrina paradigm. The timing of the project, for example, is such that it sets in play further crossings-over and paradoxes: most significantly, Egypt’s return or reattachment with the Alexandrina is coming at a time when the Western academy is strategically detaching itself from the Alexandrina paradigm. Although already consigned to the ‘attics of legend and myth’ (MacLeod 2002: xi) full detachment from Alexandrina paradigm has been exacted as critics have responded to more general shifts within the academy. Not only has postmodernity’s never-ending return, done with myths of return in having squeezed them dry of all metaphor, but in more broad terms social scientists and cultural theorists have made explicit their rejection of the discourse of ancient origins and of elitist, colonial, universalizing ‘cosmopolitics’ (see, for example, Clifford 1998).
Fig. 1: Model of Bibliotheca Alexandrina (source: UNESCO 1990: 2)
Moreover, following in the footsteps of the above critics, museologists and heritage theorists in recent times have critically reviewed their historical attachment to the Alexandrina paradigm as an adherence to an ‘old’ museology (cf. Vergo 1989), and compared this unfavourably with a ‘new’, critical museology which has similarly placed a stress on alternative Foucaultian genealogies of rupture and discontinuity (for example, Crimp 1997 [1993]; Hooper-Greenhill 1992; Bennett 1994). Here then, is a drama in which just as critics are detaching themselves from the paradigm - significantly without any critical reflection on its on-going potencies - Alexandria itself is re-experiencing a revival of its museological past and ancient heritage, by re-erecting - if you like - the stones which ‘Western’ academics were setting out, intellectually, metaphorically, to demolish.

With more potency still, this motif of repossession and of the re-erection of foundation ‘stones’ has a concomitant material expression too within contemporary cultural revivalism. For at the same time as the New Alexandrina project is returning this key icon to the contemporary city, wider acts of destabilisation have taken place as Alexandria, - previously noted for its poverty of archaeology, - has witnessed the return of objects from its ancient past to the modern city. Significantly, recent land and underwater excavations have reclaimed other potent ‘lost’ icons: special attention has been focused upon excavations directed by French teams at Fort Qait Bey, where Pharos once stood, and the ‘Cleopatra ’96’ project at the ancient royal palace site in the Eastern harbour of Alexandria (Empereur 1998: Goddio 1998) (fig. 2 and 3). These projects in turn have prompted further aspirations and have emerged as the point of origin for a dramatic ‘museumification’ and ‘heritagification’ of the contemporary city. Not only are there plans, again supported by UNESCO, to build a museum in the Eastern harbour ‘to rival the Sphinx underwater’ but to inscribe the whole of Alexandria as a UNESCO world heritage site (UNESCO 1997).
Fig. 2. Re-emergent heritage, object lifted by archaeologists at the Qait Bey/Pharos site
(source: Compoint in La Riche 1998: 17)

Fig. 3. Past in the present, object lifted by archaeologists at the Royal Palaces site
(source: Delafosse in Foreman 1999: 182)
THESIS ARGUMENT

The central argument of my thesis is that the ‘Western’ academy and ‘new’ museology by detaching itself from the Alexandria project, has lost a potent paradigm with which to investigate what is a stake in the above contexts and thus to engage with contemporary commitments to new and alternative acts of memory-work. Moreover, since contemporary Alexandria is re-emerging as a site of museological and heritage activity, by extension, museologists and heritage critics are the best placed to critically investigate this context. In this sense museological and heritage practice has outstripped academic museological discourse and, as such, contemporary Alexandria is witness to a crisis/breakthrough of the Alexandria project and associated Alexandrina paradigm. The practical working out of the project in contemporary Alexandria is indicative of the fact that despite intellectual rejection of the Alexandrina paradigm by many academics, ancient Alexandria continues to exert a mythology powerful enough to fuel a substantial ‘new’ attempt at revivalism. It is also illustrative of the potency of the ancient myth to provide a means of reformulating many of the ‘old’ museological characterisations in new national elite and global configurations.

I argue, therefore, that contemporary revivalism has destabilised the traditional Western thesis predicated, historically, on the export of the Alexandria project to the West. The Alexandrina paradigm’s own home-coming is also met with the destabilising effects of the return of objects from Alexandria’s ancient past to the modern city. Not only has revivalism disturbed the Western mythical vision of Alexandria based as it is on an a priori poetics of nostalgia and loss, but it has opened it up to re-formulation, re-development and hybridisation as a means to enact the renewal and redemption of contemporary Alexandria and, writ larger still, of the wider Egyptian context. I further argue that an investigation of this process, undertaken at this point in time, provides an opportunity for harnessing these motifs of destabilisation, homecoming and crisis/breakthrough of origins in order to use these as tools to critically recast Alexandrian revivalism as an ethnographic case-study analysis. My objective is thus to gain an
empirical purchase on the subtleties and complexities of the rise of heritage, of urban revivalism and memory-work in Alexandria as a post/ex-colonial context.

THEMATIC APPROACHES

I take this overall theme of the Alexandrina’s homecoming as the central organisational motif of this thesis. I use it as a means to critically read the contemporary odyssey and return to origins as an act of destabilisation of the Alexandria project. As the cultural critic Said states - with a specific gesture to the Alexandrian poet Cavafy - the genre of the ‘odyssey’ is that of a journey/process which is subject to the discovery of what ‘attracts’, what ‘threatens’ and to a certain Freudian ‘working out’ as one makes one’s way along an ‘extremely intricate’ voyage/pathway towards something ‘new’ (Said in Bar:enboim and Said 2002: 48). As such I also view Alexandria’s contemporary odyssey in terms of a movement that potentially brings new insight into both the Western imagination’s purchase on the city and archive and also as a process in which the ‘old’ dream-world is opened up to ‘new’ visions, metamorphoses and mediations as it encounters the ‘real’ of the modern city of Alexandria.

I establish a number of related motifs/themes around this central investigation which are in turn set within a broader conceptual and methodological framework. My objective is to mobilise these in order to access a shift beyond the ‘old’/‘new’ museological polarised positions in a specific contribution which links alternative conceptualisations of the museum/heritage discourse with more grounded research. My critical return to museology’s origins thus allows me to engage in a fundamental rethinking of the core, foundational values as they map across mythic-historical, literary-metaphysical realms and onto the operational ‘real.’ Moreover, this leads me to address what I argue is the need for a re-conceptualisation of museology/heritage theory and practice based upon alternative sets of values, critical approaches, theorisations and lived experiences which are currently located outside mainstream museology and heritage studies and, as such, remain largely unrecognised. I argue that these framings which currently characterise the contemporary global domain of cultural revivalism need to be centred as the basis for
museology/ heritage studies’ articulation of its own ‘possible futures’ (cf. Venn 2002: 65). Therefore, while the theoretical work of the thesis is not set apart from the concrete practices of the individual chapters, writ large, Chapters One and Two provide a critical basis for moving ethnographically into the contemporary context in Chapters Three to Seven. I, thus, re-situate my text within the context of my fieldwork investigations and my own series of returns to Alexandria (my fieldwork phases) carried out in the period 1995-2002. As an introduction and guide to the principal arguments that are taken up in the course of the thesis, in what follows I outline the five key themes/motif which predominate along with a discussion of sources of evidence I use.

i. - Archival Traumas and Redemptions

A core motif I pursue, and one that has gone largely ignored by mainstream critics, is that of the enduring potency of the Alexandrina paradigm – and more broadly of the archive-as a locus for the narrativisation of traumatic loss and redemption. I draw upon this aspect initially with reference to a critical reading of the Eurocentric sources of evidence and frames which legitimate the Western purchase on the Alexandria Project as beyond question. I illustrate how both ancient sources and authors, writing from the Renaissance and post Renaissance period onwards, form in the Western imagination a philosophical/metaphysical theme of the Alexandria archive as a return to origin underpinned by the trauma of original loss (cf. Polignac 2000a; Foucault 1964; Errera 1997). I crystallise these dynamics by picking up on the acts of mirroring and empathetic identification at play in ‘old’ museologists’ ancient coding of the birth the Museum/archive as synonymous with an ‘acting out’ of a wider ‘universal’ drama of individuation in which the West’s traumatic act of separating out from the Greek childhood/homeland (personified in the figure of Alexander the Great who as ancestor-hero charts out this odyssey) and in which the ancient Alexandrina (as ancestor-archive) is positioned as both a ‘refuge’ for the ‘Greek’ exiles/diaspora (both ‘old’ and ‘new’) and a means to manage, mediate and potentially redeem traumatic loss and reinstate collective memory (cf. Bazin 1967).
I contextualise these particular perspectives by placing them within an alternative intellectual engagement in which the museum/ archive/ library is positioned as mirror to the Western psyche and more specifically to modernity's preoccupation with its own philosophical loss of origin (cf. Maleuvre 1999; Castillo 1984). My concern is to characterise the role of the archive as located at the break between memory and history and as a place where destabilized, failed memory - or memory-in-exile - is re-housed. I draw upon Derrida's Freudian impression of these dynamics in *Archive Fever* (1996) which addresses more specifically the archival compulsion to return to origin which I understand is symptomatic of a more profound sense of cultural loss and erosion in the Western imaginary that can only be retrieved by investing in the archive as a place of return, diagnosis and cure.

My concern here, therefore, is to highlight the tension exposed by Derrida and other anti-archival/ anti-museum critics between this redemptive idea that the archival template offers a means for trauma to be repeated in such a way that it can be mastered, and its antithesis, that recasts the archival space as a realm of conflict, 'archiviencences' and further trauma (Derrida 1996: 10-11). The core dilemma being that of putting into play an archival discourse 'which holds' rather than one which 'destroys' (Rapaport 2003: 88-89). This archival drama is bound up in the apparent contradiction that all archives are legitimated in the moment of traumatic break/ destruction and, as such, they must 'burn' (metaphorically or literally) for a 'community' to be born (Rapaport 2003: 78). The consequence here is that new tensions come into play between, firstly, the archive as the 'Greek' metaphysical subject's exclusive 'self object' which actively exiles the 'other' from the domain of archival hospitality and, secondly, the attempts of those exiled (marginalised, misrepresented or made absent) to destabilise and open up such spaces for new, alternative acts of memory-work and narrativisations of loss and trauma. I argue the contemporary revivalist project is bound up in this drama.
ii. Memory, Loss and Repossession

From its inception as the ancient ‘memory of the world’ to the city’s modern cosmopolitan counterpart as Durrell’s ‘Capital of Memory’ Alexandria has preoccupied the West as the site of memory’s constitution, its destruction and renewal (Polignac 2000a). I take up this motif of memory-work to argue that the emotive quality of the Alexandria project lies in its assertion of an Aristotelian base for universal archival memory (cf. Findlen 2000: 167) which, in turn, has become adopted as the foundational frame of Western orthodox museological/heritage paradigms of preservation, as the defense against cultural loss and entropy. As such the Alexandrina archive is canonised as the point of origin for curative aspirations which have become embedded in the museological/heritage languages and practices, for example, in its objectives to curate, preserve, revive and restore and thus to build ‘on the ruins.’ My concern is to show how these operate not only historically but underpin UNESCO’s post-war project of cultural brokership and reconstruction.

In order to expose the limitations of the Aristotelian model of memory I draw out competing critiques of memory-work and literary re-workings of orthodox theories of loss. I attach particular importance to the imagist poet H.D. whose own ‘Alexandria project’ draws upon Freudian dynamics of memory–work (forgetting, trauma and mourning) and re-works these alongside new poetic interventions into nostalgia and melancholy (H.D. 1961; Chisholm 1992). As such H.D. engages in a literary recovery of Alexandria’s ancient ‘signs and images’ and its ‘myths and icons’ in order to recast both the city and archive as a potent therapeutic space, a theatre of memory and mourning and as a means to define a ‘writing cure’ (cf. Chisholm 1992:6). My concern is to show how Alexandria’s literary odysseys and acts of mourning intentionally or unintentionally narrate the West’s own exile and departure from the colonial scene as the emergent post-War real-politick shocks the ‘khawaga’ (European ex-patriot) communities out of their own dream-worlds (Brown and Taieb 1996: 9).
I subsequently shift the focus of my inquiry to the violent break-up of worlds, landscapes and the destabilisation of Grand Narrative values which mark the post-war era. I, therefore, re-situate my critique in a global context traumatised by the Holocaust and by the violent acts of partition which have accompanied the process and experiences of decolonisation and new nation-building. I turn to alternative acts of memory-work, in the interventions of, amongst others, anti-colonial writers, activists, postcolonial critics and deconstructionists. It allows me to bring into play wider tensions between the rejectionism and complex recuperations of Western values and institutions which define this period and which also mark Egypt’s rejection of its Greco-Roman past in the post-Independence period. I argue that a critical rehearsal of this context is necessary to understand the complex dynamics of the Bibliotheca’s homecoming.

The central claim I make here is that despite the radical destabilisation of Western orthodoxies, the search for loci to assist the objectification of identity and memory-work, not least, in terms of attempts to narrativise trauma and loss has gathered momentum. It has led, for example, to Afrocentrists’ symbolically centring of the Egyptian cultural and monumental heritage as a resource or template for memory-work. This ‘Return to Egypt’, as Diop amongst others asserts, is invested as the dynamic for the (potential) working through of historical trauma (including that of slavery) and as a means to reclaim a sense of future renewal. The deconstructionist investment in Egypt as a locus of memory-work is also investigated in terms, for example, of Derrida’s identification of ‘Egypt’ as the ‘pharmakon’ – or ‘poison-cure’ – endowed with the means to destabilise and to enact an intellectual exile from the tyrannies of the ‘White Mythologies’ (cf. Derrida 1997 [1981]; Bennington 1992: 104).

iii. - What it is to be human?

The key intellectual motif to define this thesis responds to the core question of: ‘What it is to be human?’ This intellectual odyssey emerges initially from Alexandria’s foundational mythology and as such affords museologists the means to invest the archive/museum as modernity’s metaphysical ‘mirror’ and its privileged medium for reflecting
upon the human condition (Maleuvre 1999: 22). My concern is to show that the inscription of the Alexandria as an essentially humanistic project acquires for the broader museum/heritage discourse its 'secular' humanistic, philosophical odyssey and as such is bound up in the process of secularisation synonymous with the Western experience of modernity (cf Duncan 1995; Horne 1984). Not only has this secularisation entailed the re-organisation of religious experience and the re-deployment of its rituals and theological languages into a materialised memory-work of redemption and renewal but has seen the museum as 'secular shrine' and its 'sacrilized' heritage landscapes (cf MacCannell 1989 [1978]) centred as stations which map out a course for mankind's [sic] heritage crusades (Lowenthal 1996) and tourist routes (Selwyn1996).

I place alongside this body of critical texts, alternative interventions, notably those of Said which not only address the potential intimacies and clashes between secularism and religion both inside and outside the West but which also argue the need for the recognition of a 'new humanism' no longer tied to the spread of Western liberalism but which is acknowledged as originating from an earlier phase of integration (Said 1983; Said 2001a). As such Said argues that a recuperated humanism offers a still resonant medium for 'secular justice' capable of creating an environment in which protagonists can recognise their essential humanity (Said 2003). I also draw on Derrida's contribution to these debates in terms of his *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness* (2002a) – which, amongst other dynamics, brings together notions of cosmopolitanism, hospitality (rooting these in refugee and asylum rights) and the capacity to forgive (here critical discussions of amnesty and truth and reconciliation are key preoccupations) – which see Derrida argue that the demand for justice and expiation are an impossibility without the essential nature of humanity being recognised. My concern here is with pursuing new shifts which move away from an understanding of heritage as an object/thing to heritage as humanity while also aligning these with a new politics of 'return', 'redistribution', 'respect' and 'justice' (Rowlands 2002). In this latter sense the Alexandrina’s homecoming can be seen as part of wider acts of repossession in which the dream to both define and to colonise or re-possess one's lost object endures, as does an increased faith in, and calls for, culture as cure.
I show that this is a context which is marked by both the re-emergence of 'old' museological characterisations and by this new politics of return has resulted in heritage discourse re-emerging as a powerful metaphor by which to express historical – and on-going - grievance and injustice and as bound up in accompanying demands not only for the restitution of cultural objects and human remains but of human dignity, justice and respect (Rowlands 2002). In the post-war period this complex and often contestatory context has also witnessed brokership of these renewed odysseys and quests taken up by globalising agencies: notably by contemporary revivalism’s international broker UNESCO. Not only has this seen contemporary heritage crusades bound up in a ‘Rights’ culture – and as such led to new definitions of ‘what it is to be human?’ bound up within (broadly Eurocentric) legalistic framings - but it has also witnessed the return of a predominantly Aristotelian memory/ culture paradigm within globalised heritage discourse. This process has seen a universalisation and globalisation too of the key foundational heritage values of the Alexandria paradigm. I seek to show how these have provided a resource for new empathies and ententes but also for provoking ‘new’ cultural fundamentalisms, ethnocentrism, neo-narcissisms and neo-colonisations.

iv. ‘Disturbances’ of Metaphysical and Material Worlds.

I take as my fourth motif the tensions between revivalism as a metaphysical, metaphorical, literary project of return and homecoming and the literalisation of this project in attempts to objectify in material form its (often violent, sometimes therapeutic) redemptive urges. I draw upon Freud’s theorising of a ‘disturbance of memory’ (Freud 1984 [1936]: 443-456 ) in which Freud uses his account of achieving his ‘long cherished dream to visit the Parthenon’ (Rojek 1997: 56) as a means to analyse how his literal confrontation with the Acropolis - which had previously only existed for Freud as a literary landscape (and as such had been repressed as an ‘object of the imagination’) – brought about a ‘disturbance’ capable of accessing the unconscious (Freud 1984: 443-456). Freud appeals to Oedipal readings to argue this ‘disturbance’ provoked a crisis/
breakthrough of memory-work in his recognition of having surpassed the boundaries and limitations of his origins.

Crucially, Freud’s biographers/ critics have linked this ‘disturbance’ to Freud and psychoanalysis’ wider destabilisations of the dominant ‘Greek’ identity/ psyche to a project of ‘othering’ which offered the possibility of accessing repressed identities, notably of both ‘Jew’ and ‘Egyptian’ (Forrester 1994; Raphael-Leff 1990). I argue that contemporary Alexandria can similarly be understood to be undergoing an intense ‘disturbance of memory.’ As such, Alexandria’s still dominant characterisation as literary city and as an ‘object of the imagination’ (particularly within the Western and elite Egyptian/ global imagination) is currently being confronted by the materiality of the ancient past in the form of both the Alexandrina project and archaeological finds. As such, this disturbance has the potential to access Alexandria’s own submerged, repressed memories, heritages, genealogies and origins.

I pursue these dynamics further, firstly at the metaphysical level, by placing Freud’s ‘disturbance’ in the context of interventions made by Levinas in the pivotal post-war period which issued a challenge to the dominant ‘Greek’ metaphysical identity/ position by arguing a place for the figure of the ‘Jew’ within the domain of philosophy/ ethics (Levinas 1987; Hand 1989). I also provide more detail to Derrida’s articulation of the ‘Egyptian’ as a third ‘site/ non-site’ and as an ‘enigma’ capable of confronting Western metaphysics with pre-‘Greek’ origins and influences (Derrida 1997; Bennington 1992). While this broad investigation leads me to discuss the (above authors) critical return to ancient ‘figures’ and ‘identities’ such as ‘Moses’ and ‘Thoth’ it also allows me to consider alternative strategies pursued by Spivak (1992; 1993) and Perniola (1995). I show how these latter authors’ interventions are capable of critically addressing key characterisations of the ancient Alexandrina identity, firstly, as the ‘ultimate expression of Greek narcissism in institutional form’ (Gore 1976: 169) and, secondly, as an ‘enigma’ (Abaddi 1990:12), in terms of their relationships to both metaphysical/ literary and material worlds.
Spivak and Perniola’s repossession of the literary/psychoanalytic myth of Narcissus and Echo, for example, - is mobilised as a strategy to define a postcolonial model of identity work which goes ‘beyond’ the repetition of model ‘Western’ (Narcissistic) colonial master-narratives in order to provoke ‘empathetic identification’ with the once dehumanised, colonised ‘other’ (Spivak 1993, Perniola 1995). More specifically Perniola’s broader intervention concerns itself with ‘heritage-enigma’ in terms of the capacity of heritage objects to bring the past into the present and by these means provoke new disturbances of memory across ancient and modern worlds. With even greater resonance for the contemporary Alexandria project he centres new, digital technologies in his theorisations (Perniola 1995).

Finally I use Said and Saadawi’s work to address the extremes and distopic underside of the literalisation of the project of homecoming (Saadawi 1997; Said 2003). I draw upon Said’s account of the creation of modern state of Israel which identifies the central role of archaeology and of the heritage and museum culture in legitimating ancient claims to ‘Israel’ as ‘homeland’ (Said 2003). In documenting the on-going violences which underpin this project he details how the top-down forces of museumification and monumentalism have not only silenced pre-existing oral traditions and erased their concomitant hybrid heritages but are used to further legitimate the displacement and exile of Palestinians and further still, to deny their own right of return. Saadawi an Egyptian critic, with echoes of Said, highlights both historical and contemporary acts of what she dubs as ‘cultural terrorism’ and ‘cultural genocide’ which underpin European, colonial cultures archaeological and Egyptological projects in Egypt (Saadawi 1997: 167-169). Crucially, she relates this to modern Egypt’s complex and contestatory process of a ‘return to origin’ and the contemporary ambivalence towards its ancient material heritage. My concern is to show how both authors argue for the recovery of the ‘popular voice’ of resistance and for a recognition of ‘besieged identities’ (Said 2003: 54) not only as a means to chart out a more humane approach to cultural heritage but as part of a new ‘cosmopolitan’ consciousness (Said 2003: 52).
v. Contemporary Cosmopolitical ‘Contact zones’.

It is this motif of cosmopolitanism which offers the final bridge to my ethnographic work proper and as such is used to develop aspects of theorisation and methodology in order to affect this shift. As previously stated cosmopolitanism is perhaps the most potent of Alexandria’s of ‘signs and images’ and as MacLeod (2002: xi) has remarked ‘cosmopolitanism’ is currently being reinvested as the key motif mediating return and as such is profiled as the over-arching resource from which to engage in the ‘imagination of possible futures’ (Venn 2002: 65). My engagement with these dynamics begins with the assertion that there are sympathies and resonances between the destabilisations of the Alexandria project that the force of contemporary revivalism has put into play, and new critical returns and recuperations of ‘cosmopolitanism’ currently being made within the academy (cf. Cheah and Robbins 1998: Meijer 1999; Featherstone 2002).

These interventions mark a critical contrast with the aforementioned intellectual-academic trends which led museologists and heritage theorists to reject the Alexandrina paradigm. Elsewhere in the academy, however, interventions primarily authored by postcolonial cultural studies and anthropology have resulted in the articulation of a highly politicised ‘cosmopolitical’ dynamic (Cheah 1998a; Dikec 2002). My concern is to use selected critical theorisations and frameworks from within this domain in order to recast the contemporary scene of revivalism as a ‘cosmopolitical contact zone’ (Clifford 1998: 369) and by these means to explore in more depth both the historical and contemporary subtleties of exchange and encounter. Moreover, Derrida’s recent ‘cosmopolitical’ critique of UNESCO offers a means to extend this brief to include revivalism’s chief culture-broker (Derrida 2002b).

More specifically still, I am also concerned to investigate the more explicitly oppressive, distopic underside of the discourse of cosmopolitanism and of the Alexandrina’s genealogy, vis-à-vis. the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ myth/thesis (see Said 2001a on

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1 Dikec charts out the use of the terms cosmopolitanism/ cosmopolitical from Kant, who initially ‘highlighted’ these concepts, to Derrida’s recent return to and re-working of these dynamics. He also outlines their intimacy with the concept of hospitality (Dikec 2002: 244 ft.3).
Huntington 1996). My reference here is to the fault-line appearing at the moment of the ancient institution’s destruction, which in a dominant genre of Western history writing has been particularised as a ‘clash’ between ‘Islam and the West’ (Ahmed 1992: 94-95). This is based upon (now discredited claims) that the Arab leader Calif Omar on entering Alexandria in 646AD called for the burning of the Alexandria library on the premise that only one text – that of the Koran – requires preservation (Ahmed 1992: 94-95). This latter motif, as I demonstrate later in this thesis, has re-emerged alongside contemporary revivalism’s own celebratory rhetorics, firstly, in the sense that this above myth/historical episode has returned to haunt the contemporary revivalist imaginary (cf. Chapter Five) and, secondly, in terms of new conflicts, such as those as the September 11th attacks and the subsequent ‘War Against Terror’ which, as critics argue, (and seek to challenge) has led to new fault-lines and a new ‘reality’ being given to ‘clashes’ between ‘Islam and the West’ (and between, as Barber (1995) has it, ‘McWorld and Jihad’). My concern is to argue that the Alexandrina paradigm needs to be read as the point of origin or template for, the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ thesis as much as that of cosmopolitanism.

Returning to the potency of the Bibliotheca and its motif of cosmopolitanism as a medium for a series of re-engagements (MacLeod 2001) one can see that contemporary revivalism can, writ larger still, also be read as a microcosm of different and often contested ‘cosmopolitics’ and potential ‘clashes’. Perhaps the most significant aspect of contemporary revivalism is that it marks a return to and re-engagement with the country’s Greco-Roman pasts which have been largely rejected from political national discourse since the 1950s. Ironically then, the Alexandrina as Egypt’s lost object, along with its cosmopolitical paradigms, are currently being re-presented as still resonant resources for memory work and, as previously stated, for articulating ‘possible futures’ (Venn 2002: 65). Moreover, as one radical critique of Alexandrian cosmopolitanism, made with reference to the work of Alexandrian film-maker Youssef Chahine, also draws out, the city’s ancient ‘myths and icons’ have the potential to be mobilised as a means to mediate and ‘mourn’ not only historical traumas (including the departure of the European communities post-1950s) but the Grand narrative political failures and violences which mark Egypt’s Independence era (Halim 2002a: 5). Halim’s critique also sets in play
questions regarding the role of Alexandria’s recently recovered archaeological heritage in this process.

A critical reading of context, therefore, allows me to make more explicit the ways in which contemporary revivalism, like contemporary cosmopolitical framings, offers a ‘radical destabilization’ of ‘traditional Western moorings’ (Clifford 1998:363; see also Anderson 1998:272) and is increasingly bound up in defining a host of ‘new cosmopolitanisms’ amongst which can be identified the ‘retrieval and circulation of non-western formulations of cosmopolitics’ (Anderson 1998:274). This latter dynamic is perhaps best symbolised in the contemporary context by the fact that Saddam Hussein was a key sponsor and supporter of the contemporary scheme. Moreover, it is the ethnographic context which is underlined by critics as the most effective medium via which to study cosmopolitical ‘contestations’, ‘translations’, ‘hybridisations’ and ‘crossings-over’ and to recognise these acts of world-making as part of human agency and experience (see Rabinow 1986). I argue that Clifford’s characterisation of the ‘cosmopolitical contact zone’ (Clifford 1998: 369) has further possibilities in terms of bringing into view an ethnographic mapping capable of defining the levels and layers of the contemporary project’s homecoming.

As such I argue that it provides a resonant framing for this contemporary odyssey as it undergoes transformation and translation: - from an idea initially revived by academics from Alexandria University; its subsequent re-inscription as a partnership between UNESCO and the Egyptian government; its emergence as an architectural object; and its continuous re-workings as the project is shaped, translated (and often contested) via a series of institutions (governmental and NGOs), groups and individuals at local, national, and international levels. It also allows me to demonstrate that alongside the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s own emergence also emerges an ‘official’ celebratory revivalist thesis and a complex ‘messy politics’ (Clifford 1998: 369) born of the intimacies, tensions and discrepancies between this dominant thesis and co-existent struggles to particularise, pluralize and popularise the Alexandrina’s cosmopolitics.
AN ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH

In pursuing an ethnographic approach to the Alexandrina’s homecoming in Chapters Three to Seven I make the claim that contemporary mainstream museum and heritage studies have lacked up to the present a sufficiently grounded approach that does more than talk to museum audiences about their response to exhibitions, heritage sites and displays (cf. Hooper-Greenhill 2001; Handler and Gable 1997; Hetherington 1999). I, therefore, take the task of this thesis as that of shifting attention to a much wider operational reality in which heritage revival programmes are conducted. In exploring contemporary revivalism in terms, for example, of a set of aspirations, as a bureaucratic creation and by mapping the subsequent operational networking and impacts of the Alexandrina project I argue that what is required is the need to ‘talk to people’ in several and quite diverse settings in order to precisely establish the connections and relationships that space, time and amnesia suitably interrupt and disjoin.

Tracing the points where these networks interact and shape particular decisions is the challenge set in this thesis and as such this requires the teasing out of these connections between the different actors and drawing out their motivations and intentions within and across their particular settings. I have attempted to meet this by developing a method of framing which will highlight such connectivities (Latour 1993; Callon 1998). My focus has been to provide a descriptive sense of what ‘happens’ on the ground and to focus on persons, objects and sites as the best way of showing this interaction. For example, I place great emphasis on the 1990 Aswan Meeting (see Chapter Three) as a foundational event which inaugurated the Egyptian government and UNESCO partnership and also as a precedent that established not only a set of expectations for the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project but also relations between people and institutions. Other revivalist events, sites and spaces such as the UNESCO Head-Quarters in Paris, Egypt’s national cultural agency the Supreme Council of Antiquities in Cairo and the Greco-Roman Museum in

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2 See Appendix Two for a more detailed outline of my research timetable, methodology and the specific research questions which informed my successive fieldwork phases.
Alexandria emerge as foci for looking at connections and tracing relationships of agency that combine persons and objects into a single nexus (cf Gell 1998).

To achieve these methodological challenges I have resorted to what has become, perhaps rather fashionably known in anthropology, as multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1998). Ideas on networks have been used in studies of processes of globalisation, transnationalism and consumption (for example, Hannerz 1992; Appadurai 1990; Miller 1994), nations and nationalism (Anderson 1991; Clifford 1997) and intellectual /cultural property rights (Strathern 1999). With the recognition of the diverse and interactive nature of global/local relations, the idea of context has taken on a more dispersed and integrative definition than the usual meaning of identity in one place. In my case, this relates in particular to cultural elites and their production of heritage projects that rely on diverse and frequent connections and travel for meetings, conferences, attending celebratory ‘events’ and yet are also grounded in local political networks that are the object of patronage and persuasion in order to implement the grand designs approved at much higher political and bureaucratic decision making levels.

I respond to the need, therefore, to consider networks in a more abstract sense as forms of social organisation that relate people in threads of continuity passing from the local to the global, and as networks of practices, documents and translations (cf Callon 1998; Law and Hassard 1999). As Latour remarks ‘the two extremes, local and global, are much less interesting than the intermediary arrangements that we are calling networks’ (Latour 1993: 121-122). Clifford has also insightfully pointed to these moments of transition as ‘border crossings’ (with echoes of his work on ‘cosmopolitical’ ‘contact zones’). This also serves to locate the thesis at the point at which values and meanings are created through the translations and interactions that take place in these actor networks (Clifford 1998: 2001).

My ethnographic methods draw upon semi structured interviews and discussions with the principal players involved in the decisions and implementations of contemporary Alexandrian revivalism in order that the complexity of networks can be drawn out. In
addition since Alexandria continues to exist on an abstract, imaginary level as a ‘city of memory’ and as a realm constructed by literary/ historiographic interventions, I found interviews with poets/ writers and cultural historians instrumental in offering a further destabilisation of the Alexandria project. These particular interventions are committed to opening the project up from its Eurocentric lens in order to define more inclusive future orientated visions for the Alexandria project’s ‘signs and images’ based upon the recognition of alternative genealogies of cosmopolitan crossings-over. Due to word length selected sources and substantive case material on which my analysis is based can be found in my appendices. I consider these vital for understanding the technicist ‘languages’ and ‘development apparatus’ (cf. Ferguson 1994) deployed as the standard discursive practices of heritage revivalism and as mobilised by a largely routinised group of ‘experts’ regularly employ in different settings.

On a final introductory note I accept that my own role as an ‘actor’ requires of me a self-reflection in terms of my attitudes and my reactions to ethnographic contexts and events. Writ larger still, I am aware, and moreover I am interested in, what might be described as the relative position that the same context which had been investigated, or where an interview was held, in 1995, might produce a different story when revisited in 2003. This motif of fluidity, changing perspectives and the shaping and redefinition of revivalist ‘memory’ (i.e. revivalism’s account of ‘itself’) is a specific concern and interest of this thesis, and I would argue, is a dynamic which not only narrates collaborations and ‘ententes’ but has illustrated how revivalism itself has emerged as a traumatic experience for some actors and groups. Moreover, this need to disturb the vision of revivalism as a ‘world in itself’ must also be recognised in terms of highlighting how revivalism’s most dramatic fault-lines relate to its increased exposure to the ‘real’ of a world traumatised by the events of the September 11\textsuperscript{th} attacks. Also closer to ‘home’ the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians and the on-going Intifada, as I show, continue to have profound impacts on the Bibliotheca’s homecoming.
Chapter One

The ‘Alexandria Project’ in the Western Imagination
CHAPTER ONE
THE 'ALEXANDRIA PROJECT' IN THE WESTERN IMAGINATION

INTRODUCTION
RECOVERY AND TRANSMISSION

Alexandria would be the town of the Muses, the town of the Museum and of the greatest library of antiquity.

(Jacob and Polignac 2000: 15-16)

[The medium that archives all media cannot archive itself. This paradox inhabits all dreams of an exhaustive transformation into museums or (as Borges has it) all dreams of relentless memory.

(Kittler 1996:76).

The objective of this first chapter is to critically return to the acts of recovery and transmission that have shaped the Alexandria project historically with the aim of using these to explore the hold that Alexandria and its legendary archive have had on the Western imagination. My initial, and more specific focus, is on the means and motivations by which the West as self appointed heir of the ‘Greek’ tradition came to dominate the actions of modern museum and heritage culture in the appropriation of Alexandria’s foundational dramas, its motif of homecoming and its redemptive formula. I therefore investigate the Alexandrina paradigm and address its potency as an integral part of the West’s creation of cosmopolitan dream-worlds and underpinning promises and values.

My starting point is to emphasise that the construction of the Alexandrina project is bound up in both ancient as well as modern mythologisations and idealisations of Alexandria. This acts as the source for subsequent acts of transmission and for their translation into projects of cultural revivalism spanning both ancient and modern worlds (Polignac 2000b: 212). Polignac, for example, in a recent critical ‘excavation’ of Alexandria’s myth/historiography prompted by contemporary revivalism, gives an
account of ancient authors 'exalting the glory' of Alexandria's 'origins and monuments' from the Hellenistic period onwards and emphasises how, 'The Alexandria library was a legend well within its own lifetime' (Polignac 2000b: 214). He further illustrates how Alexandria's 'glory' is bound up in a powerful combination of the 'elaboration' of 'myth', of 'royal propaganda,' 'local traditions' and in what are dubbed as the 'twisted accounts' (Polignac 2000b: 212). The last accolade goes to the *Alexander Romance* a 'collection of Alexandrian legends from the third century AD' attributed to pseudo-Callisthenes which dramatise and idealise further Alexander the Great's myth and in so doing the city's own status (Polignac 2000b: 212). These accounts which are articulated from an almost exclusively pro-'Greek-Macedonian' perspective are also effective in positioning both city and archive as an extension of the 'Greek' landscape and highlight further Alexandria's characterisation as the 'New Athens' and, from the Roman period onwards, as Alexandria *ad Aegyptum*, Alexandria *by not in* Egypt (cf. Brown and Taieb 1996:7).

One of a number of key paradoxes associated with the city’s mythologisation lies in the fact that with some irony, and with some advantage to modern Western historiographers, the *Alexander Romance* emerges as the most effective medium by which Alexandria’s myth has been transmitted into modernity and also ‘exported’ internationally (Polignac 2000b: 214.). Polignac, for example, highlights how, ‘By the Middle Ages, the pseudo-Callisthenes, through its innumerable versions and translations, had become the principal source of knowledge about Alexander for all the peoples living from Spain to Mongolia, from Sweden to Ethiopia, and its influence made the myth of Alexandria available to the most varied of civilizations’ (Polignac 2000b: 214). This process is credited in turn with putting into play the aforementioned ‘signs and images of universal domination that were associated with Alexandria’ (Polignac 2000b: 212) and which, although subject to contestation, – and in some cases rejectionism –, ‘established a myth which has survived the tribulations of history to become implanted in the collective memory’ (Jacob and Polignac 2000: 14).
Although, as critics make clear, the complex ‘translation’ of Alexandria’s legacy extends across East (for example, Baghdad’s ‘House of Wisdom’) and West it is the latter’s insistence on a ‘monolithic transmission’ of the legacy of Alexandria which has led to the establishment of an orthodox Eurocentric framing for the Alexandrina project (Jacob and Polignac 2000: 18-19). Critics also argue that while for many, particularly in the non-West, the myth of Alexandria is subsequently rendered ‘vague and foreign’ (Polignac 2000b: 214) it is, however, the West who consolidated, explored and exploited further an empathic projection and identification with the city. As a consequence this Western frame has increasingly claimed a fixed pathway which extends the project from the Renaissance, Enlightenment to modernity. As another critic asserts, ‘Scholars and men of letters will never forget that Alexandria was the origin, the blueprint for Europe, both Medieval and Modern’ (Klibansky 2000: 226).

- Museum Town, Mirror Town

As stated in my introduction, it is Alexandria’s characterisation as ‘a museum town, a mirror town’ (Jacob and Polignac 2000:14) and as dream world of the ancient Mouseion/Library that has provided the specific mirror for the retrospective gaze of traditional museum historians intent on (re-)possessing a desired or imagined ancient ancestor and claiming its foundational values (cf. Burcaw 1997 [1921]: 25-6; Bazin 1967). The result has been the construction of the Alexandrina paradigm. The ‘new’ museologists and heritage theorists subsequent rejection of this ‘old’ narrative of ancient origins has thus resulted in a dramatic destabilisation and metamorphosis of the traditional landscape of museology. Demystifying this ‘old’ museological discourse by detaching it from its

1 In this thesis my purpose in using the terms ‘West’/ ‘Western’ is a means to recognise and to engage in a critique a Euro-American set of attitudes and thought that have attempted to dominate the construction and shaping of knowledge and power. My specific focus is upon how these frames and sources exert their influence on the myth-historiography which characterises the Alexandria project/ Alexandrina paradigm. My point is to retain the term to challenge rather than to privilege the absolute worth and moral/ethical values and certainties synonymous with the force of ‘Occidental modernity’ (Venn 2002). Moreover, rather than pitching this against a ‘native point of view’ or the ‘non–west’ as different in temporal/spatial terms, I draw out the hybridisations of contact and identity-work across North and South which both historically and in contemporary times resist the simple ‘truth’ and moral/ethical validity of staging global identity work in such homogenised and hermetically sealed worlds.
Classical origin and re-contextualising its ‘birth’ firmly within modernity, has been a defining mark of ‘new’ museological critiques (Bennett 1995; Huyssen 1995: 13-37). One casualty of this shift has been the Alexandrina paradigm which has subsequently been largely dismissed by museologists as little more than an attempt by ‘old’ museologists to establish metaphorical/ mythical connections with imagined precursors in order to acquire for a modern institution a sense of longevity and a Classical pedigree (Vergo 1989).

While in agreement with the intellectual untenability of a narrative which appropriates ancient history in its own image, it is these dynamics of metaphor, empathetic identification and acts of mythologising that operate across ancient and modern worlds which interest me as does the paradoxical crossings-over in the rejection and revivalism of critical museology. To give some idea of the drama of this over-lap, Vergo’s (1989: 1-3) rallying call for a ‘new’ museology and its concomitant symbolic rejection of the Alexandrina paradigm (which galvanised critical museological perspectives) came within a year of the foundation stone of the Alexandrina being laid by Egypt’s President Hosni Mubarak and UNESCO’s (then) Director General Federico Mayor (see Appendix One).

My point here is that what I call the homecoming of the Alexandrina project witnesses that current practice has gone beyond this ‘old’/ ‘new’ museological splitting and is currently responding and giving recognition to alternative hybrid museological/ heritage models. However, while critical museologists such as Hooper-Greenhill (1992) and Crimp (1997) have engaged in strategic, critical returns to what have been dubbed ‘original institutions’ (Crimp 1997: 18) within the ‘old’ or traditional museological trajectory (Renaissance institutions/ Wunderkammer etc) no specific critical returns have been made to either ancient origins or to the Alexandrina paradigm. Therefore, while I take as a useful starting point Crimp’s recommendation that museological acts of return to ‘originary institutions’ need to be undertaken not just ‘to uncover their [museums] true histories but to observe how they have been pressed into the service of contemporary museological historicism’ (Crimp 1997: 18) my own project of going beyond the ‘old’/ ‘new’ museological looks to further critical perspectives.
With this in mind, my intention is to observe how the legend of the Mouseion-Library has been pressed into the service of museology and as such I pursue the project of a return to ancient origins with the objective, firstly, of engaging in a critical return to selected traditional museum histories: notably that of Bazin’s *Museum Age* (1967) which is generally regarded as the canonical ‘old’ museological text. My second strategy is to critically re-read these texts alongside the aforementioned recent critical ‘excavations’ of Alexandria’s mythologising and historiography prompted by contemporary museum revivalism. These include not only Polignac’s contributions (2000a; 2000b) but also, for example, those of Boulluec (2000) and Mosse (2000) and Maehler (1983; 1997). My claim here is that these latter critiques by revealing a wider context of mythologisation have made available the repressed or forgotten aspects of the ‘old’ museological discourse. As such it allows me to engage in a critical recovery of the visions and aspirations evoked for the West when it reaches back to Alexandria to outline both the potency and repression which exists in these myths of origin and homecoming.

It is also at this point that I argue for the need to shift towards alternative theorisations capable of addressing the Eurocentricity of the ‘old’ discourse and I begin to draw out the potential implications of this legacy for the contemporary revivalist context. I therefore take Halliday (1996) and Said (1993) as initial guiding forces. Halliday, for example, investigates the ‘power’ that myths acquire as a medium ‘to legitimize, to mislead, to silence, to mobilize’: he argues how, ‘once conveyed into the political realm, they acquire a force and a reality they previously lacked’ (Halliday 1996: 6-7). Both he and Said have mobilised their own intellectual projects to ‘unveil’ and thus reject the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ myth-thesis which has taken on new force of reality in the contemporary context. Said’s method of ‘contrapuntal’ reading also informs my critical excavation of modernity’s/ museology’s adoption of ancient identities and mythologies (Said 1993). Borrowed from music, Said re-works the term to describe a method of reading texts that is capable of revealing their complicities in the colonial process. Thus a reading of the ‘old’ museologies (like that of the works of Austen or Kipling) can ‘unveil’ the metaphorical and mythological aspects of these narratives to reveal their social and
cultural reality: as Said recommends, 'we look back at the cultural archive... to reread not uni-vocally but contrapuntally' (Said 1993: 59).

When enacted together not only do these critical perspectives enable me to recast the Alexandrina paradigm as the point of origin for an 'invented' or 'imagined' history of the modern museum but to draw out the 'realities' at stake. As such, they offer a means to 'unveil' the agendas which underpin the 'old' Eurocentric museological discourse imagination and its cosmopolitan imagination, and therefore, to make critical reflections on museology’s foundational sources which have not met with critical inquiry, and which, I would argue, is all the more crucial as these orthodox frames are currently being recuperated as the chief resource for contemporary revivalism.

SECTION ONE
CRITICAL RETURNS TO THE MUSEOLOGICAL IMAGINATION

The Museum of Alexandria in Egypt was essentially like those of today ... and was, in fact, the first real museum. It was perhaps more than two thousand years before western civilisation again had comparable institutions. Perhaps only in the last hundred years or so are we really catching up with the ancient Greeks

(Burcaw 1997 [1921]: 25-6)

To write a history of the Museum is to give an account of the evolution of two concepts: that of the Museum and that of Time

(Bazin 1967: 5).

- Alexander’s Odyssey

Bazin’s The Museum Age (1967) the canonical ‘old’ museological text is shaped by acts of ancient to modern mirroring, reflection and empathetic identification. It is also preoccupied by the key concerns of ‘Greek’ origins, of myth-history, of memory and particularly that of time. The latter motif is so dominant that Bazin begins his text with
the above quoted statement. In asserting this link Bazin is interested, in particular, in the shift from cyclical to historical time which, he argues, creates the unique climate in which the birth of the Museum/ Alexandrina Mouseion occurs. These acts of mirroring and reflection are thus particularly powerful in positioning Alexander the Great as the (perhaps unlikely) hero of early museum formation. Bazin argues, for example, that ‘Alexander’s conquests brought to the concept of temporality the dimension of space, requisite for its [the Museum’s] evolution (Bazin 1967: 5). The traditional account of the museum and heritage cultures origins is, therefore, bound up in Alexander’s ‘forward movement’ and is seen as synonymous with the wider movement of ‘civilisation’ from city-state to empire; from cyclical to linear time; and from the time of myth to the time of history, and society’s entry into literacy (Bazin 1967: 5).

According to Bazin, just as ‘preludes’ to the Museum/ Alexandrina Mouseion can be identified in the memory-spaces and temples of the Muses, notably that of Delphi, and the intellectual academies of Plato and Aristotle located in mainland Greece (Bazin 1967: 12-16) the specific ‘preludes’ to Alexander’s journey can be identified as a series of conflicts – including the Medic, Peloponnesian and Philippic wars - which bring not only development but also displacement and despair (Bazin 1967: 5). Bazin thus echoes the traditional viewpoint which understands Hellenism as a ‘psychological moment’ (Ferguson 1973: 74) as defined by the experiences of change, rupture, war trauma and expansionism which, Bazin argues, caused ‘mankind’ [sic] to undergo psychological disorientation and which he further argues is synonymous with the moment in which, ‘the burden of time increased when humanity became conscious of individual destiny – of secular destiny’ (Bazin 1967: 5). From this basis Bazin’s text essentialises the story of the Alexandrina’s birth as a key moment in ‘mankind’s’ wider epic odyssey: its separation from the Gods, from the homeland and from the childhood and ‘primitive’ state; here too the experience of individual and historical consciousness is understood as a trauma of loss.

The ancient ‘birth’ of the museum at the liminal moment between the twilight of myth and the dawn of history according to Bazin is a ‘consolation’ for, and a means to manage,
mediate and potentially redeem traumatic loss and re-instate or re-house collective memory (Bazin 1967: 5). He argues that Hellenistic society is thus defined by simultaneous introvert and extravert tendencies. These introversions are expressed in the turn to the past and the retreat into nostalgia, ‘self-analysis’ and introspection, while, by way of contrast, expressions of extraversion are located in new aspirations and new concepts of utopianism which motivate projects to push back the boundaries of the known world (Bazin 1967: 5). ‘Utopianism’, as many authors argue, is subsequently essentialised a key part of Museum’s/ Alexandria’s genealogy (Polignac 2000a: 34). As such the Alexandrian Mouseion is regarded as the institution created to fulfill these twin contradictory needs of Hellenistic society.

These preoccupations with the psychological dynamics of loss of origin and trauma have gone largely ignored within mainstream museology. Expressed another way, however, the ‘old’ museologists ancient coding of the birth the Museum/ archive can be understood as synonymous with an ‘acting out’ of a wider ‘universal’ drama of ‘individuation’ in which the West’s traumatic act of separating out from the ‘Greek’ childhood/ homeland (personified in the figure of Alexander the Great who as ancestor-hero charts out this odyssey) and in which the ancient Alexandrina (as ancestor-archive) is positioned as both a ‘refuge’ for the ancient ‘Greek’ exiles and by their modern claimants (Bazin 1967: 6). This account of the Museum/ archive, therefore, legitimates and fixes the ‘Greek’ immigrant odyssey as point of origin for the universal pathway of history. Not only does the ‘old’ museological account of origins co-opt the Museum into a teleological trajectory but simultaneously ‘mankind’s’ desire for a cyclical, repetitive ritualism synonymous with an earlier ‘primitive’ state of being is recovered and preserved in the Museum’s transcendental qualities. This latter need to take ‘refuge in intemporal spheres’ is regarded of great importance and imbues the Museum/ Alexandrina with its other-worldliness and thus positions it outside time (Bazin 1967: 6).
Introversions/ Extraversions

By drawing out new ‘excavations’ of Alexandria’s mythologisation alongside Bazin’s ‘old’ museological thesis one can see how this wider drama is substantiated by, and also substantiates, the interventions of the aforementioned long line of ‘inventors and promoters of legend’ engaged in reviving Alexandrian myth and memory (Polignac 2000b: 214). The key characterisations in circulation across museological and mythological discourses which give substance to the aforementioned introversions of the archival trajectory are found, for example, in references to the Mouseion/ Library as an intensive ‘bird-cage of the Muses’ and as an original ivory tower (cf. Canfora 2000: 49). It is here too that the Alexandrina emerges as the symbolic ‘Mother’ or alma mater for the scholar-intellectuals and thus as a ‘womb-tomb’ philosopher’s cave (cf. Errera 1997: 139). Beneath this symbolism and securing the Alexandrina’s status as both an elite temple of contemplation and communion and also as ‘secular’ shrine is what Polignac refers to as the ‘living reality’ of state funding (Polignac 2000b: 214). This is a contrast to the Greek context in which philosophers had to compete for patronage (Polignac 2000a: 40). Moreover, as the ‘heir’ to both the ‘Platonic academy and Aristotelian lyceum’ the institution is charged with taking forward this core ‘secular’ humanistic philosophical odyssey (Bazin 1967: 5; Polignac 2000a: 40).

Key intellectual visions are thus internalised and essentialised within the Alexandrian archival imagination. Once again introversions are identified in the institution’s ‘antiquarian tendency’ (Maehler 1997:6). At its core is what is described as a ‘very Aristotelian’ project based upon the idea that to ‘understand a phenomenon you had to look at its origins’ (Maehler 1997:6). As critics argue, this preoccupation with origins and the need to re-house memory-in-exile, led to the ‘creation of a new object “Greek culture”’ (Jacob 2000: 98). Thus a key part of the archival mission was to retrospectively define, collect and preserve the ‘Greek’ heritage (Abaddi 1990:152). Alexandria is thus invested as ‘the place where the Greek diaspora could return to its cultural roots as perceived through books and knowledge’ (Jacob and Polignac 2000: 17). As recent critics and museologists make clear the Alexandrina is also driven by new and more rigorous
examinations of both external and internal worlds: not only in terms of objects and texts but mediations of the soul, mind, self (Mosse 2000). Consequently the 'old' museologists dedicate the Museum as 'secular shrine' to the contemplation of the destiny of man and to the spiritual odyssey of 'what it is to be human?' Bazin, for example, highlights Plato's search for the Happy or Good Life as part of the Alexandrina's foundational utopian influences (Bazin 1967:6). An associated 'old' museological characterisation of the museum/ archive as the 'Place for the Cure of the Soul' also draws out the institution's potentially healing capacity (Canfora 2000: 44).

Alongside these interrogations of 'inner/ interior' worlds are the Mouseion/ Museum's extraversions. These are expressed in terms of projects which map outwards into external objects and worlds. Here an emphasis is placed upon the archive as a place for the shaping of 'new' knowledge, in particular, projects to map, measure, define and extend knowledge of the known world (Boulluec 2000:56). This endeavour not only included the exploration of the earth, but, with the planetarium, the heavens too. The project of bringing 'Greek' knowledge into translation with other cultures (including 'barbarian sources' (Boulluec 2000:57), gives substance to the Alexandrina's 'dream of universality' a project which had 'haunted Aristotle' (Jacob and Polignac 2000:16). This 'universalising', encyclopaedic project orientated towards gathering together 'the memory of the world' in objectified form is thus motivated by the Aristotelian model of knowledge and memory in which objects are regarded as analogues to memory/ knowledge (cf. Mosse 2000). However, as a broader 'model for intellectual work' (Jacob and Polignac 2000: 17) not only Aristotelian/ Platonic influenced intellectual projects but also other philosophical traditions are 'exported' to Alexandria and developed within the walls of the Alexandrina to become the point of origin for new hybrid intellectual interventions (Boulluec 2000: 57).

- World in Microcosm

For many authors these 'fantasies of universal learning' (Polignac 2000a: 40) are best expressed in the institution's legendary library and in the particular project to accumulate
all the books in the then known world' which, authors argue, was believed by contemporaries to be achievable (Maehler 1997: 9). Moreover, this project led to the archiving of 'Greek' knowledge with 'alien wisdom' including 'Egyptian, Jewish, Chaldaean [and] Indian,' heritages (Boulluec 2000: 40). The Alexandrina is famously the place in which the Jewish Torah was first translated into Greek, and as such, the Alexandrina is not only home to the foundational texts of the Iliad and the Odyssey but 'Moses' too is credited as an 'emblematic figure' of its archival imagination (Boulluec 2000: 58). Not only was the Alexandrian dream that of attempting to encompass 'the world in a scroll' but the city itself is opened up to wider descriptions as a 'world in microcosm' (Canfora 2000: 43).

It is this latter motif which is intimately linked to further claims and characterisations of both city and archive as the birthplace of cosmopolitanism. Within the Alexandrina's walls critics argue that the 'initial elaborations' of the Cynics and Stoics regarding philosophical, conceptual cosmopolitanism were translated into an operational culture capable of challenging 'exclusive orthodoxy' and 'restricted perspectives' including the restrictiveness of the 'polis', of 'ritual', of 'law' and increasingly of the 'monotheistic religions' (Anderson 1998: 267; see also Zubaida 1999: 20) thus establishing cosmopolitanism proper. The city is similarly celebrated as a city of 'immigrants', 'exiles' and of an 'international diaspora' dominated by the 'Greek diaspora' (Jacob and Polignac 2000: 17). The city's foundational dramas and sources also assert that, 'Seers ... had prophesied, accurately, that the city would be a melting point of all nations' (Polignac 2000a: 33). It is here too that Alexandria establishes itself as a potent and idealised 'meeting place' of East and West. Moreover, it is this claim to cosmopolitanism which subsequently emerges as the over-arching, legitimating force of Alexandrian mythologisation and of the museological imagination.

- Trauma of Origin

Underpinning what Bazin and other 'old' museologists regard as an epic odyssey mapping across ancient and modern worlds and initiating the Alexandrina/Museum's
ancient birth and its transmission into modern times, is an equally epic trauma of origin. It is here one can draw out in more detail the central paradox or 'enigma' surrounding the monolithic role of the Alexandria archive as 'mediator, filter and thesaurus' and as a resource for the Western imagination (Jacob and Polignac 2000: 18). It is both because the 'work accomplished at Alexandria in the 3rd century BC marks a fundamental stage in the transmission of ancient culture' (Jacob and Polignac 2000: 17) that the institution is re-invested as a potent locus of memory/ identity-work, despite the fact that nothing survives of the archive itself. Stated another way, it is because and despite the destruction of the institution that the damage to the 'authenticity' of connection makes available a 'gap' or 'wound' in the history of the West and allows the Alexandrina as ancestor archive and as lost object to undergo repeated idealisation and which subsequently renders the institution at once both immortal and omnipotent.

This drama of the destruction of the ancient Alexandrina exposes an underpinning motif of loss and redemption within traditional museological discourse which is often missed by those assuming 'old' histories to be of a simple linear trajectory (for example, Hooper-Greenhill: 1992). In fact, traditional historians did not attempt to show a continuous history of the encyclopaedic, universal museum. The old museological narrative is better understood as one of conscious discontinuity (embraced as a positive element). The break - the Dark Ages - between Alexandria and their own time was a necessary rupture to show how civilisation had declined and how the new regime would recreate the glories of the past (Bazin 1967: 5-7). Thus the 'history' of the museum provides an important motivation for, and justification of, modern museum building. It also provides a powerful means to declare a rebirth/ revival that is capable of reaching back to a more glorious time: the time of origin and idealised roots. As a model it offers a narrative uncontaminated by the previous or present 'regime' and a corrective to current difficulties that feature as aberrations. Moreover, I argue it is by these means the museum as ancestor-archive also acquires its redemptive qualities and is afforded both diagnostic and prescriptive qualities: for example, by situating the Alexandria paradigm as a model of 'perfection' museologists could argue the need to reclaim their 'original' mission and 'originary' authenticity by returning to a founding myth.
As such Bazin outlines the next phase in the odyssey of museum development and recovery as the ‘rebirth’ of a ‘forgotten classicism’ during the Renaissance\(^2\) (Bazin 1967: 29). From a critical perspective these acts of transmission are best exposed as claims to ancestry made via the recovery of an etymological link between Mouseion/ Musaeum and Museum, purposefully nurtured in the West during the Renaissance period and later nodal points of museum formation. It is this link which thus affords the means by which the legend of the Alexandrina could be attached to museum/ heritage genealogies. It is by taking this critical perspective that one can better appreciate the sense in which the modern myth of the Alexandria project and Alexandrina paradigm undergoes its modern (re-)construction and the particular motivations at play.

Findlen, for example, one of the few critics who has returned to the Alexandrina paradigm, demonstrates that the Renaissance humanist’s recovery of the ancient Alexandrina is implicated in complex acts of memory-work. The ancient institution is celebrated as the key medium by which Aristotle’s own ideas were ‘transmitted’ and thus ‘endured for almost two thousand years’, moreover, it is the reclamation of the potent duality of ‘reason and imagination’ within the ‘Aristotelian schema’ which affords Renaissance philosophers – and the embryonic museum and heritage culture and wider Western philosophical tradition – to lay claim to a perfected, utopian and eternal vision of its originary self (Findlen 2000: 178). More specifically it lays claim to a vision of the Alexandrian Mouseion/ Library in which, ‘Untouched by the ravages of time, it housed everything one would ever care to know or recall, a perfect museum that one might roam with abandon, a true temple of the Muses’ (Findlen 2000: 178). The institution’s demise similarly serves as a dramatic mirror to the realities of cultural loss and underlines the point that it is the fear of loss of knowledge and of memory which underpins and

\(^2\) The Medieval world is described by Bazin as an ‘interlude’ or dark ages within the wider museum history (Bazin 1967: 29) defined as it was in Europe by its own sacred religious spaces, relics and notions of time and of the past outlined in Biblical texts. As such, he makes explicit only a secular age can engage in museological recovery.
motivates not only the Aristotelian project and Alexandrina paradigm (Findlen 2000: 178) but by extension invests itself in the wider museological/ heritage imagination.

The Alexandrina is further inscribed by Renaissance humanists as a lost ‘utopia’ representing ‘the perfect moment of knowledge’ (Findlen 2000: 178). The ‘haunting’ power of the institution’s ‘spectacular demise’ thus provides the impetus for the creation of an Alexandria project motivated by the desire to overcome historical obstacles (the ‘callous manoeuvres of ambitious leaders’) in order to create a ‘new Alexandria’ capable of luring ‘back’ the Muses into their rightful resting place and, as such, fulfil the institution’s destiny (Findlen 2000: 178). From this critical position it is possible to draw out a chief concern of this PhD thesis: the tensions between the literary/ textual aspect of Alexandria’s myth and memory and its material objectification. Museological expressions of Alexandria’s ‘Myth of Return and Redemption’ (Foucault 1964) have taken the form, firstly, of a literary retrievalism, - as Foucault makes explicit to ‘write is to return’-, which manifests itself more specifically in the ‘museum’ as paper archive, inventory and text (Findlen 2000). The urge to revive Alexandria ‘on the ruins’ subsequently gathers more material substance in the form of both object collections (initially in the form of cabinets (for example, see Hooper-Greenhill 1992)) and increasingly as a wider template for the modern museum as public institution (Burcaw 1997).

- Catching up with the ‘Greeks’

Further into modern times Bazin identifies the French Revolution as the key moment of rupture and recovery (Bazin 1967: 7). Again, from a critical perspective one can trace the Alexandrina paradigm’s influence upon this particular ‘nodal point’ of museum formation as evidenced in the Enlightenment influenced encyclopaedic institutions of the Louvre (see, for example Diderot’s plan with its cosmopolitan vision) the British Museum, and latterly in the Altes Museum (see Hirt’s specific vision) which all take the

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3 The French Revolution is argued to be the catalyst which re-animates the on-going ‘slow metamorphosis’ of museums thus pushing them into the modern museological secular destiny as a state institution (Bazin 1967: 7).
Alexandrina as foundational 'blueprint' (see Young-Lee 1997; Boulton 1939: Crimp 1997: 282-332 respectively). The Alexandrina thus affords these claimants a model of a universal, encyclopaedic collection. A particular emphasis is also placed upon the Alexandrina as offering a paradigm in which the museum is more broadly understood as an academy with accompanying library, and as such a vision of unity is acquired: as Kittler states, 'a museum that, as in ancient Alexandria, also functions as a library that has not gone through the modern split between text and images, libraries and galleries' (Kittler 1996:73). Traditional museologists thus complain of the erosion of wholeness found in the modern museum, not only Bazin, but Crook states how 'only a fragmented society would dream of separating them [the museum and the library]' (Crook 1972: 19-20).

From this moment onwards the museum is invested as an icon of secularisation and as such the museum as a 'secular shrine' (cf Duncan 1995) and its 'sacrilized' heritage landscapes (cf MacCannell 1989) are embedded in the wider processes of modernity’s re-organisation of religious experience and its re-deployment of its theological languages and 'civilizing rituals' into a materialised memory-work of redemption and renewal (cf Duncan 1995; Horne 1984). This Classical pedigree undergoes substantial re-affirmation as the 'public' museum culture reclaims the imagery, mythology and architecture of the 'temple of the muses' (Crook 1972: 132). This ancestry, I argue, affords the museum/heritage culture more than a Classical image and quasi-religious aura. Modernity’s self-appointed ‘New Greeks’ in new acts of mirroring invest the Mouseion/library as the blueprint for their on-going project of ‘catching up with the [ancient] Greeks’ and in doing so revive the Alexandrina paradigm as their source of legitimation to make wider claims (Burcaw 1997:25-6).

The museum culture’s specific investment in the Alexandrina as an ‘ancient quarry [from which were] extracted the ideas that were to lay a conceptual foundation for the creation of the modern museum’ (Diaz 1998:438) opens up wider the Classical world as the

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4 Diaz’s paper is written in a celebratory ‘old’ museological style and after giving a resume of the Alexandrina’s historical influence she argues that the Alexandria paradigm be revived as the model for new
treasury and archive of modernity’s ‘self object’s’ (Kohut 1978) for greater Western mobilisation. The more holistic sense of Alexandria as ‘museum town,’ as a point of retrievalism and as a liminal space or entry point affords a means to enact not only a ‘return to Athens’ - and by these means lay claim to a wider lexicon of ‘Greek’ ‘signs and images’ and foundational values - but to acquire the qualities and values specific to Alexandrian Hellenism. These former links to Greece and more specifically its characterisation as the birthplace of democracy has proved effective in authenticating the modern museum’s position as an essential feature of civilised, democratic life (cf. Duncan 1995). The specific links to Alexandria, however, not only include the aforementioned myth/histories and their central motifs of universalism, cosmopolitanism, humanism but, crucially, as Burcaw adds, the overarching figure of Alexander as conqueror thus draws into view the motif of empire (Burcaw 1997:26). This latter connection is, once again, often missed by mainstream museologists.

- Conflating Worlds

Drawing upon the Said’s notion of ‘contrapuntal’ readings (Said 1993) I want to argue that it is the connection with the concept of ‘empire’ which is the crucial element overlaying this ‘old’ thesis of ancient origins and it is by these means that the colonial imagination invests itself within the Alexandria project/ Alexandrina paradigm as it operates across ancient and modern worlds. From this alternative perspective what Bazin articulates as a more originary psychological framing of Alexander’s journey to Alexandria and further into Asia not only provides the museum with a narrative of forward motion of progress and enlightenment/ Enlightenment (Bazin 1967: 5) but is implicated further within this ‘colonising’ brief. As such it pitches the Alexandrina and museological genealogy as part of what Kittler describes as ‘the triumphant march of colonial empires’ (Kittler 1996: 77).
A more detailed return to the mythologisation of the figure of Alexander the Great as hero-liberator, for example, demonstrates how this narrative of a charismatic leader civilising ‘barbarian’ cultures and conquering ‘old’ empires (including Egypt; ‘liberated’ from Persian forces (Wood 1997: 22)) has similarly provided a re-affirmation of the concept of History as synonymous with Western advance and as a resource which legitimates a Grand Narrative blueprint for the ultimate collector, acquiring territories as ‘objects’. As recent studies have shown ‘Alexander’s deeds’ have had a specific resonance for the key modern Western museum builders France, Germany and Britain’s own colonial projects (Wood 1997: 22). Napoleon, for example, was explicit in his own emulation of Alexander’s campaigns which he used to justify, in particular, his own Egyptian ‘adventure’ (Wood 1997: 74)5. German interests in the Alexander mythologies have been further explored in terms of links with fascist historians and writers (Wood 1997: 235). In addition British historians’ appeals to Alexander’s Greek adventures were used as a model for the colonialisation of India and strategically exploited the motif of ‘benevolent colonialism’ (Wood 1997: 235). Other critics have similarly argued that the Ptolemaic collecting policy took forward Alexander’s monumentalising project in their strategy of adorning Alexandria with trophy objects from despoiled ancient sites (Thompson 1997: 17). The majority of objects – as underwater archaeologists working in contemporary Alexandria are now discovering - came from an earlier Egyptian archive-academy in Heliopolis located outside Cairo (a dynamic I return to discuss in Chapter Six).

-Benevolent Colonialism

This motif of ‘benevolent colonialism’ opens-up alternative perspectives on Alexandria’s mythologisation and crucially its idealised cosmopolitan tradition. For example, Alexander the Great’s ‘early empire rhetoric’ in which he positioned himself as the ‘reconciler of the world,’ and which the Ptolemies centred as themes within their own cultural and political policies, is intimately linked to the cosmopolitan tradition and its

5 Significantly too Bazin himself identifies in French attempts to colonise Egypt the central position of the Institut d’Egypt established by Bonaparte’s savants in Cairo which as a research institute, museum and academy contains the core elements of the Alexandrina paradigm (Bazin 1967: 191)
themes of fusion, harmonisation and unity (Ferguson 1973:7). For modern claimants looking back in time this vision perhaps has more to do with the Western myth/fantasy in the ‘ability to secure the appropriation of difference’, achieved by, ‘imagining that there was a period when the appropriation of alterity was uncontested and unproblematic’ (Prakash 1996: 63-64). From a critical perspective this celebratory vision also needs to be counter-posed to a number of factors including critical debates regarding Greek-Macedonian strategies for retaining elite control of both the city and of knowledge and characterisations of Ptolemaic Alexandria as an ‘apartheid’ culture based on an oppressive and decisive separation between ‘Hellenes’ and the ‘rest’ (Maehler 1983: 9). Revisionist historians have similarly asserted alternative potent mirrorings that powerfully characterise the ancient Alexandrina as ‘the height of Greek narcissism in institutional form’ (Gore 1976: 169) and as an ancient version of ‘McDonalds’ as a key icon that epitomises the colonialising forces of the modern era (Maehler 1983: 9). Moreover, it is argued that underpinning this ancient drama of colonisation is the fear of assimilation within the wider Egyptian/ non-European context (Maehler 1983: 9).

This myth of ancient origins and of the cosmopolitan imagination has thus proved a useful resource in terms of providing the museum culture with an ancient veil by which to obscure, displace and also legitimate its narcissisms, violences and ethnocentrisms and more specifically its complicity in the modern colonial project. As such it underlines the sense in which modern cosmo-politanism is described by critics as itself bound up in the ‘twinned birth of European colonialism and modernity’ (Venn 2002: 67). It is here that the ‘old’ museological power to conflate ancient and modern worlds and the mobilisation and transmission of the Alexandrina as a template intensifies as it maps across and thus becomes embedded in both the European heartlands and also the West’s colonial possessions. Moreover, from the nineteenth-century onwards the desire for ‘pure forms’ has seen the museological imagination bound up further in colonial, ‘Orientalist’ (cf. Said 1978) agendas, the ‘Aryan Model’ of ‘Greek roots’ (cf. Bernal 1987) and also the ideologies of ‘race science’ and other oppressive characterisations of cultural
difference (see Grewal 1996: 105-112; Coombes 1994). The Alexandrina paradigm's complicity in these orthodox translations of Classical models and agendas of Western liberalism and Kantian cosmopolitics thus mark it out as part of this trajectory too.

As such alignment with this vision of Alexander the Great inaugurating the forward march of History/Civilization has further implications. For example, it legitimates further the key 'old' museological tenet that the development of the museum is measurable on an evolutionary scale of complexity (Bazin 1967). Consequently, a society's possession of a museum is seen as an indicator of a minimum standard of 'civilisation'. Accompanying this co-opting of the Mouseion/museum into the 'Western' roots/routes of culture (cf. Gilroy 1993; Clifford 1997) is the establishment of the museum as an exclusively or essentially Western phenomenon and the privileging of a Western origin over non-Western and pre-Alexandrian cultures of collecting and their associated sacred spaces. The entrenchment of museological qualities is consolidated the museum being characterised as a fixed and bounded space (what Hetherington calls the museum's 'sitedness' 1996: 153-177) and in the essentialised status of texts and objects within this space. All this is achieved at the exclusion of oral and non-monumental traditions (cf. Simpson 1996).

- Clash of Civilisations

The 'old' museological strategy of projecting the modern museum back in time, and subsequently re-presenting this as a 'forward movement' has thus afforded the means to distance the museum from the modern political context but, more crucially, to provide a method by which one could claim that the endorsement of the modern museum's cultural/civilisational project came from within the museum's own 'history.' Writ larger still, it is modernity's appropriations of this vision that has afforded the West the means to claim the role of 'reconciler of the world' and as such to take the dominant position in splitting the world in two: - into the categories of civilised and the barbarian; and in putting into

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6 These particular authors have problematised aspects of the museum culture's Classical, 'Greek' image/ancestry and its complicity in the modern colonising imagination/project but have not engaged in a specific critique of the Alexandrina paradigm.
motion the related desire, that of seizing the dominant or superior position in dramas of contact and in projects to reunite, reconcile or redeem the whole (cf. Murray 1953). This colonising vision is also the point of origin for the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ myth-thesis.

Moreover, the West’s insistence on an emotive - violent, traumatic - narrative of loss more specifically has cast this act as the outcome of an encounter with an intolerant, obstinate ‘other’ and thus particularised this ‘clash’ as the first in a series of ‘major encounters between Islam and the West’ (Ahmed 1992: 94-95). Critics have subsequently argued how this continues to be used to negatively stereotype Muslims in contemporary contexts as ‘book burners’ and to characterise Islam as an intolerant, chauvinistic and violent force (see Ahmed 1992: 95). Halliday’s ‘process of reflection on the contemporary Middle East’ similarly identifies how this genre of the ‘myth of confrontation’ between East and West has acquired a ‘force and a ‘reality’ within the contemporary global consciousness (Halliday 1996: 6-7). He, like Said, also makes clear that this particular myth/ history is bound up in new desires to split the world into two: - into the ‘self-group’ and the ‘other’; with the later as increasingly demonised within the categories of stranger, foreigner and outsider (cf. Said 2001). It is here too that the ancient Alexandrina, as the casualty of what is understood as an originary act of iconoclasm, is canonised as the icon from which the traditional heritage paradigm of loss and preservation establishes its roots (Lowenthal 1985:109).

- A time like our own

A return to Bazin’s own ‘Museum age’ demonstrates how his particular text has as its chief preoccupation a contemporary world attempting to emerge from the traumas of the Second World War. He is one of a number of authors writing in the post-war period who articulate a very specific and highly emotive, empathetic identification with the Hellenistic period as a ‘time like our own’ and thus see both eras as marked by both the destabilising effects of war and the physical as well as psychological displacement which conflict and expansionism causes (Maehler 1983: 1). Adopting the museological motif of pausing for reflection ‘on the ruins’ Bazin appeals to the Hegelian notion of the twilight
of wisdom and clarity. He states how ‘Only when men sense the waning of a civilization do they suddenly become interested in its history and probing, become aware of the force and the uniqueness of the ideas it fostered’ (Bazin 1967: 6). By pursuing these motifs of contemporary trauma and loss further he engages in a powerful act of mirroring in which he argues that just as within the ancient world the museum/archive offered ‘consolation’ for traumatic change, he identifies in his contemporary world an identical quest, odyssey and ‘impulse’ (Bazin 1967: 6). He describes this as a search for ‘transcendent moment’ and as such asserts that ‘the museum can offer an escape from time and even from absolute time’ and thus as ‘A temple where Time seems suspended, the museum procures for today’s man those momentary cultural epiphanies in which, since Gide, he has delighted’ (Bazin 1967: 7).

With even more passion, Bazin draws out the way this odyssey had passed to the people and in (his) contemporary times is played out within the context of tourism. Here modern ‘man’ as visitor/tourist ‘uprooted, deprived of myth and religion’, searches for some stability and continuity in museums which as ‘temporal oases ... number among the enchanted places’ (Bazin 1967: 8). This vision is also one in which Bazin articulates his fears regarding cultural loss and threats to world heritage. Citing the UNESCO campaign to save the monuments of Abu Simbel in Egypt as an example, Bazin is one of a number of authors/voices featured in this thesis who identify a mirroring or empathetic identification between the UN/UNESCO and the Alexandrina paradigm, as such, the former is characterised as taking up the latter’s universalising, redemptive project in the post world war context (Bazin 1967: 278). Bazin asserts how, ‘The museum in its present state reflects the contemporary inclination towards universality; it is a hybrid born of science, philosophy, ethics and politics; it has its UN, its technical communions, its laboratories and its research centres, its body of laws,’ adding how, ‘Its form seems perfected and yet it enters a difficult period’ (Bazin 1967: 278). Drawing upon the theories of Spengler, Toynbee and Mumford Bazin also identifies a motif of hubris underpinning this wider museological utopianism and redemptive formula (Bazin 1967: 6. 278).
- Enigmas and Narcissism

The critical excavation of 'old' museological discourse undertaken in this section demonstrates that more is at stake in the construction and transmission of the Alexandrina paradigm than dispute over definitions or the acquisition of some quaint Classical pedigree as 'new' museologists have argued. By way of contrast, my claim is that the museum and archive and the wider 'dream,' 'promise' and 'destiny' of heritage preservation and revivalism is bound up in the circulation of powerful 'signs and images', 'icons and myths' across ancient, modern, real and imagined worlds. More specifically my interest is in the emergence of a certain duality that has gone largely ignored by mainstream museological/heritage discourse. This duality is apparent, firstly, in the Alexandrina paradigm's characterisation as an 'enigma' and as expressed in its on-going potency and seductions as a template or resource for memory work and more specifically as a locus for the 'narrativisation' of originary psychological dramas of traumatic loss and redemption.

The second aspect is best captured in the Alexandrina's characterisation as the 'ultimate expression of Greek narcissism in institutional form' (Gore 1976: 169) and expressed in terms of the Alexandrina's intimacy with both ancient and modern colonising-imaginations and with its capacity to displace and veil the more violent archival trajectories within its more idealising cosmopolitan aura. While I return to address the implications and critical responses to the latter trajectory more fully in Chapter Two it is, however, the former aspect of the Alexandrina's legacy and its expression in Bazin's post-war 'Museum Age' that I now turn to explore in more depth.
SECTION TWO
    PLATONIC ALEXANDRIA AND ETERNAL RETURNS

In a certain sense it can be said that the Greek theory of an eternal return is the final variant undergone by the myth of the repetition of an archetypal gesture, just as the Platonic doctrine of Ideas was the final version of the archetypal concept, and the most fully elaborated.'

(Eliade 1991 [1954]: 123)

[T]hose who built these museums ... emphasised what might be called the Platonic idea of the museum ... of which the individual museum is but a pale reflection'

(Bettelheim: 1989 [1956]:143)

As demonstrated above, traditional narrations of the Alexandrina’s drama of traumatic loss crystallise the psychological seductions and empathetic identifications which have become an essentialised part of the Alexandria project/ Alexandrina paradigm and which, as previously stated, have gone largely ignored by mainstream museology/ heritage theory. They also draw out in more general terms the ways in which ancient narrative structures and templates are similarly returned to and re-invested as resources to ‘act out’ and/ or ‘work though’ (real or perceived) traumatic events that mirror across ancient and modern worlds. More broadly still these psychological dramas operative within the museum/ archive and heritage discourse also see institutions and spaces inscribed as part of modernity’s search for - and redemption of - lost object(s), lost perfection, lost childhood and a means to pursue the desire to reinstate memory-in-exile back to its essential wholeness.

Insights from the (above quoted) psychoanalyst Bettelheim and the mythographer Eliade, both contemporaries of Bazin, give further definition to these museological psychodynamics. All three authors have attempted to draw out in their various ways how ‘collective’ and ‘popular memory’ is ‘un/anhistorical’ in the sense of its investment in archetypes is a means (again with some paradox) to retain the ‘reality’ of a phenomenon.
As such, the assertion is made that 'archetypes' and 'templates' are the mechanisms by which 'objects of memory' (as, images, icons and myths) are mobilised in repetitive acts and cast as 'universal' paradigms. With more detail Bettelheim (1989) and Bazin (1967) draw out this in terms of a vision in which the museum as 'Classical form,' and as pressed into the service of the Alexandrina paradigm, is internalised within popular, collective memory and by these means re-emerges as the 'universal,' iconic image of the 'Museum' (as transcendental subject) which is subsequently bound up in acts of Platonic repetition. Both also assert that this template permeates the contemporary moment.

As previously rehearsed it is with the institution’s demise – its violent sacrifice – that empathy is rendered most acute and which conveys the sense in which the wounding inflicted on the Western omnipotence has to be redeemed. It is here, therefore, that the institution is rendered at once immortal and omnipotent and is said to 'haunt' the museological, heritage discourse (Findlen 2000: 176). It is also here that the ancient Mouseion/museum is re-positioned as a standard of ‘perfection’ and a template by which museums in later historical periods must seek to measure itself. This subsequent sacrilisation of the Alexandrina paradigm sees the institution take on qualities of the eternal ancestor and acquire its Platonic dimensions. As such, the ancient model becomes the ‘real’ museum/archive with individual museums and archives regarded as part of its mirrorings and thus as a ‘pale reflection’ of the original (Bettelheim 1989: 143).

Eliade draws out the ancient to modern mirrorings at play in this drama. He begins by reiterating how ‘collective’, ‘popular memory’ has an ‘inability’ to retain historical events and individual personalities except in so far as it transforms them into ‘archetypes’ and annuls their historical and personal peculiarities (Eliade 1991: 46-47). Again with echoes of Bazin’s thesis, Eliade explores these dynamics by rooting these dramas within the ancient world and in traumatic acts of separation which give birth to the emergence of ‘historical man’ and his struggle to ‘interiorise’ experience as history and memory (Eliade 1991: 46-47). This experience is said to be synonymous with the need to bring into play ideas, rituals and templates that would revive links with a lost ‘Golden Age’ (Eliade 1991: 112). More specifically, Eliade sees this expressed in the enduring appeal
of archetypes in terms of the cosmic (the link with the divine), the ancestor-hero (significantly, Alexander the Great is named by Eliade as such a template (Eliade 1991: 119-123)), the 'symbolism of the centre', and the desire to repeat archaic structures as a means to redeem loss (Eliade 1991: 3-6). With deep echoes of Bazin, the space of return and of revival is invested as a space of escape, outside the everyday but, crucially one which is invested with authenticity and 'realness' (Eliade 1991: 3-6).

As Eliade emphasises, reality is acquired solely through repetition or participation and through, 'the same “primitive” ontological conception ...[in which] an object becomes real only insofar as it imitates or repeats an archetype (Eliade 1991:34). He draws out the 'redemptive' qualities of this trajectory by stating how the motif of return 'repeats the primordial gesture of the cure' (Eliade 1991: 31) and how the final odyssey is 'the restoration of integral wholeness' (Eliade 1991: 25). With implications for the Alexandria Mouseion/ archive's own demise there are connections between this trajectory and the 'myth of universal conflagration' and strands of 'millenarianism' which marked this context (Eliade 1991:124). As Eliade adds, 'the myth of the end of the world by fire' was for many ultimately regarded as 'consoling' (Eliade 1991:124) Here he states how, 'In fact, fire renews the world; through it will come the restoration of a new world, free from old age, death, decomposition and corruption, living eternally, increasingly eternally... It is also bound up in the idea that, 'the good will survive' (Eliade 1991:124).

Shifting his attention to the 'survival' of the 'Myth of the Eternal Return' in the modern context he argues how, 'We must wait until our own century to see the beginnings of certain new reactions against the historical linearism and a certain revival of interest in the theory of cycles; so it is in that, in political economy, we are witnessing the rehabilitation of the notions of cycle, fluctuation, periodic oscillation; that in philosophy the myth of the eternal return is revived by Nietzsche; or that in the philosophy of history a Spengler or a Toynbee concern themselves with the problem of periodicity' (Eliade 1991:146). From this he asserts how, '[T]he modern world is, at the present, not entirely converted to historicism; we are witnessing a conflict between two views: the archaic conception, which we should designate as archetype and ahistorical; and the modern
post-Hegelian conception, which needs to be historical' (Eliade 1991:141). This duality he argues is part of the failure of what he describes as 'historicist solutions' (and here he cites both Hegel and Marx) which have called into question human salvation' (Eliade 1991:147-149). He further argues that 'The reappearance of cyclical theories in contemporary thought is pregnant with meaning' and, as such, 'betrays at least the desire to find a meaning and a transhistorical justification for historical events' (Eliade 1991:147).

Crucially here, and with great effect, Eliade recasts the central preoccupation of this debate, like that of the museum and archival discourse, away from the alleged philosophical concern with - 'What it is to be human? – by re-presenting this instead in terms of: how has man tolerated history? (Eliade 1991:149). Eliade, like Bazin, positioned 'on the ruins' of the Second World War, turns to the question of how far a theory (historicist or ahistorical) can or should 'justify historical sufferings? Here Eliade asserts that the 'The terror of history becomes more and more intolerant from the viewpoints afforded by the various historicist philosophies' (Eliade 1991:149). Here too Eliade challenges the notion of the truth-value of history: ‘We should wish to know for example, how it would be possible to tolerate, and to justify, the sufferings and annihilation of so many people who suffer and who are annihilated for the simple reason that their geographical situation sets them in the pathway of history; that they are neighbours of empires in a state of permanent expansion’ (Eliade 1991:151).

In offering up the question of 'Mankind's' capacity to 'redeem all the dramas of oppression, the collective sufferings, deportations, humiliations and massacres that fill universal history' and which return to haunt the present (Eliade 1991:149). Eliade gives his own (initial) reply by outlining the contemporary impasse and arguing that: 'The more modern he ['man'] becomes – that is, without defences against the terror of history – the less chance he has of making history' (Eliade 1991:156): a scenario in which 'freedom ' becomes 'illusory' and all that is left is 'Faith or despair'(Eliade 1991:159).
That museums elicited an immediate philosophical response shows that, from the start, philosophy recognised in them more phenomenon worthy of philosophical attention. They represented a fully-fledged philosophical situation: that is not a mere category of philosophical discourse but a mirror of philosophy... Loss of origin is an inherent motif of modern philosophy... Coincidentally, it is the problem of origins that we find also at the basis of philosophy's interest in the museum. Rushing to the site of the museum's beginning, philosophy was there to decry its perverted origin and denounce the injury committed to authenticity. ... It is as though, from the beginning, philosophy was saying to the museum: you too have no ground, you like me have forsaken your origin'

(Maleuvre 1999: 22)

I have suggested that the 'old' museology is best understood as a narrative preoccupied by the motifs of loss and redemption, in which the museum is invested as a space for (potential) diagnosis and cure and for the acting out of consolatory displacements and deferrals and that the significance of this has been largely ignored within mainstream museology. This perspective does, however, find resonance within an alternative intellectual engagement in which museological/ archival discourse is conceptualised within the wider modernist turn towards the archive, and characterised in terms of modernity's philosophical preoccupation with its 'own loss of origin', its 'feelings of ontological homelessness' and with projects to redeem and re-house modernity's memory-in-exile (Maleuvre 1999; Castillo 1984; Derrida 1996). As such the museum is approached as modernity's metaphysical mirror. It is here that modernity and the archive/ museum are thus credited with metaphysical attachments akin to the redemptive qualities of the Alexandrina (cf Huyssen 1995: 13-36; Maleuvre 1999:22). These critiques also give more depth to the intellectual odyssey which 'old' museologists argue emerges initially from Alexandria's foundational mythology and which invests the archive/ museum as the West's privileged medium for reflecting upon the human condition and to address the core question: what it is to be human (cf. Bazin 1967; Maleuvre 1999).
My concern is to show that the inscription of the Alexandria as an essentially humanistic project acquires for the broader museum/heritage discourse its secular humanistic, philosophical odyssey and as such is bound up in the process of secularisation synonymous with the Western experience of modernity (cf. Duncan 1995; Horne 1984). Integral to this context are modernity’s lexicon of metaphysical languages which centre upon philosophical expressions of exile, melancholy, mourning, nostalgia, desire and longing. Not only are these bound up in concomitant philosophical theorisations of loss but also in related metaphysical expressions of pain, wounding, grief and grievance which mark modernity’s crisis of what it is to ‘have forsaken an origin’ (Maleuvre 1999:22). Significantly, museological and archival discourse is pressed into the service of modernity’s metaphysics and thus takes on its languages and curative aspirations and subsequently embeds these in its own foundational values and transforms them into practice. Here the etymologies of cure/curation and the desire to preserve, conserve and revive are the most obvious points of connection. This trajectory revives a further ‘old’ museological motif which sees the archive/museum as ‘the Place for the Cure of the Soul’ (Canfora 1989: 10).

In critically rehearsing this ‘old’ modernist museological/archival thesis of salvation and cure several authors also highlight a tension between ‘mythos’ and ‘logos’ which marks this domain and which brings an ‘overdetermined’ quality to the empathetic identifications at play. In sympathy with Bazin’s thesis, Castillo, for example, contends that: ‘myths’ as ‘stories of origin’ are the only medium capable of describing ‘the vast, disastrous breach with perfection’ further reiterating, ‘only myth has the power and the overdetermination of significance to encompass such metaphysical pain (Castillo, 1984: 3). As such, the museum/archive (and also library) are further invested as places where the individuated can inscribe traces of such separations and glimpse a return to essential unity which can only be achieved as a mythical return. The cultural critic Maleuvre also outlines an equivalent museological ‘mythos’ and metaphysics. Here the museum is situated not only as a ‘mythic body’ but as a ‘totem invested with the authority of a great historical ancestor giving his blessing to the cultural politics of the current regime’
Moreover, this positioning of the museum/archive as the essential shelter or refuge for the Western ego/psyche is underpinned by the central project of making tangible (sensible and coherent) the metaphysical trauma of loss and strategising a materiality of retrievalism. This promise of the archive/museum to harbour the possibility of 'working through' the alienations of modernity's metaphysical exile/homelessness, is typically couched in the language of reconciliation of self/other (origin) (Castillo 1984: 33) and of subject and object (Maleuvre 1999: 21-39). Thus this project of objectification has been expressed as an archival project of textual retrieval and translation (Castillo 1984) and within the museum space it is art and artefacts and the discourse of esthetics/aesthetics which have traditionally constituted its materiality (Maleuvre 1999).

- Historical Avant-garde

In order to critically investigate these 'old' museological acts of metaphysical mirroring, Maleuvre lists a number of illustrious commentators who emerge, often in opposition, to shape this trajectory: 'In a line that runs from Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremere de Quincy (the cultural eminence who, in France, first theorized the antimuseum critique) through Hegel, Nietzsche, the first historical avant-garde, Dewey, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty, esthetic discourse has bemoaned the separation of art from existence, a separation for which the museum is held largely responsible' (Maleuvre 1999:2).

With interesting links to Eliade's thesis, Hegel and Nietzsche emerge as the most resonant philosopher-critics in that their interventions in this realm offer a critical understanding of, and a challenge to, the Alexandrina paradigm. It is Hegel who binds the museum project up in his own philosophical project to the extent that, as Merleau-Ponty's asserted, 'Hegel is the museum' (in Maleuvre 1999: 21). Hegel's museological aesthetic emerges as both a recognition of, and a break with, the then dominant museological mirror: the Alexandrina paradigm. Hegel's objective is one in which, 'The museum
mirrors the idealist totalisation of world history by Spirit’ (Maleuvre 1999: 24; Hegel 1977). A ‘concrete example' of the application of Hegel’s aesthetics (Crimp 1997: 300) is the ‘paradigmatic early art museum’ of the Altes Museum, Berlin (Crimp 1997:290). The original concept of the museum, first proposed in 1797 by Hirt (an historian of architecture) is based on a return to the Alexandrina model and imagined as a museum incorporated into an already existent academy (Crimp 1997: 294). Hirt’s attachment to what is described as the ‘classical norm’ and the ‘rejuvenation of art through the study of classical antiquity’ was challenged by Hegel’s champion Schinkel, the museum’s chief architect, who aligned his project with Hegelian aesthetics (Hegel 1975; 1977). Schinkel thus designed a museum – to be separate from the ‘academy’ - which was ‘itself to constitute the Hegelian Aufhebung’ (Crimp 1997: 300).

The two models – Alexandrian and Hegelian – are present within the Altes project with the latter, however, powerfully staged as the emergent future vision and template for the art-history museum. The former model is embedded in the museum’s ‘rotunda’ which is described as a ‘sanctuary’ and designed to ‘preserve the world of classical perfection’ and as such it emerges as an ‘exalted space’ and a mirror of both the Alexandrina paradigm and in recognition of Hirt’s ideas for the space (Crimp 1997: 301). The main gallery, by way of contrast, is dedicated a Hegelian vision of art in which paintings are exhibited in chronological order so as to illustrate a ‘march through the history of man’s striving for Absolute Spirit’ (Crimp 1997: 301-302). The gallery has also been described as ‘Schinkel’s Gestalt, in which all relationships to objects were fixed’ (Crimp 1997: 302). This shift from the Alexandrian to Hegelian model is perhaps best crystallised the Rotunda’s exemplification of the ‘possibility of arts rejuvenation’ and the main gallery as testimony to the ‘irrevocability of art’s end’ (Crimp 1997: 302). Expressed another way this shift narrates art-history from a display of the ‘greatest works of classical antiquity in its twilight’ to the birth of Hegelian ‘idealist aesthetics’ (Crimp 1997: 302).

The above duality – the encounter between the Alexandrina Museum project and the Hegelian Museum project – subsequently emerges as modernity’s enduring museological theme. It has typically been expressed as the difference between the art museum and the
desire for a universal, encyclopaedic museum. This co-existent, intimate and, therefore, mutually supportive museological duality also brings back into play Eliade’s and Bazin’s key assertions. Most effectively it brings forth a sense of duality in a post-Hegelian modern world which, as Eliade asserts is ‘not entirely converted to historicism’ and in which some ‘conflict’ exists between a view-point which ‘seeks to be historical’ and that which is drawn to the archetypal and ahistorical (Eliade 1991: 141).

The encounter can also be seen as a clash of ‘Greekness’ and it is this tension that, in turn, underpins the ‘quarrel of the ancient and moderns’ and in so doing feeds and sustains both models (Huyssen 1996:13; Marchand 2000). This more reified anti-museum critique or more emotively ‘the rage against the museum’ is taken further by the ‘historical avant-garde’ (Maleuvre 1999: 50). The return to the ancient world – or more specifically to the ‘Greek’ work of art – emerges as a resource used by a number of the key philosophers (named above) as a means to further define modernity’s key philosophical questions. Heidegger, for example, takes up and defines the metaphysical/museological drama in which ‘mankind’s’ experience of consciousness is played out as a trauma of loss (Maleuvre 1999:49-50). Within the Heideggerian thesis, this drama is used to articulate questions concerning the mediated nature of Being/ the World and the nature of authenticity (Heidegger 1981). Moreover, it is the question of authenticity that subsequently emerges to haunt the museum imagination. Here discussions revolve around the assertion and rejection of claims that argue that the museum/ metaphysics is a mirror to that which is ‘authentic’ (Maleuvre 1999: 17-19). These key debates on museological aesthetics give more depth to both modernity’s, and the museum/ archive’s, ‘Greek’ persona and to the definition of the ‘Greek’ metaphysical subject.

- Anti-museums and ‘Dionysion solutions’

This on-going anti-museum critique and the associated discussions on authenticity with regard to the invention of the past and of heritage (Lowenthal 1985: 196) has become increasingly bound up in what Maleuvre calls the ‘alienated place of memory in modern times’ (Maleuvre 1999:59). As such it is inextricably linked to discussions on
modernity’s creation of ‘lieux de memoires’ and the turn to monumentalism as a means to cope with the sense of estrangement which characterises the modern age (cf. Nora in Maleuvre 1999:59). Such contexts and also the fear of ‘sinking into a sort of terminal classicism’ were to preoccupy many critics, including the Frankfurt School and their alternative memory-work strategies (Maleuvre 1999:52). For example, Adorno and Benjamin’s respective attacks on the supposed ‘neutrality’ of the museum effectively politicised these institutions and opened up museological discourse to Marxist cultural critiques. Adorno’s intervention is best known in his characterisation of the deathly ‘museal’ consciousness (Adorno 1981) and Benjamin’s in his unveiling of the quasi-religious rituals and ‘auratic’ qualities of the museum space (Benjamin 1968).

As critics state the extremes of the anti-museum thesis is expressed in the ‘Futurist call to burn down the museums’ (Maleuvre 1999: 51). Marinetti, the figure-head of the Futurist movement picked up on a particularly Nietzschean motif in his assertion that the destruction of archives and museums represented a, ‘Dionysion solution’ or “thanatopraxis” (Castillo 1984: 153). This reference is to Nietzsche’s ‘Return to Dionysus’ and his revival of the theory of the ‘eternal return’: these strategies are, in turn, part of Nietzsche’s own polemical attack on modernity’s obsession with its historical self and with archival culture (Nietzsche 1956). Here Nietzsche calls for a return to the ancient world in order to explode the oppression of an Apollonian culture, which, with great significance, he argues was born within the confines of the Alexandrian/ Mouseion library (Nietzsche 1956:110). The Apollonian/ Alexandrian identity is that of the rational, objective, patriarch and theorist; the order-giver worshipping at the altar of cognitive power and engaged in deathly acts of cataloguing, collecting, naming, editing and ultimately obsessed with the fixing of both texts and of identities; here transmission is fetishised in terms of the dominant filters of preservation, conservation, restoration which, for Nietzsche, are synonymous with death (Nietzsche 1956:110-112; see also (Castillo 1984: 40-42).

The critic Castillo adds further gloss to this by describing the ‘magical’ potential of the archive pressed into the service of logos culture’s attempts to effect a unity between
self' and 'other'. Significantly staged on the archivists own terms, it represents the attempt of an archival culture to achieve a return to a state of originary unity. As she expresses it, the insular world of the archive/library takes on a particularly narcissistic personality; the archivists thus indulging in 'narcissistic self-love' (Castillo 1984:33). The impulse to seek refuge, shelter and to claim the archive as a diagnostic/redemptive media are re-presented as the summit of this self-obsessed ego-centred world. Here the failure of empathetic identification is revealed as an 'objectification of and grasping for fantasies of the self', a process in which, paradoxically, 'alienation is intensified, since this self is a shadow identity, an imaginary construct that binds the...[archivist] further into intrasubjectivity' (Castillo 1984:33). Castillo concludes by stating, 'It represents what Nietzsche refers to as accepting the empty cogito ergo sum over the plenitude of vivo ergo cogito' (Castillo 1984:33).

Nietzsche thus fundamentally disturbs the celebratory model of the Alexandrina and Alexandrian intellectualism further, by focusing attention onto the oppressed Alexandrian 'slave class' – the true exploited resource - which shores up the elitist archival culture (Nietzsche 1956: 110). He declares: 'One thing should be remembered: Alexandrian culture requires a slave class for its continued existence... therefore it courts disaster once the effect of its nice slogans concerning the dignity of man and the dignity of labour have worn thin. Nothing can be more terrible than a barbaric slave class that has learned to view its existence as an injustice and prepares to avenge not only its wrongs, but those of all past generations' (Nietzsche 1956: 110).

This hidden story of humiliation, grievance and revenge is read by Nietzsche as the archival waiting-game and its ultimate time-bomb. The curative powers are therefore disrupted in the confines of this space by institutional narcissisms, an echo here of Gore's diagnosis of the ancient Alexandrian Mouseion/Library as the 'ultimate expression of Greek narcissism in institutional form' (Gore 1976: 169). In similar fashion, Castillo recasts the interior space of the archive/library as the scene of violent struggles between life - giving forces and those of death (Castillo 1984: 54). Drawing on Freudian theory this scene is recast in terms 'of an unremitting tension between the demands of man's
primitive instincts and the requirements of civilization' (Castillo 1984: 32) and ultimately as a conflict of Eros and Thanatos (Castillo 1984: 198-199). This connects us with what Castillo, like other authors, understand to be the overriding preoccupation of modernity’s archival project, that of constructing a shelter or refuge from ‘man’s’ ultimate narcissistic wounding: the recognition of one’s own mortality and death (Castillo: 1984: 3). Here the tragedy of ‘what it is to be human’ is fully exposed as that of humankind ‘stripped of myth’ and in the reality of his death laid bare (Nietzsche in Castillo: 1984: 3). This is the final act of return for which there is no cure, only the archival strategies of deferral and denial.

- Archival Traumas and Fevers

More recently Derrida has upped the stakes in terms of his own ‘Freudian impression’ of archival dramas and repressions. He diagnoses an on-going mal d’archive or ‘archive fever’ (Derrida 1996:12) and more ominously still identifies the archive’s ‘silent – vocation’ (Derrida 1996:10) – its ‘archival violence’ (Derrida 1996:7). The archive is thus transformed into the scene of epic Oedipal violences which are underpinned by the destructive forces of the death-drive which manifests as a force of evil and malice (Derrida 1996: 80). The critic Rapaport has recently characterised this Derridean thesis as a clear identification of ‘trauma in the archive’ (Rapaport 2003: 81) and explicitly cites ‘the Library of Alexandria’ as Western civilisation’s ‘paradigmatic’ example of ‘archive trauma’ (Rapaport 2003: 76-77).

With echoes of Bazin, Rapaport also emphasises that ‘archives occur at that moment when there is a structural breakdown in memory’ and by way of a comparative illustration reiterates ‘where there is regularity and efficiency in Foucault’s archive, there is trauma in Derrida’s’ (Rapaport 2003: 76). Again with significance for the Alexandria paradigm Rapaport crystallises the ‘diasporic condition of the archive’ using Freud’s archive/home/museum as an example, in terms of, ‘its founding being a consequence of exile’ (Rapaport 2003: 78). In addition, Derrida’s Freedian analysis of archival narrativisation is also ‘read’ by Rapaport as a ‘spectral “acting out”’ (Rapaport 2003: 81).
As such Derrida is credited with exposing a dilemma/intimacy between the (potentially) redemptive idea that an archival ‘acting out’ can afford ‘a repetition of the trauma that is repeated in such a way that the trauma can be mastered’ and that of the (distopic) repetitive force of archival violence at play which recasts the archival space as a realm of conflict and further trauma (Rapaport 2003: 89). Significantly, this archival dilemma is expressed by Rapaport as the difference between a mastery of trauma as played out, for example, in the museological realm (he cites the Washington Holocaust Museum as an example of this potential) while also exploring the crisis of empathetic identification which is also bound up in such domains (Rapaport 2003: 89). The latter crisis is detailed as at risk to an ‘empathetic moment in which [occurs] a transferential contamination of trauma [which one] might call ‘secondary trauma’” (Rapaport 2003: 88).

He argues further, ‘Apparently, from a Derridean perspective, one does not simply inherit or share the trauma of others; one encounters trauma as something that is Other on a horizon that is not predictable’ (Rapaport 2003: 88). Again the dilemma is between the discourse that ‘destroys’ and that which ‘holds’: ‘[D]iscourse can also be destroyed by the traumatism …When the discourse holds in some way, it is at once because it has been opened up on the basis of some traumatising event, by an upsetting question that doesn’t let one rest, that no longer lets one sleep, and because it nevertheless resists the destruction begun by its traumatism’ (Derrida quoted in Rapaport 2003: 88-89).

We can now understand why a central revelatory moment exists for Derrida in the archival quest. What Derrida describes as a ‘spectral messianicity at work’ in this search for ‘something presumed lost which once revealed becomes nothing less than a promise of having a future’ (Derrida 1996: 36). The dominant ‘Greek’ control of the archive and status as the pre-eminent ‘hospitality-givers’ (Rapaport 2003: 84) is also disturbed by Derrida’s account of the figure of the ‘Jew’ within the archival domain and as an ‘acting out’ of the story of a ‘Jewish story’ of ‘exile’ and exodus/Exodus (Rapaport 2003: 81, 79). As such Freud’s texts of *Totem and Taboo* (1986a [1913]) and of *Moses and Monotheism* (1986b [1939]) are positioned as the emergent foundational/originary
scripts of archival dramas (Derrida 1996: 59): both of which are underpinned by the trauma of an originary act of murder (Derrida 1996: 65). For Derrida, this crisis/breakthrough affords further destabilisations in the form of the re-emergence too of other archival spectres, lost ancestors, forgotten genealogies, alternative origins and 'traces' of 'the other' which come (partially) into view (Derrida 1996: 34; see also Feuchtwang 2000a).

Derrida similarly argues that a tension exists between the archive's colonising desires and that of self-destruction. This allows him to investigate a further paradox – which is of deep relevance to the Alexandrina paradigm – by pinpointing the archive’s vulnerability: its essential flammability; moreover, in an earlier text he cites the Alexandrina as an example (Derrida 1997 [1981]: 53). This Derridean schema highlights that all archives and thus all 'community' is ultimately legitimated by an anticipation and/or threat of loss and destruction: as Rapaport argues, the 'archive is involved in... [a] burning and [in the knowledge] that what brings death, inheritance, and community into relation is fire' (Rapaport 2003: 78). For Derrida this is part of a complex investigation of the nature of both archival violences but also of the 'trace', which Derrida argues, post-Holocaust sees 'ashes' take on more traumatic associations and which within his own work sees him powerfully position the 'Cinder/cinder' as the motif which addresses the inhumanity of 'crematoria or genocides by fire' and problematises these dynamics with respect to both 'annihilated memory,' (Rapaport 2003: 92) the inability to mourn (Rapaport 2003: 95).
In this final section I address a further integral feature of Alexandria’s mythologising which has proved so seductive to the Western imagination: that of Alexandria as literary Muse. Of crucial importance here is the tension which Alexandria as literary-city exerts within the wider ‘Myth of Return’ and, more specifically, the ability of Alexandrian poetics to create a tension between idealised characterisations of Alexandria as the West’s foundational myth and as its odyssey of homecoming with more subversive, deviant and critical use of Alexandria’s lexicon of ‘signs and images’. My particular interest is in how these interventions have offered up a modern literary-poetic aesthetics orientated towards alternative narrativisations of memory-work, loss and redemption which are, in turn, inextricably linked to re-worked motifs of both homecoming and cosmopolitanism.
- Literary Odysseys and Muses

It is this myth of Alexandria as literary muse that enunciates the memory of Alexandria’s birth within the Western imagination. From Homer’s *Odyssey* as the city’s ancient foundational text, to Durrell’s *Alexandria Quartet* and beyond, as Foucault makes explicit in his rehearsal of Alexandria’s myth of redemption - ‘to write was to return’ (Foucault quoted in Errera 1997:138). That Alexandria’s and thus modernity’s myth of redemption should claim as its locus of memory an archive is therefore more potent still. As one critic asserts, it is the ancient Alexandrina’s acts of literary translation that ‘placed Alexandria at the birth of our world’ (Errera 1997:138). Moreover, cast as ‘one of the great wombs of western literature’ this has led to Alexandria’s literary genealogy to becoming the focus of increased metaphysical musings (Errera 1997:138).

The city has also given birth to a more specific Alexandrian literary-poetics which spans ancient and modern worlds and in these particular mappings – (again) from Homer’s *Odyssey* to Cavafy’s poem *Ithaka* – acts of ‘mirroring’ throw up recurrent literary themes which have emerged to dominate Alexandria’s literary-myth. As critics argue, it is the myth of homecoming and of the exile/voyager that has emerged as a chief preoccupation of Alexandrian writers (Bowden 1995: 50). In further acts of ancient to modern mirrorings – from Theoritus, who is credited with the invention of the ‘elegy’, to E.M. Forster, whose ‘fiction changed as a result’ of his experience of Alexandria and as such ‘finally encompassed loss’, - these literary Alexandrias’ are noted for their nostalgic content (Pinchin 1989: 6). The modern city is both a double of its ancient ancestor but, more provocatively and seductively still, is narrated as the scene of decadence, decline and increasingly of decay, and whose fading glory is typically couched as a reflection of an ancient cosmopolitan golden-age. It is, however, in acts of literary recovery that an image of a ‘residual city’ has emerged which is characterised as a palimpsest of ancient, modern myth-history and memory and of multiple ‘real’ and ‘imagined’ cities (Gregory 1997: 50). This is perhaps best captured, once again, in Durrell’s characterisation of Alexandria as the ‘Capital of Memory’ (1986).
As previously stated, Alexandria’s modern literature/poetics are thus credited with creating a tension between more orthodox idealised visions of both ancient and modern cities with more subversive, deviant readings of Alexandria’s myth/history and of its cosmopolitics. In terms of the literary re-workings of ancient Alexandria this has led to writers mobilising Alexandria’s liminal position – betwixt and between worlds - in order to interrupt or destabilise any simple genres of transmission and translation. This has allowed the orthodox Classical, ‘Greek’ visions of the city to be opened up into more disruptive crossings-over and hybrid characterisations (Gregory 1997: 47). Here, for example, the mobilisations of Hellenistic and Mediterranean identities offer greater possibilities for transgressing the fixity Western/ Eastern worlds and thus opening up the sense of Alexandria’s cosmopolitan identities. Within these visions Cavafy the ‘Greek Alexandrian’ poet has emerged as the founding figure of the city’s modern myth-poetics and is regarded as the epitome of Alexandrian decadence and deviation and as such draws upon late nineteenth-century decadent literary genealogies (Gregory 1997: 47).

- Narrativisation of Loss

Cavafy’s literary preoccupations are best crystallised by the claims of critics that his poetic aesthetic is pervaded by ‘loss’ (Dollimore 1998: 317). As such Cavafy’s poetics depict Alexandria as a ‘city that is always being lost, always at the point of oblivion’ and thus as ripe for literary ‘recovery’ (Gregory 1997: 51). Cavafy is best known for his recovery of powerful moments or episodes of loss within Alexandria’s ancient history which are undertaken as a particularly effective means of exploring in more broad terms the condition of ‘loss.’ The Gods Abandon Antony, a poem based on Mark Antony’s departure from Alexandria, is the most famous example of this project: the refrain of which echoes; ‘Say goodbye to her/ To Alexandria you are loosing’ (Cavafy 1990: 27)

From this and other poems critics have argued that Cavafy’s work holds in tension a number of competing perspectives on loss. One critical perspective here holds that the poem itself – as a medium for the narrativisation of loss – offers Cavafy a means to alleviate, console and compensate the sense of ‘loss’ (Dollimore 1998: 319-320). It is
further argued, however, that Cavafy’s ‘aesthetic recompense only goes so far’ and that ultimately his poems are ‘haunting rather than consoling’ (Dollimore 1998: 318-319). Cavafy is also credited with a poetics which illustrates how ‘redemptive creative memory’ is subject to narcissistic tendencies which are never fully satiated and as such is itself subject to further ‘hauntings’ and experiences of ‘loss’ (Dollimore 1998:319). Critics argue that Cavafy's poetic sensibility is bound up in the ‘impeding loss of memory’, which it is further argued makes Cavafy, ‘more, not less vulnerable to the devastating interactions of time, loss and mutability’ which ‘haunts and wounds by intensifying loss, transience and mutability’ (Dollimore 1998:317). Significantly too, Cavafy has used the motif of the ‘mirror’ to capture scenes of entropy, mortality and moments of ‘joy’ and ‘truth’ that these interior odysseys provoke (Dollimore 1998:317).

Cavafy has been privileged by later Alexandrian writers as the city’s honorary ‘artist in exile’ and has provided the inspiration for, amongst others, a series of neo-classical and Hellenistic poetic themes (Bowden 1995: 50). It is Cavafy’s literary confrontation with the themes of memory-in-exile, loss and with the homoerotic economy of the city’s poetics which unites him with fellow writer E.M. Forster. This is emphasised with greater force in the writings of another poet Hilda Dolittle, - or H.D. in her literary persona -, who was a former analysand and student of Freud (see H.D.: 1976). What has been dubbed as H.D.’s literary ‘Alexandria project’ although less prominent in the public imagination than Cavafy, Durrell and Forster’s work is ground-breaking in its objective of bringing together Alexandrian icons, myths and poetics with psychoanalytic perspectives on loss (Gregory 1997:43). H.D. thus mobilises her ‘Alexandrian project’ as an integral part of what has powerfully been dubbed as her ‘writing cure’ and as such re-works the Hellenistic landscape of Alexandria as both a poetic space and a therapeutic zone (Chisholm 1992: 6). H.D. makes clear that her work not only has ‘therapeutic efficacy’ but a ‘redemptive purpose’ and thus re-inscribes Alexandria as a powerful ‘theatre of mourning’ and as a place of psychic transformation and metamorphoses (Chisholm 1992: 6).
Writing Cures

Alexandria as a poetic frame provides H.D. with a world in microcosm that she is able to master and to manipulate as a space of both mediation and deferral but ultimately of 'cure'. The landscape of Alexandria, like the poem, is thus imagined by H.D. as a 'place of healing and refuge': these characterisations and the repetitions of archaeological metaphors allow the poetic process to take on a vision which shares some correspondences with the old museological characterisation of the museum/archive as refuge, shelter and as atemporal sphere (Chisholm 1992: 207). H.D.'s interventions also have the capacity to crystallise correspondences between the Alexandrina paradigm and psychoanalysis as models by which not only the narrativisation of traumatic loss, separation and re-attachment can be effected but also as templates by which personal and collective cultural origins, heritages and identities can be mediated. From psychoanalytic discourse H.D. draws upon a specific therapeutic enactment of a return to 'origins' – as a 'psychic' journey - characterised as a form of 'unconscious voyaging' and as a 'quest' for therapeutic cure (Chisholm 1992:7). The act of writing as a form of mediation or analysis has as its ultimate goal the redemption and reconstruction of the self/world.

In sympathy too with Bazin and Eliade’s contemporary concerns, H.D.’s desire for ‘cure’ and ‘redemption’ has as its more immediate framing the rupture and conflict she bears witness to in her contemporary world (her writing career spans both the First and Second World War eras) and more specifically her attempts to confront and thus to ‘cure’ her own war trauma (Gregory 1997: 15-16). With more resonance still for the ‘old’ museological ‘Alexandria project’ H.D.’s literary return to ‘ancient narrative structures’ allows her to define templates by which to work though contemporary traumas (Chisholm 1992: 168). Moreover, this is illustrative of H.D.’s objective of creating a curative dynamic by mapping the liminal dynamics and movements between ancient and modern worlds, between the intimate and the distant, and between historical/mythological narrative and personal biography. In this sense H.D.’s project is a ‘quest to comprehend patterns – but without the immediate engagement with actual events and memories’

In what follows I want to pick up on H.D.’s radical and subversive re-reading and re-writing of Alexandria’s founding text *The Odyssey* and its central theme of homecoming. It is in her text *Helen in Egypt* (1961) that H.D. undertakes a creative literary ‘return’ to the Alexandrian archive in order to both ‘excavate’ and ‘recover’ an ‘alternative’ myth (a hidden, buried forgotten or marginalised narrative) of Helen of Troy (Chisholm 1992:175). It is Euripides who H.D. draws upon to engage in her literary excavations, and more specifically his literary mythological account of Helen’s exile in Egypt: which significantly is spent on the Alexandria’s famous promontory: the isle of Pharos. What needs to be emphasised here is that H.D.’s act of literary excavation (referred to as a ‘new, psycho-/archaeo-logical analysis’ of Helen) is a radical act of return made to pre-Alexandrian origins and as such accesses a host of destabilising potentials which I return to and develop throughout this thesis (Chisholm 1992: 175). As one critic states of H.D.’s ‘anti-epic’: ‘Helen is both the object of a quest for origins and the subject of a radical re-reading’ (Chisholm 1992:168). In particular it allows H.D. to pursue her preoccupations with the nature of nostalgia, of loss and separation and with the key motifs of melancholy, mourning, grief and grievance (Chisholm 1992:167). Her opening up of ‘Greek’ memory to ‘Egypt’ also initiates a subversive cosmopolitics of memory-work.

- Crypt of Memory

In H.D.’s text the isle of Pharos emerges as both the symbolic space of exiled memory and also of recovery and redemption. The specific motif which gives depth to Pharos’ literary recovery is H.D.’s on-going literary preoccupation with the motif of the ‘lost island’ which she sees as the ultimate synonym for loss and as both a mirror to the self as an ‘interior island’ and to what she describes as the ‘lost lands in personal memory’ (H.D. quoted in Gregory 1997: 36). H.D. also asserts that, ‘what’s lost is made recoverable in memory and affection’ (H.D. quoted in Gregory 1997: 36). Throughout H.D.’s text the figure of Helen remains fully located on the isle of Pharos where as ‘proto-Alexandrian’
she 'waits by the temple-tomb of Proteus' to take her own position (echoing that of H.D.) as muse, healer, oracle, as both analyst and analysand and above all as remembrancer (Chisholm 1992: 186). The figure of Proteus whom HD encounters on Pharos (and whom many critics assume to be an allusion to Freud) gives substance to HD's (and thus Helen's) re-working of Alexandria, and in more general terms Egypt, as a 'place of metamorphosis' and 'cure' (Chisholm 1992: 196).

Pharos becomes Helen's 'crypt of memory' and an 'archive'/'pharmacy' where HD imagines Helen drinking a 'pharmakon' – a 'potion' rather than 'poison'– which allows her to bring 'buried and forgotten memory into consciousness' and thus to explore 'deep memory traces' (Chisholm 1992:176). The pharmakon is also the 'cue to dream' and to call forth 'charismatic healing powers' (Chisholm 1992: 179). Gregory argues H.D.'s text outlines an odyssey in terms of a return to health in which Helen's recovery is articulated in terms of 'stages in Helen's self-consciousness' and is a feature which, 'critics rightly see ... in a Freudian psychotherapeutic context, in terms of the suppression, recovery and working though of traumatic memories' (Gregory 1997: 229). With more detail, Pharos is the place where Helen engages in a 'painful archaeology' and a form of memory-work in which she is able to retrieve or remember events 'missing' from Homer's epic account of the Trojan war (Chisholm 1992:176). These 'missing' episodes and the motif of deep memory retrieval allow H.D. poetic licence to re-interpret, to add to, and thus transform Helen's myth and its central themes.

H.D.'s key intervention is thus to stage Helen as a medium through which 'vivid memories' of the 'full horror' and both the collective and personal trauma of the Trojan War are recovered (Gregory 1997: 15-16). The obvious strategic mirroring of H.D.'s experience of the conflicts of the First and Second World Wars allows poetic therapeutic acts of empathetic identification to take place. Helen's own complicity in what H.D. refers to as the 'Holocaust of the Greeks' emerges as a particular trajectory that combines a therapeutic discourse on themes of guilt, grievance and justice with H.D.'s own experiences and her anti-war sentiments (Chisholm 1992: 194). This alternative psychic journey of homecoming is also an act of mourning in which H.D.'s Helen takes on a
liminal identity. This movement in-between realms and identities also provides a critique of dominant understandings of possession. H.D. thus challenges rights to the possession of objects and persons through war and conflict by re-casting these contexts in terms of the movement of objects within a 'gift economy' (Gregory 1997: 58).

Here the figure of Helen as 'gift' gives H.D.'s poem a heroine (or anti-heroine) who has the potential to circulate between the living and the dead, the domain of the 'real' and the 'phantom', of past and present and between the 'events' and landscapes of trauma and healing. H.D. also offers up new, destabilising, cosmopolitan identities as she positions Helen between Greek and Egyptian psychic personas. As such Helen asks herself 'was she Greek or Egyptian? (H.D. 1961: 154). Moreover, at the centre of this odyssey emerge further recurrent themes: the first, takes forward the motif of identity-work; 'who is the 'real' Helen? This is a trajectory that leads H.D. to the wider 'enigmatic question: what is real?' (Gregory 1997: 228). This allows H.D. to repeatedly raise questions regarding the nature of authenticity and to reflect on the nature of reality, truth, belonging and mortality. This in turn can be regarded as a means to re-address and/or to re-work the central question of: 'what it is to be human?', and, more powerfully, to use 'myth' to centre-stage the on-going traumas of 'real human suffering' across historical and contemporary contexts (Gregory 1997: 226).

- Unity, Reconstruction

While H.D.'s text marks Helen's anticipated journey towards redemption/ home with traumatic, destabilising images and episodes there is, however, a moment of unity to emerge within her anti-epic. As one critic states, 'Helen's musings throughout the poem constitute a kind of archaeology' the objective of which is an 'ultimate union with Achilles' (Chisholm 1992: 230). This union between Helen and Achilles climaxes in a dramatic act of reconstruction, recovery and reconciliation that has mirrorings, echoes and resonances with contemporary revival and reconstruction in Alexandria. H.D.'s poem reads:

80
‘... [T]hey [Helen and Achilles] occupied with the thought of reconstruction, he “to reclaim the coast with the Pharos, the lighthouse”, she to re-establish the ancient Mysteries’ (H.D. 1961: 187).

These efforts of ‘recovery and preservation’ lead H.D. to characterise Helen and Achilles as ‘the first citizens of Alexandria’ and critics similarly refer to them as ‘The indigenous Adam and Eve this time building the world anew’ (Gregory 1997: 52). H.D., however, powerfully undercuts what is primed to be the ultimate act of recovery: that of Helen’s ’nostos, or homecoming, to Greece’ (Gregory 1997: 224). The ‘ending’ of H.D.’s epic-drama offers the reader only ambivalence and questioning, in particular the lines:

‘Is it death to stay in Egypt?
is it death to stay here,
in a trance, following a dream?’ (H.D. 1961: 187).

This problematisation of the notion of home-coming allows H.D. to re-work both the motif of return, and crucially too, is a means to elicit the ‘truth’ that war profoundly de-centres ‘home’ as both a metaphysical and literal refuge (Gregory 1997:224). She also draws out the sobering connotations of the final act of return or homecoming: death (Gregory 1997: 35). This does, however, in turn direct H.D. towards her alternative therapeutic scheme which is founded upon a critical excavation of homecoming’s associated motifs of nostalgia and melancholy (Gregory 1997: 35). More specifically, H.D.’s work has been interpreted by her critics as a deep ‘defence of nostalgia’ (Gregory 1997: 36). Although nostalgia is ‘a suppressed component’ of ‘Freud’s thought’ and has been widely rejected by critics/ intellectuals, for H.D. nostalgia is centred as the vehicle via which to explore and potentially cure traumas of loss and separation (Gregory 1997: 36). Nostalgia is thus cited as the point at which ‘H.D. altered the plot of Freud’s therapeutic scheme’ (Gregory 1997: 36-37). Authors claim that during H.D.’s analysis with Freud, he ‘allowed’ H.D. to engage in a ‘reconsideration of analytic methods regarding both nostalgia and melancholy’ (Gregory 1997: 35). With more complexity still, in Helen in Egypt H.D. ‘excavates’ Helen’s desire to return home in order to
simultaneously ‘excavate’ the dynamic of nostalgia: but ultimately, however, as Gregory states, ‘in H.D.’s writing’ there is no home ‘to return to’ (Gregory 1997: 35).

Just as Freud through his collection of antiquities found consolation in the ancient world during his experiences of rupture, displacement and exile, H.D. shares with him and with Euripides (known for his poetic ‘pathos’ surrounding the ‘loss and grief in war’ (Gregory 1997: 26) some consolation in a pacific rather than provocative Hellenism. In wider ‘excavations’ of ancient literature and with more resonance for the wider ‘Alexandria project,’ H.D. draws upon the figure of the Muse as a means to transform and translate melancholic, nostalgic desire into more therapeutic rituals of homecoming and mourning (Gregory 1997: 27). Moreover H.D’s poems as works of mourning are bound up in attempts to move the text from a preoccupation with ‘individual pain to a sense of shared grief’ (Gregory 1997: 26). This movement can be found in the final words of Euripides’ poem *Rhesos* which was translated by H.D., who, critics argue, used her poetic license to privilege the figure of the Muse in her task of uniting ‘divine’ and ‘mortal’ grief and by these means (and the Muse’s recourse to ‘bald wisdom’) H.D. opens up the text to a moment of recognition in terms of the truth of the futility of war, and crucially too, to a moment of empathy which accesses the possibility of ‘othering’ (in Gregory 1997: 26).

CONCLUSION

THE END OF WESTERN DREAM-WORLDS

HD’s ‘writing-cure’ and her poetic-psychic journeys were bound up in her literal visits to both Greece and Egypt and to her own odyssey for therapeutic cure (H.D.:1976). This drama between literal and literary worlds has resonances too for the wider Alexandrian literary context and for the presence of Western cosmopolitan communities in the city during and after the Second World War. By way of conclusion I want to explore this context, by making a brief return via the figure of Durrell and more specifically his connections with the *Personal Landscape Group*: a network of European writers who were exiled in Egypt during the Second World War (Bowden 1995).
With many echoes of the themes rehearsed in this section, this group, who published a quarterly magazine, *Personal Landscape* during the war years, sought to explore what they termed the ‘interior’ or ‘personal landscapes’ created by the experience of exile and held in place via the desire for homecoming (Bowden 1995: 45-53). The act of writing - or the narration of exile – was thus invested by this group as a resistance or ‘refusal to be overwhelmed by the experience of exile’ and as an artistic or intellectual creation of a second exile - one made in an attempt to escape the realities, limitations and humiliations of enforced exile (Bowden 1995:47). This literary project, like the earlier rehearsed archival and museological investments in the Alexandrina paradigm, makes a claim at a psychological and also a metaphysical level, for a locus from which to redeem, reconcile and re-instate a sense of essential wholeness; whether couched as a ‘universal’ project, or as the desires of the self or ‘self group’. However, within this project, as within the wider Western imagination there emerges a destabilising force which returns to insist that this claim to cure can only ever be partial, thus rendering the Alexandria project essentially aspirational, Utopian and as potential hubristic.

The recognition of partial cure and of other destabilising forces has further resonances within the wider repertoire of Alexandria as literary Muse and more particularly in a return to Alexandria’s ‘Cassandra’ qualities (Quignard quoted in Errera 1997: 141). The adoption of the Cassandra figure not only re-affirms the sense of Alexandria’s mythologising as an ultimately ‘tragic legend’ but more subversively that the Alexandria project succumbs to a prophetic moment of ‘truth’ from which comes the acknowledgement that ‘immortality is a deception, a death deferred’ (Errera 1997: 141). In this sense strategies to deny and displace the reality of ‘endings’ also succumb to this prophecy and by these means, give recognition to the Alexandrina paradigm’s own mortality. This is bound by some recognition that the narcissistic wounding that underpins the Alexandria project’s redemptive agency is rendered impotent when shocked out of its narcissistic dream-world and faced with the ‘real’. With more detail this can be recast in terms of the Western imagination like the Alexandria project’s fear of ‘othering’. The wider Alexandrian landscape is also seen to convey the limits of this in terms of the vulnerability of such dream-worlds, ‘By its geographical position,
Alexandria most probably realised an already ancient political dream while, at the same time, perpetuating some what of a feeling of an "end of the world", wavering between Egypt and Libya, whose inhabitants did not always know to which gods they should kneel.' (Favard-Meeks and Meeks 2000: 29)

This is most effectively expressed in terms of the reality of the 'other' in terms of the modern, contemporary real-politick and is best conveyed in a return to the Personal Landscape Group's literary project. In the modern post-war period the literary desire to re-connect with homeland 'Greece' via Alexandrian 'dream-worlds' could only be sustained by denying the wider realities of the contemporary Egyptian context. The writers thus joined E.M. Forster in reiterating the ancient separation of Alexandria ad Aegyptum (Alexandria by, not in, Egypt) (Brown and Taieb 1996: 7). Egypt, both ancient and modern, was typically characterised unsympathetically by these writers. For example, the Pharaonic landscape which had seized the imagination of travellers and inspired an Egyptomania in many other Western scholars and poets (together with a certain claim to a 'White Egypt' as Western origin (Howe 1998)) failed to stir the emotion of the exiles. The desert, in particular, became a literary device symbolising the estrangement, placelessness and disintegration of self experienced by the poets in exile.

With echoes of HD's literary 'Alexandria project' one connection that the group did make with the traditional Western investment in Egypt is its problematic association with mortality and death. The act of a return to Egypt, in contrast to aspirations of re-birth and revival synonymous with a return to Alexandria and to Greece, is explored by the writers in order to pursue a deeper anxiety surrounding the theme of death. The poets picked up on what they considered to be a trace of an earlier memory/ trauma. As such, they became the 'innocent exiles' returning to the cradle of civilisation, an act of 'homecoming' that ultimately confronts them with the grave (Pinchin 1989: 24). The close proximity of the Alamein campaigns (which became the focus of world attention in July and November 1942) provoked further consciousness of the realties and close proximity of death. One member of the group, Keith Douglas, wounded in the Alamein
campaigns, took the experiences of the battlefield as his literary subject pursuing an anti-war sentiment in the style of Wilfred Owen (Bowden 1995: 66-93).

This theme of mortality and death was also used to narrate the decline and ultimate end of European control and privilege in Egypt, an experience symptomatic of a more general post-Second World War wounding to Western omnipotence through decolonisation. As Bowden comments: ‘If theirs [The Personal Landscape Group’s] tone is frequently elegiac, that now seems percipient of them for their world had not survived. Theirs is a tale, intentionally or not, of the end of empire. One history blots out the other’ (Bowden 1995: 24). This recasting is one which not only seeks to address (and potentially to work through the West’s own nostalgias and narcissisms, particularly that of colonial desire) but also narrates the West’s own departure from the colonial scene. It also conveys the sense in which these literary projects (again intentionally or unintentionally) have correspondences with H.D.’s recovery of the ritual of writing as mourning and as a means to narrativise and thus fully centre the experience of ‘ endings’.

The final acknowledgement of the end of ‘Western’ control in Egypt comes with Independence in 1952, and is powerfully symbolised with the ‘loss’ of what was claimed by the West’s more modern ‘self-objects’ the Suez canal in 1956. The ‘dispersal’ of Alexandria’s cosmopolitan community - the ‘khawaga’/ the ‘foreigners’ quickly followed - which further complicate the dynamic of homecoming (Brown and Taieb 1996: 9). Memories and narrations of the modern cosmopolitan city do, however, survive most powerfully in Durrell’s most famous novel The Alexandrian Quartet, dubbed by one critic as the ‘final and elaborate poem of exile’ (Bowden 1995:193). Significantly, the successive ‘books’ that appear under this collective title were published by Durrell (1957-1960) on his return to Greece and in the same period within which H.D.’s Helen in Egypt (1961) was published. It was also the era in which the Nasser’s new government pursued new narrations of nation which where collected under the banner-head ‘Egypt for the Egyptians’ and this emergent real-politick thus saw the West fully exiled from its own dream-world. In a dying act, the ‘Western imaginary’ and its associated ‘polyglot, multi-
ethnic (pre-Suez) modern city is identified with Europe and cast as recapitulating Hellenistic Alexandria’ (Halim 2002a: 5).

As the broad shifts of this chapter has shown museology and heritage studies own vision of itself within these Eurocentric dream-worlds and within the odyssey and quest for a foundational epic narrative of origins and homecoming has offered a means to establish its core values as certainties and thus to essentialise these as beyond question. The more subversive possibilities, and the fissures and openings within the discourse, I argue, lie in a deeper understanding of the psychodynamics of discourse which anti-museum/ archival critics and Alexandria’s more deviant poetics draw out further. It is, however, the post-war context which brings with it not only reshapings, rejections and re-conceptualisations of these dynamics but also confers an alternative force of reality upon pronouncements of the death of European dream-worlds as articulated from outside the West’s own sheltering discourse and frames of reference. It is to this context I now turn.
Chapter Two

‘On the Ruins’ - Postcolonial Heritage Metamorphosis
CHAPTER TWO
‘ON THE RUINS’ - POSTCOLONIAL HERITAGE METAMORPHOSIS

INTRODUCTION

VANTAGE POINTS

Here is the museum. Thirty years ago there stretched in front of it one of those desert-like areas that the English, though so knowledgeable about lawns, bequeathed to Islam... I went back ten years ago, and found the dusty museum and the desert-like square again. Today it is called Liberation Square; the new, vigorous Cairo rears its squat sky-scrapers all around me, and the enormous Hilton Hotel which flaunts its own view of Egypt against the slow soaring of two sparrow hawks, descendants of Horus. At the other end of the square, where the fountains play, the same spiritual presence fills the rooms of the museum ... a spiritual presence and something more disturbing.


Leave this Europe where they are never done talking of Man, yet murder men everywhere they find them in every corner of the globe... Europe undertook the leadership of the world with ardor, cynicism, and violence. Look at how the shadow of her palaces stretches out ever further! ... When I search for Man in the technique and the style of Europe, I see only a succession of negations of man, and an avalanche of murders.

(Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth [1968] quoted in Said 2003: 21)

If I were them, you might say, I’d prefer my mumbo-jumbo to their Acropolis’

(Sartre in Fanon, [1968] 1990: 5).

Chapter Two is a bridge to my ethnographic chapters, and as such, accesses a movement away from preoccupations with the West’s imaginary dream-worlds and closer to the ‘real’ of the contemporary context of homecoming. My point of entry is the post-war period and the critical reflections of the French ‘museologist-intellectual’ Andre Malraux.
on the dramas and destabilisations that mark this context. Malraux is perhaps most famous for his text ‘The Museum Without Walls,’ in which he is credited with reformulating the ‘museum’s imaginary’ and in doing so he has emerged as a significant actor within the anti-museum debate (Crimp 1993: 287). It is, however, his Anti-Memoirs (1967) that take forward Malraux’s concerns as cultural critic while also drawing upon his experience as a diplomat in the post-war context that I take as my specific focus. Malraux’s objective in this latter text is to produce a critical memoir which, in order to avoid falling into the narcissistic category of ‘confessions,’ is orientated towards a reflection on the ‘human condition’ by means of understanding one’s individual odyssey ‘as a particular relationship with the world’ (Malraux 1967: 17).

For my purposes, Malraux, whose numerous legacies have recently undergone new critical recuperations (Lyotard 1999: 2001), is a significant figure in the emergence of an anti-colonial discourse in the immediate post-war intellectual climate in Europe. Whilst he was part of a group studying the effects of colonialism on the colonised territories and their peoples, Sartre and Fanon were to become more influential figures in this postcolonial discourse. Yet it is the dedication of Malraux to defining hybrid histories through a shared sense of heritage that forms what became the more submerged theme that national liberation ‘is necessarily an act of culture’ (cf Young 2001:289).

Significantly then it is ‘on the ruins’ of this complex world of metamorphosis and transformation that Malraux chose the Egyptian Museum in Cairo as a medium to reflect upon the crises and breakthroughs of the immediate post war period. He chose to sketch out a vision of this new world order as a landscape marked by trauma and subject to both new distopic readings and new redemptive formulas. Malraux takes the Egyptian Museum and its immediate landscape as a medium /metaphor to crystallise these dynamics. From this vantage point he makes it clear that the scenes from the Cairo Museum he narrates are part of his own act of return, in which, after a ten year absence, the British held colonial Egypt had been transformed into the ‘new’ and ‘vigorous’ Independent Egypt (Malraux 1967: 46). This is symbolically enshrined in the renaming

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1 This appears in Malraux’s The Voices of Silence (1953).
of the Cairo’s central space in which the Museum is located as Tahrir or Liberation Square. It is, however, Malraux’s impulse to dig deeper than the surface of things that he locates, ‘something more disturbing’ (Malraux 1967: 46). It is the spectres which haunt the Museum and in consequence destabilise the confident air of the modern, contemporary (‘postcolonial’) landscape which allow Malraux to raise key questions concerning the nature of memory-work/ origins, the politics of aesthetics/ representation and mediation of identity-work/ homecoming and clashes between ‘old’ and ‘new’ cosmopolitics in this complex context. Turning first to address the museological, colonial imagination he states how:

The Cairo Museum is akin to these haunted places ... Here, now, are the birds with human heads, images of souls, Molberg, he with the pointed ears, used to say that the Egyptians invented the soul. What is more certain is that she invented serenity. For the feeling that strikes me here is not to be confused with the feeling of mortality... I am as profoundly ignorant of ancient Egypt as a man would be of love if he had not experienced it, however much he might have read; as profoundly as each one of us is ignorant of death. All I know of it are these figures which I contemplate as I pass by ... Europe has made them into a race of corpses ... Beside our statute-columns, what becomes of the corpse-like rigidity which the Book of the Dead seemed to corroborate? ... This sculpture is magical not aesthetic ... I cannot find the Hellenistic statutes which represented gods and monsters ‘realistically’ (Malraux 1967: 48-51).

Here the Museum sustains a potency as a haunted remnant of a colonial age in which spectres in the form of old colonial characterisations of cultural difference fixes Egypt as the before and beneath of the West’s civilisational scale. As Malraux, like other critics have made clear, within the dominant museological imagination and in a now familiar dualism, Greece (re-) emerges as the West’s dream-world and Egypt as the West’s self-defined ‘nightmare’ (see also Grewal 1996: 105-112). This force of museological representation sees Egypt take on a wider role as it emerges as a synonym for non-European cultures and as such features within the dominant Western museological imagination (and is exhibited within its gallery and spaces) as a terrorising mix of ghost,
human, animal and as objectified in deathly ‘pre-aesthetic forms’ (Grewal 1996: 111). The particular hauntings which Malraux is subject to operate on further registers and illustrate how the post-Second World War museological and archival culture has failed to confront the ghosts within its own home/ psyche and those which still occupy a potency in its now abandoned ‘postcolonial’ outposts.

By way of contrast, Malraux’s engagement with this scene allows him to challenge stereotypical images of ancient Egyptian culture. Crucially he pitches ‘Greek’ acts of filtering and mediation to function both as a failure and as an act of violence (Malraux 1967:51). Alexandrian cultural translations of Egyptian cultures, he believes, mutilated the latter’s spirit and misunderstood its soul. Malraux reiterates how the ‘serenity’ (the soul, humanity) of Egypt as ‘other’ is lost due to the West’s projection of its own deathliness onto the scene (Malraux 1967:51). On this theme Malraux states how a further destabilising force, a ‘subterranean sorcery pervades the museums of Egypt’ which he subsequently uses as a means to locate the subversive potential within this stereotypical representations: he thus proceeds to define this as the force of an animism which ultimately opens up a psychic net-work of spaces which takes the (European) museological imagination further into the African landscape (Malraux 1967:60). This is a means too for Malraux to reflect on his own journeys through the landscapes of Abu Simbel, and into Nubia, where he encounters new and alternative myth/ histories, archives, origins and ancestor-rituals. He reflects:

‘In the Cairo Museum, it was the dead who spoke. And I remembered Queen Sebeth [of Senegal]. Her [‘fetish’] tree reminded me of the walnut-trees that I had not forgotten, but these were attuned to the rhythm of human life, while the sacred tree was suggestive of a geological rhythm, in which man flitted past like a butterfly. The feeling that had overwhelmed me was one of profound reverence for that seal with which the unknown gods affirm their incarnations. (I had forgotten that Helen of Sparta had been the incarnation of a plane-tree...) The metamorphosis of the doubles of the Egyptian dynasts descended the melancholy staircase of the Cairo Museum, between the priestly wigs and
the panther skins studded with golden stars, through a cemetery of gods' (Malraux 1967: 62-63).

It is, however, at the point that Malraux imaginatively descends the ‘melancholy staircase of the Cairo Museum’ that he radically shifts the notion of the ‘non-West’ (Egypt, Africa) in its stereotypical characterisation as the land of death, by positioning the West instead as the true ‘empire of death’ (Malraux 1967:64). Crucially, here he adds that the West’s own capacity as a death-dealing agency reaches a pitch in what he dubs as the ‘most profound metamorphoses of all ... into a modern museum’ (Malraux 1967:64). Again, it is not only with reference to the horrors of colonialism, but the events of the Second World War that Malraux, outlines what he argues are the complicities of the West’s museological imagination in the dehumanising, barbarity of the Holocaust and in particular the death camps: here he states;

‘I have studied the vanished civilisations, observed foreign civilisations, and even my own, like the shades silently descending down the staircase of the Cairo Museum. Thus did the intellectuals of Altenberg study the historical barbarisms, as particular civilisations. But the true barbarism is Dachau; the true civilisation is first of all the element in man which the camps sought to destroy. The Christian can offer up his suffering, the ascetic can deny it - on the condition that he died fairly quickly ... Civilisations flutter like huge moths around this conflagration’ (Malraux 1967: 460-61).

The comparison of death camp and museum appears at intervals. Malraux says of Nazism (which he risked his life opposing as a resistance fighter) that, ‘it was aimed at losing one’s soul’, thus echoing the key dynamic which he saw in operation at the Cairo Museum, the erasure of the soul of the ‘other’ (Malraux 1967: 461). Malraux uses this moment to return to his central preoccupation with the human condition and as such offers his own reflection on: what it is to be human? Here Malraux rejects the idea of any grand redemptive project but instead argues forcefully for the need for the museological imagination and wider cultural discourse to take on a politics of representation which
gives expression to empathetic, rather than violent, acts of translation across Western and non-Western worlds.

The concept of human sympathy (symbolised for Malraux in the motifs/media of 'serenity' and of the 'soul') allows him to pursue, in more detail, Egypt's own dramas of translation and mediation of identity/memory-work in the period following Independence. He argues that Egypt's attempts to repossess its cultural forms and of its ancient origins that have been a key feature (and a complex dilemma) of the post-1950s context are necessarily bound up in a return to a heritage heavily mediated and dominated by European/Western translations and filters. Malraux emphasises the complexities of this process and both the power and the diverse cosmopolitical forces which underpin acts of representation by situating more specifically the 'return to Islam' within a wider dynamic of hybridisation: he thus argues that: 'It is not through the Koran that Egyptian Islam brings Egypt back to life, but through the Louvre, the British Museum, and the Cairo Museum. And already this museum is no longer an assurance of survival' (Malraux 1967:53).

Malraux uses his specific vantage point in order to further sketch out a highly politicised mirror on events across European and non-European contexts and to reflect on global futures. Broad critical strokes are used to recast and extend museological motifs and metaphors further: he returns to reiterate the West’s status as a 'doomed museum' and to argue that its death-dealing capacity is not simply a colonial or war-time phenomenon but he expresses his fears concerning the re-emergence of narcissistic, neo-colonial ambitions in the post-war era (Malraux 1967:53). Moreover, he places this dynamic of violent repetition alongside contemporary anxieties over the new violences which mark the process of decolonisation and, in particular, the crises and clashes synonymous with new nation-building. Here Malraux’s concerns are not just for Egypt’s future but he focuses more broadly upon the ‘birth’ of new nations as they come traumatically into force via acts of partition, enforced displacement and in the re-population of landscapes and territories in the post-war period. For example, he describes in detail his diplomatic visits to India and Pakistan and his deep concerns over Israel/Palestine (Malraux 1967:284).
Malraux, like many other cultural critics, makes it clear that from the post-war period onwards the traumas and violences that mark the global arena are dramatically and inextricably bound up in the domain of cultural heritage. Here critics more specifically identify tensions between the urge to reject Western orthodoxies and associated discourses of origins and heritage values, - and, by way of response, to locate alternative origins, heritage, values and dynamics of mediation (typically in a return made to a pre-colonial period) - , with that of the desire to repossess the West's foundational 'signs and images' and 'icons and myths' for new causes (see, for example, Prakash 1996). In this complex context not only has the tangible cultural heritage emerged to become part of this contested arena but so too have its foundational values/ ethics such as those of democracy, universalism, cosmopolitanism and humanism which are inextricably linked to the Westernised Alexandrian genealogy. In the latter case, alternative intellectual and political projects have emerged to challenge the West's exclusive rights to claim possession of these values.

Taking forward Malraux's position as a liminal figure in the emergence and the articulation of new relationships across North and South, in the following sections I pursue the specific crises and breakthroughs of this context by critically rehearsing the interventions of, amongst others, anti-colonial writers, postcolonial critics and deconstructionists and by emphasising the alternative, potent reinvestments that Egypt and its associated tangible/intangible heritage has acquired within these visions.
SECTION ONE

EGYPT AS ORIGIN AND REDEMPTION: ‘WRITING BACK’

For us, the return to Egypt in every domain is the necessary condition to reconcile African civilization with history ... it will play the same role in rethinking and renewing of African culture that Ancient Greece and Rome plays in the culture of the ‘West.’

(Diop 1992: 149).

On the spot occupied by this obelisk there formerly stood a temple dedicated to the sun ... Nothing, save this one solitary obelisk remains of this important city in which Egyptians and Hebrews were united for many centuries in brotherhood.

(Wilson 1878: 61).

It is not only Alexandria and its archive that has been cast as a powerful locus of homecoming but, with specific effect in the post-war period, the wider Egyptian landscape has similarly been pressed into the service of alternative discourses of origins, return and redemption. As critics such as Howe have shown in recent times the ‘lure of Egypt’ and its enduring appeal as a site of ‘mythical pasts and imagined homelands’, has been opened up from the powerful hold of the Western imagination (as, for example, is expressed in its discourses of Orientalism and Egyptology) to be re-possessed for the anti-colonial/ postcolonial imagination (Howe 1998). Moreover, this dynamic of re-investment, I want to argue further, is symptomatic of the on-going attractions of locating a template or resource for memory work, and more specifically, for the narration of trauma of loss and separation.

As such, alternative discourses of a ‘Return to Egypt’ have emerged to become bound up in alternative odysseys, new strategies of dream-work and the articulation of possible futures. These are characteristically led by the desire to repossess a pre-colonial origin, Golden Age, homeland, and therefore, of a heritage considered to be, firstly, more authentic and, secondly, uncontaminated by colonial contact. Furthermore, it is not just
Egypt's monumental heritage, for example, the Pyramids and the Sphinx, which are centred within these new acts of 'mirroring' and empathetic identification but also the narratives of Exodus and Egypt's characterisation as a cradle of civilisation (Howe 1998: 122). These projects have therefore, once again, brought both literary (as in the genre of 'writing to return' dubbed as 'writing back') and more literal, material dynamics into play. It is in this context too that renewed significance is given to the therapeutic dynamics of homecoming and motifs of purity and hybridity (Howe 1998: 122-138).

One of the most resonant acts of return made to the Egyptian landscape is that of the Senegalese historian and political activist Cheikh Anta Diop (1923-1986). With even greater significance for the trajectories of this thesis, Diop centres within his thesis a dramatic return and recuperation of the landscape and myth/histories of Heliopolis which emerges in this thesis as the Alexandrian archives repressed 'other'. Old Heliopolis is situated in what are now modern Cairo's Ains Shams and Al-Matariyya suburbs. Like Alexandria, this landscape has been subject to a wealth of images and mythologies: ancient Heliopolis, for example, is characterised as the place of creation (where the 'benben' mound emerged from primeval chaos); as a prominent centre for the sun cult; and as the intersection of narratives which, amongst others, map across the Old Testament and the Koran and which feature the figures, for example, of Abraham, Jacob, Moses and Mary and the dramas of both the Exodus and the Holy Family's flight into Egypt (Wilson 1878: 60-67; Rodenbeck 1998: 44-50.). 'Mary's Tree' is located nearby: reputedly one of the places where the Holy Family took refuge from Herod's persecution. The area is currently a heritage site managed by the Supreme Council of Antiquities (see figs 4 and 5).

Another bond with the Alexandrian archive is the poverty of archaeological remains since ancient Heliopolis is also said to have been subject to a devastating fire (Rodenbeck 1998: 44-50). As previously stated too, a large amount of Heliopolis' monumental heritage was taken by the Ptolemies to decorate ancient Alexandria and is now being repossessed through the medium of contemporary underwater archaeological excavations (as is featured in Chapter Six). Moreover, some of the ancient heritage from this site,
Fig. 4. Plato’s Obelisk, Old Helipolis, Ain Shams, Cairo (photo: B. Butler)

Fig. 5. Mary’s Tree, Old Heliopolis, Al-Matariyya, Cairo (photo: B. Butler)
notably its obelisks/ 'needles', have undergone further displacement and have been famously exiled in New York and London. Only one such column - that of Usertsen I Pharaoh from 12th Dynasty, also known as 'Plato's obelisk' still stands at the original site (Diop 1992: 149). This object, the oldest of all known obelisks, and more specifically its historical (mythical?) associations with Plato, are crucial dynamics within Diop's thesis.

Writ larger still, Diop positioned Heliopolis as the potent centre-point of his project of a 'Return to Egypt'. In contrast to the Eurocentric dream-worlds sketched out in Chapter One, Diop's vision depicts Egypt as an extension of the African landscape and of an African genealogy. At stake here is the reversal of the routes/ roots of culture (cf. Gilroy 1993: Clifford 1997) and the privileging of an earlier Egyptian origin over that of a Greek origin and more specifically still of Black African, rather than White European cultural beginnings (Howe 1998). Writing in the 1950s and 1960s Diop asserted a connection between his contemporary sub-Saharan Black African culture and ancient Egyptian Pharaonic culture which he understood to be a Black African civilisation (Diop 1992). This, in turn, led to him being affectionately characterised by his supporters as the 'Black Pharaoh' or 'Pharaoh of African Studies' (Diop 1992: 12). His work is inextricably linked to the contemporary political agendas of decolonisation in Africa, in particular, its narratives of unity and revivalism as expressed in Pan-Africanism.

Again, by way of contrast to European writers (including the 'old' museological texts rehearsed earlier) this 'return to Egypt' did not symbolise death for Diop but was a redemptive act of homecoming enacted in order to bring about the renewal and regeneration of African culture. The death of African culture, Diop believed, was enacted by Western scholars who strategically exiled Africa from its place in world history (Diop 1992:149). The reclamation or repossession of this heritage took the form of a symbolic return centred upon a still existent material landscape. Diop's thesis thus asserts that everything starts in Egypt and as such Egypt is thus positioned as the distant, forgotten or repressed 'mother' of science and culture of the West: a teacher to Greece in its infancy - a culture Diop believed owed everything to its encounter with Egypt (Diop 1992:163).
A specific link between his thesis and the ancient Heliopolitan landscape is the aforementioned academy or centre of learning which once stood at this site. For Diop and others, this prominent centre of science and religion which was in existence before the Alexandrian Mouseion-Library, is pivotal in proving that the flow of 'universal' knowledge came from Egypt to the rest of the world (Diop 1992: 299). Diop and other authors writing in this genre, take as literal truth ancient sources which assert that Plato (hence the name of the obelisk) and other ancient scholars including, Strabo, Solon, Pythagoras Thales, Eudoxus to name a few, either visited or were initiated at Heliopolis (Diop 1992: 299). The thesis continues that these philosophers came to ancient Heliopolis to 'learn' wisdom from Black African culture: an historical 'fact', they argue, that Herodotus and other ancient authors took as common knowledge (Diop 1992:300). This assertion thus argues the presence of an earlier African-Egyptian origin which subsequently exerts an on-going influence on 'Greek' intellectual odysseys, thus putting an alternatively rooted cosmopolitics into play.

For Diop and others, Old Heliopolis is re-invested as the place for the regeneration of contemporary African culture - both in terms of the African continent and the African diaspora. Diop stated that Black African memory was traumatised not only by the pens of racially motivated Western scholars exiling Africa from world culture, history and philosophy but also as a result of the historical experience of slavery (Diop 1992:113). He believed that the psychological impact of this form of 'exile' and its associated trauma needed to be addressed. Diop believed that to lose one's history was to lose one's soul and to risk a disintegration of self and self-group (Diop 1992:113-12). An alternative curative mode of memory-work was advocated via attachments and identifications made between modern Black African culture and ancient Egyptian Pharaonic culture. Heliopolis was thus privileged by Diop as the place for internal psychic restoration, for expressions of mourning, and, as he understood it, memory recovery. Part of the training of initiates at Heliopolis involved the practice of the 'strengthening of the soul' that Diop felt was an apt prescription for the contemporary African culture (Diop 1992: 299-300). Yet again, there are echoes of the tradition museological/ archival discourse which positions the archive as the 'Place for the Cure of the Soul' and with Malraux's
intellectual preoccupation with the ‘soul’. As such, new interventions are thus powerfully made in terms of on-going attempts to re-house memory-in-exile and define ‘what it is to be human?’

The central tenets of Diop’s work continue to be reworked and revived by other authors in new cultural and political contexts. An extract from the South African President Mbeki’s political speeches, for example, illustrates this continuity while extending the brief to include sub-Saharan African ‘icons and myths’:

‘To perpetuate their imperial domination over the peoples of Africa, the colonisers sought to enslave the African mind and to destroy the African soul ... The beginning of the rebirth of our continent must be our own rediscovery of our soul, captured and made permanently available in the great works of creativity represented by the pyramids and the sphinxes of Egypt, the stone buildings of Axum and the ruins of Carthage and Zimbabwe, the rock paintings of the San, the Benin bronzes and the African masks, the carvings of Makonde and the stone sculptures of the Shona ... In that journey of self-discovery and the restoration of our own self-esteem, without which we would never become combatants for the African renaissance, we must retune our ears to the music of Zao and Franco of the Congos and the poetry of Mazisi Kunene of South Africa, and refocus our eyes to behold the paintings of Malangatane of Mozambique and the sculpture of the Dumile Fine of South Africa’ (Mbeki 1998: 299).

A more critical reading of the use of Egypt as a resource within what have become known as Afrocentrist theses followed the publication of Martin Bernal’s Black Athena (1987). Bernal’s text provoked both academic and popular profiling of these issues and sparked a number of controversies which, amongst other factors, illustrated how attachments to ancient Pharaonic culture have found a renewed resonance for many within the African American community and thus has seen ‘Egypt’ subsequently emerge as a significant feature in US culture wars (Howe 1998: 7). This identification with Egypt has also led to an extreme form of Afrocentrism that has gathered increasing criticism. Critics suggest that authors writing in this genre simply invert the traditional Western
model in order to make claims to a superior African origin, without problematising the pseudo-scientific, essentialist and transhistorical notions of 'race' on which the thesis resides (Howe 1998: 215-75). As Howe comments 'Black Athena is just as wrong as White Egypt' (Howe 1998: 9). Perhaps to offer an antidote, Egypt has also provided a point of inspiration for the recent articulation of a thesis of 'travelling cultures' which privileges and intellectualises the fluidity of routes and hybridisations over the obstinacies, fixities of the purist characterisations of roots (see Clifford 1997: 1-2 on Ghosh's ethnographic work in an Egyptian Delta village).

The recovery of Egypt has had a potency in other domains of intellectual discourse, for example, 'Egypt', the figure of the 'Egyptian' and significantly too the landscape of Heliopolis has been re-worked by deconstructionists as part of critiques of what Derrida's refers to as the 'White Mythologies' (1982). It is to Egypt as a central emblem within the deconstructionist strategy of metaphysical unfixing and destablisation I now want to turn.

SECTION TWO
METAPHYSICAL DESTABILISATIONS: 'EGYPT' AS DECONSTRUCTION

Jewgreek is greekjew: but greekjew is Egyptian.
Hieroglyphs and pyramids, Thoth and Isis, colossi and Sphinx: Egypt repeatedly returns to haunt Derrida's writing. From the two (or three) great Plato readings to the two great Hegel readings, via discussions of Freud and Warburton, Egyptian motifs regularly appear at important moments in the texts. What is the place of 'Egypt' in deconstruction? Is there any sense in insisting on Derrida, greekjew or jewgreek, as North African, analogically 'Egyptian'?

...In proposing 'Egypt' as one name of that 'unnameable necessity', we are not naming any thing, any place or any date. If the question 'what is ...?' [I]s dated, and dated as 'later' than 'Egypt', we cannot ask 'what is Egypt?'

(Bennington 1992: 97. 104)

Freud too, naturally, is Moses. Mosaic, capital M, from Moses: small m, from Greek mousa, Muse

(Bennington 1992: 116).
The deconstructionist preoccupation with ‘Egypt’ and the accompanying strategisation of a ‘Return to Heliopolis’ has emerged as part of attempts to both destabilise the ethnocentrisms and exclusive qualities of Western – or ‘Greek’ – metaphysics and to radically re-work its associated discourse of origins, memory-work and homecoming. This deconstructionist ‘reading’ of ‘Greek’ metaphysics builds upon the work of intellectuals such as Levinas, who, once again in the pivotal post-war period, issued a challenge to the dominant ‘Greek’ metaphysical position by arguing a place for the figure of the ‘Jew’ within the domain of philosophy/ ethics (Levinas 1987). The possible stagings of a ‘third position’ in the figure of the ‘Egyptian’ has subsequently featured in Derrida’s texts, notably in Dissemination (1997 [1981]) and has been given critical gloss by Bennington (1992). It is not only Levinas’ work but, amongst others, that of Freud which informs Derrida’s interventions. It is argued that having centred the discourse of psychoanalysis upon a ‘Greek’ myth/ literary and philosophical genealogy, in his closing years, Freud began to develop further his less defined – and thus ‘enigmatic’ - interests in Egypt and in Egyptian mythology (see Raphael-Leff 1990; Cororan 1991; Forrester 1994). Freud’s work, - which also makes connections with the landscape of Heliopolis in his preoccupation with, amongst others, the figures of Akhenaton (the ‘creator’ of Monotheism) and Moses -, first raised the possibility of positioning oneself ‘as Egyptian’ (Freud 1986b [1939]).

It is, therefore, with Freud as a Moses/ Muse figure that Derrida powerfully takes up ‘Egypt’ as an emblem and also as what is perhaps best described as a speculative synonym for deconstruction. In a complex schema (or non-schema as Derrida might have it) ‘Egypt’, like ‘deconstruction’ itself is subsequently staged as a liminal ‘site’/’non-site’, a ‘beyond’, a ‘between’, and a ‘beneath’ and as an ‘undecided’, which is always enigmatic, and therefore never fixed (Bennington 1992: 116; Derrida 1997). Moreover, the key dramas that Derrida seeks to return to in order to both ‘destabilise’ and ‘unfix’ are nothing less than the foundation moments of Western metaphysics. Deconstruction then reclaims ‘Egypt’ as the ‘unnameable necessity’ which is capable of confronting Western ‘logos’ culture with its own fears, distress, confusion and blindness with regard to the
nature of its own origin (Derrida 1997). It is here that alternative ‘readings’ of the thesis’ central themes of origins, traumatic loss, separation, reattachment and the dynamics of cosmopolitanism and ‘othering’ can be extracted.

Derrida’s descent into ‘Egypt’ comes with his strategic excavation and search for a more ‘originary’ landscape, archive and origin than that offered by ‘Greek’ discourse. Derrida seeks to identify as his point of access a space which is at once library, museum and, with echoes of HD’s poetics, is crucially positioned as an ‘archive’/‘pharmacy’ (Derrida 1997: 23-24). For example, it is in a survey of a metaphorical/metaphysical Museum - first imagined by Hegel - and prompted by the latter’s reading of Schelling - that Derrida begins his search for a potential fissure. This imagined space is cast as the realm which ‘exhibit[s] the realm of thought philosophically’ (Hegel quoted in Derrida 1997:24).

Hegel’s point is to question the value of the ‘traditional material’ which is re-presented as the ‘source’ of modernity’s philosophising (and more specifically Schelling’s own interventions) which are characterised by Hegel as a collection which offers ‘only here and there a meager shred or a disordered heap of dead bones (Hegel quoted in Derrida 1997:24). Derrida, in turn argues that this Museum of Western thought is ‘a prefabricated “construction,”’ in which ‘philosophy applies simple oppositions, formulas prescribed once and for all: somewhat as in a well-kept pharmacy or grocery store, or even in a museum of natural history where one can find collected, classed, and exhibited all manner of dead limbs and cold bones, skins dried like parchments, anatomies plates, and other tableaux and displays that pin down the living to death’ (Derrida 1997: 43).

Leaving behind thoughts of his particular vision of the Museum/metaphysics as mausoleum, Derrida shifts his focus from Hegel’s critique in order to examine the unexplored potencies of the motif of the ‘pharmacy’ with respect to its Egyptian roots. More specifically he uses this motif to pursue alternative ‘readings’ of foundational ‘Greek’ philosophical sources from this alternative position on the margins (Derrida 1997: 65-74). Once again Plato is the key figure who provides this link into ‘Egypt’.

2 Hegel’s uses this vignette in particular to critique Schelling’s philosophy of nature, its foundational sources and oppositional categories (see Derrida 1997: 23-4).
Derrida engages in a specific 'reading' of Plato's text *Phaedrus*, within which 'Egypt' can be glimpsed in the form of both references to the 'pharmacy'/ 'pharmakon' and to Theuth/ Thoth. The latter two figures, as the following demonstrates are liminal figures whose identities cross-over between Greece and Egypt as they transform into various guises. The text of the *Phaedrus* itself centres upon Socrates ('who famously never wrote anything' (Collins and Mayblin 2001: 26) recounting the myth of the 'invention of writing' as a means to argue that 'speech is superior to writing' (see Collins and Mayblin 2001: 26-29; Derrida 1997: 65-74). As such, Derrida engages with what has become the foundational aspect of Western philosophy and metaphysics: the moment in which Socrates via Plato as inaugural figures of Western reason and logos (and its vocabulary of 'being', 'truth', 'centre', 'origin'), condemn writing and valorise speech. This is a moment which also holds further insights in terms of archival metaphysics (Derrida 1997: 75-78).

Derrida's strategy begins with him repeating the myth of the 'invention of writing' that sees Theuth (in his guise of inventor) visiting the Egyptian king Thamus in order to exhibit 'his arts' (Plato quoted in Derrida 1997: 75). As Derrida explains: '... when it came to writing Theuth said, “This discipline (*to mathema*), my king, will make the Egyptians wiser and will improve their memories (*sophoterous kai mnemonikoterous*): my invention is a recipe (pharmakon) for both memory and wisdom” (Plato quoted in Derrida 1997: 75). Here Derrida chooses to ‘freeze the scene’ before the point at which the king makes his ‘decisive’ moment – his rejection of the ‘invention of writing’ – as a means to crystallise the analogy between this moment and the ‘rejectionism’ at the heart of the ‘pronouncement on writing’ made by Western metaphysics (Derrida 1997: 75-76). For Derrida, the king’s words of reply to Theuth speak for the Western metaphysical position: ‘Those who write will stop exercising their memory and become forgetful. They’ll rely on the external marks of writing instead of their internal capacity to remember things’. The ‘inauthenticity’ of writing is pursued further by the king: ‘You’ve discovered a pharmakon, not for true memory... you offer your students a mere appearance of it, not the reality ... they’ll carry the conceit of wisdom, instead of being really wise’ (Plato quoted in Derrida 1997:102). As a consequence it is therefore fixed
that 'writing is poison' and that Theuth attempted to put into circulation a poisoned gift (Collins and Mayblin 2001: 31)³.

Derrida recasts this moment as 'the doctoring of philosophy' (Derrida 1997: xxiv). In response his own return to Phaedrus is made in order to 'unfix' the metaphysical certainties which accompany the 'birth' of writing/metaphysics by drawing out a key emblem of deconstruction the 'play of undecidability' which he identifies in this and in other foundational texts of Western philosophy (see Collins and Mayblin 2001: 32 for a discussion). In this particular case Derrida invests Theuth as a figure of 'undecidability' and creatively conflates the latter's identity with that of the Egyptian god Thoth (Derrida 1997: 85-94). Derrida's point here is to define the philosophical limitations and epistemological violences which accompany the 'fixing'/ 'doctoring' of foundational metaphysical 'certainties'. He reiterates that writing, like the archive and metaphysics itself, will always be an index of the West's mourning for the authenticity of speech (Derrida 1974: 141-142).

It is this traumatic break - the West's rejection of writing - which (again despite or because of its obvious 'inauthenticity') reinvests the archive/writing (and potentially metaphysics and its 'objects' too) as the model and medium of redemption. Derrida, however, destabilises this dynamic further by posing a crucial question: 'by what' can Western metaphysics redeem itself 'if not already a writing older than speech and already installed in that place?' (Derrida 1974: 141). His partial reply is to cast 'Egypt' as a strategic 'synonym' for a 'writing older than speech' which he defines further as a reworking of Plato's 'writing the soul' and which sees Derrida take up the motif of the 'hieroglyph' as an equally potent 'model' to express the co-presence and co-existence of 'origin', 'writing', 'archive' and 'difference' (Derrida 1997: 85-87; see also Collins and Mayblin 2001: 33; Bennington 1992: 116).

³ Derrida, like HD, thus explores and exploits the meanings of the Greek word Pharmakon as both 'cure and poison' he subsequently casts the pharmakon as 'undecidable' and 'inhabiting' both positions (see also Collins and Mayblin 2001: 29). As such 'Egypt' is similarly positioned by Derrida as 'undecidable' and as the 'poison-cure' to be administered to Western metaphysics.
- Heliopolis

It is by taking forward these ‘Egyptian’ motifs that Derrida is able to move deeper into the myth/history and landscape of Heliopolis. Part of his strategy is that of keeping Plato’s visit to Heliopolis (which Diop saw as pivotal to the ‘Afrocentrist’ thesis) as a great ‘undecided’ event in Western metaphysics and as such to use this as a means of exploring more fully a whole gamut of alternative identity-work which, yet again, centres around the potency of the archive as ancestor/origins (Derrida 1997: 85 ft. 15). It is in a return to the figure of the Egyptian god Thoth that Derrida accesses into the destabilising forces operating out of Heliopolis. This is achieved by recovering from amongst Thoth’s multiple identities as ‘limen’ and ‘mediator’ his role as ‘scribe and bookkeeper of Osiris’ (Derrida 1997: 91). An alternative archival ‘mythos’ emerges which appears to merge, mix and cross-over ‘Western’/‘non-Western’ heritages to produce a destabilising cosmopolitics.

As such Thoth takes his position as “Master of the books,” and with some mystical potency as “master of divine words” (Derrida 1997:91). With echoes of Malraux’s recuperation of the genre of the ‘tree fetish’ and the ‘Lady of the Tree’ as the repressed objects of the museological/archival imagination, Thoth has a ‘female counterpart’ at Heliopolis, Seshat, meaning ‘she-who-writes’ and who takes the position of “Mistress of libraries” (Derrida 1997: 91). As counter-parts, their duties are defined in the following: ‘she marks the names of the kings on a tree in the temple of Heliopolis, while Thoth keeps account of the years on a notched pole’ (Derrida 1997: 91). Crucially, Thoth is also a presence in ‘the scene of the last judgement’ and as such, ‘in the underworld, opposite Osiris, Thoth records the weight of the heart-souls of the dead’ (Derrida 1997: 91). It is the confusion of cosmopolitan identities, co-existence and mixture that attracts Derrida and encourages him to harness the potential of both Thoth and Heliopolis for ‘unfixing’ and ‘destabilisation.’

Derrida uses these forces to draw out a deconstructionist ‘reading’ of another foundational act of Western metaphysics: the act of ‘turning away’ from the Sun/Sun-
god (Derrida 1997: 82-84). This defining moment of Western metaphysics, now relegated to a 'trace', is understood by Derrida as an 'originary' trauma and as an index of the West's ('forgotten', 'repressed', 'denied') violent separation from 'Egypt.' This act of separation, is argued to precede the foundation of a 'rigid monotheism' and the legitimation of the 'One and Unique' which is necessary in order for the West to subsequently establish a basis for 'Greek' metaphysics (Bennington 1992: 107-110.). This foundational drama required the founders of metaphysics to 'reject' the 'distressing plurality' and the 'confusion of Egyptian gods' which inhabit Heliopolis, and more specifically its characterisation as the place of the Sun-god and Sun-cult ((Bennington 1992: 107). Derrida re-casts the enormity of this 'Greek' metaphysical moment of 'turning away' from the blinding sun as a 'recourse to logos, from [the] fear of being blinded by any direct intuition of the face of the father, of good, of capital, of the origin of being in itself, of the form of forms, etc' (Derrida 1997: 83). Derrida thus employs 'Heliopolis' as a motif capable of confronting logos culture with its own fear, anxiety, confusion and blindness regarding the nature of its own ('pre-metaphysical') heritages and hybrid origins.

-Moses as 'Insider: Outsider'

The figure of Moses and the account of Exodus are the final key dynamics within the lexicon of deconstruction to mark the Egyptian landscape. Moses - the figure who leads the Exodus - has been the locus point for new excavations of origins which draw out Moses' liminal identity as at once insider: outsider (Bennington 1992: 114-116). Here, critics have placed Moses' identity as 'legislator', 'foreigner,' 'founder' and also (building on the work of Freud) as an Egyptian alongside alternative accounts of identity-work: notably that of the desire to belong to a 'tribe', a community and to find a unity in terms of a 'landscape', 'origin', 'home' and 'self-group' (Bennington 1992: 114). This has produced further reflections on the tensions between the 'Greek', 'Jew' and 'Egyptian' identities. The 'Greek'/ 'Jew' binary, for example, is 'read' by critics in terms of polarisations and as a difference between: the Hellenic/ Hebraic: the Classical/

It is here too that critics have explored the tensions between: the ‘Greek’ ‘odyssey’ and the ‘Jew as wanderer’. The difference, as Derrida and Bennington make clear, is that the former ‘Greek’ narrative movement of the ‘Odyssey as a ‘story’ of homecoming takes the form of a return to origin mediated by a philosophical journey and as motivated by the acquisition of wisdom as self-knowledge (Bennington 1992:100-101). The latter narrative movement of the ‘Jew as wanderer’ as personified in the story of Abraham, by way of contrast, is an account of the individual ‘breaking from and opposing the life of community and love’ and, in consequence, is ‘self-condemned to wandering in the desert away from any fixed domicile, marking this cut with the sign of circumcision’ (Bennington 1992: 101). As an identity operating out of Messianic Hebraic text, the ‘Jewish’ narrative of origins and roots, like orthodox spirituality and wisdom go unmediated (Bennington 1992: 101). Moreover, these qualities of non-assimilation and of an identity-work which goes unmediated, as Levinas’ interventions powerfully demonstrate, offer a means to articulate a specifically moral-ethical position for the figure of the ‘Jew’ (Levinas 1987).

The figure of the ‘Egyptian’ – symbolically articulated around the figure of Moses – is ‘set in play’ by Derrida as an attempt to create a ‘third’ position which is capable of interpolating new hybrid loci for identity-work ‘inbetween’ and ‘across’ the ‘Greek’/‘Jew’ binary (Bennington 1992: 97). Significantly, Derrida’s own cosmopolitan biographical identity -as a North African Sephardic Jew ‘reading’ ‘Greek’ text encompasses these different ‘worlds’ and ‘identities’ (Bennington 1992: 99). Derrida as ‘Egyptian’ is, therefore, able to pursue motifs of insider/ outsider, of home/ exile and of archival hospitality and archiviolences as a means to map across and thus destabilise identity-work further in an attempt to articulate cosmopolitan positions and movements
which hold in tension ‘Egypt’s’ characterisation as a landscape of reconciliation and redemption and as a place of originary trauma and separation (Derrida 1997:109).

In contemplating the contributions, and also the limits of ‘Derrida as Egyptian’, critics such as Bennington, remain ‘undecided’ as to whether deconstruction and its ‘founder’ have indeed escaped the ‘melancholic attachment’ and the ‘mourning for metaphysics’ that Derrida himself argues ‘suffocates’ those who work exclusively within the ‘library of Western tradition’ (see Bennington 1992:99). Bennington, for example, questions whether Derrida’s project, is not (even if by default), ‘an essentially conservative ruse’ played out within the well-trodden interior spaces of this arena (Bennington 1992:99). It is here, however, that gestures are made to ground the implications of the above trajectories within the ‘real’ world in order to, yet again, disturb the peace of the academy.

It is in this context, therefore, that critics not only cite Derrida’s concern to ground his deconstructionist project within the political ‘real’ but it is used to draw upon the relationship of Derrida’s interventions to his intellectual intimates. It is here that the writer-philosopher Jabes preoccupies Derrida. Jabes’ biographical-identity is also able to pull together the ‘Greek’, ‘Jew’ and ‘Egyptian’ identities: born in Egypt, he, like Derrida, is a North African Jew (Bennington 1992: 102). More specifically it is Jabes who, as poet, exile and Holocaust survivor offered the ‘library of Western tradition’ a ‘Book of Questions’ which over-turned all redemptive possibilities of the archive as a site of mourning. Jabes thus sought to define a writing project which challenges modernity’s investment in the book/ writing as a space/ media for ‘working through’ and recovery. Thus he powerfully posed the ‘question’ with respect to the post-Holocaust era of how to mourn? (Jabes 1992).

4 The trauma relating the Moses’ murder is the subject of the speculations of deconstruction (Bennington 1992: 109).
SECTION THREE

ECHOES, ENIGMAS AND DISTURBANCES OF MEMORY

Thus you might say that I am interested in the psychoanalytic Narcissus because, in a kind of “colonial” reconstallation of the matter of “Greece”; he is made to stand at the door of the free flight of Oedipus ... My question is: what are we choosing today when we choose an identity, which is different from an echoing or counter-echoing of Western discourse? Is there a difference between the choice of this Echo and that of programmed madness. Or are we in a place where we can choose something ex-orbitant

(Spivak 1992: 11)

... I felt that Ovid himself, against his probable intentions, had monumentalized in neglected Echo the random possibility of the emergence of an occasional truth of a kind’.

(Spivak 1993: 20)

Enigma originates at the precise moment when past and future are both collapsed into an ambiguous, supremely problematic present...This is what is meant by the Egyptian effect.

(Perniola 1995: vii-viii)

The articulation of ‘Egypt’ as a third ‘site/ non-site’ and as an ‘enigma’ capable of confronting Western metaphysics with pre-‘Greek’ ‘origins’ and influences allows me to consider alternative strategies pursued by Perniola and Spivak which offer a means to address more directly the cosmopolitics of ‘origins’ and ‘othering’ within postcolonial discourse (Perniola 1995; Spivak 1992; 1993). More specifically still these authors’ interventions enable me to return to critically address the dual characterisation drawn out in Chapter One of the Alexandrina paradigm firstly, as the ‘ultimate expression of Greek narcissism in institutional form’ (Gore 1976: 169) and, secondly, as an ‘enigma’ (Abaddi 1997:12) with reference to both metaphysical and material worlds.
Spivak’s and Pemiola’s critical projects converge around the repossession and re-conceptualisation of the potent ‘Greek’ personas found within the literary-Freudian myth of Narcissus and Echo. Spivak, for example, mobilises this myth as part of strategies to define alternative models of identity work which go beyond the repetition of model Western (Narcissistic) colonial master-narratives in order to provoke ‘empathetic identification’ with the once dehumanised, colonised ‘other’ (Spivak 1993). A resonant dynamic within Pemiola’s intervention - with echoes of Freud’s ‘disturbance of memory’ (Freud 1984) - concerns itself with ‘Egypt’ as heritage-enigma in the sense that the capacity of heritage spaces and objects (including museums, art, archaeology and architecture) to bring the ‘past in the present’ is associated with the project of ‘othering’ and with the ability to provoke a crisis/breakthrough of origins (Pemiola 1995). With further relevance for the contemporary Alexandrina project Pemiola centres new, digital technologies within his critique.

- ‘Narcissus and Echo’

Spivak and Pemiola’s recuperations of the figure of Narcissus position this particular compelling ‘Greek’ icon as the over-determined and tragically flawed ‘hero of the Western predicament of ‘self’ (Spivak 1993: 30). More specifically, however, it is the recovery of the subversive potential of Narcissus’ ‘other’ in the guise of Echo which interests the above critics. Spivak, for example, uses this strategy in order to dramatise the complexities of postcolonial identity-work by making explicit, that Narcissus and Echo’s identities and relationship to origins are bound up in their respective position within the ‘universal’ pathway of self development/individuation, which in turn is synonymous with the pathway of ‘universal’ History and the ‘march of civilization’ (Spivak 1993: 18). Correspondences can, therefore, found with Alexander the Great’s own characterisation as narcissist charting out this civilisational odyssey (Gore 1976: 169).

Narcissus himself is diagnosed as suffering from ‘secondary narcissism’ (Spivak 1993: 22) in which the cultured, ‘adult’ self’s movement from pre-Oedipal unity to Oedipal
separation is expressed in a retrospective nostalgia for the childhood state and as a desire to return to ‘origins’ and thus to the now ‘idealised’ space of ‘primary narcissism’ (Rycroft 1995: 107). Within psychoanalytic theory the narcissist is thus incapable of an affective life and, therefore, of giving recognition to, or empathising with, the ‘other’. In Ovid’s account of the Narcissus myth (the source from which the above critics, taking Freud’s lead, draw) this obsession with origins is expressed in Narcissus’ fixation with his own image in the pool (as mirror) in which the self is reflected as world. Echo is caught in a double-bind in her inability to ‘narrativise’ her own identity (humanity, soul, subjectivity) and her failure to fully ‘repeat’ the identity of Narcissus as master narrative. As such Echo is able to repeat only the end statement of Narcissus’ words (Spivak 1993: 24).

Spivak sees this as providing a powerful metaphor for the power inequalities of identity-work within the colonial memory-space. Echo’s dilemma also contains its own echoes of Spivak’s critical investigation of the question: ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ (Spivak 1988). These dynamics are strategically re-worked in Spivak’s privileging of the particular struggle of Echo to ‘step forth’ from the colonial context (Spivak 1993: 37). Within Spivak’s schema Narcissus takes the position of the Colonial-Master while Echo takes hers as the colonised ‘other’. As such Spivak’s interest is in exploring the dependency of the ‘self’/ ‘other’ Narcissus/ Echo role and attempts to face the ‘real’ of the postcolonial identity-context. For Narcissus this means letting go of control and for Echo the need to take control and to engage in acts of self-determination (Spivak 1993: 23).

Echo, therefore, is strategically recast by Spivak within the loci of ‘mimicry’ in which her partial acts of repetition are afforded a particular potency and recast her further as ‘ironist’, ‘analyst’ and interestingly as the tenth ‘forgotten muse’ (see Loewenstein 1984: 5). Echo’s acts of repetition are subversive in that they are capable of ‘revealing the speakers imperfect knowledge of the world’ (cf. Loewenstein 1984: 5). The particular moment of liberation in Ovid’s text comes when Narcissus in anger tells Echo to ‘fly from me!’ and in response Echo finally discovers self-recognition as she echoes back ‘Me!’ (Spivak 1993: 25). It is here that Echo asserts herself as a powerful agent and
strategist both in terms of her own self individuation and significantly in terms of
provoking 'transference' in order that Narcissus' metamorphosis occurs and that, as a
consequence, both identities can relocate themselves along the path to self-knowledge.
Echo is the figure who takes the lead in this potentially redemptive transformation. She
thus administers the pharmakon required for this process of 'separating out.'

Spivak thus stages the postcolonial experience as a crisis of origin: an 'apoia' imagined
as a shutting between Echo and Narcissus; which she argues requires further definition
and identity-work. As defined within psychoanalytic theory, the potential 'cure' for
narcissism is in the recovery of the capacity for 'othering' (recognition, empathy,
affective life) as a necessary dynamic in the shift from pathological to 'healthy' identities
and within the wider turn towards the 'real' (Lasch 1985: 12). Narcissus' pool - as a
shelter for the 'Greek' subject/ psyche - like Derrida's model of the archive is also
characterised as a denial of the death drive. As such, the concluding drama of Ovid's text
sees Narcissus calling upon the gods to allow him to leave the pool and to stop gazing at
his own reflection, even though this would mean choosing 'death' (of a certain identity,
i.e. in Spivak's project, the colonial identity) over 'immortality'. This crisis, is based
upon a recognition of 'vulnerability' and is bound up in the need to let go of an obsessive,
narcissistic vision of 'origins.' This moment comes when in recognition of Echo's
presence (i.e. the reality of the 'other') he also recognises the 'truth' of his position
within the wider world and is able to begin his separating out from Echo. As Freud and
others argue, this moment of facing death (and thus the reality of life: mortality) is the
ultimate narcissistic wound (in Rycroft 1994: 107). Spivak also sees this drama as bound
up in confronting the metaphysical-moral impasse of shuttling between 'Greek' - 'Jew'
identities within the postcolonial frame which, she argues, is only achieved by giving
recognition to cosmopolitical identities and to new shared futures based upon the
transformation of relationships between 'self'/ 'other'(Spivak 1993: 23).

It is Echo who, as Spivak shows, ultimately holds the key towards more 'just' and
'reciprocal' reattachments within the vision of a postcolonial, cosmopolitan 'future'
based upon the recognition of the humanity of the 'other' (Spivak 1993: 25). Echo's
'stepping forth', therefore, is located in the possibility of 'working through' the oppressive, pathological traits of both 'old' and 'new' narcissistic identities as a means to access a position for identity/memory-work beyond a repetition of a simple model of the 'stereotype' and by creating new, strategic cosmopolitan and hybrid identities. It is Echo who initiates the ritual movements of transformation in the form of acts of mourning (i.e. by definition change involves a loss of some kind) and as a means to both memorialise (archive memory) and move on (Spivak 1993: 25). Writ larger still, Spivak has similarly argued that the contemporary narcissistic North should follow a similar process in terms, for example, of recognising the death of its own fantasies of omnipotence as symbolised in the failure of 'universal' Grand Narratives and which should, she argues further, be taken as a symbol too of the 'radical acceptance of ['Western'] vulnerability.' This is also made amid her calls too for the West to 'unlearn their privilege as their loss' and for the marginalised to engage in the politics of 'strategic essentialism' (Spivak 1993: 25-26).

- 'Egyptian Effect' and Enigma

Pemiola offers a complementary, though differently nuanced, version of the Narcissus and Echo myth in which Echo emerges as a more globalised identity-figure. Of specific interest to this thesis is the exploration of the relationships between 'objects' and 'narrativation' and as such Pemiola argues that Echo provides a 'model' for 'two essential aspects' of modern 'experience': that of 'being a thing', and that of being a 'collective and socialised' being (Pemiola 1995: 28). Pemiola argues a link between these two 'experiences' in terms of what he regards as the highly mediated sense of identity which contemporary culture is subject to and argues that in this arena human and non-human agencies (he discusses, for example, electronic archives and memory-aids) are pitched in new conflicts, entanglements and intimacies between object, electronic and human worlds (Pemiola 1995: 25-32).

Moreover, Pemiola's wider thesis critiques the global urge to 'return to origins' which he understands as illustrative of contemporary feelings of cultural/psychological estrangement by arguing the need to recognise not only the narcissisms but the violences
which accompanies this discourse (Pemiola 1995: 29). Ovid’s text also sees Narcissus’ ‘crisis of origins’, his turn to ‘death’ and his subsequent metamorphosis as accompanied by the revelation of the violent ‘reality’ of his origins: in some versions of the myth this is the rape of his mother in a stream (a more originary pool/mirror) at the moment of his conception (Spivak 1993: 25). Pemiola’s own objective is to bring into the frame the violences acted out in the contemporary ‘real’: he thus emphasises that; ‘beyond the mirror lies real violence’ (Pemiola 1995: 29-30). It is the epistemological violence which accompanies the West’s discourse of origins which Pemiola identifies as the underpinning act of metaphysical colonialism. A now familiar argument he makes is that the West in defining itself in relation to a Greek origin and cultural, metaphysical identity defined itself within an ‘ethno-philosophy’ which was founded upon the violent repression of the ‘other’ (Pemiola 1995:107).

Making his own intellectual descent into Egypt, Pemiola sees this act of repression symbolised in tensions between the West’s simultaneous and co-existent repulsion and fascination with Egypt as ‘enigma’ and thus comments further on its destabilising effects in terms of the act of homecoming: ‘It is that the enigmatic coexistence of past and present makes it impossible to test the lived moment and to work one’s way back to an arche, a beginning, an origin’ (Pemiola 1995:75). He subsequently rehearses a number of binary positions/tensions within which ‘Egypt’ occupies a liminal position, for example, between the rational/irrational, civilised/barbarian, conscious/unconscious - notably in terms of Narcissus and Echo – and finally in terms of past/present (Pemiola 1995:100). It is this characterisation of the ‘Egyptian effect’ as a destabilising ‘enigma’ which is bound up in a confrontation with the return of the repressed as ‘other’ and as a vision in which: ‘past and future are both collapsed into an ambiguous, supremely problematic present’ which Pemiola takes forward as his central motif (Pemiola 1995:vii-viii). He argues that the ‘enigmatic affinity’ has ‘for millennia’ been ‘symbolised in the collective imaginary of the West by the Egyptian pyramids’ and cites the pyramid-shaped sky-scraper the Transamerica Building in San Francisco as a potent illustration of a contemporary expression of this affinity (Pemiola 1995:viii).
I argue that the 'Egyptian effect' as a 'moment' in which the 'ancient past' is expressed in its contemporary relationships with the present has correspondences with the Alexandrina project and archaeological excavations taking place in contemporary Alexandria. These correspondences reside in the potential of these projects to be characterised as heritage enigmas which finds resonance in terms of the objectification of revivalism as a hybrid mix of 'authentic' forms existing in complex relationships to the simulacrum and copy (Pemiola 1995:100). Moreover, the architectural brief of the new Alexandrina in particular (and as fully explore in Chapter Four) has interesting parallels with the aforementioned Transamerica Building in terms of bringing together ancient and modern 'icons and images' in order to create an ultimately futuristic-looking institution.

Once again this 'Egyptian moment'/ 'affinity' is argued by Pemiola to be bound up in the tensions which the presence of the 'ancient' exerts when experienced as co-existent future-shock and which are capable of provoking a disturbance. With more echoes of Freud’s 'disturbance of memory' (Freud 1984) the 'Egyptian effect' is understood as both a crisis/ breakthrough in which access to the 'repressed' and a turn to the 'real' can be made. Pemiola thus concludes by arguing that this act of destabilisation has relevancy at the level of a new ethics of intellectualism and that in the late modern/ postcolonial context this requires recognition to be given to the reality that origins and identities are multiple and reciprocal: as he has it; 'Alongside the thought of the Greek ethnos, philosophical dignity is now extended to black-African thinking ... to the cultural influence of Islam' and beyond (Pemiola 1995:107). With specific resonance to contemporary Egyptian culture he returns to the problematic of the mediation of identity and states how: 'Attention ought now to be focused on the influence of non-iconic cultures such as the Hebrew and Arabic traditions or other cultures that are orientated more towards light and things than, like Byzantine culture, towards imagery' (Pemiola 1995:140).

Pemiola's critique also asserts that critical reflections on the ethical contours of the above dynamics also need to be made with regard to new technological media in order that these are not simply used as a resource to revive and repeat 'old' utopian rhetorics and
statements. Thus at a time when the Alexandrina is itself being centred as a ‘model’ for new technological futures Perniola’s thesis is a useful critical touchstone. As I demonstrate with more detail in Chapter Four contemporary attempts to invest the new institution as a template and vision for new technological universalising, cosmopolitical ventures (by reviving its ‘old’ qualities (cf.Diaz 1998; Jacob and Polignac 2000)), notably includes aspirations to centre within the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s digital library a project to digitally catalogue all the texts in the contemporary world.

- New Disturbances of Memory

Spivak and Perniola’s interventions also re-connect with Freud’s conception of a ‘disturbance of memory’. As previously stated, Freud’s experience of visiting the particular ‘Greek’ icon of the Acropolis saw him experience a ‘disturbance’ when his literal confrontation with what had previously been a literary landscape/ ‘object of the imagination’ (and as such housed in the timeless landscape of the ‘unconscious’) brought about the possibility of accessing the unconscious’ (Freud 1984: 443-456). Crucially too, Freud’s biographers/ critics have linked this ‘disturbance’ to Freud’s wider destabilisations of the dominant ‘Greek’ identity/ psyche. Here the psychoanalytic project of ‘othering,’ and more specifically the possibility of accessing repressed identities, are explored within Freud’s own identity-work/ analysis and his own relationships to the identities of ‘Greek’, ‘Jew’ and ‘Egyptian’ (Forrester 1995; Raphael-Leff 1998).

Again, I argue, that this ‘disturbance’ has resonance for the contemporary Alexandrian revivalist landscape. Contemporary revivalism as a crisis/ breakthrough of origins and identity-work is also a drama in which Alexandria as archive, dream-world’ ‘mirror-town’ and universalising medium is confronted by the ‘real’ not only in terms of post-war politics and the events of Egyptian Independence but the material disturbances made by contemporary revivalism to the surfaces and depth of the city. I argue that Alexandria can itself be understood as undergoing an intense ‘disturbance of memory’ or experiencing ‘Egyptian moments’ in the sense that Alexandria as an ‘object of memory’ (particularly in the Western and elite Egyptian imagination) is currently being confronted
with the echoes, mimicry, materiality and the new technological mediations/revivals of its ancient past in the form of both the Alexandrina project and archaeological finds. Crucially too, when contextualised within the above critical, postcolonial, Freudian framings, this is an experience which has the potential too for accessing Alexandria’s ‘unconscious’ in terms of its capacity to provoke an ‘othering’ and to put into play an alternative cosmopolitics which brings to the surface previously ‘repressed’, ‘submerged,’ ‘buried’ memories, heritages, genealogies and origins.

SECTION FOUR

LITERAL AND FIGURATIVE ARCHAEOLOGIES:
‘BESIEGED’ IDENTITIES

I very much doubt that Freud imagined that he would have non-European readers, or that in the context of the struggle over Palestine, he would have Palestinian readers. But he does. Let us look quickly at what becomes of his excavations—figuratively and literally—from this new set of turbulent, as well as startlingly relevant perspectives

(Said 2003: 43)

In excavating the archaeology of Jewish identity, Freud insisted that it did not begin with itself, but rather with other identities (Egyptian and Arabian) which his demonstration in Moses and Monotheism does a great distance to discover and thus restore to scrutiny. This other non-Jewish, non-European history has, however, been erased, no longer to be found insofar as an official Jewish identity is concerned

(Said 2003: 44-45).

It is the tensions between the Alexandria project as a metaphorical/literary act of return and the literalisations of this project in attempts to objectify in material form the act of homecoming that I want to pursue further in this section. More specifically my intention is to outline the implications and the lessons for contemporary revivalism of both the extremes and the distopic underside of the often violent redemptive urges which accompany this project and which repress its cosmopolitical potentials. To do this I draw
upon Said’s text *Freud and the Non-European* (2003) which features a specific critique of the creation of the modern state of Israel which draws out the central role of archaeology and the heritage and museum culture in legitimating ancient claims to ‘Israel’ as ‘homeland’. Moreover, it is in a return to Freud and in an alternative excavation of the figure of Moses that Said addresses the question of the consequences of this imaginary being realized with reference to the contemporary violence of the Middle East.

Said’s excavation of the figure of Moses and new ‘readings’ of *Moses and Monotheism* (1986b [1939]) places an emphasis upon the recuperation of the motifs of the ‘insider/outsider’ and re-approaches Freud’s assertion that Moses was an Egyptian with specific reference to ‘non-European’/‘non-Western’ identity-work and to what Said defines as ‘cosmopolitan’, ‘besieged identities’ (Said 2003: 53-54). As Said demonstrates, applying the various readings of Freud to the project of constituting the ‘non-West’ has not been without its difficulties. In part this is the problem of the universalism of psychoanalysis which has been challenged by alternative postcolonial ‘readings’ and in more directed excavations and re-conceptualizations of Freud’s work for mobilisation in specific empirical circumstances. Thus while Said is aware of the limits of Freud’s own worldview – for example, his ‘Eurocentrism’ and ‘Orientalism’ – his critical objective is to draw out the more liberating aspects of Freud’s work with regard to the ‘other’ (Said 2003: 26).

As such Said begins by highlighting Freud’s refusal to align himself with some of the more exclusive notions of ‘cultural difference’ which mark the run up to the Second World War which is also the period in which Freud wrote the Moses text (Said 2003:38-39). Said thus focuses more specifically on Freud’s departure from ‘the dominant race theories of his time’ (as based on Ayrianism and anti-Semitism) which Freud’s contemporaries used increasingly to both define and exclude ‘foreignness’, and which more specifically were used to cast prejudicial identities onto both Jewish and, as Said makes explicit, Arab identities (Said 2003: 44-45). Said, therefore, sees the power of Freud’s ‘Moses’ residing in its capacity to (re-) place the ‘origins’ of cultural memory-
work within the territories of the 'non-West,' and to redefine this as an 'Egyptian' origin, and as such to restore to Moses his identity as 'non-European' (Said 2003: 44-45).

It is Freud’s empathetic identification with Moses as insider/outsider (an identity which Said empathises with too) which enables certain ‘fixed’ identities to be transcended and other ‘fissures’ of identity to be ‘excavated’ further (Said 2003: 27-28). Said argues that Freud (both intentionally and unintentionally) creates within his ‘Moses text’ ‘ruptures’, ‘fissures,’ ‘openings’ and moments of ‘ungainly repetition’, ‘complexity’ and ‘irreconciliation’ (Said 2003: 28). By characterizing the text as ultimately ‘episodic, fragmentary, unfinished (i.e. ‘unpolished’), Said asserts that, as a consequence, this offers up, ‘new ideas and provocations’ (Said 2003:28). The destabilising effects on cultural memory are drawn out further: as Said states; ‘Freud … [is] obsessed with returning not just to the problem of Moses’ identity, which of course is at the very core of the treatise, but to the very elements of identity itself’ (Said 2003:29). In terms of Freud’s own identity-work this complex text opens up possibilities for Freud to return and reflect on his ‘own Jewishness’ which Said ultimately characterises as a ‘hopelessly unresolved connection’ (Said 2003:31). Said (with reference to Chemouni 1988) argues that Freud’s return to Moses is part of a, ‘largely unresolved triangulation of the dilemma of exile and belonging’ in which Freud sought (again, without apparent success) to resolve the difference between the identities of ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ and of ‘host’ and ‘foreigner’ that he felt he shared with Moses’ (in Said 2003:37)

Said outlines how in response to contemporary threats facing ‘Jewish’ communities in Freud’s contemporary world (and which Freud himself experienced in the run up to the Second World War) this crisis is played out via strategic gestures, within which Freud looks to ‘Mediterranean’ (cf. cosmopolitan) identities as a means to pitch Jewishness inside a ‘European’ framing (Said 2003:40). With resonance to Alexandria’s potencies as both a ‘remnant’ of the historical Mediterranean, cosmopolitan cultures and as home to a substantial Jewish community pre-1950s, Said adds, that in ‘the shadow of anti-Semitism’ Freud seeks ‘protectively to huddle the Jews inside, so to speak, the sheltering realm of the European’ (Said 2003:40). It is at this point, however, that Said contrasts
Freud’s strategic use of Mediterranean, cosmopolitan identity as ‘shelter’ with the violences enacted within these literal landscapes. This reaches a pitch, Said argues, with the literal ‘return to origin’ which marks the foundation of the modern state of Israel (Said 2003:40).

Said states how ‘Suddenly the world of Moses and Monotheism has come alive in this tiny sliver of land in the Eastern Mediterranean’ (Said 2003:41). A scenario which Said characterises as ‘The almost too-perfect literalisation that is given the binary opposition Jew-vs-non-European in the climatic chapter of the unfolding narrative of Zionist settlement in Palestine’ (Said 2003: 40-41). Said focuses upon the violent complicity of the ‘science of archaeology’ in this process, he argues: ‘Thus archaeology becomes the royal-road to Jewish-Israeli identity, one in which the claim is repeatedly made that the present day land of Israel the Bible is materially realised thanks to archaeology, history gives is flesh and bone, the past recovered and put in dynastic order. Such claims of course uncannily return us not just to the archival site of Jewish identity as explored by Freud, but to its officially (we should also not fail to add its forcibly) sanctioned geographical locale, modern Israel’ (Said 2003:46-47).

What Said seeks to draw out more explicitly here is how this ‘too-perfect’ act of literal ‘return’ to ‘origin’ sanctioned by Israeli archaeological science has brought with it acts of displacement, traumatic loss, separation and the impossibility of ‘return’ and of ‘secular justice’ for those displaced: he states how, ‘Palestinians who lived in pre-1948 Palestine can never return (in the case of refugees) nor have access to land as Jews can’ (Said 2003:44). Again with implications for contemporary revivalism’s own literalisation of the myth of return and redemption, Said argues that it is not just archaeology but wider acts of top-down museumification and monumentalising heritage that has emerged as a fundamental component in legitimating the Israeli state’s account of its own return and redemption (Said 2003:46-47). Not only does Said reject the seductions of exclusive, separatist histories and identities which are projected by this neo-colonising museological imagination but also its divide and rule mentality which has led to some Palestinian writers/ politicians and activists to respond by mobilising their own versions of separate
histories and identities (Said 2003:49-50). Said’s response, however, is to argue for the mobilisation of alternative archaeological accounts of the Palestinian landscape and culture, in particular, the ‘enormously rich sedimentations of village history and oral traditions’ which testify to the ‘history of exchange’ and more specifically the ‘rich exchange’ which defined the cosmopolitan, hybrid heritages and cultures pre-1948 (in Said 2003:47).

Said makes a link between this context and an alternative ‘archaeology of identity’ in which he ‘traces’ the ‘more cosmopolitan option’ in Freud’s own identity-work. The reference here is to place Freud’s empathetic identification with the figure of Moses within the ‘dissenting tradition of the ‘non-Jewish Jew’’ (cf. Deutscher in Said 2003:52). Here he argues that what has been positioned (typically negatively and thus with oppressive intent) as the ‘irremediably diasporic, unhoused character’ of Jewish identity is capable of being repossessed in order to make new empathetic identifications within the contemporary context (Said 2003:53). Said states that this identity: ‘needn’t be seen only as a Jewish characteristic but in our age of vast population transfers, of refugees, exiles, expatriates and immigrants can also be identified in the diasporic, wandering, unresolved cosmopolitan consciousness of someone both inside and outside his or her community’ (Said 2003:53). The possibilities opened-up by Freud in terms of his refusal to resolve issues, not only of his own identity, and that of Moses, but writ larger still that of the relationship between the European and non-European identity/psyche, allows Said to finally assert:

‘The strength of his [Freud’s] thought, is, I believe, that it can be articulated in and speak to other besieged identities as well, not through dispensing palliatives such as tolerance and compassion, but rather by attending to it as a troubling, destabilizing secular wound, the essence of cosmopolitanism, from which there can be no recovery no state of resolved or Stoic claim, and no utopian reconciliation even within itself. There is a necessary psychological experience, Freud says, but the problem is that he doesn’t at all indicate how long it must be tolerated or whether, properly speaking it has a real history - history
being always that which comes after and, all too often, either overrides or represses the flaw' (Said 2003:54 -55).

SECTION FIVE

EGYPT ‘WRITES’ EGYPT: ELITE AND POPULAR ‘VOICES’

The questions Freud, therefore, leaves us with are: can so utterly indecisive and so deeply determined a history ever be written? In what language and with what sort of vocabulary?

(Said 2003: 55).

Is my identity Mediterranean? Some people say Egypt is not an African country but is in fact linked not only geographically but also culturally to the Mediterranean basin. Am I a woman whose past and future are linked to Black Africa? Or am I a White Egyptian whose land is bathed by the Mediterranean Sea like Italy, and Greece and France and Spain? Does this make North Africa a part of Europe rather than the continent from which it draws its name? Does the Sahara Desert decide my culture for me?

(Saadawi 1997: 127).

At a key point in his critique, Said’s states how accounts of Moses are mediated for Freud by ‘European scholarship’ and subsequently illustrates this by setting against Freud’s Moses the Egyptian novelist Mahfouz’s novel Akhenaton: Dweller in Truth [1988], which in its excavations of Akhenaton’s identity, as Said points out, the usual connections with the figure of Moses do not appear, he thus comments ‘The novel is as resolutely Egyptian as Israel was to be Jewish’ (Said 2003: 42- 43). In this section I want to draw upon this dynamic of modern Egypt’s own complex and contestatory process of a return to origin and, more specifically, to centre projects of national re-appropriation and recuperation of Egypt’s figurative and literal or material heritages. This discussion is obviously crucial for paving the way for discussions of these dynamics in the Alexandrian revivalist context. This also allows me to place alongside Said’s ‘besieged
identities’ the Egyptian critique Saadawi’s recovery of the ‘popular voice’ of Egyptian resistance.

Saadawi, an Egyptian activist and intellectual, has sought to dramatise the lack of empathetic identification that Egypt’s modern, predominantly Arab-Muslim Egyptian population has for ancient Egyptian culture in order to convey the struggles and ambivalence which mark attempts to recover connections with ancient pasts (Saadawi 1997: 127). She proceeds to present this struggle in terms of historical and contemporary power relationships. With obvious echoes here of Said’s critiques of the Israeli state’s oppressive use of archaeology, Saadawi begins by charting out how in the Egyptian context it is not only of archaeology but of an even more elite core ‘Orientalist’ discourse - that of ‘Egyptology’ - which has been pressed into the service of the European colonial imagination (Saadawi 1997:167-168). Saadawi argues that Egyptology, ‘is an example of cultural genocide or terrorism, in which a whole nation and its civilization and philosophy are violently reduced to a few stones or ruins’ (Saadawi 1997:169). Crucially too, she sees these European acts of ‘cultural terrorism’ as central to the ancient dramas of the Mouseion/Library. For example, she states how, ‘Egyptian philosophers have disappeared from history. One of them was a woman philosopher called Hypatia. She was killed twice: the first time in AD 415 by foreign invaders who killed her physically and burned her books together with the whole library of Alexandria in Egypt.’ In her rehearsal of the events of Hypatia’s murder Saadawi, interestingly, names the Christian ‘foreigners’ as the terrorising force which destroyed the ancient Alexandrina (Saadawi 1997:169).

Other critics have similarly opened up an alternative genealogy which reveals expressions of ‘national’ resistance within both ancient and modern worlds. For example, in a further ‘Return to Heliopolis’ an ancient Egyptian ‘nationalist’ text contemporary with the Ptolemaic period, known as the ‘Potter’s Oracle,’ illustrates Egyptian attitudes and resistances to the presence of ancient ‘Greek’ communities (Thompson 1997: 14-16). In this text the ‘Greeks’ are negatively characterised as outsiders - ‘a crowd of foreigners’ - and also as the ‘Typhonians’ or the followers of Typhon or Seth (the Egyptian God of
Evil, the brother of Horus and the murderer of Osiris) (Thompson 1997:14). The ‘Potter’s Oracle’ is couched as a prophetic text which declares that ‘the time of the Typhonians’ was one of the ‘maltreatment’ of the Egyptians by ‘terrible malefactors’ (Thompson 1997:14). The Oracle’s prophecy is one of elemental disturbance and warns that ‘the sun will darken as it will not be willing to observe the evils in Egypt’: these evils include famine, high taxation, war and slaughter (Thompson 1997:15). This mythic epic of cultural retribution imagines a ‘better future’, for Egypt, one ‘without the Greeks’ (Thompson 1997:15). The narrative culminates in the abandonment of Alexandria - dubbed the ‘City of Foreigners’ - and is symbolised in the movement of both the monumental heritage (taken by the Ptolemies to Alexandria) back to Heliopolis and the totemic snakes the Agathos Damon and Knephis’ back to Memphis. When this is enacted, so the Oracle promises, ‘Egypt shall flourish again’ (Thompson 1997:16). As an ancient echo of opposition these ripples of resistance are capable of opening up alternative readings of contemporary archaeological revivalism.

Critics have similarly mapped the emergence of oppositional nationalist ‘voices’ within the modern colonial context. The period immediately before and during the British occupation of Egypt, for example, is characterised as the time of the ‘awakening of [national] memory’ (Hassan 1998:204). Appeals were made to an Egyptian national ‘rebirth’ and ‘renaissance’ based upon the concept of an ‘eternal Egypt’, for the ‘return of the Egyptian soul’, and for an ‘awakening sense of Egyptian nationalism grounded in Pharaonic history’ (Hassan 1998:211). The creation of a unity between Egypt’s Muslim and Coptic Christian communities were part of this project. This vision also included Taha Hussein’s ‘highly debated’ call made in *The Future of Culture in Egypt* (1936-1954) for a return to the Hellenistic past as part of the recovery of Egypt’s Mediterranean identities (Hassan 1998: 211).

Following Egypt’s independence in 1952 a revolution also occurred in terms of the characterisation of national identity. The Nasser and Sadat eras have been described as a time of dramatic ‘fashioning of political identity’ premised upon a ‘denial of memory’ (Hassan 1998: 207). Thus the political discourse ‘that centred on Pharaonic Egypt was
replaced with a discourse that placed Egypt within the folds of Arab nationalism’ (Hassan 1998:208). While bringing its significant liberations this discourse has been responsible for the marginalised of non-Arab communities (including the Copts). Interestingly, in post-1950s literature Alexandria is positioned as an abandoned, declining, colonial backdrop, and a place of ‘self-exile’ for dissident Egyptian writers and intellectuals. Once again, the city is understood as distinct from the Egyptian landscape (see Kararah 1997). Writers today highlight the violent polarisation of positions: ‘A fundamental internal split exists between modernists, who seek to legitimate Egyptian nationalism by reference to the glory of Egypt within a European context, and Islamists, who revoke nationalism in favour of a transnational religious ideology legitimised by reference to historical times of Islam’s golden-age’ (Hassan 1998:202).

Saadawi’s writings take us further into this critique by not only placing Egypt within wider global landscape of North-South power relations but also by exploring Egypt’s internal political landscape. In terms of the former, this global landscape is, for Saadawi, dominated by the neo-colonialism of the North: complicit here are international agencies (including the United Nations, the International Monetary fund, the World Bank (Saadawi1997:13)), Western intellectuals (in particular, postmodernists and deconstructionists) and (international/ Western) tourists (Saadawi 1997:169-170). She sees these forces converging in a violent consumption of the Egyptian landscape as part of discourses of ‘development’, of the intellectual colonisation of ‘docile bodies’ and ‘the subaltern’ and of the monumental heritage and cultural difference (Saadawi 1997:170). As Saadawi asserts: ‘They mediate our experience for us and then sell back our images of ourselves’ (Saadawi 1997:179).

In terms of internal conflicts Saadawi alludes to a landscape of terror and violence within Egypt: a hidden network of spaces of detention constructed by a state with an escalating number of Human Rights violations (see also MiddleEast Watch 1992). It is here that a connection can be made between Saadawi’s recovery of popular culture as a powerful ‘reservoir of collective memory’ and as a site of ‘collective moral resistance,’ (Saadawi 1997:180-181) and Said’s motif of ‘besieged identities’ (Said 2003: 54). The following
brings these forces together with that of the museological imagination and what Saadawi calls ‘state terrorism’:

‘[There is a] ... popular anecdote from the sixties and seventies when dictatorship and the police state hid behind a screen of words such as ‘democracy’, ‘welfare’ and ‘peace’. A small statue of a Pharaoh disappeared from an Egyptian museum. The Department of Antiquities failed to locate it. State security and police forces stepped in. In less than twenty-four hours they announced that they had found the statue, identified the king, and discovered everything about his life, his marriage and his divorce. Everyone was amazed. They asked the police. ‘How did you discover all that – you must have located his tomb?’ ‘Not at all’, answered the police, ‘the king admitted everything’ (Saadawi 1997:185).

This ‘joke’ Saadawi argues, illustrates how popular culture, ‘unveils the link between the imaginary fantasy (a stone confessing) and the absurd reality (the use of torture by henchmen of the police state to exact statements from political prisoners)’ (Saadawi 1997:185). In her summary, Saadawi argues for the popular voice of resistance to be centred within cultural critiques, adding: ‘Books can be burned, but the collective memory of an entire people cannot’ (Saadawi 1997:180).

CONCLUSION

MORE EGYPTIAN, LESS GREEK

In this chapter I have explored various strands of literature concerned with showing how the Western imagination has been variously rejected, destabilised and/or incorporated within the category of the ‘non-West’ to create various hybrid or cosmopolitan discourses concerned with understanding both the nature of contemporary crisis in West/Non-West relations and how this has been conflated historically by ignoring their mutual constitution within the empirically located ‘real’. Here, for example, critics pursue the template of coloniser/colonised as inseparable identities in the sense that the memory of violence and trauma at ‘origin’ will continue to define their future relationship. In response comes the requirement for a cosmopolitics of recognition based on the humanity
of the 'other': as such this re-addresses for postcolonial consumption the question; what it is to be human? My point is that the crisis/ break-through currently facing the contemporary city of Alexandria could usefully be critiqued within these debates. As a bridge to my ethnographic work I would argue that the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, once an institution historically characterised as both a site of 'narcissism' and 'enigma,' is now re-emerging to take up the challenge of 'new' memory-work.

Writ large the success of the Bibliotheca’s homecoming, its potential effectiveness as an archival, museological space and its effectiveness as a fulcrum for acts of remembering and forgetting (ie. as an archival discourse that 'holds' rather than 'destroys') depends upon its capacity for 'othering.' It is also based upon the ability to orchestrate identity/ memory-work in transformative, healing and therapeutic modes. As such the crisis faced by contemporary revivalism is in terms of its ability to narrativise loss, to face the 'real' and to take up the role of mediator in the wider dramas of metamorphosis and change which, in turn, are subject to contestation, clashes and rejectionist responses. This project is perhaps best expressed in Freud’s concept of the ‘compromise formation’ in which ‘health’ and ‘therapeutic’ efficacy is achieved via locating an effective reciprocity between ‘fantasy’ and ‘real’ worlds (Davies 1998: 52).

Moreover, interesting ‘Egyptian moments’ (cf. Perniola 1995) have emerged in the contemporary context not only in terms of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina architectural image as a composite of ancient mimicry and futuristic illusions but also in respect of the ‘new’ knowledge which, firstly, the Alexandrian archaeological teams’ discovery of the ancient underwater heritage – including the ‘enigmatic’ objects from Heliopolis – have yielded and, secondly, as promised in the Bibliotheca’s new digital and technological networks. The former dynamic has also brought with it the revelation that rather than a purist vision of a ‘Greek’ city ancient Alexandria was ‘less Greek’ and ‘more Egyptian’ than previously thought (Cotteggianni quoted in La Riche 1998: 52). Interestingly this ‘othering’ of identity is echoed in one critic’s characterisation of contemporary archaeological teams as ‘a conflation’ of ‘two models’ of that of ‘Ibn Khaldun’s close-knit tribe’ and that of the ‘Mouseion’ (La Riche 1998: 28). The positioning of Khaldun
(the fourteenth-century Arab Islamic philosopher-historian) within this frame powerfully opens up readings of postcolonial cultural forms to both a 'non-western' audience and also as a means to pursue, from this perspective, the place of religion and secularism (Khaldun's own preoccupations) within the contemporary revivalist discourse and more specifically to re-position the dynamics of mediated and unmediated heritage with relation to Islamic culture.

It is worth pointing out that the contemporary Alexandria project offers an ethnographic account of what Hooper-Greenhill has recently characterised as the 'post-museum' (Hooper-Greenhill 2001: 152-162). She envisages the 'post-museum' as retaining, 'some of the characteristics of its parent [the Modernist museum], but it will re-shape them to its own ends' (Hooper-Greenhill 2001:152). In a dramatic break with 'old' museological discourse, she asserts how, 'It is likely too, that much of the intellectual development of the post-museum will take place outside the major European centres which witnessed the birth of the museum' and will be a space within which the tangible and intangible (memories, songs, cultural traditions) heritage motivates and mediates, 'mutual nurturing partnerships and celebrations of diversity (Hooper-Greenhill 2001:153). But whether this makes a serious break with origins and with authenticity has been hotly disputed, Maleuvre for example argues that museologies both 'old' and 'new' continue to 'deal in identification rather than identity' and as such demand the 'mimetic absorption of the individual into an ideal image of a group, the prototype, the ancestor, the father' and thus 'compliance with an ego-ideal' (Maleuvre 1999: 109-110).

The challenge being addressed is, therefore, not to be understood and critiqued simply in terms of either 'old' or 'new' museologies but rather the process of identification that takes place in the discourse of 'empowerment' that surrounds the 'revised' museum and which simply underscores the fact that museums and heritage projects are still in the business of transforming individuals into collectives and into citizens. I would, therefore, reiterate that, writ larger still, underpinning this drama is both the failure and the need of the mainstream museum/heritage culture, like Narcissus, to fully conceptualise a vision of itself within a wider globalised and more grounded real-politick. Furthermore, for any
substantial change to take place this fundamental redefinition of foundational identities and alternative acts of memory-work demands a commitment to both the centring of alternative theoretical perspectives, - notably those highlighted in this chapter -, and also to address the 'messy politics' of exchange and encounter, - and its utopian/ distopic tensions and clashes as they map across elite and popular discourse -, which the Alexandrina project as 'cosmopolitical contact zone' (cf. Clifford 1998: 369) and ethnographic case-study brings home. It is to the operational expression of these dramas in the setting of contemporary Alexandria that I turn to in Chapter Three.
Chapter Three

Contemporary Return to Alexandria – International Sacred Dramas
CHAPTER THREE
CONTEMPORARY RETURN TO ALEXANDRIA -
INTERNATIONAL SACRED DRAMAS

INTRODUCTION

Alexandria

The wide wet corrugated arc of the Mediterranean's turquoise washes against Alexandria's shores, garnering in its sweep, all the boats that had accidentally gathered into a necklace of rainbow.

I had once met a poet here Who reminisced about youth and beauty, about sea and heat Cavafy knew full well, the intricate Madness and bacchanalia poetry serves up.

Azza and Mostafa listened With patience, soaking in my grief About such losses, its unsure Damp edges that spilt out Onto the ancient banks of this Aquamarine sun-struck city.

There is something undiscovered About this place - its logic, Its overt desire not to adhere. Perhaps that its why the city's Sunken library that holds A great part of our civilization remain in my dear friends' custody. Their warmth and wisdom, string Together magic-beads of an imagined Necklace, afloat with the basics of living - a love that allows ancient papyrus to unscroll and give'

(Sudeep Sen, Alexandria 1997: 72).
Fig. 6. Alexandria, view along the Corniche

(source: Compoint in La Riche 1998: 39)
As the entry-point into an ethnography of contemporary revivalism the aim of this chapter is to provide some account of the origins of the Bibliotheca scheme. More specifically I describe the initial emergence of the project as an idea raised by academics at Alexandria University and its subsequent re-inscription as an international project. My point of departure is an interview held in January 1997 with Mostafa El Abaddi, Professor of Greco-Roman Studies at Alexandria University, which is bound up in moments of origins and initiations. This interview, which initiated my fieldwork proper, addressed revivalism in terms of – ‘how it all started’ – and is led by Abaddi’s account of his key in agitating for the project in the 1970s. As such, Abaddi emerges as the point of origin and recovery for the contemporary dramas of the homecoming and for the new mobilisations of Alexandria canon of ‘signs and images.’

Our meeting took place in the study-library at Abaddi’s home, an elegant apartment housed within a nineteenth-century building which is set back from Alexandria’s central Corniche in the busy downtown area of the city. A good description of both the man and the milieu is provided by The New Yorker journalist Stille (2000: 90-99) who positions Abaddi variously as archetypal Egyptian host and as an urbane Alexandrian cosmopolitan (with aspects of the ‘English don’ added to a long list of intellectual credits). These are sentiments that cast Abaddi as an almost priest-like liminal figure who, while firmly rooted in the contemporary city, is capable of bridging ‘East’ and ‘West’ and ancient and modern Alexandrias.

These are sentiments that were echoed by a number of fieldwork informants and have been given more poetic treatment by Sen (above). Sen’s accolades, in turn, consolidate the more general sense that emerged of Abaddi’s identity as revivalism’s gatekeeper or guardian. Sen, for example, situates Abaddi (‘Mostafa’) and also ‘Azza’ (this is a reference to Azza Kararah, Professor of English Literature at Alexandria University, and Abaddi’s wife) as figures of ‘warmth and wisdom,’ as custodians of the ‘city’s sunken library’ and as personifications of the twin aspects of Alexandria’s heritage: its Greco-
Roman past and its literary myth/poetics respectively (Sen 1997: 72). Sen also draws out a more mythical, spiritual and even metaphysical role for Abaddi when his and Kararah’s intellectual and territorial keepership of Alexandria’s ancient heritage merge with the role of potential redeemer and reconciler.

Abaddi conveyed a depth of intimacy between ancient and modern landscapes in one of his gestures in interview when pointing down at the floor of his study. He stated how: ‘This whole area would have been part of the ancient city’s royal quarter. We may even be sitting on top of the ancient library as we speak’. Another point of connection was the presence of Abaddi and Azza’s cat, aptly named Cleopatra, who presided over both her ancient namesake’s royal quarter and our meeting. More prosaically, Abaddi’s claim to revivalism’s gate-keepership is based upon his long-term research interest in the ancient Alexandrina and more particularly, his book The Life and Fate of the Library of Alexandria (1990) that significantly became the intellectual base of the contemporary Bibliotheca Alexandria project.¹

- Two ‘Catalysts’

Abaddi began his discussions by rehearsing two ‘anecdotes’ that he described as ‘catalysts’ to the revivalist scheme (Abaddi: 1/97)². The first, concerns the former US President Richard Nixon’s state visit to Egypt, made in 1974, at the invitation of the then Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. Part of Nixon’s itinerary included a visit to Alexandria where Abbadi and his colleagues from the university were drafted in as specialist academic ‘tour guides’. Of the occasion Abaddi commented: ‘Nixon displayed the interest that many foreigners do. He had an idealised image of Alexandria already formed in his imagination and obviously felt a certain affinity and a nostalgia for Alexandria’s Golden-age: its Greco-Roman, Hellenistic, and cosmopolitan pasts. This became particularly obvious when Nixon asked us if we could show him the site where the

¹ Although first printed in Arabic, the volume was taken up by UNESCO during the initial phases of the scheme and reprinted and translated into several languages.

² My interviews and the month and year they took place can be found listed in my bibliography.
ancient ‘Universal’ Library and associated Mouseion once stood’. Abaddi then added
with some irony: ‘Of course we couldn’t show him anything...The exact location of the
Great Library is not known to us - there are no archaeological traces. Not so much as a
single stone survives’.

Not long afterwards a form of role-reversal took place as Abaddi was invited to the US to
attend a meeting at the Library of Congress. He told me how he was greeted with a
special warmth by the Chief Librarian, who said how pleased he was to meet a delegate
from Alexandria, proclaiming that, “‘The Alexandria library was the prototype of our
own institution: its ancient ancestor.’” The compliments continued as Abaddi was then
asked if he could give information concerning the appearance and architecture of the
ancient institution so that, as a tribute, a model could be made and placed at the entrance
of the Library of Congress. In what Abaddi called ‘a near repetition of the Nixon
encounter,’ he told me, ‘of course, I couldn’t show the Chief Librarian anything—not so
much as a single record or image survives of the Alexandrian Library.’

Abaddi stated how these two episodes left him both ‘much amused’ and motivated him to
seek support from his colleagues at the University of Alexandria (notably the then
President of the University Dr Lufti Doweidar) in order ‘to produce a report which
collected together a résumé of existing information of the ancient institution’ and
crucially too, argued the potential for ‘creating a project for its revival’. It was here that
Abaddi discussed the objective of the contemporary revivalist project as that of re-
appropriating the Alexandrina’s ‘legacy’ for Egypt both intellectually, and, as he
reiterated throughout our discussions, in ‘practical’, operational terms.

Outlining some of the obstacles Abaddi, stated how, ‘There continues to be much more
interest in the West in Alexandria’s ancient heritage than within our own country. As
with Nixon, the West’s interest in Alexandria is based upon a romantic, nostalgic idea of
the city and enhanced by the fact there was previously very little surviving evidence ... in
some cases writers leave the facts behind and create an institution based more on
fantasy.’ He adds, ‘Highly educated Alexandrians will have some knowledge of Egypt’s
Greco-Roman era. I do, however, doubt that there is any real connection in the minds of the common people between them and the ancient past of the city. We have been very conscious of this factor in terms of gaining support for the contemporary project'.

Abaddi also made clear that he saw the Librarian of Congresses’ and Nixon’s desires to commemorate the Alexandrina as largely symbolic gestures. By way of a contrast he stated: ‘My interest in this project has never simply been led by my interest in the study of the ancient library historically or in its symbolism, although this of course is of crucial importance. Very importantly, my desire, and that of my colleagues, was to provide our city and our university with a decent research library which did not, and still does not, exist. We also wanted to complement this with museum spaces which formed an important part of the ancient Mouseion-Library complex and we hope of the new Bibliotheca complex too’.

Abaddi argued further that the Bibliotheca project should be driven not only by objectives of providing a resource for educated, literate Alexandrians but that it would bring ‘wider benefits for the city’ and as such ‘unite revivalism with development needs.’ In order to achieve these objectives, Abaddi and his colleagues engaged in a strategic return to certain dominant historical characterisations of the ancient Alexandrina: ‘I thought we could make use of specific associations of the ancient library for propaganda purposes and by these means make an appeal to the common mind whether in Egypt or abroad for support with the scheme. My particular attention has been to re-present the ancient Alexandrina’s legacy through its historical association with cosmopolitanism and its position within a city which historians powerfully describe as a ‘melting pot of cultures’ and as a ‘crossroads’ or ‘meeting point of East and West’.

Abaddi’s intervention is a significant first testimony of the centering of the motif of cosmopolitanism as the force mediating the contemporary revivalist context. He stressed how the Hellenistic period and that of Mohammed Ali which are typically drawn out

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3 The term ‘propaganda’ is used here to convey a specific style of presentation which has a promotional purpose to it. In Egypt it is not (typically at least) tainted with the negative connotations which is often assumed in the ‘Western’ usage.
(particularly within Western historiography) as the ‘prominent examples of cosmopolitanism’ and as intimately ‘bound up together’. Abaddi, however, used this motif of ‘cosmopolitanism’ to open-up the exclusivities of Western historiographic trajectories, an intervention which brings together his on-going intellectual project (Abaddi 1990) with operational action. He emphasises, ‘I saw the reviver project as offering a great opportunity to stress how Alexandrian cosmopolitanism relates to, amongst others, creative cultural influences from Eastern, African, Arab and Islamic worlds.’ It was made clear by Abaddi that the contemporary scheme had an intimate yet strategic relationship with the West’s traditional Alexandrina paradigm and, more specifically, that the contemporary act of re-appropriation is premised on a certain restitution and reconciliation of the ‘non-West’s’ relationship with city’s ancient heritage.

Revivalism’s critical recuperation of cosmopolitanism has a strategic potency in terms of its relationship to contemporary intellectual and political fashions within the West, Abaddi explains: ‘Around the time of defining the project I participated in a conference in the [United] States in the Paul Getty Institute. That was a fantastic situation as I discovered that there was a new trend and a new interest in ideas of cosmopolitanism and ‘melting pot’ cultures which I hoped our propaganda could tap into’. Abaddi adds that this targeting of cosmopolitical propaganda across North and South had other potencies, ‘We found that playing the ‘cosmopolitan card’ was useful as it worked very well within UNESCO’s own interests and values.’ He explained, ‘My immediate reaction, due to the ancient library’s own internationalist, cosmopolitan history was to approach UNESCO in the hope that the contemporary project would have an international, global aspect. We found out that as University professors we could not go to UNESCO directly but had to first find support within Egypt at national ministerial and governmental level. The representative of UNESCO in Egypt was initially hesitant to propose the project as we knew it would be expensive but with the help of the Minister of Education [Dr Mostafa Kamal Helmy] who had Alexandrian roots and was sympathetic with our project UNESCO Paris was approached about the project’. With great pride Abaddi told of the

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4 ie. UNESCO only considers projects which are presented to them directly from the signatory countries as ‘states-parties’ and ‘member-states’: a dynamic discussed later in this chapter and in Appendix Three.
then UNESCO director-general [Ahmed Mukhtar Embu] making a visit to Alexandria:
‘He said, “If the project is implemented to the level of the idea which inspired it; it will
be capable of changing the cultural map of the whole area”.’

Also as an expert/ gate-keeper of the city’s archaeological heritage, Abaddi was keen to
link the Alexandrina’s revival with the ‘city’s exciting archaeological rebirth’ which he
stressed ‘although unplanned, has given a certain unity to revivalism,’ adding, ‘It will add
new chapters to our knowledge of Alexandria.’ He drew into discussion, yet again, a
more informed local archaeological genealogy which brings into view the work of
individuals such as the local amateur diver Kamal El Saadat (again often neglected by
Western accounts) ‘In the 1970s Saadat located items at the citadel site. We now have
archaeological teams working along the whole coast of Alexandria and reaching up to
Abu Qir adding to earlier discovery,’ thereby adding, ‘This has all been unexpected and
for me is a dream come true’.\(^5\)

- Cosmopolitan Cards

Addressing the more complex, and potentially conflictual, aspects of contemporary
revivalism, Abaddi stressed how both the Bibliotheca project and archaeological
excavations mark a dramatic intervention in terms of them representing a return to
heritages which, as previously rehearsed, have been problematic for Egypt’s own
identity-work, and have been largely rejected from political national discourse since the
1950s. He gave his own account of how the search for national identity which followed
the 1952 Revolution led to both a turn to the Arab-Islamic world and ‘a rejection of the
country’s Greco-Roman and cosmopolitan pasts’. The latter shift he described as a
symptom of ‘anti-colonial sentiment’ translated into the political imaginary and played
out in terms of detachments from the ancient pasts. Taking a wider brief, Abaddi
characterised the Nasser period as ‘a breach in normal development’ describing the
liberations of this period in terms of ‘advances in social justice’, emphasising how, ‘we

\(^5\) Appendix Six provides more detailed information on the recent history of archaeological excavation
projects in Alexandria.
[Egyptians] had until that moment been second class citizens in our own country'. He also described the ‘strong revulsion against anything believed to be connected with imperialism and colonialism,’ stating how, the Greco-Roman period and cosmopolitanism, due to their ‘association with the West’ historically, was ‘abandoned as part of this shift’.

Abaddi stated how by way of contrast to the Egyptian state’s official line of detachment, ‘The Greco-Roman past has been a line of resistance for Egyptian intellectuals’. In this sense revivalism can be understood as a source of continuity with an earlier generation of Egyptian intellectuals such as Taha Hussein, who, as previously mentioned, argued in *The Future of Culture* (1954) [1936] that a reparation must be made by Egypt with its Mediterranean heritages. Abaddi, like many other Alexandrian elites would later do, emphasised his own autobiographical stake in terms of profiling this heritage by defining himself as both a product of cosmopolitanism and as someone who has experienced Egypt and Alexandria’s pre-independence and post-Independence eras. As such Abaddi is a witness both to pre-1950s Alexandria as a cosmopolitan city and to the metamorphosis of post-1950’s Alexandria as the ‘khwagas’ departed the city and nationalism took hold.

Crucial to this account of the origins of revivalism is the requirement of Alexandria to be reconstructed from within. Abaddi expressed his hope that in raising the ‘banner of revivalism’, he and other Alexandrian elites could tap into what he defined as contemporary Egypt’s ‘more stable state of mind,’ adding, ‘my hope is that we [Egyptians] can approach, with confidence our many different heritages nationally and use these to explore our connections with the outside’. Current revivalism, for Abaddi, thus signals a new phase of intellectual and operational involvement in Egypt’s national pasts in which, for the first time Egyptian ‘actors’ are the key agents in an act of cultural revivalism which centres upon Alexandria and on its Greco-Roman and Alexandrian pasts. It was also clear that Abaddi was aware how within the contemporary context Alexandria’s ancient pasts are being re-presented as a resource for memory work – and
more specifically - as a template not only to re-engage with 'lost' histories but to 'work through' and/or mediate the loss, traumas and separations of the recent past.

- Revivalism's Networks

My discussions with Abaddi demonstrate the effectiveness of my earlier rehearsed ethnographic methods (see both my introduction and Appendix Two) in terms of focusing in on certain key players in actor networks as a means see them in a multi faceted sense as acting towards the Alexandrina project as a material part of a network that is always in process and which is subject to re-definitions in terms of informants sense of its importance or value. Revivalism, for example, as a model or fulcrum for future oriented projects is given substance through informants’ recollections of past dramas and in the articulation of a set of aspirations. A keen sense in particular emerges of revivalism’s homecoming in relation to the ‘messy politics’ of a recent history of rejectionism of the Greco-Roman past and also to the aspirations and anxieties bound up the co-presence of what have been dubbed as the three ‘tributaries’ of revivalism (Halim 2002b: 17): the Bibliotheca project, archaeological excavations and urban regeneration.

It is at this early stage too that the consciousness to position the Bibliotheca’s homecoming as a drama of othering and as a ‘cosmopolitical contact zone’ (cf. Clifford 1998: 369) is written into its own origins. My relations with Abaddi also assisted in terms of mapping out in broad strokes what were to be the central themes or ‘connectivities’ which guided me towards other informants, institutions and debates and which subsequently have formed the structure of my ethnographic chapters. It is, however, the initial re-inscription of the project into an international project I now turn. Here I place great emphasis on the 1990 Aswan Meeting as a precedent that established not only a set of expectations for the new Alexandrina project but initiated a new phase of revivalism which saw effective ownership and brokership of the project pass from Abaddi and his colleagues to be taken up by a culture of politicians, bureaucrats and diplomats within international and national domains.
SECTION ONE

THE ASWAN MEETING

INAUGURAL SCENES OF TRANSFORMATION

The historic city of Aswan has been linked with great achievements as a result of the close co-operation and support of the international community such as the salvation of the great Temples of Ramesis at Abu Simbel, the saving of the Temples of Kalabsha and Elphantine and the building of the massive High Dam. All this was a result of the close co-operation and support of many nations.

On February 12, 1990, a historic event of no less importance took place, which all the cultural world watched with esteem, enthusiasm and unequalled unanimity; the occasion was the inaugural Meeting of the Revival of the Ancient Library of Alexandria, chaired by Mrs Suzanne Mubarak and honoured by the presence and patronage of H.E. Mr. Mohamed Hosni Mubarak, President of the Arab republic of Egypt.

Participating in the meeting were Kings, Queens, Presidents, Princesses, Prime Ministers and notable dignitaries in the fields of science, literature and art, who gave generously of their valuable time and effort...

Indeed the Aswan Meeting was truly an unprecedented international event that has caught the eyes and hearts of cultured and peace-loving people around the world. This Aswan historic day for the Bibliotheca Alexandrina is described by a prominent international newsman as 'the unique cultural summit of the twentieth century.'

(GOAL 1990: 7).

Since the United Nations makes its impression on the imagination of mankind through a spectacle presented in an auditorium with confrontations of opposing personages. It may be said to belong to the category of drama. Since the personages, individually or collectively, symbolise mighty forces, since the audience is mankind and the theme the destiny of man, the drama may rightly be called sacred.

(O'Brien 1968: 10).

Given the particular difficulties UNESCO faces in fulfilling its peculiar Constitution, perhaps it would be better, then, to settle for Conor Cruise O'Brien's game theory? He applied it to the UN as a whole; it would fit UNESCO best of all.

(Hoggart 1978: 163).
The transformation of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project into an international project was achieved via the official reframing of the scheme as it underwent a legal inscription at national level ‘under the auspices of President Hosni Mubarak’ and in the international arena ‘under the auspices of the United Nations and UNESCO’ (GOAL 1990: 9). As such this process signalled a dramatic process of re-invention and reformulation in terms of a simultaneous nationalisation and internationalisation/ globalisation of the project within these respective domains. Informants and official UNESCO/ GOAL\textsuperscript{6} sources drew my attention to the Aswan Meeting of February 1990 as the most powerful foundational revivalist event. The effectiveness of the occasion was that it combined a major act of legal, bureaucratic and diplomatic inscription, - that of the Inauguration of the International Commission for the revival scheme - with the gravitas and glamour of a high profile UN-supported international event.

The Aswan Meeting thus served as a highly publicised dramatisation of the scheme within the domains of international diplomacy. The presence of both Hosni and Suzanne Mubarak at the Aswan Meeting illustrates the central place of the scheme as a Presidential project while it is through partnership with UNESCO that the scheme acquires its international framing and pitches both project and presidency onto the world stage. The International Commission as representatives of the international community also used the occasion to define their own roles (couched as duties and responsibilities) within the scheme. As such the Aswan Meeting provides a template for power-sharing and future action. The potent setting of Aswan (the scene of the first UNESCO supported international heritage campaign) also afforded a powerful backdrop for the occasion. Participants used this location to make powerful comparative links between the Nubian Monuments campaign and the Alexandria project. Crucially also, these prominent international actors created their own return to the ancient Alexandrina’s myth/ history and redemptive formula.

\textsuperscript{6} The General Organisation of the Alexandria Library (GOAL) which I feature in Chapter Four.
In order to critically reconstruct the key dramatics of the Aswan Meeting I have found it useful to draw upon a critique initiated by O'Brien's (1968), and subsequently adapted by Hoggart for UNESCO (1978), which argues that UN-related diplomatic interactions with the international community are best understood as part of an on-going 'sacred drama' which is intimately bound up in the construction of symbolic sites and arenas, and upon the powerful use of ritual performance (O'Brien 1968: 9). Both critics argue that the ritual and imaginative elements of the UN/ UNESCO exist in the everyday bureaucratic life of these organisations but are more profiled in certain contexts. The Aswan Meeting provides an interesting example of what O'Brien dubs as a 'UN- spectacular' (O'Brien 1968: 19). These critics also stress the potency of the latter in terms of their effectiveness as high profile and high status events which bring together elements, for example, of 'metaphor', 'fantasy', 'illusion', 'power', 'theatre', 'acting' (O'Brien 1968: 18-19) in order that this 'imaginative energy' (Hoggart 1978: 163) interacts with more literal acts of global decision-making.

The potential is particularly striking to read the Aswan Meeting in this way. The Meeting is invested as the key symbolic stage-set and as the primary location for the powerful dramatisation of the Alexandrina scheme at the level of diplomatic encounter. As such, the event establishes a powerful space for itself within which to construct a united contemporary revivalist imaginary. Echoing Hoggart, O'Brien remarks, 'participants describe the Meeting as a display and expression of 'imagination and will' (Briggs in GOAL 1990: 39) and engage in almost over-determined attempts to underline the Aswan Meeting's potency as an 'event': referring to the occasion as an 'auspicious event', an 'unprecedented international event' and as a 'decisive event for culture' (GOAL 1990: 7). As the most prestigious of a series of foundational events, it secured an imaginative foundation for the revivalist process of construction. These more hidden networks of bureaucracy and diplomacy were therefore being put into place before work started on the Alexandrina's construction site. O'Brien underlines this point by stating how UN
performances always require a 'preparatory' and a 'propitiatory' ceremonial (O'Brien 1968: 12).

It is here that fundamental correspondences are evident between the motivations and moral/ethical 'values' and 'frames' which I argue define the Western imagination historically and those which from the Second World War onwards undergo globalisation as part of the UN/UNESCO own universalising imaginary. UNESCO's 'Greco-European' 'origin' and 'memory', for example, has recently been outlined by Derrida who also characterises the organisation as a 'privileged' archival-philosophical medium of the post-war period committed to the recuperation and globalisation of a specifically Kantian 'cosmopolitics' (Derrida 2002b: 9). He, like other critics, assert that any particular 'act', 'performance' or 'drama' which takes place under the 'auspices of the UN/UNESCO' operates out of and in creative tension with the UN's own foundational grand narrative 'script': the UN Constitution (see also O'Brien 1968: 10).

The UN Constitution, as a legal instrument and moral-ethical statement position, it is argued, 'reads' as a modern secular version of an ancient 'sacred drama' (O'Brien 1968:10). This 'script' binds the UN and its sister organisations to a number of foundational 'sacred duties' and a 'sacred' genealogy which at root originate from the same 'Eurocentric' frames critically rehearsed in Chapter One. The UN is thus positioned as a semi-divine 'actor/prime-mover' (imbued with 'god-like' and 'high-priest'-like qualities) which gives life and legitimacy to the 'world stage' and charges its 'actors' (states parties) with the 'acting out' and 'dramatisation' of 'world events' (O'Brien 1968: 9-11). Thus UN/UNESCO 'spectacles' and 'performances', while centring upon particular issues (events, projects, schemes) are (by their own Constitutional law) committed to placing these specific dramas within the core UN 'universalising' discourse (O'Brien 1968: 10).

Of note is that this 'script' repeats and takes forward for re-inscription the 'old' ('Eurocentric'/museological) 'values' of universalism, humanism, democracy and

7 See also Appendix Three where a copy of the UNESCO Constitution can also be found.
cosmopolitanism as UN/UNESCO's underpinning values. Similarly, the UN's core duty as international peace-keeper and mediator thus affords a means to recoup and globalise Alexander the Great's role as 'reconciler of the world'. This complex 'script', critics argue, manifests itself in 'UN spectacles' as an epic 'morality-play,' containing elements of 'tragedy', 'triumph' and even of 'comedy' and 'farce' (O'Brien 1968: 11). Crucially these performances collect around a core transcendent 'theme': that of the 'destiny of man' and as such it is indicative of the UN/UNESCO's and the international community's post-war diplomatic engagement with the core question of: what it is to be human? Critics also have emphasised that the UN/ UNESCO 'scripts' concerning the 'destiny of man,' are ultimately in the project of 'mankind's' 'redemption' (O'Brien 1968: 10-11).

Correspondences thus emerge between what O'Brien defines as an idealised 'Platonic UN' (1968: 74) and the Alexandrina paradigm as redemptive formula. Again, these redemptive qualities can also be traced back to the UN/ UNESCO's own discourse of origins and its birth 'on the ashes of the Second World War' and as part of the wider post-war redemptive vision (both philosophic and operational) of 'reconstruction and rehabilitation' in a world traumatised by conflict (O'Brien 1968: 10; see also Appendix Three). UNESCO is specifically charged, within the wider UN brief, with 'the rehabilitation of the structures of education, science and culture' (cf. Hoggart 1978: 201). Critics thus characterise the UN Constitution as a 'prayer' offered to a 'war-stricken world' and an effort to construct, 'an imaginary Organisation suited to a regenerate mankind' (O'Brien 1968: 10). In the context of the Aswan Meeting the UN/ UNESCO redemptive formula like that of its concomitant cosmopolitics invests this particular 'sacred drama's' ritual performances with the dynamics of 'enchantment', 'utopianism', 'dream', 'promise' while also drawing out its potencies as a 'transformation scene', a 'ceremony of restitution', of 'purification' and an enforcer of 'reality' (O'Brien 1968: 13-14).
SECTION TWO

ASWAN AS STAGE-SET -
SCRIPT, PERFORMANCE, AND PLAYERS

A 'reading' of the format and structure of the Meeting alone offers insights into the key
dynamics of the revivalist drama. The event centre-stages the Presidential couple - Hosni
and Suzanne Mubarak - in their role as hosts, while the Egyptian partnership with
UNESCO is given validation by the presence of the (then) UNESCO Director-General
Federico Mayor. The latter's participation is thus vital in investing the Meeting as a UN/
UNESCO authenticated 'world stage'. A Keynote Address from Francois Mitterrand of
France (whose own Bibliotheque Nationale is credited as a major motivation for
Mubarak's personal pursuit of the Alexandrina project (Stille 2000: 95)) was the first
symbolic and supportive 'voice' of the International Community to be profiled at Aswan.
His words - and the images which followed (including dramatic images of the
Alexandrina's new architectural design) - set the stage for is the core moment of the
Aswan performance's ritual activity: that of the inauguration of the International
Committee.

This particular 'drama' centred upon, firstly, on the reading of the Aswan Declaration
and, secondly, the members of the Commission giving their signature and pledging their
support to this document (see fig. 7). This group of participants - from North and South -
included such figures as Queen Noor of Jordan, Queen Sophia of Spain, Prince Al -Saud
of Saudi Arabia, Princess Caroline of Monaco, the Amir of Kuwait and Melina Mecouri
(GOAL 1990: 12-13). They subsequently made their own 'responses' (made via
Statements) to the Egyptian Government/ UNESCO's Opening Speeches. In providing
the Meeting with supportive 'voices' they fully inscribed their own role as witnesses,
supporters and authenticators of the project within the international arena. A certain
formatting and templating of Speeches emerged too which saw participants (both the
scheme's 'partners'/ 'official stakeholders' and the International Committee) follow a
certain set procedure.

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8 See Appendix One for a copy of the Aswan Meeting programme and of the Aswan Declaration.
Fig. 7. Aswan Meeting 1990 - showing signatures of delegates on Aswan Declaration

(source: UNESCO 1990: 4)
As previously stated, and most crucially of all, the resource for this dramatisation is that of participants making their own return (by way of a commemoration of the Aswan Campaigns) to the ancient Alexandrina’s myth/history and redemptive qualities. Thus the Alexandrina paradigm is used by the gathered assembly as a resource (much in the same way as did the ‘old’ museologists) to press its ‘signs and images’ and ‘myths and icons’ into the service of the contemporary revivalist imagination. These acts of repetition and return not only see the Alexandrina paradigm idealised further but as a key resource it also allows the management, manipulation and mediation of the revivalism at the level of the dramas, the spectacle and the glamour of international diplomacy. The opportunity is then opened up for participants to particularise this act of return in terms of their own stake in revivalism. Finally, participants made more explicit references to the UN/UNESCO ‘universal’ ‘script’/Constitution into order to emphasise the potency of the revivalist project as an ‘act for all humanity’ and to align it to the more ‘temporal’ agendas of peace-keeping, human rights and cultural revivalism (GOAL 1990).

This particular aspect of the formatting of the Aswan Meeting corresponds with O’Brien’s analysis of reference to UN ‘language games’ and the way in which Speeches are initiated and responded to (O’Brien 1968: 14-15). There is a certain ‘Echo’ and ‘Narcissus’ quality to this, O’Brien describes how the ‘dialogue’ begins with those at the podium (the centre of the event) – in this case revivalism’s official ‘partners’ - initiating the ‘performance’ with the ‘drama’ then requiring a ‘Chorus’ – again, in this case, the International Committee - to echo the key themes and pledge their support (expressed in terms of an emotional and moral-ethical exercising of their ‘sacred duty’) (O’Brien 1968: 14-15). Drawing upon both ancient Greek and religious imagery the participants/respondents are thus characterised as a ‘Chorus’ and as ‘Mummers’ (O’Brien 1968: 247).

What is crucial to understand is how the Aswan event, its performance, and the definition invested in its actors provides a template or ‘script’ for the rest of the revivalist programme. This formatting and structure of the Aswan Meeting and the arrangement of speeches, in themselves can be ‘read’ as an outline or template of the specific roles and relationships within the wider ‘drama’ of the international heritage campaign. The Aswan
Meeting thus takes on the potency of a 'world in microcosm' and as a microcosm of revivalism itself. Not only does this create the sense that both UNESCO and the International Committee are staged as a synonym for the 'international community' at large, but also that the meeting presents itself as a microcosm/model of the relationships and roles which are to dominate the revivalist imaginary at the 'official' reaches of the international diplomacy. The Aswan 'performance', therefore, has its symbolic stagings at the levels of diplomacy, power and politics (these also anticipate operational stakes too) by establishing not only the 'internal' roles and relationships between participants but also, via an invited media presence, - another powerful 'Chorus' at such events - these relationships were made visible to the international community and international publics.

Exposing the meeting as a 'world in microcosm' and as a microcosm of revivalism has been done by Briggs (a member of the International Committee) who highlights how the 'interweaving of images and texts' at Aswan – the former notably includes the video 'Bibliotheca Alexandrina' and the first images shown of the Alexandrina as architectural icon and design – illustrates how 'ancient and modern imaginatively conceived can complement each other' (Briggs in GOAL 1990: 39). Not only does this offer a means of drawing together the key strands of wider revivalism by appropriating and possessing them in visual-textual form but as Briggs continues, 'Imagination expresses itself in a supply of resources: human and financial' (Briggs in GOAL1990: 39). The latter sentiment thus articulates the central agenda of the culmination of the event in the signing of the Aswan Declaration and underlines its call for funding from the International Community. Briggs does, however, contextualise this further: 'This great project initiated by the Government of Egypt, and backed by UNESCO and UNDP, will come from many different sources and will take many different forms: physical, technical, financial' finally emphasising, 'and, not least, moral' (Briggs in GOAL1990: 39).
Aswan’s ‘High Priests’: Acts of Commemoration

‘Your support recalls what you did in the past when you sponsored the rescue campaign for saving the Nubian Monuments. The international community could not stand back and see the Aswan High Dam’s water destroy those great monuments. Your great contribution helped to save the temples and preserved their grandeur. Abu Simbel stands as testimony to the Egyptian civilization, to the international community’s awareness and dedication, as well as, to the profound feelings of solidarity and unity in the face of these challenges ... Your participation is primarily an act for all humanity.’

(Hosni Mubarak, President of Arab Republic of Egypt, in GOAL 1990a: 17)

‘Thirty years ago, the greatest archaeological rescue campaign all time was initiated when the then Director-General of UNESCO, Rene Maheu, launched his appeal to the international community to save the treasures of Nubia. Twenty years later the campaign had been successfully completed, following a spectacular engineering operation that lifted the temples of Abu Simbel and Philae beyond the reaches of the raising waters of the High Dam.

... Today it is the international community... meeting here in Aswan to celebrate this universal heritage and, in particular, to pledge its support for a project that will commemorate and perpetuate the library at its place of genesis.’

(Federico Mayor, [the then] Director-General UNESCO, in GOAL 1990: 25)

The quotes above illustrate a central dynamic, initiated by the Mubaraks and Mayor, of participants using their speeches to mark a return to the Nubian Campaigns. This, in turn, transforms the Aswan Meeting into a space of commemoration and authentication and thus as a potent site of ‘memory-work.’ Hosni Mubarak, for example, uses his Inaugural Speech to ‘recall’ and ‘commemorate’ and thus evoke memories of the acts of ‘solidarity’ and ‘unity’ which made possible, ‘the rescue campaign for saving the Nubian monuments’ (Mubarak in GOAL 1990a:17-8)9. Mubarak’s expression of his ‘gratitude’ to the International Community for their ‘participation in this great cultural and human

9 I use the references ‘1990a’ and ‘1990b’ to distinguish between Hosni and Suzanne Mubarak respectively.
project' reaches into the domain of the 'sacred drama' in his assertion that this was 'an act for all humanity'(Mubarak in GOAL 1990a:17). This earlier international heritage campaign is both celebrated and commemorated as testimony to an occasion at which the same participants – the Egyptian Government, the UN/ UNESCO and the International Committee – worked in co-operation to save ‘common’ or ‘universal’ heritage. In terms of the potency of the rescue campaign as a ‘template’ for contemporary revivalism, Mayor also makes explicit that, ‘I believe that this project, no less than that which safeguarded the treasures of Nubia for posterity, will mobilise the support of the international community (Mayor in GOAL 1990:26). He subsequently calls for the ‘spirit’ of the Aswan Meeting to be translated to the Alexandria campaign.

The Nubian Campaigns are best described for both partners as key foundational events. As the Aswan Speeches and other sources (see Appendices One and Three) draw out, these Campaigns represent a key moment for Egypt’s status and sovereignty. As a newly independent nation-state Egypt will be drawn into the ‘world stage’ in spectacular fashion via this internationally supported cultural heritage salvage operation. Taking place, as it did, when Nasser was in power, it afforded Egypt the means to publicly demonstrate its commitment to the safeguarding of ancient heritage within its territorial boundaries and to present this as a Campaign which successfully married aims of preserving and conserving the ‘common’, ‘world’ or ‘universal’ heritage with those of Egypt’s own urgent ‘development needs’ (Mubarak in GOAL 1990a: 17).

Similarly, for UNESCO, the Nubian Campaigns represent a defining moment in which UNESCO’s own status as an international cultural broker was drawn onto the ‘world stage’ and received its authentication and legitimation too (cf. Hoggart 1978: 14). These Campaigns, as the first of the international salvage operations, were crucial in putting into action, - and in this sense making real or giving substance - , the concept of ‘universal’ heritage, which had, until that time, existed only in the abstract. In this sense the success of the Nubian Campaigns can be explored in terms of signalling the birth of ‘universal’ heritage and also providing the foundation for the World Heritage Convention (WHC) (Mayor in GOAL 1990: 25-6; also see Appendix Three). The latter Convention is
regarded as UNESCO's most high profile concern and in many senses is its redeeming feature (or redemptive formula) in terms of UNESCO's own survival and as a measure of its success.

As an act of 'commemoration'/memory-work the Aswan Meeting also offered the Egyptian Government/UNESCO 'partnership' a means to recuperate celebratory accounts of the Nubian Campaigns and to engage in strategic acts of forgetting. Hoggart, for example, refers to the 'elaborate set of political and logistic operations' underpinning the project which not only saw, 'nations literally taking the smaller temples from just ahead of the rising waters and rebuilding them in their own capitals' but he further argues: 'So most of the objects of major value have been saved. What has been lost is a country, a region: Nubia, with its own systems of life and rhythms; that could neither be saved or replaced'. Finally adding, 'Perhaps the Nasser Dam had to be built, so that the standard of living of Egypt’s millions should improve, if that will really be the outcome. But, to repeat, let us recognise what was lost in the process: Nubia and the Nubians as a people in their own right – a land and a people which have haunted British explorers – exist no more' (Hoggart 1978: 35).

SECTION THREE

NATION-STATE SOVEREIGNTY:

'SOIL OF ASWAN, SOIL OF ALEXANDRIA'

'Egypt has decided to carry out this colossal work, and give it top priority in spite of tremendous burdens in the fields of development, and in spite of the challenges it faces in terms of in its comprehensive economic reform. For Egypt can never relinquish its pioneering cultural role that it plays by virtue of its history and location. This is what the world expects form it. Therefore, Egypt has initiated the idea of reviving the Alexandria Library because it believes that not by bread alone does man live, but that culture be the food of thought, conscience and feelings, and this is of no less importance to man than his material needs. This is Egypt. Egypt, the land of civilisation, the land of knowledge, the land of art and the land of culture. Egypt, the land of security, safety and peace'

(Mubarak in GOAL 1990a: 18).
'National politics, also, whether democratic or authoritarian in form, has always required play-action, symbolism and ritual ... They were actors not only in the histrionic sense, though they were that, but also and chiefly in the sense of being men who did things, who had used real power' 

(O'Brien 1968: 9).

The more celebratory display of diplomatic memory and identity-work that took place at Aswan was soon opened up to explore different purchases on the revivalist context. The commanding presence of both Hosni and Suzanne Mubarak at the Aswan Meeting is illustrative of the central place of the scheme within the wider context of Presidential projects. As official accounts show, following Abaddi's initial call for the revival of the Alexandrina, the project was taken up nationally by the Egyptian government, and adopted directly by the President (GOAL 1990: 9). After securing UNESCO's assistance with the 'Appeal to the International Community' in 1987, the scheme gained its legal definition within as a UNESCO/ states-party 'partnership' and nationally in terms of two Presidential Decrees issued in 1988 and 2001. As Egypt's First Lady, Suzanne Mubarak's active involvement in the project sees her Chair the Aswan Meeting and from this point onwards she effectively takes over the public profiling of the scheme. Her participation thus affords her official recognition as, 'T]he first sponsor of the project since its inception [i.e. Inauguration]' and anticipates her greater profiling in 2001 when, 'President Mubarak delegated Mrs Mubarak to chair the Board of Trustees' (see Appendix One).

The Aswan Meeting itself thus inaugurates and anticipates the substantial use of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina scheme as a resource for nation-building. As such the Meeting is capable of offering insights into both the role of nation state-sovereignty within the dramas of the international heritage campaign and in terms of drawing out the specific nature of the relationships between UNESCO and its states-parties. More specifically it illustrates the potency of the 'event' in terms of the opportunity it presents for re-investing and, I would argue, quite substantially re-inventing, Egypt and the Egyptian presidency upon the 'global stage'. As critics make explicit the UN/ UNESCO is
constructed from the 'organised territorial units of sovereign-states,' defined within UN/UNESCO jargon as 'states-parties'. Together these units create the 'world stage' which is subsequently given legal structure and its moral/ethical framing via the aforementioned UN/UNESCO Constitutions. This, in turn, creates a certain bureaucratic institutional culture whose operations are (again legally) bound up in the commitment to supporting nation-states in terms of offering an international framing and presence on the 'world stage' while respecting a policy of non-interference into domestic affairs. This schema, as outlined by O'Brien, is dependent upon a strategic symbiosis between nation-state and international community and dubbed by him as an 'impossible perfection' (O'Brien 1968: 292).

An exploration of the 'ritual possibilities open' to the nation-states within this domain include the use of this UN/UNESCO 'world stage' as a platform upon which they (notably 'new' nations) can acquire a certain visibility (Hoggart 1978: 64). This 'visibility', in turn, has the potential to extend beyond symbolic acts of inclusion (although of crucial value in themselves) and to be opened up in order to dramatise a a particular nation-state's pursuit of more specific 'aspirations, grievances, demands' and to (potentially) take on problem solving strategies (Hoggart 1978: 64). Critics further stress that the 'symbolic apparel' which nation-states as 'actors' acquire through this 'performance' offers them the potential to both, 'cut a good figure on the 'world stage' and also to, 'to play on the domestic stage the part of one who is cutting a good figure on the world stage' (O'Brien 1968: 56). These 'performances' thus offer nation-state leaders the means to acquire (or to consolidate further) an identity both as 'High-Priests' within national territorial boundaries and in regional (for example, Egypt has its regional status as 'big fish') as well as international terms (Hoggart 1978: 65).

Moreover, once upon the 'world stage' the use of sacred 'play-action, symbolism and ritual' to enhance 'real,' 'temporal' powers is bound-up in the 'icons' and symbols' which are promoted (and/or emerge) as the currency of nationhood (O'Brien 1968: 56). While these can take many forms (for example, they can be political or moral 'objects') the specific alignment of these 'symbols' to a nations cultural heritage carries a particular
weight, and potency. Not only are these used to root nations and their national-identity upon world-stage but as translated into the ‘apparel’ of ‘universal’ heritage these ‘symbols’ are used within highly ‘dramatised’ and ‘moralising’ performances as a means for ‘actors’ to legitimate themselves within the UN/UNESCO’s universalising, liberal, democratic cosmopolitics of diversity and dialogue even if ‘at home’ authoritarianism may block the reality of exercising such ‘values’ (O’Brien 1968: 56).

The Egyptian Presidency at the Aswan Meeting charts its particular course through the above dynamics. The Presidential patronage of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project in ‘partnership’ with UNESCO places the Mubaraks’ – and by extension Egypt’s – drama of a return to origins upon the ‘world stage’, with the Aswan Meeting profiled as its most explicit ‘performance’. Moreover, this situation requires the Egyptian Presidency to engage in a diplomatic drama of a return and re-attachment to origins and to heritages which, as Abaddi made clear in his interview, since the 1950s have occupied a largely ambivalent place within the national identity and/ or suffered omission. As such this return to origins is itself bound up in the re-invention, renewal (perhaps redemption?) of both nation-state and presidency and is achieved by the recuperation, recovery and revival of the key symbols of Egypt’s ancient pasts – notably from Egypt’s Greco-Roman and Pharaonic heritages - and their associated myth-histories. The ancient Alexandrina - dubbed by Mubarak as a ‘civilizational symbol’ – is of course invested with being the key icon within this ‘performance’ (Mubarak in GOAL 1990a: 17).

To focus, firstly, on the speeches of Hosni Mubarak, he skilfully uses his texts to set in play these ‘icons and symbols’ in order dramatise the central dynamic of all nation-state ‘partnerships’ with UNESCO: that of positioning states-party sovereignty and ‘universal’ heritage as mutually supporting entities. Mubarak thus uses his speech to draw out an initial, powerful framing of revivalism from the ‘soil of Aswan’ to the ‘soil of Alexandria’ (Mubarak in GOAL 1990a:17). This allows Mubarak to effectively outline the territorial, bounded landscape of (‘his’) nation from Upper to Lower Egypt. Interestingly too, Mubarak emphasises Egypt’s ‘deeper’ discourse of origins - in terms of its ancient safe-guarding and nurturing roles - with regard to both the built heritage and
the 'great religions' (Mubarak in GOAL 1990a: 17). This is mapped out alongside the epic 'sacred drama' of the destiny of man and his progress towards civilisation: 'Egypt one of the most ancient civilizations, that has nurtured one of the most sublime cultures, has safe-guarded the great religions, and received prophets and messengers, is aware of its cultural role, and is conscious of the duties imposed upon it by its geographic location, historical background and cultural heritage. This will be achieved by rebuilding one of its most prominent historic features, the renowned civilizational symbol namely the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’ (Mubarak in GOAL 1990a: 17).

After rehearsing Egypt's 'pioneering cultural role' (a reference to the Nubian campaigns) and Egypt's 'duties' with regard the wider safe-guarding of heritage, he moves on to chart out the specific heritages associated with the ancient Alexandria which are to be returned to and revived in the contemporary context. Here Mubarak out-does the 'old' museology's romantic, idealising cosmopolitan trajectories in asserting, ‘The history of the Library of Alexandria, affirms that it opens its doors to everyone who sought knowledge without any discrimination due to colour, origin, or religion. This is the expression of equality of human beings in knowledge at this early juncture of human history’ (Mubarak in GOAL 1990a: 17). Mubarak also draws out correspondences between what he defines as the key attributes of both ancient and modern Alexandrinas and those of the UN/ UNESCO's own Constitutional values, notably that of the central tenet of peace-keeping: ‘Science, art, thought and culture are the materials of this civilizations structures which you are all participating in rebuilding. All these factors are the main themes of peace, which is our ultimate goal and the dream of all mankind without exception. Art, thought and culture flourish Man's mind, conscience and sentiment. Man thus advances, values peace, appreciates the right of others to a free and honourable life, rejects oppression and avoids conflicts and wars. Hence the Alexandrina Library contributes to deepening the foundation of peace and love among people, providing global services towards art and culture, bringing enlightened minds closer together and uniting the thoughts of men’ (Mubarak in GOAL 1990a: 17).
Not only does Mubarak establish ‘his’ and Egypt’s commitment to ‘universal’ heritage, but he inverts this dynamic in order to reiterate that revivalism is ‘a global event not exclusive to Egypt’. In so doing he defines the ‘responsibilities’ and ‘duties’ placed on the international community in terms of the ‘safeguarding’ of heritages - both within and outside – their ‘geographical scope’ (Mubarak in GOAL 1990a:17). His Speech is subsequently marked by his insistence that despite the, ‘tremendous burdens in the fields of development’ and of ‘economic reform’ an essential component of any nation is that of culture as an essential component of development (Mubarak in GOAL 1990a:18). Here ‘temporal’ development needs and the wider ‘sacred drama’ of the ‘destiny of man’ are brought together in Mubarak reiterating: ‘not on bread alone does man live, but culture is the food of thought, conscience and feelings’ (Mubarak in GOAL 1990a:18). As the head of a ‘Third World’ nation, in aligning revivalism with development, Mubarak marries the ‘universal’ UN/UNESCO (Constitutional) script with the wider brief of his Presidential projects.

The First Lady Suzanne Mubarak in her role as Chair repeats the broad sweep of the President’s Speech. She does, however, crystallise a key agenda of the Aswan Meeting and the Presidential use of the ‘cosmopolitan card.’ in revivalism. A re-enactment of a return to origins is more specifically aimed towards the official presidential endorsement of cosmopolitan heritages and thus at the inclusion of diversity and pluralism within Egypt’s political national imaginary. Not only does Suzanne Mubarak, therefore, give specific recognition to Alexandria’s Greek, Roman and Mediterranean identities but recuperates the archival redemptive imagination by focusing upon the ‘book’ as a means of uniting the heritage of the Alexandrina with Egypt’s wider cosmopolitan brief: ‘The core of this great gathering is the book, and the book in our history, civilization and culture is the sublime symbol of knowledge. Throughout the successive ages and eras, in the land of Egypt the book has remained always a symbol that Egypt and its people endeared. Such has been the case throughout the Pharaonic, Roman, Coptic and Islamic epochs: our country believes in the book, treasures libraries and considers the written word as a precious treasure of esteemed value’ ([Suzanne] Mubarak in GOAL 1990b: 19).
The inclusion of Islamic heritages is pursued further by the First Lady, (again with resonance to archival discourse) when she asserts that ‘the modern Egyptian believes that the first revelation from God to the Prophet Mohammed was “Read” and that “Pen” in the Koran [this] was mentioned in the same verse as the greatest gift from Almighty God to mankind’ (Mubarak in GOAL 1990b:19). Significantly, both the President and the First Lady ultimately root their concluding comments within both ‘old’ and ‘new’ cosmopolitical visions. The former, for example, states, ‘On the soil of Alexandria, the ancient Egyptian civilization met and merged with Greek, Roman and Arab civilizations,’ adding, ‘Egypt’s future shall not simply depend on its history and location as the gateway to Africa, the road to Asia, the crossroads to Europe and bridge between people and their civilizations, but, above all, shall thrive as the throbbing heart of the Arab World the third “Keblaa” of the Islamic World and as a dear sister to the countries of Africa and the third world’ ([Hosni] Mubarak in GOAL 1990a:18). The First Lady with a specific gesture to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina echoes the sentiments of these new cosmopolitical dynamics: ‘It will be a centre that unites together the Arab, Islamic and international heritages, and will be a continuous message to our future generations’ ([Suzanne] Mubarak in GOAL 1990b:19).

SECTION FOUR

UNESCO AS REDEMPTIVE COSMOPOLITICS

The Project for the Revival of the ancient Library of Alexandrina goes to the very heart of UNESCO’s mission. Our task is, in essence, to promote the sharing of knowledge – knowledge for its own sake, knowledge for development and knowledge for mutual understanding. Sharing implies diversity and thus, by extension, the promotion of those cultural identities that constitute the harmonic richness of the concert of nations, by the same token, it presupposes the protection of the cultural heritage in which our national and supranational identities are rooted.

(Mayor in GOAL 1990: 26)
'The Bibliotheca Alexandrina – a link with the past and an opening onto the future – will be unique in being the first library on such a scale to be designed and constructed with the assistance of the international community acting through the United Nations system'

(Aswan Declaration in GOAL 1990: 99)

As the over-arching symbolic ‘High-Priest’ and ‘God-like’ presence (cf. O’Brien 1968: 247) at the proceedings, UNESCO’s (then) Director-General Federico Mayor is the essential element needed to invest the Aswan Meeting and its ‘sacred dramas’ - and by extension, the larger revivalist project – with an international, global framing. The objective of this latter inscription is to complement (also to manage and mediate) the concomitant force of ‘Egyptianisation’ dramatised at Aswan. While Mayor’s speech, once again, repeats the same key themes as the Egyptian Presidency, what is particularly striking about his intervention is the depth he gives to a cosmopolitical thrust to revivalism (cf. Derrida 2002b). This, in turn, leads him to make a strategic return to and a reworking of UNESCO’s own myth/history and mission in the light of the contemporary project. Mayor, who has previously written emotively on the Alexandrina’s myth/poetics (see his preface to Abaddi 1990: 7-11), re-works these in his Aswan speech, and as such, his statements illustrate the Aswan Meeting’s re-investment in an idealised Alexandrina paradigm and in its myths of return and redemption as the core resource and central dynamic of the contemporary revivalist imaginary.

In ‘old’ museological style Mayor thus describes the ancient Alexandrina as the institution which endowed ‘humanity with a collective memory’ and ‘universal vision’ and states how, ‘At the heart of the Alexandrian enterprise that drew scholars from all over the Hellenistic world to study, discuss, investigate and create was a sense of wholeness, of the radical interdependence of natural phenomena. No work was excluded from the Library of Alexandria; the nine muses dwelt in harmony within the halls of its Museum. In the person of an Erastosthenes, the scientist, philosopher, mathematician, historian and critic and poet were reconciled’ (Mayor in GOAL 1990: 25). Having recuperated these key themes of ‘wholeness’, ‘harmony’ and the figure of ‘reconciler,’ he
focuses upon the pivotal trauma: ‘the ‘ultimate fate of the Ancient Library’ (Mayor in GOAL 1990:25). With much drama, Mayor argues that as a consequence of the destruction of the Alexandrina, ‘the memory traces of civilization, were virtually wiped out’ emphasising that the institution’s loss serves as a, ‘sobering reminder of how fragile the constructs of the civilized mind can be (Mayor in GOAL 1990:25) He cites from Borges’ “Poema de los dones” (“I, who had always thought of Paradise in form and image as a library”) to make it clear that the Alexandrina’s demise represents ‘paradise’ lost (Mayor in GOAL 1990:27).

Crucially, he establishes an empathetic identification between the preoccupation with the motif of loss and recovery that marks the Alexandrina paradigm and that which marks UNESCO’s own mission. Continuing a theme initiated by Bazin in Chapter One, Mayor thus makes further illusions to UNESCO as a modern manifestation of the Alexandrina paradigm, as such, both institutions are described as Grand Designs and obvious parallels are explored between the Alexandria project and UNESCO’s dominant emphasis upon the conservation/ preservational paradigm and its own commitment to the objectives of safeguarding, restoring and protecting universal/ world heritage (Mayor in GOAL 1990:26). The cosmopolitical dynamics of UNESCO which stress ‘mutual understanding’, ‘diversity’ and the ‘harmonic richness of the concert of nations’ broaden these connections and, more crucially, are bound up with the potency of the Alexandrina as a redemptive formula (Mayor in GOAL 1990:26). Therefore, writ larger still, the objective of the UN’s preservational, safeguarding roles are ultimately concerned with the grand narrative of the ‘destiny’ (the survival and possible redemption) of ‘mankind’: its central role as O’Brien argues is that of ‘helping to safeguard the survival of the species’ and via ‘powerful rites for the aversion of doom’, to bring about the ‘preservation of world peace’ (O’Brien 1978: 288).

Mayor’s speech is also mobilised as a means to express and reaffirm three main UNESCO identities, which, while co-existent in the contemporary organisation, are synonymous with characterisations of UNESCO which have dominated successive stages
of its development\textsuperscript{10}. These phases begin with what has been characterised as the organisation's 'age of idealism' (Lacoste 1994: 11) synonymous with UNESCO's aforementioned 'birth' 'on the ruins' of the Second World War and as part of the post-war redemptive vision of reconstruction and peace (Hoggart 1978: 42). The central component of this vision is the UN/UNESCO's role as a 'scene of dramatic mediation' in which the 'Clash of Civilisations' can be pre-empted/ worked-through (O'Brien 1968: 10). In his speech at Aswan, Mayor marries these internationalist concerns - including UNESCO's attempts to define a 'world philosophy, a new humanism' (which was led initially by the European allied nations cf. Hoggart 1978: 54-5) – with statements which position the revivalist imaginary within the UN/UNESCO Constitution and its defence of an ethics of pluralism, dialogue, diversity, of human rights and its international peace-keeping role (Mayor 1990: 25).

Mayor also argues for effective links between UN/UNESCO's Kantian cosmopolitics (cf. Derrida 2002b), its sacred duties and its more 'temporal,' operational role within 'new strategies of culture and development' (Mayor 1990: 26). It is here that UNESCO's second identity/ phase is crystallised: this is synonymous with 'operational activities' (such as the Nubian campaigns which marked the 1960s-1970s) and which saw UNESCO marked not only by 'Cold War' political divides but respond to the needs of 'new nations' undergoing decolonisation in terms of 'development' needs (Hoggart 1978: 31).

As Mayor makes explicit at Aswan, UNESCO itself is not a funding agency but as international 'culture-broker' it does 'support' states-parties access to the UNDP: he thus states; 'The task before us now is to bring to fruition the first project of its kind to be undertaken with the help of the international community. With the generous help of the United Nations Development Programme, which has co-operated since 1988 with UNESCO and Egypt in this joint venture, the first, preparatory phase of the project is complete. The time has come to focus all our efforts on the campaign to raise the funds required to construct the building, to purchase equipment, constitute the book collections, train staff and organise and run the library and its associated services' (Mayor in GOAL 1990: 26).

\textsuperscript{10} See also Appendix Three for more detail.
Interestingly Mayor illustrates how the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, as one of UNESCO’s premier international projects, not only encompasses ‘old’ empathetic identifications but is a vehicle and symbol of UNESCO’s most recent reinvention of identity. This contemporary reinvention has seen the launch of new programmes: Mayor, for example, references new, global, technology and information networks as a big part of UNESCO/the Bibliotheca’s future. As subsequent chapters demonstrate these ‘new’ programmes that include not only intangible heritage but intellectual property rights, cultural rights, underwater archaeology and tourism are integral to Alexandria revivalism (see also Appendix Three). UNESCO’s reinvention is also motivated by the need to re-affirm (redeem) the organisation’s own profile and credibility – i.e. its good image - on the world stage and as such the Bibliotheca scheme provides a means to pursue this objective.  

SECTION FIVE

VOICES OF ASWAN: CELEBRATORY CHORUS

‘You are an elite vanguard whose duty it is to restore to human culture an ancient international centre lost for centuries.’

([Suzanne] Mubarak in GOAL 1990b: 19)

‘You are giving the best example of enlightened leaders and pioneers.’


‘The members of the UN, then at any given moment in time collectively represent a kind of planetary Burkean ‘natural aristocracy.’

(O’Brien 1968: 286)

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11 As Chapter Five demonstrates UNESCO has recently undergone received significant criticism I return to discuss these points later.
As previously stated, the spectacles performed at the centre were met by my responses from the International Committee as ‘Chorus’ (O’Brien 1968: 14-15), and which, as O’Brien states, are a necessary part of this drama and more particularly to its dynamic as ‘morality play’ (O’Brien 1968:75). Thus these gathered elites representing the interests of the international community respond to the keynote speeches by both the repetition of dominant themes and by stressing specific moral, political and diplomatic agendas. By these means the ‘Chorus’ inscribe and dramatise their own ‘sacred’/ ‘temporal’ roles and responsibilities with respect to the Bibliotheca project. The management of ancient myth at Aswan is such that it enables participants – from both North and South – to immerse themselves in the Alexandrina paradigm. These new engagements with Alexandria’s myth and memory while expressing obvious echoes and repetitions of the ‘old’ Western museological celebratory trope also open up the genealogy of the city further to recognition of wider ‘non-western’, cosmopolitan influences; provoking (with some irony) even more idealised accounts of both city and archive.

- Follow their footsteps

As a means of enacting their own return to origins participants stress their commitment to ‘honouring our ancestors’ as Queen Noor of Jordan would have it (in GOAL 1990:28). A sense of unity is captured as the ‘Chorus’ position themselves as the guardians, heirs and/or inheritors of Alexandrian tradition. The ancient Alexandrina is, therefore, opened up as a shared object of empathetic identification. These acts of mirroring and reflection see Mitterrand, for example, encourage other participants to descend into the Alexandrina’s ancient imaginary when he states, ‘Let us imagine the poets and thinkers, from all corners of the known earth, working together and co-operating with each other’ (Mitterand in GOAL1990:43). Participants as modern cosmopolitans are thus keen to take on the mantel of what they position as their ancient counterparts in speeches that create a narrative of community, belonging and replicate a non-conflictual ‘world in microcosm’. The Advisor to the Amir of Kuwait similarly urges the assembled cosmopolitans that, ‘we should follow their footsteps in reviving’ the institution (Hussain in GOAL1990:34). It is the (now late) Greek cultural critic and M.P. Melina Mercouri, appropriately enough,
who reminds participants that to support the project is indeed to follow the footsteps of Alexander the Great and "to participate in reviving Alexander's dream" of "building the Library of Alexandria" and interestingly she pitches the contemporary scheme as an 'echo' of its ancient self (Mercouri in GOAL 1990:35).

- Temple of Muses

Participants identify the different elements that comprise the ancient institution in order to re-affirm their value and project these forward. The specific dynamic of the Mouseion is evoked in references to the 'nine Muses' as spiritual well-springs of 'inspiration' and who are said to dwell in harmony with the ancient scholars (Mercouri in GOAL 1990:35). The 'Chorus' thus take their place in the long line of elites as the names of the 'Great men' (the philosophers of the ancient Alexandria) including Eratosthenes and Callimachus are evoked at the Aswan Meeting (Vargas in GOAL 1990: 37). Thus ancient Alexandria is itself idealised as a space in which intellectual inquiry reached new 'universal heights' and which in turn established civilisation along its 'path of progress' (Princess Caroline of Monaco in GOAL 1990:30). In contrast to the 'old' museological thesis a challenge is, however, made to the Alexandrina as an essentially 'Greek' project and although Aristotle's Lyceum is inscribed as a potent precursor (Mercouri in GOAL 1990:35), participants thus acknowledge the achievements of other ancient 'non-Western' civilisations, notably, that of the Middle and of Egypt itself (Prince Turki Ben Adel-Aziz Al-Saud in GOAL 1990:31). It is diplomatically argued here too that Alexander's 'dream of empire' will be re-directed and 'transposed' into a 'quest for universal knowledge' (Sorour in GOAL 1990:45). Again this opening up of cosmopolitan acts of translation and transmission across East and West is realised in appeals to the key motif of the Aswan Meeting's collective memory: that of Alexandria and archive as 'meeting point' and as 'melting pot' (Mercouri in GOAL 1990:35).
- Paradise Lost and Found

The ‘Chorus’ speeches at Aswan also return to further rehearse the traumatic loss of the ancient Alexandrina: as such they dwell upon the act of destruction, but diplomatically enough avoid ‘controversies’ regarding the institution’s demise. Mitterrand, for example asserts, ‘Until today, stories conflict and are inconclusive’ (Mitterrand in GOAL 1990:44). Furthermore, a more complex transmission of the Alexandrina’s ‘memory’ via, for example, ‘Constantinople and Arab thinkers’ as well as ‘Greek’ institutions is drawn out (Mitterrand in GOAL 1990:44). Participants subsequently focus upon what is argued to be an ancient ‘wisdom’ and ‘universal vision’ located within the ancient institution and is believed to offer lessons for the contemporary world (Brundtland in GOAL 1990:33). As the (then) Norwegian MP Gro Harlem Brundtland states further, ‘Today we need, more than ever, to learn from our past when building the future. The founders of this ancient institution possessed great wisdom – a kind of wisdom that will be needed at the dawn of the twenty-first Century’ (Brundtland in GOAL 1990:33). As the self-appointed guardians of this cultural inheritance, participants assert the enduring potency of the Alexandrina as, ‘a raw model for the whole world and the international community’ (Prince Turki Ben Abdel-Aziz Al-Saud in GOAL: 31). Brundtland similarly makes the claim that, ‘we will need improved cultural exchange and communication, based upon a scientific tradition founded some two thousand years ago’ (Brundtland in GOAL 1990:33).

-New Redemptions

The motif of loss and recovery re-emerges in the Alexandrina paradigm’s now familiar redemptive urge. As delegates highlight the survival of certain memory-traces, this leads Mitterrand, for example, to revive Durrell’s literary reference to Alexandria as a ‘Capital of Memory’ (Mitterrand in GOAL 1990:43). A Russian delegate accesses further into the archival imagination by mobilising motifs which characterise libraries as the ‘memory of culture’ and books as ‘markers of memory’ (Likhachev in GOAL 1990:47). Writ larger still the ‘Chorus’ own acts of memory-work allow a ‘forgetting’ or rather the creative
displacement of number of differences and divergences in the modern world (political/cultural/geographic) which are, none the less, resolved at the level of myth. In this conflation of ancient and modern worlds it is the memory of ‘cosmopolitanism’ that is both celebrated and reinvigorates the ancient template and is the resource from which new national and international, global configurations are drawn out.

- Remedy of the Soul

The motif of memory-work also offers a means to profile the Alexandrina paradigm’s more transcendental, metaphysical qualities. At this point, a contemporary revivalist imagination repossesses specific archival traditions that pitch libraries/museums/archives as places for the “Remedy of the Soul” and places this alongside descriptions of these institutions as “houses of life” (Mitterrand in GOAL 1990:43). Moreover, in a clear echo of Bazin’s thesis, delegates assert their commitment to ‘continue the quest for “the good life” and thus what was once the odyssey of the ‘ancient philosophers’ is now reinscribed at Aswan as a ‘renewed journey of caring and good will’ (Queen Noor in GOAL 1990:28). Participants use these ancient qualities in order to recuperate the transcendental, ‘eternal’ auras of the Alexandrina’s, both ancient and modern. This trajectory also returns to the traditional/old museological motif of the sacred shrine located outside of time which functions both as a ‘refuge’ and space of contemplation (Likhachev in GOAL 1990:43). The notion of culture as ‘cure’ and as that which ‘unites’ difference is reiterated by a number of the ‘Chorus’ as is the (once exclusively Western) fantasy of uniting East and West which is recast as in terms of the project’s future directions and aspirations (Prince Turky Ben Abdel-Aziz Al-Saud in GOAL 1990:31).

- Indispensable Tool of Development

The Alexandrina project is therefore ultimately recast in terms of a useable history and its heritage is translated into the more specific agendas of contemporary development needs. As such, not only does the Aswan Declaration describe the Bibliotheca Alexandrina as ‘an indispensable tool of development’ but the scheme is also framed within the UN led
World Decade Culture and Development (GOAL 1990: 99). This broad framing sees participants echo comments made by Mayor regarding the expense of the Alexandrina scheme: he states how the project's costs, - then estimated at ‘$150 million’-, are ‘a high price’ to pay especially when ‘apparently more pressing needs clamour for our attention’ (Mayor in GOAL 1990:26). He asserts, however, that it is ‘knowledge’ that is the ‘supreme resource because it is cumulative and is the key to meeting so many basic needs’, finally in a dramatic polarisation of human needs he asks, ‘Are we to place a lower value on a library than on a super-bomber? At a time when the disarmament momentum is growing, the promotion of knowledge deserves to be one of the first peace dividends ‘(Mayor in GOAL 1990:26).

- International Peace, Universal Humanism

The aspirations of the ‘Chorus’ to bind Alexandrian revivalism with the agenda of ‘peace’ is an over-riding concern and integral to UNESCO’s Constitution and its role as a UN ‘peace-keeping’ agency. Peace is also an issue which increasingly characterises Egypt’s political role – in terms of the profiling of Mubarak as ‘peace-maker’ in the Middle-East. It has been the cornerstone of Egypt and Mubarak’s identity-work in the contemporary international arena (see Buckley 2000: 12). Participants are therefore keen to follow both Mubarak and Mayor’s lead in reiterating these and related agendas. Prince Turky Ben Abdel-Aziz Al Saud, for example, reiterates these points for the gathered assembly: ‘I am positive that your concern and interest in such a project will have its implications for the future of mankind, crystallising our hopes that we can work together to establish peace in our region and in all parts of the world as well. A peace that is based on justice and that promises a bright tomorrow of justice, forgiveness, and elimination of violence and oppression’ (in GOAL 1990: 31). Significantly too the Bibliotheca scheme has led Alexandria’s candidature for UNESCO’s ‘Cities of Peace’ programme (see Chapter Seven and Appendix Seven).

Members of the ‘Chorus’ take turns to align revivalism to what could broadly be described as UNESCO’s liberalist, Enlightenment and humanist values. For example,
Brundtland advocated the need for the Alexandrina to, 'Enhance the welfare of humanity at large' and to aid the 'Promotion of human will for all freedom and dignity' that she asserts are 'all dependent on a common understanding of common responsibility for our common future' (in GOAL 1990:33). A significant emphasis is placed by participants on new technologies – a cornerstone of the digital library and proposed information networks synonymous with the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project - which are seen as a means of 'uniting the world' via media which sees 'intellectual borders ...constantly broken down' (Brundtland in GOAL 1990:33). Once again the revived Alexandrina is imagined as a cure-all, with its capacity to address concerns which map across cultural and scientific divides. Its role is defined in terms of: 'The stewardship of our planet, the management of an environmentally and socially sustainable development [which] will require great skills, scientifically based on knowledge and the spread of information' (Brundtland in GOAL 1990:33).

- Elite and Popular Worlds

There is almost no attempt to problematise the genealogy of the Alexandrina at the Aswan Meeting apart, that is, from one reference to the ancient institution's 'elitism' made by Mayor, who argues, 'Knowledge of the ancient world was the preserve of the elite' with 'no popularisation' of concerns' (in GOAL 1990:26). He further comments how, 'The Covenant of the League of Nations' which 'inspired the Constitution for the United States' similarly 'claims to speak on behalf of the people... [but] in reality is addressed to them, in terms of their hopes and fears' (in GOAL 1990:26). Mayor's point here is that the task of contemporary revivalism is that it should encourage democratisation and align itself with the strategy as 'development of all' (in GOAL 1990:26). The fight against illiteracy is highlighted as an especially potent and symbolic agenda by those engaged in the resurrection of perhaps the most legendary Library in myth/history (Briggs in GOAL 1990:39).

Once again, what emerges is an almost over-determined desire to press the Bibliotheca Alexandrina into the service of a number of causes which, at this stage at least, exist only
as rhetoric and as such remain unspecified and unlocated. Moreover, just as the limits of this thesis come into view the compensatory tactic employed by Aswan delegates’ is to immerse themselves further in myth and metaphor. The Bibliotheca scheme thus effectively appropriates the metaphor/identity associated with Alexandria’s/revivalism’s other potent icon ‘Pharos’: and is thus characterised as a ‘beacon’ of light which, delegates argue, will shed the redemptive light of development and progress in order to overcome the aberrations of the dark ages and thereby thrust humankind fully into the future (see, for example, Mercouri in GOAL 1990:35).

- Future Political Directions

Perhaps the key alignment or reattachment made at the level of international diplomacy is that made with the ‘East’/‘non-west’: echoing Mubarak’s earlier rehearsed reference to Egypt as ‘the road to Asia, the crossroads to Europe… the third “Keblaa” of the Islamic World and as a dear sister to the countries of Africa and the third world’ (Mubarak in GOAL 1990a:18): the familial references continue as representatives of other Middle Eastern refer to ‘Sister Egypt’ (see Prince Turky Ben Adel-Aziz Al Saud in GOAL 1990:31). This contemporary re-working of the Alexandria’s liminal position is also flagged up in the Aswan Declaration (which itself initiates the final phase of ‘buying in’ to Alexandrina project in its call for donations of both books and money): as the Declaration has it; ‘Alexandria was predestined for this role: in ancient times a meeting place of civilisations, it is today at the cross-roads between the West and the Middle East’ (GOAL 1990: 99; see also Appendix One for a full version of the Aswan Declaration).

The most significant indicator of this shift came with participants/donors from Arab/Middle Eastern countries, coming forward not only with moral support but also with hard cash. As the official proceedings show, ‘$64 million were pledged by Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Iraq within 24 hours of the proclamation of the Aswan Declaration (GOAL 1990: 7). Significantly, Saddam Hussein donated the largest financial contribution ($21 million) to the Alexandrina project in its early stages and in so doing claimed his place to be the patron of world civilisation/culture.
CONCLUSION

ASWAN'S UNCHALLENGEABLE STATEMENTS

It has not been my intention in this chapter to describe in linear form the homecoming of the Bibliotheca project as a transition from academic idea to international implementation. On the contrary, the birth and implementation of the scheme demonstrates complex entanglements of ideas and agencies, and articulations of structures and roles that forbid any simple top down notion. Abaddi, for instance, represents an intellectualism and scholarship that is not only international in scope and appeal but he also makes claims to have harnessed his skills for the pursuit of both local interests and cosmopolitan identities. The catalyst is in fact more of a two-way movement. What might be called a kind of cultural compradorship articulates a performance and drama that seeks an increasingly universal stage for the players and stakeholders to gain and assert a form of cultural value. Abaddi, the Mubaraks, members of the Aswan Inaugural Meeting all share a common interest in a performance that operates on a number of registers, for example, diplomatic, national and global by using similar rhetorics, modes of consumption and allusions to universal human and cultural value. Yet each purport to do so with different inflections and with due regard for the local knowledges they possess whether it be as Alexandrian intellectual or the Director-General of UNESCO.

Moreover, they use what their different inflections hold in common to quite explicitly mobilise support, persuade local interests and convince key players as to the value of culture and why, therefore, funds should be provided to achieve these goals. A certain use of common buzzwords, for example, – ‘universal’ origins, cultural patrimony, progress, revivalism, peace, democracy, humanity, enlightenment and development – are a core part of the Aswan Meeting as foundational drama and are effective in evoking an emotional response of unchallengeable statements. They also echo the ‘old’ museological frames and sources of reference. It is, once again, therefore, the diplomatic strategy of
playing the ‘cosmopolitan card’ which offers a means to open-up revivalism’s/ the Alexandrina paradigm’s foundational ‘icons and images’ to new visions of collaboration across contemporary North and South. This, for example, sees not only Abaddi but Saddam Hussein ‘buy in’ to Alexander’s ‘dream’.

From this context the key dimensions to emerge are the ‘Egyptianisation’ of the project, the enactment of an alternative universalising cosmopolitics, - within which is also housed the aspiration of reviving contemporary Alexandria as a cosmopolitan centre -, and the role of cultural revivalism as a cure of social ills. The latter dynamics of which are acquired through and embedded in UNESCO’s own philosophy and the organisation’s origins as a cure to the post war traumas of Europe. Such mutual reinforcement does, however, have its limits and not only do the same terms (rhetorics, buzzwords) convey different meanings in certain contexts but the actors are often explicitly aware of the dissonances in meaning and their implications for possible conflicts in the implementation of the project. As such, the language of the Aswan Meeting succumbs to an aporia, an implicit populist leaning, that asserts that the project cannot be legitimised by the interests of an internationalising cultural elite alone. The emphasis here is that the Bibliotheca should address different audiences, be seen to encompass contested meanings and, significantly to address its cosmopolitan appeal through the manifest, diverse interests who are expected to want to appropriate it for their own ends.

The Aswan Meeting’s statements and speeches were also performed alongside the first dramatic images of the Alexandrina as architectural object in anticipation of the next stages project development in which material substance is given to mythologies, old and new. It is from the domain of the ‘acting-out’ and ‘working through’ of revivalism at the level of diplomatic dramas to the success of the project’s homecoming in these operational terms that we must now turn.
Chapter Four

‘Revivalism Between Worlds’ - UNESCO and GOAL
CHAPTER FOUR
‘REVIVALISM BETWEEN WORLDS’ - UNESCO AND GOAL

INTRODUCTION
‘BEHIND THE SCENES’ – BUREAUCRATIC WORLDS

The General Organisation of the Alexandria Library [GOAL] was established once the scheme had been accepted by the Egyptian government in collaboration with UNESCO. Our role at GOAL is to bring together the many concerns and needs of these two groups together and to take the project into a new phase. What we do here is to translate the initial idea into practice …

(Moshen Zahran, Director of GOAL: 1/97)

One of the key dynamics of UNESCO’s international projects, particularly the Alexandrina, is that operates between first and third worlds.

(Richard Holmquist jr., Liaison Officer Bibliotheca Alexandrina Project, UNESCO Paris Head-Quarters: 3/00)

The stage is, therefore, always in the minds of those who are behind the scenes: it dominates their actions, as it is intended to dominate the imagination of those who watch it... Yet there would be not behind the scenes: were it not for ‘the scenes themselves’

(O’Brien 1968: 49)

I described in chapter three the emergence of the Bibliotheca as a diplomatic object inspired by the precedent of the Aswan Meeting. A ‘new phase’ in the odyssey of homecoming followed which saw a shift of focus back to the Alexandrian landscape and upon the operational dramas of the Bibliotheca project as it is translated ‘into practice’ (Zahran: 1/97). This act of ‘translation’ thus signalled the project’s movement into
operational revivalism proper, the initial phase of which was dominated by what can best be described as two construction processes. The first, is the ‘behind the scenes’ construction of the project as it undergoes intricate layering, shaping and management within various bureaucratic domains which operate across international (notably UNESCO-Paris), national and local levels (in both Cairo and Alexandria) and, as such between ‘first and third worlds’ (Holmquist: 3/00). The second dynamic of ‘translation’ is that of the Bibliotheca’s physical construction and its emergence – its material objectification - as an architectural object along the city’s Corniche.

As such, this ‘new phase’ of revivalism sees the idealised dream-worlds, dramas of ‘transformation’ and rhetorics of redemption constructed at the Aswan Meeting confronted with the disturbances and crisis/ breakthroughs and hybridisations which emerge as the scheme becomes increasingly exposed to the realities, vulnerabilities and complexities of the ‘real’ of Alexandria as an urbanised Third World city. It is also at this point that the General Organisation for the Alexandrian Library (GOAL) and the Bibliotheca’s construction site, emerge as the centre-points for these acts of operational translation and contestation.

To provide critical insight into this context in this chapter I place an emphasis upon interviews held with two key ‘actors’ involved in this particular phase of revivalism, and who, as Egyptian government/ GOAL and UNESCO counter-parts in the scheme, are capable of offering insights into this motif of ‘revivalism between worlds’. My discussions were with the Director of GOAL, Moshen Zahran, in Alexandria and with the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s Liaison Officer Richard Holmquist jr, at UNESCO’s Paris Head-Quarters. Not only do these interviews convey a sense of the project being held in tension between these, and other worldviews and cosmopolitan settings but also outline the complexities and nuances of the UNESCO/ GOAL partnership and power-sharing. This also allows me to explore in more detail the operational dynamics of a contemporary global heritage project.
It is important to state here that my repeated visits to the GOAL offices provided me with not only a number of interviews (both in terms of repeat interviews with Zahran and with other GOAL employees) but also provided a bench-mark in terms of the change and transformation of project vis-à-vis its various phases of construction. My numerous tours of the construction site, for example, drew out these dynamics at the level of the physical change to the landscape. My visits to UNESCO’s Paris Head-Quarters and attendance at UNESCO conferences in Mexico (2000) and Korea (2001) afforded me a particular purchase on these issues from the experiences and point of view of some of the chief international culture brokers of revivalism. The question raised is how revivalism is understood from the particular perspective and specific context of UNESCO?¹ Both the GOAL/ UNESCO visits also required the essential task of immersing myself in what Nirvana Tolk GOAL’s Promotion’s Officer referred to as ‘the celebratory propaganda of operational revivalism’ (Tolk:1/97) including its various official literatures and languages. By these means we can begin to gain a sense of what is best described as - ‘official’ revivalism’s account of itself.

SECTION ONE

THE GOAL VISION - ALEXANDRIA’S URBAN DRAMAS

In the Alexandrian context the official point of contact between the Aswan Meeting’s diplomatic ‘sacred dramas’ and the (seemingly) more ‘profane performances’ of the operational urban context is the GOAL offices. GOAL’s Project Manager and Director, Dr Moshen Zahran, held the position of representative of the official stakeholders in the Alexandrian context. My first appointment to see him came in January 1997 shortly after my meeting with Abaddi. Zahran, an Alexandrian and formerly a professor of Engineering at Alexandrina University, was one of the academics who gave his support to Abaddi when he first raised the idea of revivalism in 1970s. In contrast to Abaddi - whose gate-keepership of the Alexandrina and interventions into contemporary revivalism (even though directed towards ‘practical’ goals) took on intellectual and

¹ See also Appendix Three.
almost spiritual or metaphysical qualities - it was clear that Zahran’s role was defined more by his position as chief bureaucrat within the Alexandrian reviverist context. As such Zahran was specifically appointed by a Committee, made up of both UNESCO and Egyptian government representatives, in order to guide revivalism into its new operational phase and to oversee the management of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s construction site during the engineering and construction phase. The role and responsibilities of GOAL are very broadly outlined in the 1988 (Egyptian) Presidential Decree No. 532 as: ‘the implementation of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and its operation and continuity.’ In Zahran’s own words, GOAL’s task is, ‘to translate the initial ‘idea’ [of revivalism] into practice’ (see Appendix One).

My interviews and more informal conversations with Zahran took place in the GOAL offices that are located in Alexandria’s downtown area, near to both Alexandria University and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina construction site. The building is positioned towards the end of one of the city’s noisiest thorough-fares, Horreya Street, and near to a busy traffic island and adjacent to a group of public gardens (which at the time of my first visit looked rather dishevelled). This is a wealthy area in local terms and the office complex within which GOAL is housed contains the head-quarters of a number of notable national and international banks and finance companies. The interior spaces of the GOAL offices are in striking contrast to the urban sprawl of the surrounding streets and boast plush office furniture and an array of new technologies: including computers, faxes, telephones, air-conditioning; these are objects rarely seen in other Egyptian locations and emerge in stark contrast to the majority of institutions – particularly state-owned agencies - I was to visit in Egypt. From a local perspective what might be dubbed as GOAL’s more ‘Westernised’ format endows the institution with a certain quality of ‘foreignness’ and ‘future-shock.’

A model of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina housed in perspex is dramatically positioned in the focal point of the GOAL entrance and as such dominates the scene. This model made in the futuristic design of the Snohetta architectural team (see fig. 8), is accompanied by a mini-exhibition in the form of a series of images of the Alexandrina that comprise of both
Fig. 8. Snohetta Model of Bibliotheca Alexandrina (source UNESCO 1990: 3)

Fig. 9. Detail of exterior wall with 'universal' scripts (source UNESCO 1990: 3)
photographs of the construction site and more full-colour images of the Snohetta design on a black background which together make a striking visual impact. Both GOAL and UNESCO logos and posters were plentiful too. A sense of the contemporary scheme as a Grand Design is evoked here, as is a certain sense of the rootedness, repetition, aspiration and future vision bound up in its re-emergence. The model and the accompanying images within the GOAL offices also offer an interesting echo (inversion? reworking?) of Abaddi’s account of the Librarian of Congresses’ attempts to locate an image of the ancient Alexandrina so that a model could stand at the entrance of the Library of Congress.

In this sense the ‘old’ museological/archival investment in the ancient Alexandrina - of which, as Abaddi stated no ‘image survives’ (Abaddi: 1/97) - as ancestor-template and ‘Platonic ideal’ has been recuperated or rehoused within the new architectural form which effectively objectifies the image of the Phoenix-institution’s future resurrection. As such, it also provides revivalism with a symbolic model of a ‘Platonic Bibliotheca Alexandrina.’ Thus by these gestures, links between ancient and the modern Alexandrinas are established and re-worked which enable GOAL to authenticate its own position as the broker of this ‘new’ expression of the ‘old’ drama of recovery and revival. This was also my introduction to a host of official revivalist ‘icons and images’ (and also literatures) which were to accompany the bureaucratisation of the scheme and its physical emergence.

**- Bureaucrats as Operational ‘Brokers’**

My interview with Zahran (1/97) took place in one of the GOAL plush meeting rooms where his account of revivalism took on both this utopian quality while drawing out some of the ‘challenges’ (as he put it) of the local context. Zahran has been characterised in the press as both ‘jovial’ and ‘ebullient’ (which sums up his enthusiastic and animated demeanour during our encounters) and, for some, a ‘tough political infighter’ and ‘apparatchik’ (see Stille 2001:12). He was also dubbed by one informant as ‘Mr Metaphor’, a reference to Zahran’s repeated use of analogy and metaphor to put his
account of revivalism across. This sense of the crossings-over between the metaphorical and the real was conveyed in Zahran’s initial description of the Bibliotheca’s design that provided the starting point for our discussions. It also conveyed the sense of the building as an extension or objectification of the cosmopolitical rhetorics which the Aswan Meeting gave (re-)birth to and which the architect’s ‘gloss’ underline. As Zahran, borrowing heavily on the latter’s ‘gloss’ stated, in interview:

‘An amazing, truly inspirational building is being constructed which will be a beacon of hope to all the world and to future generations. It will speak an international language by fusing together Egyptian motifs with those of universal culture; ancient symbols with those of modern worlds and even futuristic designs. The central form is an Egyptian sun and moon disc, the roof structure of the library is constructed to look like a microchip, while the exterior walls are decorated with the scripts and alphabets of every language and are ridged to give a sense of the ‘layers of time’ [see fig. 9]. Inside - we have revived the main aspects of the ancient institution. We shall have a wonderful library space of both ‘real’ and ‘digital’ texts. We shall have museum spaces [museums of science, calligraphy and archaeology], restoration laboratories, a planetarium and, to honor our ancestors, we have the ‘Ptolemaic Space’ where we shall display busts of the scholars of the ancient Alexandrina’.

Zahran explained how this design was the outcome of ‘an international competition organised with UNESCO’s help’ emphasising how, ‘the Norwegian architects Snohetta were chosen out of over 1,4000 entries from more than 77 countries’. This revival of ‘ancient symbols’ in ‘modern worlds’ as a means to articulate future visions was pursued further by Zahran to narrate the various stages of its development/homecoming: for example, not only did he reiterate the key ‘foundational events’ (see Appendix One) but emphasised how; ‘UNESCO and the Egyptian government were convinced by the project and realised that no less than like the Pharos, the Alexandrina will be a beacon of light illuminating Egypt’s way forward into the twenty-first century’. He also communicated a consciousness of the Bibliotheca as a future force of urban regeneration and a centre-point for the wider transformation of the city by arguing: ‘The project will change the
whole face of Alexandria. It will bring about a ‘new renaissance’ within the city. As Egypt turns into the seventh millennium Alexandria will centre itself as a glorious city’. Buoyed up by what he dubbed as the project’s ‘millennial spirit’, he moved on to define GOAL’s role and position within this Grand Narrative of urban redemption.

Turning to outline his own more ‘temporal’ duties and responsibilities in terms of putting this vision into action, Zahran drew out three key aspects of his role as GOAL Director. Here he explained how, the first, writ large, was that of, ‘taking overall responsibility to make sure that the library is constructed’. Here, he emphasised that this act of material construction brought with it a, ‘complex process of bureaucratisation.’ This brought him to describe his second key role; that of co-ordinating domestic bureaucratic networks and to make these compatible with UNESCO’s own mission. Most prestigiously of all within this bureaucratic brief Zahran was charged with making sure the International Executive Secretariat located in Egypt runs efficiently (see Appendix One). This Secretariat, as Zahran detailed, is made up of politicians and diplomats and met in the presence of UNESCO observers. Its duties are to oversee GOAL’s work and thus required Zahran to submit reports on all aspects of the progress of the scheme’s construction. Zahran’s final key role was detailed by him as, ‘building up the book collection for the Alexandrina’s ‘universal library’; he explained how: ‘We aim to have 500 000 when it opens’.

It was clear from Zahran’s commentary that he saw himself and ‘his’ organisation (very clearly Zahran’s personality is stamped on GOAL) as occupying a liminal position within these various internal/external ‘landscapes’ of revivalism. At times he pitched his role as that of a figure moving between worlds: not only North and South (chiefly in terms of maintaining effective links with UNESCO) but increasingly in terms of Cairo and Alexandria. Zahran’s appointment saw a shift in the power, control and management of the project as the scheme, in its early stages, was largely authored from within Caireen bureaucratic and ministerial worlds. Through its various inscriptions the scheme was located within the Ministry of Education with the ultimate responsibility for the project residing with the President, Hosni Mubarak. This presidential patronage of the project that had been dramatised via the speeches and spectacles of the Aswan Meeting, put into
play a force of ‘Egyptianisation’ and ‘Cairo-isation’ which were to continue to define the operational context of the project. As a consequence, the control and focus of the project dramatically altered and thus saw the intellectual force of ‘Alexandrianisation’ initiated by Abbadi and its concern for the local take second place (initially at least) to this new power shift. As such Alexandria and its local context were still described in largely metaphorical languages and with reference to the city’s ‘glorious ancient past’ as Zahran had it, even though all responsibility for the project had shifted elsewhere.

- ‘Official’ Cosmopolitics

A first glimpse into the strategic alignment of these complex worlds emerged with Zahran’s own use of the ‘cosmopolitan card.’ Thus with further echoes of both the ‘old’ museologies and the Aswan Meeting’s ‘script’, Zahran incorporated the cosmopolitics of a reinvigorated revivalism with a return to the epic narrative motifs of the ‘destiny of man’ and the ‘predestined’ nature of the city. A certain redemptive quality also emerged in statements such as his references to: ‘The monumental effects of the Alexandrina on the world ... Its roots and roads are the beginnings of civilization and the beginnings of cosmopolitan contacts between nations in the north and south ... The Mediterranean will have its rebirth and the Alexandrina will be its nodal point. In reviving the Alexandria, UNESCO in partnership with GOAL are reviving this role and will give back to Alexandria her former glory’.

He also adds that, ‘While the whole world will benefit from this glorious enterprise Alexandria and the Alexandrians will be the biggest beneficiaries’. Beneath the more idealising rhetoric, however, Zahran did identify potential obstacles in terms of the project’s capacity to embed itself and its ‘official’ cosmopolitics at the local level. Echoing Abaddi’s earlier comments Zahran made it clear that apart from ‘an educated minority’ in Alexandria there was ‘little education there about Alexandria’s golden-age.’ He added ‘you cannot ask people to be committed to something that they do not know enough about. This is not by intention, as I say, but due to a lack of information and education’. Zahran subsequently chose to cast such negativity within a more positive
vision of the new institution’s ‘challenge’ to ‘educate the Egyptian people in their glorious past’ and to nurture and mediate popular re-attachments. At this early stage in revivalism it was clear that the key focus of GOAL – and thus of Zahran’s account of context – was upon the construction phase. It was also clear that there was little specific information regarding strategies to be put in place regarding access and education. A big emphasis was, however, placed on the future role and support of the Bibliotheca’s International Friends Groups in terms of not only giving profile to the scheme globally but also financial donations and help in terms of donations of books and also technical, expert assistance where required (see Appendix One).

With respect to the local Alexandrian context Zahran preferred to stress what he anticipated to be ‘the positive forces of change’ which he argued accompanied the ‘wider dynamics of revivalism.’ Here, for example, he referred with great enthusiasm to the underwater excavations and drew out their intimacy with the Bibliotheca scheme, ‘It was by the Grace of God that these things happened together. They were not planned like this. We do know, however, that they will help support each other’. During successive fieldwork visits and discussions with Zahran it was clear that not only archaeological revivalism but also a concomitant force of urban revivalism authored primarily by the Alexandria Governorate was making its mark on the city and on the Bibliotheca’s own development. In a later interview, for example, Zahran referred to his desire to create ‘deeper links with the Governorate’, thereby adding, ‘the new Governor [Mahgoub, who began his term in July 1997] is a supporter and he and the minister are on one of our key committees and he has a speciality for art, archaeology and is committed to the revivalism of the city. We hope, God willing, to make more and more links with the governorate’ (Zahran: 8/99).

- Revivalism’s Take-Off

Zahran, in my interview with him in 1999, stressed that attention was increasingly being focused upon the relationship between the dynamic of revivalism and issues of civic pride and social change. In many senses this can be seen as a return to the enduring ‘old/
'new' museological motif of cultural revivalism creating good citizens. It was also a shift which took him to articulate a whole range of more modern metaphors of 'movement' and 'take-off' as a means to convey the 'psychological' affects (in an interesting echo of Bazin (1967) of revivalism on the contemporary city: he argued;

'The Bibliotheca will soon emerge as a splendid monument along the Corniche and will guide the city towards its future. There are suggestions too that UNESCO may be involved in a scheme to build a huge underwater museum near Qait Bey Citadel². It is wonderful that all these things are coming together, planned or not planned. The end is change and change is a wonderful booster for people's morale. Revivalism has an emotional and intellectual aspect to it and it is already making people aware that something is happening and they are beginning to tell themselves, "I must not get left behind. The train is moving how can I miss it?" This kind of attitude is worth the world. It is worth millions! Change is the best kind of investment you can make because it means you are investing in changing people's behaviour and attitude. The physical reality of the positive changes occurring within the city are beginning to have these effects.'

Zahran pursued his interest in harnessing the 'spirit of revivalism' to create 'social change' and further 'civic pride'. He went on to detail how, 'Social change has a most valuable element and you cannot put a dollar sign to it! You can have a depressed population that you can get nothing out of or people who are optimistic, visionary and forward looking; these are the ones that build the future. We are beginning to see how revivalism is allowing people to change themselves, to change their vision of the city and to change their behaviour to fellow citizens'. Interestingly, by echoing Hosni Mubarak's words at Aswan, Zahran pursued the theme or metaphor of the Bibliotheca as the 'food' or 'sustenance' for the 'mind and spirit of the people'. He also emphasised that, 'Whatever comes from above, people usually resist but what comes from within changes their attitude, their outlook and their behaviour'. His final triumphant gesture regarding the claim that the Bibliotheca Alexandrina would soon embed itself in contemporary

² This project is a key feature of Chapter Six.
Alexandria saw Zahran quote what he referred to as ‘Winston Churchill’s dictum’ that “We shape buildings and afterwards they shape us.”

SECTION TWO

CONSTRUCTION SITE ‘ON THE RUINS’ –
THE ALEXANDRINA’S ‘MATERIALISATION’

After my first interview with Zahran I was able to speak with other GOAL employees, and, accompanied by Nirvana Tolk, GOAL’s Promotion’s Officer, visit the Bibliotheca’s construction site and to meet Mohammed El Qot, the Site Manager. Here the project of homecoming and the old museological motif of building the Alexandria Mouseion/Library ‘on the ruins’ took their literal expressions. The site, adjacent to Alexandria University and located (like Abaddi’s study-library) within the broad area of Alexandria’s ancient royal quarter, is referred to in GOAL publicity material as being ‘in the same vicinity where the ancient ancestor of the institution once stood’ (GOAL 1990: 9). My first guided tour of the space began with the site offices (a series of port-a-cabins which lined one side of the site) within which a display of engineering and architectural plans outlined the various phases of the scheme. Once outside El Qot was able to move around the various parts of the foundational structures using these as prompts to explain the main features of the completed building to me. During the time of my visit a perfect circle had been cut deep into the earth which marked out the massive area of the Alexandrina’s main structure (see fig. 10).

If the Aswan Meeting constructed the Bibliotheca as a diplomatic object and Zahran’s interview re-framed it as a bureaucratic object, then El Qot’s commentary gave great depth to the Alexandrina as technological object and as bound up in an engineering operation of epic proportions (El Qot: 1/97). Here he outlined a certain cosmopolitan quality to the construction process by outlining the involvement of Egyptian construction firms such as the Arab Contractors and foreign companies, for example, from Italy and the British owned Balfour Beatty. Also included were specialists such as marbling.
Fig. 10. Early construction phase – preparing the foundations at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina site (photo: B. Butler)

Fig. 11. Later construction phase – Mohammed El Qot directing work on exterior roof of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (photo: B. Butler)
experts brought in from Turkey. One particularly interesting link between old and new Alexandrinas was the team of engineers’ determination to use preventative measures against the key forces that are said to have destroyed the ancient institution. El Qot, for example, commented how, ‘Because of the history of the destruction of the ancient library people always ask if the building is strong enough,’ adding, ‘In technical terms the building is designed to be indestructable’.

He subsequently detailed how, ‘We have included elaborate fire-extinguishing systems. We tell this to people who are concerned that the building could be burnt down like those who think this happened to the old Bibliotheca. Some of them are very concerned about this! We also have our own generators here so should the power fail in the rest of the city the Bibliotheca would not be effected and keep going as normal’. This characterisation of the Alexandrina as a technological object imbued with qualities of invincibility and as privileged within a more fallible contemporary city, took on more weight when El Qot commented, ‘We also tell them how our team of designers have created a structure which is totally earthquake proof and would survive any act of destruction even if the rest of the city turned to rubble.’

In a second interview with El Qot undertaken in 1999 he communicated a more positive sense of how the scheme was beginning to have an impact upon the wider landscape of Alexandria (see fig. 11). Like Zahran he drew attention to the support of Alexandria’s governor and to the importance of the archaeological excavations: ‘It is as if Alexandria has been asleep for many years and now with this project and with the divers retrieving projects from the Eastern harbour, it is being brought back to life. We have a good governor now who will build on these elements’ (El Qot: 9/99). El Qot also drew out a different expression of the schemes internationalism which he acquired from his contact with the diplomats and ‘Friends’ groups who make visits to the site: ‘We are very pleased with the tremendous international support for the scheme. People are very moved when we show them around the site. The Bibliotheca has a very big, powerful history – it is a romantic idea too. People are amazed when they see that we are giving life to this project too. Of course we would like to see the project light-up the whole city.’ These motifs of
revivalism as life-giving and as bound up in wider aspirations to harness it as a force for positive change, in both ‘literal’ and ‘psychological’ terms, was a recurrent theme.

- ‘Celebratory Propaganda’ - Icons and Images

During my first tour of the site I was also able to seize the opportunity to interview Tolk and to find out more about what by now amounted to an ‘official canon’ of revivalist ‘icons and images’, which were described as integral to GOAL’s and to what she dubbed as the organisation’s ‘celebratory propaganda’ (Tolk: 1/97). Once again, as in Abaddi’s usage, ‘propaganda’ is employed to convey promotional purpose. She commented, ‘GOAL’s promotions department promotes the project to the public. We also have many distinguished visitors come here and representatives from the International Friends Groups, many are foreign: we tell them about the Bibliotheca Alexandrina scheme and give them a tour of a site’. Tolk spoke, with great enthusiasm, of the dynamics by which GOAL’s publicity department put this ‘whole range’ of official reviverist literatures and images into circulation in order to accompany the scheme’s bureaucratisation and its physical emergence. She illustrated, for example, how this process is one in which significant and strategic appeals to the ancient Alexandrina’s ‘myth/history’ as a resource for ‘both marketing and other aspects of publicity and promotion.’ Tolk explained how in terms of the ‘a whole range of [historical] information’ emerging from ‘seminars and conferences’ held at Alexandria University and in Paris and Cairo (see Appendix One) has been incorporated into GOAL’s ‘leaflets, brochures, newsletters’ and also into electronic, digital worlds via its ‘web-site’ (http://www.bibalex.gov.eg).

Tolk also underlined how a number of ‘icons and images’ that were initially put into play within revivalism’s diplomatic worlds are becoming increasingly mobilised for more popular, international distribution. Here Tolk comments:

‘We have a number of publicity and promotion literature in which we tell people about the project and its aims. We have very few images of the ancient city and as you know we have no images of the ancient Alexandrina itself, although the department is always
asked for one by journalists and reporters. We do use symbols like that of the [Pharos] lighthouse – which is also the image used by the University – it is a very powerful image and appears on a number of posters. We were of course pleased when the architects design was accepted. This gave the project and everyone else a visual focus just at the time when we knew more people would be interested in finding out more about the project. We can now show these people to a new design’.

The ‘celebratory’ style of the written texts which accompany these ‘icons and images’ are illustrative of more contemporary repetitions of ‘old’ museological motifs, a dynamic which has become more explicitly idealised and essentialised within the scheme as revivalism gathered pace. In the course of the interview Tolk was happy to discuss with me what she couches as ‘new elements’ to promotions (here, for example, she included the web-site) and that which, was ‘typically Egyptian’ and, as such, regarded by her as more traditional. Writ large Tolk, stated how the notion of ‘promotions and publicity’ is ‘new to many people in Egypt and is better known to the Western world’ adding, ‘Here in Egypt there is not so much concern to advertise as there is in Europe and the US. But Egypt is beginning to turn to this way of thinking’. Expressing her enthusiasm, she made clear that her job was part of such change. In discussing the ‘typically Egyptian’ elements to the Bibliotheca’s promotions she highlighted the central role of the Presidency in official literature and publicity. Tolk was concerned to point out how the, ‘Egyptian’s are proud of their President and the projects he heads. Egyptians are very nationalistic too and are eager to show the world what they are capable of.’

Examples of how the project has afforded both Hosni and Suzanne Mubarak a ‘good image’ can be found in both GOAL Newsletters and on the web-site.3 The former, for example, begins with a general synopsis of the President and First Lady’s CV, achievements and activities, before reminding the reader of their wider patronage of the

3 As is discussed in the next section one of the main features of the Alexandrina’s digital library is that of its project to make available on line a record of all websites globally with the objective of also making available the ‘historical’ memory of these sites in terms of giving access to previous versions of their text and images. Currently this project offers access to the historical memory of specific web-sites over a six year period (see http://www.archivebibalex.org).
project (see GOAL 1996). The web-site also provided its own images and visual record of the project’s ‘Egyptianisation’. During the Alexandrina’s construction phases the site, which is sponsored by the Egyptian government, opened up a ‘home-page’ which shows an Egyptian flag (electronically) waving and offers the user a link to an image of the President’s office, none of which appears on the UNESCO Bibliotheca Alexandrina mirror-site that instead opens-up to its own logo/ ‘home-page’ (see http://www.unesco.org). Both web-sites gave a percentage guide to how much of the building had been constructed at the particular moment of logging-on.

SECTION THREE

REVIVALISM'S OFFICIAL MEMORY-WORK

My interest in pursuing the connections between this ‘celebratory propaganda’ and GOAL’s mobilisation of Alexandria’s myth/history took me back to the GOAL offices in Horreya Street to meet another employee, Omneya Fathallah. My various meetings with Fathallah were highly significant in that she gave a keen sense of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s potency as an archival space and as a powerful resource for memory-work. Not only is it Fathallah’s job to collate information on the ancient Alexandrina but her work is closely related to UNESCO’s Memory of the World programme which was to emerge as increasingly important within my research. She explained: ‘We are a ‘home’ for the Memory of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina [MBA] which is part of a wider UNESCO Memory of the World programme [MOW]. The objective of the wider scheme is to protect the world’s archival heritage and to preserve this via the use of multi-media. The MBA has two objectives. The first is to collect together all the information we can on the history of the ancient old Alexandrina, and the second, is to simultaneously document everything we have concerning the new Alexandrina’ (Fathallah: 5/00).4

4 I met Fathallah initially in January 1997. The following text is based on a more detailed interview made in May 2000.
Providing more detail Fathallah adds: ‘The MOW [see also Appendix Four] is concerned with preserving archives and papers that are under threat from destruction of some kind and mainly concerned with providing the end product of a CD-ROM. It is part of UNESCO’s new interest in saving intangible heritage. Of course the heritage of the ancient library is already gone in the sense that we don’t have anything monumental or physical to relate it to. What we can and are doing, however, is to preserve the ideas and the historical information about it’. Crucially here too she states how: ‘At the same time we have committed ourselves to collecting material relating to the contemporary project as it is being built’. Interestingly Fathallah’s comments give depth to Zahran’s own references to the programme: he states; ‘Nobody left us a great deal about the memory of the old Library but with the MBA we can ensure that a record will be kept of this glorious institution. This will be our message to the coming generation!’ (Zahran: 8/99). Both Zahran and Fathallah thus communicated how, from this early stage in revivalism and during its physical construction stages, a consciousness existed in terms of the Bibliotheca’s potential as an archive in which, not only ‘real’ and digital texts could be housed and accessed but historical and contemporary information – and, crucially too, ‘new’ knowledge - relating to the Alexandrina could be at the heart of this schema.

Of the former historical information Fathallah explains, ‘We have done experimental work for UNESCO’s MOW programme concerning both the old and the new Alexandrias. I was responsible for the ancient part and I constructed it on the web in terms of laying out the historical background and key events and then combined this with a biographical section regarding the librarians, philosophers, scientists, poets and the other great thinkers who dwelt in the ancient library. There is also a section dedicated to myths and rumours of the destruction of the ancient library. It is very basic but we plan to develop it in many exciting ways’ (Fathallah: 5/00). Interestingly Fathallah commented how, ‘In collecting resources relating to the ancient library we looked to many potential archival sources. We did, however, use one book printed specifically for the revival project by UNESCO and written by Mostafa El-Abaddi [1990]’. This new technological return to the key text penned by the ancient Alexandrina’s gate-keeper, Abaddi, and his continued links with the Bibliotheca were pursued further by Fathallah:
'El-Abaddi, was my professor at Alexandria University. I am very fortunate to be able to combine my degree in Greco-Roman Studies with my training in new technology and archival work. El-Abaddi's book provides the main content of the ancient memory and we relate some other biographical details from dictionaries and studies. We have to be careful not to violate any copy-write rules when making digital projects and when trying to convert material texts into digital material. I was in contact with Professor Abaddi and he is one of our consultants for different issues: so he was with us, advising us and verifying that we are in the right direction'.

Turning to what she dubbed as the 'modern aspect' of the scheme she stated how: 'A colleague has been given the responsibility of collecting information relating to the modern revival of the Alexandrina. We are building up a collection of photographs, samples and specimens of materials used in construction. We also have video-tapes of the development of the building and its construction work. We film aspects of the construction every three months for this very purpose. We also have over forty-five thousand drawings and plans.'

This perhaps defines a new and potentially narcissistic trajectory of the contemporary revivalist scheme. It also illustrates how this 'archive', like its ancient ancestor is preoccupied by entropy and loss and as such is bound up in preventative strategies against the future impoverishment of the institution. The Bibliotheca in this sense can be seen to bring together traditional archival strategies of collecting, preservation and documentation with that of contemporary collecting strategies. Moreover, these elements are, in turn, bound up in the subsequent re-presentation of this material via new technologies. In terms of the latter dynamic Fathallah commented: 'We have residential consultants both Egyptian and international experts who come to visit us in preparation for the opening of the library. The international consultants come for temporary visits and stay on either long or short visits. The emphasis is upon training in I.T. The French consultants, in particular, have given us a lot of help. They give us training and talks and
participate in the work. They help us set up projects in the library that we can build upon later. So we benefit from this kind of support.

A certain dynamic emerged here in terms of empathy and identification this time being made between the MBA and the ancient Alexandrina in terms of what might best be described as the ‘cosmopolitics of communication’ As Fathallah states; ‘We wanted to keep in mind the harmony between the multi-media collection we built and the technical aspect. Although at this stage we have had to keep the content very concise we would like to revive the ancient aspect of the Alexandrina as dialogue and as the ‘meeting place of cultures’ and expand this to bring in discussion groups on-line and to have all these debates together. We have plans to make the memory site of Alexandria very interactive, a living site rather than just a site that gives short and one-sided information’. She emphasises how, ‘Middle Eastern countries are especially eager to explore the use of new technology as new forms of communication’.

A further influence is also acknowledged here: ‘As this is a UNESCO-supported project we are committed to making sure the project is of ‘world’ or ‘universal’ value and interest. We are excited about the potential for using I.T. to bring this dimension to the wider revival programme’. It was here too that new realities were brought to the more conceptual/ aspirational claims of critics and theorists who, writ larger still, have positioned the ancient Alexandrina as a point of ‘origin’ and a ‘founding model’ for new archival ‘memory spaces’ based upon ‘digital recordings, Internet, databases and CD-ROMs’ (Jacob and Polignac 2000:18) and as underpinned by the new technological, digital revivals and globalisations of the Alexandrina’s ‘cosmopolitan ethos’ and of its project to accumulate ‘encyclopaedic, universal knowledge (Diaz 1998: 439)’. This is perhaps more keenly communicated in Fathallah’s reference to a (then embryonic scheme) to centre within the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s digital library a new universalising project to digitally catalogue all the texts in the contemporary world and also to make available on-line a record of all websites globally with the objective of also

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5 Diaz’s critique makes specific reference to UNESCO’s Memory of the World scheme within this vision too (Diaz 1998).
making available the ‘historical’ memory of theses sites in terms of giving access to previous versions of their text and images (see Appendix One).

Interestingly too, in a final gesture made by Fathallah, certain links are drawn out between the Alexandrina’s ancient and modern tangible and intangible heritages. These found two important expressions. The first, concerns the ‘future links’ being made between the MBA and the other key element of the contemporary Bibliotheca Alexandrina: – the museum spaces. As such Fathallah picked up on links between her ‘excavations’ of the Alexandrina’s myth/ history and its mechanisms of electronic retrievalism and the more material recoveries being planned for the institution’s Ptolemaic Hall. This exhibition space is, she details, ‘is to be dedicated to displaying the busts of the founding fathers of the ancient Mouseion and is another way to remember the historical connections’ (Fathallah: 5/00). At the time of my visit, plans were underway to try to locate a bust of Hypatia to take her place among the line of patriarchs and also for the Muses to be reinstalled in sculptural form.

The second expression of contemporary efforts to preserve aspects of the ancient Alexandrina’s material-memory concerns the inclusion of archaeological artefacts found at the site whilst the foundations were being dug. These, in turn, have provided the starting point for the Alexandrina’s Archaeological Museum. Of the latter initiative Fathallah states, ‘Not only do we have the physical objects but the excavations will be featured on our web-site. I did most of the html coding and most of the digitising of the project, specifically for the archaeological images of pieces found at the site. Hopefully in the future we can incorporate images of the other archaeological artefacts which divers have found underwater’. She also linked this archival vision to the future aspirations of revivalism in its ‘wider sense’ adding, ‘it is getting clearer with the underwater and land excavations that impressive monuments have been found and with the Library too which will itself be a big, impressive international building and centre-point for the city that these things will become the reason for bringing a sense of achievement and renewal to Alexandria’.
The emergence of a powerful vision of change and regeneration can be extracted from this particular group of interviews held at GOAL’s headquarters and at the construction site of the Bibliotheca. Aspirations are also expressed in terms of centring the new Alexandrina project as the organising motif around which both archaeological revivalism (and its own associated ‘icons’, notably, Pharos and ‘Cleopatra’s’ palace site) and the Governorate’s interventions in ‘urban’ revivalism can be framed and find coherence. Furthermore, this vision is underpinned by a growing sense of the potency of the Bibliotheca as an experimental archive, - both within which and from which -, tangible and intangible heritages, digital and more traditional technologies, can be mobilised in order to document, preserve and also give new life to ancient and modern worlds as the city undergoes greater transformation and metamorphosis.

The scale of vision and of operational transformations that GOAL/UNESCO set in play in their attempts to revive and recuperate the Alexandrina as a specific ‘lost’ icon of the city’s ancient past also reinstates the ‘dream’ of Alexandria as a ‘museum-town’ and also as the ‘memory of the world’. As such modern Alexandria in operational terms is acting as Muse for a whole set of objectives and agendas, both psychological and material, within the contemporary city and responding to a ‘disturbance of memory’ provoked by the different tributaries of revivalism itself. The massive challenge in terms of turning this into dream of homecoming into a workable reality, however, is perhaps best communicated in a brief return to my discussions with Zahran.

During the course of our first interview, Zahran had attempted to close the window of the GOAL meeting room in order to block out the noise of the traffic that had threatened at that point to interrupt our interview. In doing this he looked out onto the vision of the congested, urban city and commented how, ‘The city lacks civic pride and has suffered in the past from benign neglect. Most people, particularly foreigners, comment on the dirty streets, the broken curbs and the beggars asking for food and money’. He did, however, swiftly recast this initial vision of GOAL’s immediate surroundings in a more positive
light. Accessing some historical depth, and drawing upon the area’s more glorious ancient past he outlined with some pride how, ‘Horreya street is a remnant of the Hellenistic city, it is a survival of the ancient planning system put in place by the Ptolemies,’ adding, ‘Alexandrina’s Golden age is still hidden but with the contemporary revival scheme it will be reborn’ (Zahran: 1/97).

The image of the GOAL offices built on top of the city’s ‘hidden’ heritage is a particularly potent one and echoes Abaddi’s earlier references to his study-library sitting on top of ancient Mouseion-Library. Just as the Ptolemies’ ancient routes and roads are now pressed into the service of the contemporary city’s urban sprawl, these visions of the Alexandria’s ancient ancestry were quickly lost to the activity of the modern city. Modern Alexandria’s apparent ambivalence towards the city’s ancient ‘Golden-age,’ is a dynamic which is indicative not only of the high aspirations but also the challenges and real obstacles to be confronted in the contemporary revivalist context.
SECTION FOUR

THE UNESCO VISION: ‘GRAND DESIGNS’

The [UNESCO] building itself is worth more than a simple mention. It is a sort of Coventry Cathedral among UN Buildings, the one to whose public areas all the continents of the world contributed some of their best-regarded artistry. All these parts are making one great assertion, in addition to the national pride each expresses: that the nations of the world come together in homage to the idea of intellectual and artistic excellence... [The] building and its immediate associates which deservedly have a page to themselves in the Michelin guide to Paris and which to bring the tourist groups – to see Nervi’s soaring main conference hall or the building just outside it which is wholly submerged but light, since it makes inverted use of the principle of the medieval cloister and receives its light from a great sunken inner quadrangle open to the sky.

(Hoggart 1978: 17-18)

... Kant’s writings [on the ‘cosmopolitical’] can be described as announcing, that is to say, predicting, prefiguring, and prescribing a certain number of international institutions that only came into being in this century, for the most part after the Second World War. These institutions are already philosophemes, as is the idea of international law or rights that they attempt to put into operation. They are philosophical acts and archives, philosophical productions and products, not only because the concepts which legitimate them have an assignable philosophical history and therefore a philosophical history which is inscribed in UNESCO’s charter or constitution; but because by the same token and for that very reason, such institutions imply the sharing of a culture and a philosophical language.

(Derrida 2002b: 3)

In direct comparison to GOAL’s immediate surroundings, and to Alexandria’s still emergent, and as such largely hidden heritage, my visits to UNESCO’s Paris Head-Quarters took me on a journey which boasts a wealth of famous – if not iconic - heritage landscapes. These include, most notably, the Eiffel tower (see fig. 12). It is of note too that guidebooks not only refer to the surrounding heritage icons in their commentaries but have included UNESCO itself in this category (Hoggart 1978:18). Here, my journey took me on a route to UNESCO’s main Fontenboy building, built in 1958 by Nervi in
Fig. 12. UNESCO Paris Head-Quarters with view of Eiffel Tower (photo: B. Butler)
modernist architectural style. Though now somewhat jaded, the building, and more particularly the serried rows of flags of UNESCO state-party members displayed alongside its entrance hall, brings to Paris and its environs overt signs of UNESCO’s wider global framings and communicates a sense of what Derrida articulates as UNESCO’s ‘cosmopolitical’ mission and philosophical foundations (Derrida 2003b: 3). This display is given a unity via a backdrop of a ‘one world’ themed art-work which captures and expresses the bold aspirations of United Nations culture. This shift of contexts also gives resonance to Holmquist’s comment (earlier quoted) by conveying in quite acute terms this sense of the project between ‘first’ and ‘third’ worlds and showed that he and his UNESCO colleagues looked out onto very different landscapes.

My first appointment took me to the Unit for Special Projects, Communication, Information and Informatics to meet with the two UNESCO employees most directly involved in Bibliotheca project. These are Richard Holmquist jr. the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s Liaison Officer and Aziz Abid who was UNESCO’s key contact in the scheme prior to Holmquist. Abid remains connected to the project through his new role as co-ordinator of Memory of the World programme, a factor which was explored in interview. Holmquist and Abid’s offices are located in the UNESCO annex which boasts the same functionalist identity as the main site: interviews with these informants are not only crucial to understand UNESCO’s purchase on the Alexandrina project but are useful in terms of offering differently nuanced accounts of the project within UNESCO itself. Holmquist’s more formal narrative concentrates on UNESCO’s role in terms of its diplomatic inscription and its bureaucratic links with GOAL throughout the construction phase (Holmquist: 3/00). By way of contrast, Abid’s interview provides a wider framing that includes both a critical account pre-project anxieties and what he termed as its ‘meltdown into the environment’ (Abid: 3/00).

My meeting with Holmquist took place in an office which boasted a stunning view of the Eiffel Tower, the interior spaces of which were dominated by another (now) familiar icon: that of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina; a reproduction of the Snohetta architectural design on a black background hung above Holmquist’s desk (fig. 13). This latter
Fig. 13. Snohetta Model of Bibliotheca on black background as seen in GOAL Alexandria and UNESCO Paris Offices (source: UNESCO 1990: 3)
image provided both a link with the GOAL offices and provided another starting point for discussion: this time of Holmquist’s role as the scheme’s Liaison Officer. Holmquist, who had worked at UNESCO’s-Paris offices for over ten years on various ‘special projects,’ explains, ‘Although I work on a number of projects at any one time, the Bibliotheca is my main project. I have worked on this for seven years; before then my colleague Aziz Abid handled the project.’ He was keen to stress that ‘UNESCO became involved in the project because the Egyptians of course asked us. We don’t initiate projects here at UNESCO. Egypt as one of our signatory member-states came to us with this project in order to acquire an international dimension’.

He emphasised how the Bibliotheca project is regarded by UNESCO as first and foremost, ‘an Egyptian project’ and an ‘Egyptian idea’, adding, ‘UNESCO’s role is that of pushing and promoting the project in the international arena. Perhaps UNESCO can best be described as acting as a catalyst in that we support the project in an international sense’. He re-iterated how, ‘we are not a directly interventionist organisation. If you read all the official statements on the UNESCO’s formal relationship with the Egyptian government this is carefully worded as a scheme ‘supported by’, ‘backed by’ or undertaken ‘in co-operation’ with UNESCO. This allows a project to secure an international framing while respecting nation-state sovereignty’.

Holmquist explained how the involvement of UNESCO with the project ‘took different emphases and different profiles during specific stages in revivalism’. At this point he mapped out the now familiar trajectory in terms of revivalism’s recent history before outlining UNESCO’s own specific role (see Appendix One). He emphasised, in particular, UNESCO’s initial ‘Appeal by the Director-General to the international community to support the scheme’ and UNESCO’s, ‘support of the International architectural competition’ of which he stated, ‘we have a truly impressive architectural design,’ pointing to the Snohetta image as he did so. Prompted by the fact that the competition was supported financially by the UNDP, he stated that, ‘UNESCO’s support of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina does not include direct funding of the project.’ Holmquist did, however, detail that, ‘we have a small regular programme budget for the Bibliotheca
Alexandria but UNESCO, as you know, is not a funding organisation. We do, however, support access to UNDP.’

He conveyed a sense of how significant the Bibliotheca scheme is from UNESCO’s perspective by echoing Mayor’s comments on the Alexandrina as a ‘Grand Design’ and further argued that; ‘The Alexandrina has a legendary reputation and therefore its revival has to match this. Now we have this spectacular building and are very excited about its development. We have always had good relations with Egypt. The Nubian Monuments were our first international campaign. The Alexandrina can be seen in the same light as a project of major significance to UNESCO.’ Holmquist was keen to elaborate further on what he described as the Alexandrina’s ‘international aura’ which he argues makes it a ‘perfect UNESCO project’. Again echoing many other informants he added, ‘The Bibliotheca project is a unique project for UNESCO: it is an Egyptian institution but it has an international aura. It already is attuned to the notions of ‘world heritage’ and that of ‘universal’ legacy. There are a lot of cultural projects and library projects but nothing quite like this. The idea is not just to create another big, huge library. It is to create something which is different in form, different in spirit and different in practice. The Bibliotheca is a unique cultural centre: there will be a series of museums, a planetarium, a conference centre, a school of information studies. It will be a creative space that will attract intellectuals and researchers’.

Digging deeper he details, ‘It is of course the Alexandrina’s ‘historical element’ that ‘set it apart from other schemes’. When asked if he had any concerns over the dominant Western purchase on this ‘historical element’ Holmquist replied, ‘There is a strong Western attachment, the institution has its historic base with Alexander the Great and it is remembered as the greatest library of the ancient world but this is a plus. It is such a romantic project that it is natural that people are drawn to it. This is something that made the project attractive – to the Western world - and now to the Egyptians’. Once again playing the ‘cosmopolitan card’ he argues, ‘The Alexandrina has always been deeply involved in both Western and Eastern worlds’, and added, ‘Just as it was once a bridge between the Hellenistic world and the Arabic world the new scheme will make its own
links between East and West. The fact that the Bibliotheca complex takes as its focus the Mediterranean world will enable it to anchor itself and make real impacts in terms of its position between worlds. He also referenced Iraq, Saudi Arabia and other ‘non-Western’ investments in the scheme as major indicator of the new cosmopolitical directions being pursued.

Holmquist raised the ‘cosmopolitan card’ when asked about the potential conflicts between the Alexandrina and the local Alexandrian context, ‘The Bibliotheca Alexandrina is certainly not a conflictual thing because it is a centre of learning and a place where people should mingle. It is an inter-cultural dialogue between the Mediterranean world and the Arab world. It has to be a two-way street’. Responding to questions concerning the popular/elite dynamics of the project, he, stated how, ‘Whether in the ancient world or in the modern world you always have the elites, the people who make up the intellectual group. Their ideas do filter down to the rest of the people – so that they can partake of it. This is what is important about the Alexandrina Library. It is a public research institution; therefore, it is not just for elites’. In similar fashion to Zahran, Holmquist chose to shift the focus back to the official, largely non-critical, celebratory narrative. Here he concentrated upon the dynamic of new technology as a specific redemptive cosmopolitical strategy: ‘Through the internet and the portals which will be in the Library the Alexandrina will be really open up to the world. This gives a whole new dynamic to the idea of dialogue between cultures. For example, anyone who is interested in Egyptian or Islamic studies can access this from anywhere in the world’.

Pressing the issue of local context and UNESCO’s own relationship with the contemporary city of Alexandria, Holmquist explained, ‘UNESCO of course is conscious that in different countries you have different sensitivities. To be in Egypt you have to be sensitive to those. Even in the West and in European countries you have to be aware of these. This can be overcome with understanding’. In response to my questions regarding pre-project research within the Alexandrian context, Holmquist stated how, ‘There is no
formal sensitisation scheme linked to this particular project. He did, however, suggest I speak with his college Abid regarding the schemes 'pre-project history and pre-project feasibility studies'. Holmquist, like Zahran, also highlighted the role of the International Friends Groups in acting as effective support networks within the global area. It was at this point too, however, that he momentarily stepped out of his celebratory narrative to concede that: 'Right at the beginning, of course, all we had is a hole in the ground. It was a time of anxiety for many people. Especially for those in Alexandria,' he continued, 'Some of the press picked up this. I have heard some criticisms voiced by the [international] media, but they had no substance to them. But this is to be expected, the Bibliotheque Nationale and the British Library have both undergone criticism. Now both are functioning well and people are starting to see how well they function and criticisms will die down'.

Holmquist ultimately shifted the focus of the conversation away from the 'time of anxiety' in order to retrieve a celebratory image of revivalism by adding further, 'Any anxieties were at the start of the process. Soon we will have a magnificent building, which will prove a great success'. Interestingly too, this depiction of the Bibliotheque from 'anxiety' to 'success' corresponded with Holmquist's own particular vision and experience of project, he explained, 'I visited Alexandria once, when building work had just started and when it was a hole in the ground', then adding, 'my next visit will coincide with the institution's official opening'. In an enthusiastic manner Holmquist gestured back to the Snohetta image hanging on the wall of his office, and pointing at this picture stated, 'It will look exactly like this.'

6 UNESCO's policy on National Sensitisation Campaigns are discussed in Appendix Three and Four the objective of which is to enable, 'the participation of the local protection of material and intangible heritage, in the roles of proprietors and guardians of their own heritage' (UNESCO: 1999:17).
Holmquist framed his own picture of revivalism as largely synonymous with the now familiar images of Bibliotheca Alexandrina, which hung on his office wall - and in the GOAL’s meeting rooms - and which, in turn, is inextricably bound up in the same symbolism and celebratory utopianism that emerged from the Aswan Meeting. At this juncture Holmquist offered little insight into the local context. In an office that boasted another stunning view of Eiffel Tower, my meeting with Holmquist’s colleague Abid, was, however, able to do just that. Abid’s participation in the Bibliotheca Alexandria project began before both Holmquist and Zahran’s own involvement and offered an alternative perspective on revivalism which was capable of dramatically transforming the dominant celebratory image by drawing out the more complex and contested aspects of the scheme’s origins and the initial responses it provoked in the local Alexandrian context (Abid: 3/00). Abid’s key contribution was his co-ordination of a pre-project UNESCO feasibility study visits which began in 1987 of which he stated:

'It was very clear that there are people who just don’t like the project. I went to Alexandria with groups of trained librarians: our first visit was really to explore whether the project was desirable or not to the Alexandrian people or whether it was just the West who had this interest. We had many different discussion groups, mostly based at the French Cultural Centre. We asked people such questions as: ‘what do you think about a big, big library in Alexandria where you would have all sorts of books?’ We stressed that it will also be a cultural centre and have exhibitions, museums and performances etc... We also spent our time just talking to people less formally, to students, teachers, anybody in Alexandria. We took publicity material with us, small brochures, which outlined the objectives of the project.'

7 With Abid’s support I attempted to locate this report which contains transcripts of discussion groups but was told that it was not available for consultation. As there is no official UNESCO ‘sensitisation’ programme (i.e. to both elicit local viewpoints and explicitly prepare local groups and include them in projects to embed the scheme within the local) these visits represent the only official UNESCO record of local, popular responses to the project.
Abid commented further how, ‘It was sometimes quite difficult to get discussions going.’ He did, however, single out a particular group who were, as he states, ‘prepared to talk with us ... these were students at Alexandria University.’ The University is, as previously stated, in the immediate vicinity of the scheme. The responses Abid received from this group of critics confronted him with what he referred to as, ‘An even more difficult situation.’ As Abid explains, ‘these and other people we spoke to kept saying to us that, “This is a luxury in both a city and a country which had more urgent needs”’. ‘They kept saying, “What we really need are books so that we can use these for our university courses, we don’t want to have a library which is full of international specialist collections which are only for international researchers”.’

These responses also illustrated how contemporary local anxieties surrounding the scheme drew upon the myth Histories of the ancient institution. By way of contrast to the ‘official’ celebratory characterisations discussed earlier, it was negative myth-historical associations that were revived and Abid stated how, ‘It was clear that many associated it [the Alexandrina scheme] with a Western phenomenon: a Greek past, a Christian past and therefore saw it as ‘imported’ or ‘foreign’. Those we spoke to repeated to us that “All this is Greek, all this is Christian etc.” This strong sense of “otherness” expressed by informants which pitches the ancient institution as an essentially “Western”/ “Christian” object is significant. It also sets in play a certain irony, in that historically, it was Christian forces that were most likely to be the authors of the destruction of the ancient institution; motivated by the wish to eradicate the Alexandrina as a centre of paganism. Interestingly, Abid stated that informants were, ‘particularly insistent and critical that above all, “It is not Islamic”, which concerned them very much’.

Abid reiterated that the most critical voices emerged from university students, adding, ‘This group was dominated mainly by women, who were very articulate, many were dressed in the Islamic veil which is very common in Egypt now. They were insistent that the scheme was very troubling to them.’ What Abid saw on the ground, illustrated the capacity of the scheme (even simply the idea of the scheme) to provoke anxieties and
fears, and even one might suggest, revive the historical vision of the ‘Clash of Civilisations’. He continued, ‘I was shaken by such strong negative reaction’ adding. ‘It is not for us [UNESCO] to impose anything especially if they [the local Alexandrians] don’t want it.’

Abid’s visits to Alexandria, however, also included meetings with Abaddi and his colleagues (senior academics) at the University and they were supported by other voices, notably those emerging from Alexandrian elites and intellectuals. Placing the former negative reactions alongside these elite opinions confirmed Abid in his belief that, ‘the different needs and different interests of the local Alexandrians could be met in the scheme,’ and ultimately that UNESCO could be the catalyst that supported the inclusion of ‘different interest groups.’ Abid concluded how, ‘We knew we could take on these local responses and we also made clear that the project is not a threat but could bring good, useful things and much, much more to the city.’

The next stage of the scheme’s development came with Abid filing his report to UNESCO’s then Director General Federico Mayor on his return to the Paris Head-Quarters. In this report Abid reiterated his findings, and while positive about the wider dynamics of the project and their ‘sympathy’ with ‘local concerns,’ he added, ‘I also stated that it was my impression that there are things that are much more urgent to do in Egypt and that this is not the first priority for the people.’ Abid made clear in interview that at this early stage of revivalism the decision to go ahead with the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project was ultimately a ‘top down’ dynamic of diplomacy which saw the project ‘pushed forward’, Abid stated how, ‘Mayor told me, “The project needs to be taken forward as Mme and Mr Mubarak and Mr Hosni the Egyptian Minister of Culture are pressing me for support on the project”’ . He adds, ‘Mayor also felt, as I did, that this would make a perfect international UNESCO project. I was told to go ahead with the project on this basis.’

Analysing the Egyptian government’s, and more particularly the Egyptian Presidency’s, desire to ‘push the project’, (despite the testimony of a body of local Alexandrians who
reacted negatively to the project as an ‘imported’, ‘Western idea’), Abid offered, ‘[M]y guess is that for many reasons Hosni Mubarak would be pleased to see his country projecting a good image, particularly to the Western countries. I think that genuinely he is very interested in having this institution reviving the history of the prestigious times of Alexandria’s ‘Golden-age.’ Egypt will now have a huge institution that will make them remember everyday that they come from a huge, prestigious past. His command of the project is very important for him as a political leader and also the idea that everybody, except perhaps people in Egypt!, was supporting the project. This was obvious during the very prestigious one day meeting in Aswan with all the Heads of State and the Inaugural Committee. It was this that allowed Mubarak to gain support, while also strengthening his links with Africa and the Middle East too’.

Returning to discuss the discrepancies between this diplomatic engagement with the project and the local alienation, Abid concedes that, ‘Yes, yes in some projects there are potential clashes.’ He did, however, recast this negativity by stating, ‘I think this is actually one of the main reasons for us to participate because if we don’t go there no-one else will do it.’ Abid’s conviction in the need for UNESCO’s participation relates back not only to his faith in the ‘commitment and conviction of Alexandrian elites in the project’ but to what he described as the more ‘sympathetic strategies’ of the scheme’s ‘meltdown into the environment.’

- ‘Meltdown’

Writ large, the motif of ‘meltdown into the environment’ was used by Abid to convey the process by which the project embeds itself in the local. The focus here is upon the post-Aswan construction phase that Holmquist earlier described as the ‘time of anxiety’ and he marked as ‘a high degree of Egyptian autonomy’. Alongside the image (put into play by Holmquist and Zahran) of more organic attachments emerging between Alexandria and the local landscape, Abid sketched out of a more strategised operational image of

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8 As such Aziz did not use the term in the negative sense which draws upon ‘meltdown’s’ origin as a term first used to convey a disastrous, destructive event synonymous with nuclear reaction (cf. OED: 2000: 142). Although (see Chapter Five) the destructive qualities of revivalism do emerge.
'meltdown', which, as he was keen to stress, was bound up in UNESCO's complex 'relationship within the local.' With more detail, he defined this 'relationship' in terms of the three key demands placed on UNESCO and which correspond to two stages of the development of the project.

The first, is UNESCO's continuation of their 'supportive', diplomatic role. The second, is that which lies at the heart of 'meltdown', a certain ability, as Abid put it, 'to let go of the project in order to combine UNESCO's 'non-interventionist role with its careful orchestration of support networks which are 'sympathetic to the local.' Here Abid made it clear that the project's post-Aswan Meeting construction phase was a time in which UNESCO's operational networking was still in its initial stages. Abid argued that operational networking, 'if done properly should relate back to the concerns of Alexandrians' he also maintained a confidence in 'meltdown's' capacity to draw out, 'a diversity of support networks in both the local Alexandrian context, but importantly too, across international civil society'. He argued, 'International and regional NGOs [he placed an emphasis here on the Mediterranean regional in particular] and in the Alexandrina's case the Friends organisations are very important too and are very committed to working sympathetically with local and national NGOs.'

Abid did stress, however, that 'there may be factors which prevent supportive networks being effective in the local context'. Writ large, he explained that 'revivalism between worlds' means networking across contexts in which civil society, citizenship, democracy and human and cultural rights amongst many other factors are 'unequal in their development.' He, like other UNESCO informants made explicit that in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina's case networking 'on the ground' like the revalist project itself had been disrupted due to the (First) Gulf War. As such the project was suspended from 1990 to 1994 on this account (see Mostafa 2002). As a consequence net-working strategisation in the Alexandrian context reached a pitch with the SARCOM Workshop of 1997 which is regarded as the operational equivalent of the Aswan Meeting (see Chapter Six) and which

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9 See Appendix Three for more details on operational networking strategies.
takes a more holistic approach to revivalism by also centering contemporary archaeological excavations within its brief.

Our discussions also led Abid to sketch out more broadly what he termed as ‘meltdown’s ‘worst case scenario,’ by stating, ‘There is always an element of risk in any [UNESCO-supported] project. Projects can become so fully absorbed into the environment that they run the risk of being hijacked by particular groups or concerns.’ Abid spoke of the ‘risk’ taking different forms in different contexts, ‘A project, for example, could become dominated by one particular group and in doing so lose its diversity and internationalism. In some countries and contexts it could be dominated exclusively by the states-party and/or by specific political group. In other contexts a stronger threat may exist in terms of religious groups hijacking a project’.

It is true to say that fears of ‘hijacking’ were present throughout my fieldwork with the over-riding concern to dominate the revivalist context being that of fears of the Alexandrina’s ‘hijacking’ by Islamic extremists. Not only do these concerns define a contemporary ‘threat’ but this also has a myth/historical resonance within the Alexandrina’s genealogy which, once again can be traced back, to the ‘clash’ between Islam and the West’ (cf. Ahmed 1992). This distopic vision was to haunt the ‘official’ revivalist imaginary. As such, the vision of ‘fundamentalist’s’ attacking or, more potently, burning the institution arose as a repeated fear expressed to GOAL/UNESCO informants: as such, I pursue this dynamic in subsequent chapters.

Abid gave a differently nuanced example of how fears of such ‘clashes’ have became polarised over the issue of censorship and which have resulted in speculation concerning the Alexandrina becoming embroiled in ‘clashes’ between ‘secularism and religion.’ He explains, ‘In Alexandria, for example, the idea of having a new modern, public library with no censorship is difficult for many within today’s Muslim Arab culture. The ‘worst scenario’ he argued was that the Alexandrina’s ‘meltdown’ would ‘result in heavy censorship,’ adding, ‘We hope that this will not be the case but it could happen.’ Abid stressed that both the ancient Alexandrina’s own potency as the ‘first ‘universal’ library’
and also UNESCO’s own commitment to ‘universal values’ would be threatened by such a scenario. Drawing back into play archival purchases on the scheme, Abid stated how, ‘certain groups within international archive and library networks have drawn attention to this issue of censorship and taken their concerns to UNESCO’.

Controversially, Salman Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses* (1988) emerged as a form of litmus test in terms of censorship, as Abid revealed ‘At the Conference of Directors of National Libraries (CDNL) held in 1994 in Havana, Cuba ...A delegate put a question to me: “As a representative of UNESCO would you be able to ensure that *The Satanic Verses* by Salman Rushdie would be on the shelves of the library of Alexandria?” And I said “I hope so” but that “I couldn’t promise anything”.’ Abid explained how this motivated a specific initiative, ‘There is a new data-base being set up mainly by the Norwegian Library Association called the “Alexandrina” which will be presented to the Library of Alexandria on its inauguration – this is a data-base on the freedom of expression which will document all sorts of harassment most prominently in the area of media and publishing. Salman Rushdie, for example, is the first case.’ He comments further, ‘The Egyptians reacted very fairly: Mme Mubarak thought it was a very good idea and would be very instructive for the Egyptians and said that she would like to support the idea’.

Abid ultimately returned to reiterate his confidence in the project, ‘This is what makes it stimulating. Any big project like this has to be complex; it is a fact of life.’ Abid’s continued involvement in the Bibliotheca is by virtue of the Memory of the World programme (MOW) which he himself heads, and which, interestingly takes the ancient Alexandrina as its key icon/ motif and thus as a means to alert the international community (in grand ‘old’ museological style) to the perils of cultural loss (see Appendix Four).
CONCLUSION

OPERATIONAL BORDER-CROSSINGS

The exploration in this chapter of the initial dynamics of the operationalisation of the Alexandrina project has demonstrated how a complex set of diplomatic entanglements and bureaucratic networks define the dynamic of 'revivalism between worlds'. GOAL and its director Zahran are at the centre point of this drama of the homecoming, its acts of border crossing and transformation. It is Zahran who co-ordinated the bureaucratic and diplomatic committees and domains between Cairo, Paris and Alexandria and translated this into the central objective of the Bibliotheca's material construction. As illustrated the GOAL/UNESCO cosmopolitan discourse/ rhetorics and their expression in terms of promotional and publicity machines are increasingly implicated in this process of networking too. The circulation of 'old' and 'new' 'icons and images' - which link Alexander's dream, to ancient archive, to lighthouse and thus to contemporary dream-worlds and aspirations - in their repetition thus assert a legitimacy for the scheme which crosses-over and thus bridges revivalism's 'two worlds.' In so doing these form new links which are effective, for example, in both authenticating and essentialising the Mubaraks, UNESCO and contemporary revivalism within the same legacy and schema.

Moreover, this visual/ textual link can be seen to contribute to the project's construction as a material reality. For example, these dynamics converge in the symbolic-reality of an emergent architectural structure which attempts, first, to objectify the key components of 'old' and 'new' rhetorics within its design features and, secondly, to redeem its own historical vulnerability via its 'indestructibility' as technological object. This process is accompanied by the mobilisation of further canon of common buzzwords/ objectives which establish a sense of shared understandings underpinning UNESCO/ GOAL involvement beyond the image/ technology by making more explicit the links between the act of cultural revivalism and the languages/ practices of citizenship, civic pride, civil society, development and associated agendas of social and moral/ ethical redemption. The use of these buzzwords infiltrates a language that is optimistic, romantic and utopian and yet equally pragmatic and concerned to deliver measurable 'outcomes' and 'value'.

212
What also appears in this language is an ambiguity of expression and a need to convince all concerned that the project is viable and wanted by all the main players.

Both the aspirations and anxieties over the project are, therefore, bound up in the UNESCO/GOAL/Egyptian government’s common approach to making cultural revivalism operate with the wider aim of binding it to urban regeneration and poverty reduction. Adopting this strategy, if achievable, means that UNESCO will find it easier to access funds. In part this vision is also embedded in another vision of Egyptian modernity as a knowledge based society. The reference made to the Memory of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the Memory of the World programme reiterate that there is an increasing consciousness of the capacity to centre the Bibliotheca as a powerful archival agency which can draw upon historical/contemporary and material/digital/IT worlds. The ideal of reviving Alexandria (so this logic goes) will be realised by progressing from ‘backwardness’ and ‘decay’ to a hi-tech future and avoiding the present.

Furthermore in terms of UNESCO’s overall purchase on the project, a two pronged process of recovery has been revealed as the long term goal. The position of Aziz exposes how revivalism is a top down outcome of complex diplomatic and bureaucratic dealings that requires a sympathetic NGO network to be in place as part of project ‘meltdown’ that will appropriate and implement the vision and turn it into a material reality. ‘Meltdown’s’ passage from the global to the local is also settled in terms of established actor networks and their interests as ostensibly their relative autonomy justifies the argument that ‘localisation’ is a process of ‘indigenisation’. Zahran, by playing the crucial linking role, forms the border cross-over between them and in particular he has the necessary access to local bureaucracies and networks to ensure that ‘localising’ the Alexandrina project will be seen as beneficial to as many as possible.

What is demonstrated is that once made operational UNESCO supported projects and programmes undergo an intense hybridisation. As such this supports Derrida’s theoretical, intellectual position in approaching UNESCO from the ‘cosmopolitical point of view’. This reveals how the organisation (as archive/philosopheme) necessarily
creates/ participates in an ‘othering’ of its ‘Greco-European’ ‘origin’ and ‘memory’ (Derrida 2000b). At the very earliest stages, however, what becomes clear is that ‘on the ground’ other responses in terms of anticipated ‘clashes’ and radical hybrisation as expressed as project ‘hijackings’ threaten the official vision and strategisation of cultural revivalism. Thus for UNESCO/ GOAL holding all these aims in place a juggling act of some skill and a certain lack of confidence in the outcome at points becomes apparent. However, by this stage the commitment to the project’s homecoming, and the involvement of political and symbolic capital by those least able to lose face in the process of it not being fully implemented is sufficient to create the armature making such doubts as both voiced but inconceivable.

The description of Abid making a visit to Alexandria and his anxiety at being faced with a contrary populist view that the project is ‘non-Islamic’ and thus has no real relevance to the contemporary reality of Alexandria is a contradiction that finally needs to be assuaged. As does the substantial disruption caused by the Gulf War which led to the suspension of the project for four years and which (potentially at least) nullifies the wider revivalist project dreams of a unified, global cosmopolitical dynamic These factors are ultimately redeemed by an alignment to the dominant view that such a civilisational project would inevitably be of great cultural value and as such will emerge as a counterpoint or cure for the potential re-occurrence of conflict. Drawing on a wider argument substantiates that it takes people of a particular vision and education (so the logic goes) to see this and to implement the project for the benefit of all. The possibility that the local context will be either assuaged or fully recognised by the official stakeholders lies beyond Zahran’s utopian vision of ancient and modern worlds being conflated in an, as yet, to be fully detailed revival of Alexandria’s ‘Golden age’ or Holmquist’s picture-perfect vision on his office wall. Nevertheless, it is this local context that haunts the official discourse in the form of a background suspicion of the ‘rejection of revivalism’ by the popular voice and in fears of the potential threat of confrontation and resistance. It is to these dramas, marking out the context of ‘meltdown’, that I now turn.
Chapter Five

‘Meltdown’ - Revivalism’s
‘Time of Anxiety’
CHAPTER FIVE
‘MELTDOWN’ - REVIVALISM’S ‘TIME OF ANXIETY’

INTRODUCTION
RISK-TAKING

Day and night they are working here, on a project almost Pharaonic in its proportions. Designed to awaken the city from its long slumber and carry it triumphantly into the new millennium. The Bibliotheca Alexandrina now under construction aspires to become a Wonder of the Modern World. The building itself is as visionary and megalithic as a cylindrical pyramid.

(Mitchell 1998: 107-8)

Alexandria’s intellectuals, many of whom dreamed up the idea of rebuilding the library decades ago, wonder whether the city can foster the atmosphere required for such a centre.

(MacFaruhur 2001: 20).

In this chapter I refocus attention on the Alexandrian landscape as it undergoes revivalism’s ‘meltdown.’ As a ‘time of anxiety’ for revivalism this period of ‘meltdown’ sees further dramas of transformation being acted out upon the city. Not only does this establish Alexandria’s position more fully as the scene of heritage revivalism in action but also brings exposure to new conflicts including ‘risks’ of project ‘hijacking’ and distopic visions of cultural clashes. What I seek to crystallise in what follows is that the Bibliotheca’s ‘meltdown’ does not occur in a vacuum. Instead its disturbances draw pre-existing institutions, sites, agencies and their local actors into new collaborations and relationships. The particular critical movement of this chapter is thus led by interviews with selected local actors who make up this context: including Alexandrian intellectuals, archaeologists, museum/heritage professionals, cultural elites and critics active within the local press. This allows me both to pick up on the emergent institution’s involvement in a series of more particularised clashes and scandals. I will demonstrate how this group
of informants many of whom, like Abaddi himself, initially gave their support to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, re-emerge as a force of critical opposition to the more oppressive impacts of the project.

What emerges here, I argue, is the beginnings of a certain ‘Alexandrianisation’ of the dynamic of homecoming which is bound up in a more rigorous appeal to the city’s ancient and modern cosmopolitan heritage as both a site of intellectual and operational resistance and as a means to argue for a more inclusive discourse of return and revival. A key part of this line of recovery is the reclamation of a degree of autonomy synonymous with the Alexandrian context historically. It is this reclamation that sees the force of ‘Alexandrianisation’ increasingly aspire to repossess the city’s cosmopolitan identity and its civic and municipal traditions. I therefore suggest it is possible to set alongside the highly orchestrated ‘Chorus’ and supportive voices of the presidents, princesses, politicians and diplomatic elites who graced the Aswan Meeting’s International Commission an alternative group of local cosmopolitan actors who emerged (initially at least, as a reactive force) to take on the alternative mantel of revivalism’s ‘critical Chorus’, its ‘anti-voice’ and, as such, act as moral witnesses to its operational activities. At times, they can mobilise themselves as a force of opposition and resistance. Crucially too both the local and international media take a strategic, supportive role in articulating these local concerns to wider publics and, therefore, by way of contrast to UNESCO self-orchestrated projections on the world stage, offer an alternative critical re-inscription of the project within these domains.

SECTION ONE

ASSERTING AUTONOMY: ALEXANDRIA’S ‘MOUSEION’

In this first section, I focus upon Alexandria’s Greco-Roman Museum as my initial vantage point to sketch out the wider context of ‘meltdown’. As my interviews with Ahmad Fattah, the Museum’s Director (Fattah: 9/99) and other informants at this location stress, the Museum in historical terms, has played the role of ‘meeting place’ for Alexandria’s museological and archaeological communities. The Museum is located in
Alexandria’s downtown district along the Rue le Musee and has the word “MOUSEION” written in Greek script across the front of its neo-classical façade (see figs. 14 and 15). The Museum, writ large, brings a ‘Greek’, cosmopolitan aura to the contemporary Alexandrian landscape, while its interior spaces exhibit for public consumption the (relatively few) physical remnants of the city’s ancient ‘Greek’, cosmopolitan ‘Golden-age’. The Museum is flanked by other imposing buildings: those of the city’s Governorate building and the Tourist Police head-quarters. The latter gives some indication of the Museum’s status as a key focus of the city’s tourism and in this respect is one of Alexandria’s few international, cosmopolitan centres. The Museum is currently the chief Alexandrian outpost of the Supreme Council of Antiquity (SCA) Egypt’s state-owned and state-run national heritage organisation and as such it provides the key link to the central Caireen landscape. Crucially too, within the revivalist context the institution also takes on the role as the key point of contact and collaboration for revivalisms local actors.

The Museum’s roots, its façade and the objects within it give some sense of Alexandria’s identity as a place of East/ West cross-over. The Greco-Roman Museum itself is, therefore, regarded as a powerful indicator of Alexandria’s distinct traditions and its autonomy. In interview Fattah interestingly pitched the Museum’s roots within the ‘old’ museological trajectory, by repeating the view that, generically, ‘museums’ come from ‘the ancient Greek tradition’ and from ‘the European tradition of collectors interested in the origins of the West’. Mervat El-Din, the Greco-Roman Museum’s Deputy Director drew out a further links with this trajectory, ‘The Iliad of Homer begins by evoking the nine goddesses. The Muses, of course, are part of the tradition of ancient Alexandria and the Bibliotheca,’ adding that, ‘The Greco-Roman Museum building is a reproduction, or an echo of this’ (El-Din: 9/99)

These ‘echoes’ permeate Fattah’s office too: on the walls, for example, are images of Alexandria’s ‘Greek’, Hellenistic landscapes and monuments - most of which are

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1 As illustrated in my interview with Aziz in Appendix Six the Greco-Roman Museum is one of the places visited by Alexandria’s (relatively few) international visitors.
Fig. 14. Greco-Roman Museum – reprint of ‘old’ postcard

(undated/ unsourced: authors’ own)

Fig. 15. Greco-Roman Museum – contemporary postcard

(undated/ Attalla Cards, Egypt)
nineteenth-century European artists' impressions of lost objects - which notably include depictions of Pharos. These are arranged next to contemporary charts which feature dramatic new technological images of contemporary underwater excavations and which identify the 'real' of the archaeological remain, including the royal palace site and also that of Pharos with scientific, satellite-precision. What could be described as Fattah's own 'PhilHellenism' is particularised further in a collection of souvenir owls which line his desk, and which, he emphasised, 'In the Greek tradition' represent 'Wisdom'. These, in turn, are positioned near to quotations from the Koran in Islamic script and as in all government spaces a picture of President Hosni Mubarak occupies a prominent position.

Across the corridor El-Din's office, which she shares with other museum staff, contained the physical 'real' of the Hellenistic world, in the form of trays of artefacts from the collections she was busy working on.

-Civic and Municipal Tradition

In interview Fattah pursued in more detail Alexandria's distinctive 'tradition' and its relationships to the contemporary context of 'meltdown'. In doing so he began to reveal the Museum's - and by extension the Alexandria's cultural elite's - direct involvement and influence in the creation of an authentic Alexandrian heritage both historically and in the present day. It is this claim to authenticity that increasingly emerges as the resource by which the 'critical Chorus' define their own relationship with the Bibliotheca's 'meltdown'. Fattah began by mobilising ancient to modem cosmopolitical links: 'The age of Alexander and that of Mohammed Ali feature as repetition. Both were Macedonians and great men. Alexandria flourished in both of these periods and had a sense of internationalism to it.' He continues, 'During the period of the city's modern revival Alexandria developed its own Municipal Council and its own system of governance and civic traditions. This meant that the key projects and institutions in Alexandria were established by the Alexandrians themselves and not by Cairo,' adding, 'The Museum, like the [Mahmoudieh] canal and the Corniche and public works didn't, therefore, come from the government or from the King like Cairo's Museums and its parks and theatres did. In Alexandria the tradition was different'. He explained how Alexandria's 'European
communities' and its 'more wealthy Egyptian families' put 'their private money into developing the city.'

Fattah stressed how, 'The Greco-Roman Museum itself was created in this tradition and was built by donations from the city’s Archaeological Society', and once again emphasising, 'This is very different to the antiquities service operating from Cairo which was directed by Mariette and the French who were concerned with Egyptology and the Pharaonic period². Alexandria’s Greco-Roman past was by-passed by these people, there is, of course, the famous story of Schliemann’s very short visit to Alexandria!’ What is significant is that Fattah’s definition of the local thus asserts a difference between the cultural institutions set up by ‘foreigners’ in Cairo and Alexandria’s ‘local’ cosmopolitan communities and institutions: despite the fact both involved Europeans. The latter Alexandrian context of Egyptian and European elites, as Fattah underlines (as others would later do), is regarded to have had a ‘distinctive tradition of co-operation’.

The breakpoint in Fattah’s narrative however, comes with ‘Egypt’s Independence.’ He explains, ‘1952 brought great changes. European power began to decrease. Not only did their political control in Egypt end after the military coup, but they began to leave the country. Before 1952 Alexandria had a vibrant artistic, literary and culture life and led the country with its creative spirit. After 1952 all the institutions including museums and heritage agencies were centralised and instead of looking outwards we looked to Cairo for leadership. It was a loss to us Alexandrians’. He emphasised further how ‘centralisation of power in Cairo affected Alexandria badly and damaged both its local infrastructures and also its spirit’, and that ‘with nationalisation, people in Alexandria soon felt that they lost their independence’. He adds, however, that ‘Alexandrians kept their memories of there own traditions in their hearts’.

Fattah explains how these shifts brought ‘mixed fortunes’ to the Greco-Roman Museum itself. On the positive side, ‘After 1952 the Museum had a succession of Egyptian

² Appendix Five illustrates responses to revivalism’s ‘meltdown’ at national level and as such narrates the process of ‘Egyptianisation’ with reference to interviews held with Caireen based ‘actors’: notably at the Supreme Council of Antiquities, at UNESCO’s field-office and with Arab-ICOM representatives.
directors who were equal to the Europeans. We are very proud of this fact.' On the negative side he echoed Abaddi's comments, 'Politicians like Nasser were threatened by the ancient link with Europe, by Alexandria's different traditions and its associations with Western Mediterranean culture,' and how in consequence the, 'Classical and Greco-Roman period had to go into retreat'. Interestingly Fattah characterised Nasser as an 'arch-Narcissist' and as a 'black cloud descending on the country' bringing with it a violent, narcissistic strain of nationalism. Shifting his focus towards brighter days, he comments, 'But now everything is more clear. We can now say that with our Greek and Roman traditions we are distinguished from the rest of Egypt and be proud of our admiration of Mediterranean culture. This should not be seen to contradict our identities as good Muslims, good Arabs and good Egyptians'.

- 'Nationalisation' as Centralisation

El-Din the Museum's Deputy-Director, with equal passion, took up this dynamic of post-1950s disturbance of Alexandria's autonomy (El-Din: 9/99). She began by arguing, 'The new nationalised state departments and culture services were populated with bureaucrats and military men. It was a great loss for culture and had more to do with the political philosophies than concern for scientific knowledge.' She outlined the impacts on the Greco-Roman Museum, 'Due to the ignorance of bureaucrats reports on the city's archaeology were totally lost. Once these were destroyed, of course, you cannot identify objects'. This disruption to the archive operated on other levels too, 'Also our library [located within the Museum] virtually stops in 1950. This is a problem of many other libraries in Egypt too. The Europeans contributed most of the specialist magazines and they end when the Europeans left'. As Fattah reiterated too in the 1950s and 1960s Egypt experienced a sense of 'isolation from the outside world' and war with Israel also meant that resources were allocated to 'guns not museums.'

Fattah and El-Din identified the force of nationalisation and the accompanying militarization of the state and state departments with a time in which Alexandria's modern (nineteenth and early twentieth-century) cosmopolitan, material heritage suffered
neglect. Fattah, argues, 'Nasser didn’t like Alex and Western culture. The two things brought together led him to turn his back on the city and punish it. Under Nasserism Alexandria witnessed a nightmare of decay and destruction'. El-Din similarly spoke of how in the post-1950s period, ‘The city changed totally, totally!’, in contrast to the West’s characterisation of Alexandria as a site of loss, she argues, as the majority of foreigners left; ‘People from the Delta and from Upper Egyptian were encouraged to come to the city and to buy the elegant villas of Europeans. Many turned these into kinds of farms. The city and its civic pride suffered much indeed’.

Echoing Abaddi’s earlier characterisation of the Greco-Roman past as a ‘site of resistance’ for Egyptian (and more specifically Alexandrian) intellectuals, Fattah further argues, ‘The genius of the city is that it is against the pseudo-nationalism that followed the revolution. This form of nationalism was not scientific or humanistic it was a closed way of thinking which ignored the society surrounding it and particularly of the taste, culture and behaviour of Mediterranean aspects of Alexandrian life’. He also referred to the traumatic impacts of the act of separation on which nationalism was premised, ‘When the foreigners went I considered it a kind of damage to Egypt. I felt that they had left their finger prints in the city and upon its memory: not only in terms of architectural design and taste but the texture of the spirit of the city too’.

- Contemporary Recuperations

The contemporary revival of Alexandria’s memory, spirit and material heritage are placed by Fattah, firstly, within wider political shifts: ‘Mubarak is the first Egyptian ruler to visit the [Greco-Roman] Museum. The last ruler to visit was King Farouk! Naguib and Nasser didn’t visit, neither did Sadat’. He associated Mubarak’s visit made in 1984 with the beginnings of state efforts to recognise and potentially re-instate Alexandria’s place within national visions of cultural development and, crucially too, Fattah saw this as mutually beneficial in terms of assisting Alexandrian elites in their own recuperation of

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3 Other informants, however, like Zahran (1/97) earlier quoted were of the opinion that this was more ‘benign neglect’ and cast doubt on any deliberate policy of punishing Alexandria.
Alexandria’s autonomy. He emphasises, ‘Under Mubarak the state has shown its commitment to preserve culture,’ citing renovations of Alexandria’s Royal palaces, its museums: notably that of the Jewellery Museum and Maritime Museum as proof.

Taking the wider view, Fattah saw the state’s return to Alexandria as indicative of the Egyptian nation’s (paralleled by his own) process of maturation, arguing, ‘Nasser was both mine and Egypt’s teenage; Sadat when we became a man and Mubarak is our Wisdom’. Here Fattah highlights a major contemporary shift in which Alexandria’s cosmopolitan association with the West historically acquires new associations and identifications in terms of Mubarak’s contemporary turn to the West and his political objectives. As such Alexandria becomes a synonym for reconciliation and democracy. Fattah reiterates links between Mubarak’s ‘pledge to preserve culture,’ new presidential identifications with Alexandria and the ‘country’s progress towards democracy.’ Moreover, Fattah saw the ‘Bibliotheca project’ as a more substantial indicator of commitment.

El-Din also reiterates this theme, ‘Mubarak and Mahgoub [Alexandria’s Governor] see that the direction is forward toward democracy and towards developing Egypt’s cultural education’. She continues, ‘In a military state it is impossible for ordinary people to participate in the political system. It is usually the person who is promoted and not the system reformed’, by way of contrast, she argues, ‘Our Governor is very humanistic. There is a new emphasis on educating people in how to behave and think about monuments and their connection with nationalism and national-pride in a more positive way’. Significantly she argued, ‘Like the first Ptolemies we should be proud of ourselves and encourage links with the outside world. Of all the Europeans that emigrated from the city we should encourage their sons to come again,’ emphasising, that ‘to support this process’ Alexandria ‘must be commercial, democratic and safe!’ and recuperate ‘its prosperous atmosphere’. Yet again the Bibliotheca project is cited as the emblem of this future vision. El-Din, for example, states, ‘Egypt is eager to run and catch human progress and the Bibliotheca is a symbol of sharing between East and West and an echo of the glory and the vision of the ancient institution. It is an ambitious project and cannot
really hope to recreate exactly the full glories of the Ptolemies but it will have its own place and its own philosophy'.

- Filtering Processes

Both Fattah and El-Din thus saw the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, amongst other things, as part of a potential filtering system or testing ground for this motif of contact and re-engagement. It was obvious, however, that this filtering system was regarded as one which, as yet, was not directly under the Alexandrian cultural elite’s control. Beneath the articulation of wider symbolic aspirations was, therefore, the sense of the Bibliotheca itself, yet again, as a ‘foreign’ object, and post-Aswan Meeting, newly associated with ‘outside’ forces. El-Din argues this point, ‘UNESCO has a positive image with us but the project is too secret, too isolated at the moment. Egyptians need to be more involved in the project and for it to recognise local experts’. She reiterates, ‘They - we! - are not involved enough at the present moment’. It was clear too that GOAL was yet to establish itself as an effective mechanism of mediation ‘between worlds’. This is exacerbated too by the Bibliotheca project and also GOAL’s more direct networking and association with Caireen governmental committees, agencies and agendas. Moreover, the ‘top-down’ decision to locate the scheme within the Ministry of Education and, therefore, ‘outside’ the SCA (which is part of the Ministry of Culture) also meant that it is ‘outside’ Fattah’s direct influence despite his position as senior SCA representative in Alexandria.

These two informants, in response, expressed their own opinions on the potential of recasting revivalism as filter and testing ground, this also led to them making distinctions between the kinds of ‘outside’ influences they felt Egypt (and Alexandria separately) should either embrace or reject. Fattah, for example, began by looking more critically at the wider global context and asserting, ‘we need to create new relationships through commerce, tourism and through heritage and archaeological projects. But the moral freedom that people have in the West is more than we want here in Egypt’. He stressed, ‘We must be in a good position to open up our culture without the fear that it will be destroyed and taken over by outside forces’. Anxieties were expressed, more specifically,
over the import of certain new technologies, 'We know that the satellite dish can cause more destruction to Egyptian culture than previous occupations. It already has done what Churchill and Israel, and Germany and Russia failed to do' adding, 'Countries like Iran are preventing dishes. Egypt now has to deal with this crisis at the moment'. Obviously in the context of the Bibliotheca's own commitment to the new digital and satellite technologies Fattah's comments carried more weight and provoked more anxiety.

Fattah asserts, however, 'We also know that science and technology used in medicine and in surgical operations is the greatest humanistic gift to the world'. Pointing to the GIS charts produced by Goddio's and Empereur's archaeological teams of the harbour area he re-directed his emphasise to argue, 'We are very interested and keen to learn from the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the foreign archaeological missions in terms of these scientific technologies and scientific methods of research and excavation'. El-Din picked up these dynamics while drawing out in more detail the relationships between science and Islam, 'As a Muslim I am ready to accept all humanistic culture which is not against the Koran and my religion,' she argues, 'We can look to the secular world' and while rejecting 'different moralities' we can embrace the positive aspects of humanistic and scientific culture without fear.

It is here that the once tense attitude towards the Alexandrina project gave way to informants asserting their own direct involvement in Alexandria's cultural heritage and influence in revivalism's 'meltdown'. What makes all the difference is the dynamic of archaeological revivalism and the sudden revelation in the early 1990s of how much archaeology still remains under the sea and how the new technology of underwater archaeology could be used to recover it. As such archaeology was relied upon by these and other informants to produce the authentic remains of a unique past which was itself demonstrably hybrid. Fattah made clear that the first SCA underwater diver, Ibrahim Darwish, was initially based at the Greco-Roman Museum and was given solid support by Fattah and who, again as SCA's senior Alexandrian employee, continues to exert his influence in this sphere. Moreover, many Egyptian and foreign archaeological teams not only work in close collaboration with the Greco-Roman Museum and use its collection...
and other research facilities but rely on their permits being issued through SCA, Fattah and Darwish.

The agency and control over Alexandria’s heritage which comes with the experience of archaeological revivalism thus contrasts with the Bibliotheca project which, as above mentioned, is ‘outside’ Fattah’s direct influence. It is, therefore, an interview with Darwish himself on the birth of the SCA’s Alexandria-based Department of Underwater Archaeology (DUA) which revealed an even more direct engagement between the dynamics of archaeological revivalism and the force of ‘Alexandrianisation’. What also becomes clear is the expectation that archaeology would be a more secure and authentic route to reviving the fortunes of the city rather than the architectural hubris of a (post) ‘modernist’ new library.

SECTION TWO
THE ‘BIRTH’ OF UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY

The DUA itself was housed initially at the former American Embassy (which is now being developed as the new Museum of Alexandria) in the city’s downtown district and is currently located at the Maritime Museum near Alexandria’s San Stefano suburbs. These spaces emerged as additional potent operational centre-points for contemporary archaeological revivalism, and crucially too, these were the locations at which I was based during my main fieldwork sessions. In interview Darwish was keen to situate the DUA’s birth as part of both a long-term cosmopolitan tradition of underwater archaeology (as defined by both Egyptian and foreign involvement) in Alexandria while in common with Fattah he stressed the sense of the ‘local’ which these collaborations created (Darwish: 9/99). He also drew out a more immediate catalyst to contemporary archaeological revivalism: what he described as the ‘dramas at Qait Bey’ the site of Alexandria’s other potent ancient icon and landmark; Pharos. Darwish identified this as a powerful turning point in terms of the establishment of new advances towards Alexandrian revivalist autonomy.
Engaging with this account of origins, Darwish stated how, ‘the department was thought about for many years but we came across significant obstacles’. Some of these ‘obstacles’ related, once again, to the post-1950s political shifts, ‘The force of nationalism isolated us from the rest of the world and the war with Israel transformed the harbour into a military zone and therefore it remained closed to us’. Reiterating Fattah’s comments he emphasised, ‘In this context culture was regarded as a luxury,’ thus creating a ‘more obvious obstacle’ that of ‘gaining the necessary technologies and underwater equipment all of which require substantial financial investments.’ A turn to the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) for assistance brought no instant solutions: not only was there a ‘high turn-over of General Secretaries in 1980s and 90s’ but ‘the SCA thought there were enough antiquities on the land to keep them occupied and had no intentions of engaging in underwater archaeology’.

It was also a period, however, in which the ‘Open Door Policy’ begun by Sadat and sustained by Mubarak, saw ‘the return of foreign archaeologists’ to Egypt. Darwish highlights the British archaeologist-diver Honor Frost and her Alexandrian counterpart Kamel el Sadaat’s substantial contributions to archaeological mappings of the Qait Bey site: in this 1967-8 campaign sponsored by UNESCO seventeen important objects were located. He also drew out the campaigns of the first French mission, directed by Jacques Domain in 1983 at Napoleon’s Fleet in Abu Qir (see Appendix Six). Darwish remarked how ‘The SCA knew because of the renewed interest in the submerged heritage that an Egyptian specialist was needed’. Darwish’s diving experience at this time also included work with the French archaeologist Jean-Yves Empereur in Greece. He continues, ‘I showed my interest and was fully trained by the Arab Academy. I was then based at the Greco-Roman Museum. At this time I was only trained diver-archaeologist. No one ever imagined a whole department would be created’.

- ‘Dramas at Qait Bey’

It was the particular ‘dramas at Qait Bey’ which acted as the more immediate catalyst to contemporary underwater archaeological revivalism. These now somewhat infamous
events in revivalism’s genealogy took place in 1993, the period following the Aswan Meeting and the time at which work was beginning to take place on the Bibliotheca’s foundations. In interview Darwish states, ‘This conflict began when myself and a number of concerned individuals including, Asma El Bakri, Jean-Yves Empereur and Mohammed Awad were alerted to the fact that unbeknown to us a concrete breakwater was being constructed at the Qait Bey site to protect the citadel from winter storms. We had two problems: firstly, that parts of the breakwater were already in place and therefore would continue to threaten and destroy the archaeological remains, and secondly, it was the SCA who has given the go ahead for this decision’. The irony here then was that Darwish and other ‘local’ actors, – what was the emergent ‘critical Chorus’ –, began to campaign against the destructive assault on the heritage which was authored by none other than Darwish’s employer the SCA and Egyptian state organisation. Darwish continues, ‘This became a significant campaign in which many notable people concerned with preservation and with the city’s heritage - including Mostafa Abaddi - got involved. We appealed to the press - both the Al Ahram [“The Pyramids” the Egyptian, national] newspaper and to the foreign media - in order to call for work on the site to stop. We succeeded in stopping the project completely after one month’.

It was initially thought that the remaining, ‘problem could be solved at the site by removing the seventeen objects that appeared on Honor Frost’s earlier report and that the SCA could complete the project’. Darwish explained, however, that dives to the site made with new technologies (not available to Frost and El Saadat) revealed the vision of ‘thousands upon thousands of objects’ on the seabed, adding, ‘We knew that this site was something truly great indeed’. Two particularly powerful key trajectories emerged from this context in terms of the establishment of new advances towards Alexandrian revivalist autonomy which have great resonance for revivalism as a whole. To focus on the first, the discoveries at the site opened up what Darwish described as a ‘new world of possibility’ which led to a ‘difficult but exciting time’ in which SCA officially established the DUA in 1996 and gave it a power-sharing role in terms of extending ‘more confident invitations to foreign teams to excavate.’
Thus referring to maps on his own office walls which showed images of excavations around the Alexandrian coast Darwish recounted to me: ‘each foreign mission interested in excavating around the city’s coast applies for a permit and if suitable is allocated a certain coastal area’. He then highlighted the various ‘foreign missions’ position within these archaeological mappings: the main ones are as follows; ‘Franck Goddio has permission to work inside harbour and Abu Qir. Empereur works at Qait Bey; the Greeks at Sidi Gaber and the Italians at Nelson Island’ (Appendix Six). The DUA’s remit and scope as a co-ordinator of underwater excavations nation-wide is drawn out too, ‘We also authorise and manage underwater excavations in other parts of Egypt, for example, in the Red Sea’.

I shall return to give more depth to these dynamics in Chapter Six (and to return more fully to Darwish’s interview). However it is the second of the trajectories to emerge from the context - that of Alexandrian actors activist and campaigning qualities - that I want to proceed to discuss further in order to show its powerful relationship to the Bibliotheca’s ‘meltdown’.

SECTION THREE
‘MELTDOWN’S EMERGENT ‘CRITICAL CHORUS’

The Qait Bey ‘dramas’ powerfully demonstrate that within the Alexandrian landscape is located a determined force of critical opposition capable of mobilising itself against any destructive incursions on the city’s cultural heritage. As this section seeks to demonstrate, this ‘critical Chorus’ - with its key players, which include, Bakri, Halim, Awad, Empereur - emerged as an integral, dynamic component of the revivalist context, and more specifically, as a constant, critical presence during the period of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s ‘meltdown’. By way of introduction to my own account of this context (which is led by interviews with key members of the ‘critical Chorus’ themselves) I want, firstly, to turn to one of only a few published accounts of the ‘Qait Bey dramas’ which offers some interesting initial characterisations of the ‘Chorus’ key actors (La Riche
These characterisations made by the writer La Riche are useful in establishing links between the 'Chorus' critical defence of Alexandria's physical heritage and the preservation of its memory as expressed in more intangible, spiritual as well as moral values. In so doing this affirms the 'Chorus' role guardians/preservers of the city's integrity and autonomy, as agents, activists, witnesses and as a powerful ethical force. As such the 'Chorus' operational 'sacred drama' creates its own critical archival/memory dynamics and increasingly communicates the sense in which the contemporary revivalist 'meltdown' is synonymous with a city undergoing a dramatic 'disturbance of memory' as material object-worlds re-emerge on the scene to bring disturbances to both surface and depth.

Asmal El-Bakri, who played a pivotal role in the 'dramas at Qait Bey' - she was the first to 'descend beneath the waves at the Pharos site' and to witness the breakwater blocks being dropped at the site - is referred to by La Riche as the 'Cultural Conscience of Egypt' and with resonant Pharaonic imagery 'as vigilant as a sphinx' (La Riche 1998:72). To establish further details and context, Bakri, an Alexandrian film-maker whose 'work has won prizes in France' was making a film of the Greco-Roman Museum 'which included footage of a number of exterior locations that provided the occasion for her to dive at the site' (La Riche 1998:72). La Riche argues how Bakri's, 'heart-rending footage [of the destructive at the Qait Bey site] and heart stirring anger' enabled her to provoke a 'furore' which was eventually to penetrate 'the Corridors of Power' (La Riche 1998: 72-73). La Riche also features the Alexandrian writer Hala Halim in her (then) role as journalist which he argues 'sustains' the critical voice of opposition, 'at the level of the consciousness of the populace through the pages of Al Ahram Weekly' (La Riche 1998:74). Of Halim's specific and 'continuing act of witnessing' he argues, 'Hers is a diary of Alexandria's struggle with itself, of the advances and reverses of the force of culture against that of commerce, of the force of quality against that of quantity, of the force of the city's collective memory against that which would obliterate that memory forever' (La Riche 1998:74).

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4 La Riche's book was commissioned by sponsors to accompany the Centre for Alexandrian Studies (CEA) excavations at Qait Bey.
La Riche also makes clear that the conflicts, clashes and unfortunate 'ironies' which mark the initial period of 'meltdown', 'were not restricted to the sea floor,' or 'just' to the preservation of ancient heritage, by describing in more detail how not only Bakri and Halim but the 'architect Mohammed Awad and historian Mustafa el-Abaddi' and others were (and continue to be), 'active on multiple fronts' and as such 'alert to and involved in the salvaging of layer upon layer of Alexandria’s Patrimony' (La Riche 1998:73). Focusing on Awad, who is also an academic and director of the heritage NGO the Alexandria Preservation Trust (APT), La Riche argues, 'Awad has sought to conserve the outstanding examples of Alexandria’s nineteenth and twentieth century architecture' (La Riche 1998:73). He cites Awad’s campaign to save 'the cottage in which Lawrence Durrell’s lived' from destruction and redevelopment as a most ‘recent’ and most prominent example (La Riche 1998:73).

La Riche outlines how the voices of this particular ‘Chorus’ are directed at, ‘The mayors and governors and ministers, the developers and bureaucrats and civic leaders, the archaeologist and classicists and Egyptologists’ (La Riche 1998:74). It is La Riche who (as referenced in Chapter Two) characterised the contemporary archaeological teams (with specific reference to the Centre for Alexandrian Studies (CEA) directed by Empereur and their collaborations with Egyptian teams) as ‘a conflation’ of ‘two models’ of ‘Ibn Khaldun’s close-knit tribe’ and that of the ‘Mouseion’ (La Riche 1998: 28). This affords some sense of the hybridisations at play in the contemporary dramas of archaeological retrievalism. Writ larger still this ‘critical Chorus’ as a coalition across academic, preservationalist, archaeological interests and into media-journalist domains is significant in anticipating greater orchestration by these actors of the latter culture/media/journalistic links both within and outside Egypt as the Bibliotheca project takes hold.

Moreover, it is La Riche’s shift of focus to Abaddi which also makes way for a shift into the foundational dramas. More specifically, it initiates the Bibliotheca’s ‘meltdown’: here too further depth is given to Abaddi’s urbane, priestly and sage-like qualities and his authenticity of voice. La Riche thus comments: ‘Professor Abaddi, who has written with
a cultivated lucidity about, among so much else, the Mouseion and Ancient Library, has spoken with persuasive clarity and alarm about another contradictory policy, that by which a large, new library of Alexandria is being constructed on the site of the renowned Ancient Library before the ruins of the ancient structure could be excavated by archaeologists. The loss for at least another century of an archaeological opportunity which existed, however briefly, as self-evidently unique reflects a 'triumph' of expediency over responsibility in planning, a 'triumph' which could – and perhaps will – appear in a textbook on urban conservation under the heading, ‘What Not To Do’ (La Riche 1998: 78).

- Foundational Criticisms

It is in 1993, the same year as the Qait Bey dramas, that a group of critics (largely composed of the same actors) were mobilised by further dramas centring upon the Alexandrina’s construction site. But this time we see UNESCO and GOAL (like SCA before them) cast in the role of the authors of destruction rather than of preservation. Moreover, this is the first of a series of a number of dramatic clashes which occurred in the early stages of operational ‘meltdown’ which exposed the tensions between the ‘Chorus’ position as, on the one hand, the critical supporters of revivalism and, on the other, its critical opposition or anti-voice. In so doing this ‘critical Chorus’ gave voice to both their own elite and, as demonstrated in what follows, to popular, grass-roots concerns. Throughout my fieldwork this ‘critical Chorus’ emerged as the entangled objects of ‘meltdown’ and as such offer insights not only into local agency but map out further the conflicts and also the subtleties and complexities of relationships and attachments within the revivalist context. Moreover, while La Riche gives the ‘Chorus’ their heroic status within his account of the Qait Bey dramas, by way of contrast, my concern has been to return to the key players of the ‘critical Chorus’ – notably Abaddi, Bakri, Halim, Awad, Empereur (and the CEA’s Press and Publicity Officer Colin Clement) - in interview in order to gain more detailed critical reflections on the specific events of the Bibliotheca’s ‘meltdown’ and to relate this mobilisation of opposition to the...
motivating force of an alternative ‘Alexandrianisation’ of revivalism. These dynamics remain a largely untold story.

In a second interview made with Abaddi, true to character, he remained diplomatic about the period of ‘meltdown’. He, like other informants did, however, communicate a sense of how for the Alexandrian intelligentsia this ‘time of anxiety’ was bound up in their own sense of loss of ownership of the project and the desire to agitate for critical inclusion. Abaddi states, ‘Of course we have always remained very supportive of the project but became concerned when certain developments and controversies appeared to contradict both the spirit of the scheme and also the very important commitment to prioritising and preserving Alexandria’s heritage’ (Abaddi: 8/99). Empereur honing in on ‘the incident over the Bibliotheca’s foundations’ spoke for many local actors when he stressed how, ‘this was a total disgrace!’, arguing, ‘There was absolutely no consciousness or thought about building into this [Bibliotheca] project an archaeological survey. The very nature of Alexandria’s heritage is that here you have an ancient city below a big modern one, so any expansion or development of the modern town of Alex [sic.] will affect the ancient archaeology below. As I say, this was disgraceful behaviour especially when you know that this is a scheme managed by UNESCO’ (Empereur: 5/00).

His sentiments were echoed by Colin Clement, who was even more direct in his criticism, ‘Here you have a dreadful irony at play, a really bizarre scenario in which Egyptian and foreign archaeologists were fighting to preserve Alexandria’s ancient archaeology from developers – when these developers were themselves part of UNESCO project. It was unbelievable! Can you imagine? It certainly made a mockery of UNESCO’s status as guardians, moral or otherwise, of ‘world’ heritage conservation and preservation’ (Clement: 9/99). Awad’s specific involvement in the controversy centred around his discovery that bulldozers were also working on site at night. This led him to videoing this ‘secret’ activity and making a complaint to the police. The ensuing ‘critical Chorus’ campaign saw them expose these events in both the local and international press (Awad: 9/99). The French newspaper Le Monde, for example, ran the story which had the desired
effect in that it ‘embarrassed UNESCO and the Egyptian government’ into agreeing to
make funds available for an archaeological survey of the site (see Stille 2000: 99).

Perhaps unsurprisingly UNESCO/GOAL informants’ responses to this ‘scandal’ differed
dramatically. In interview Zahran (who walked out of a meeting called by Empereur and
Awad over the subject) dismissed the issue without comment (Zahran: 8/99). At
UNESCO Paris Head-Quarters Holmquist stated how, ‘I have not heard of any big
controversy. All I know is that the archaeologists were allowed to do a thorough survey.
Obviously work wasn’t going to stop or be held up on the site unless they found
something of major concern. You could imagine that there would have been a hue and
cry if this had happened. They found a few things, but nothing major, so that they could
not say, “Don’t continue”. This was before they started the construction properly on site
so it was all thoroughly investigated’ (Holmquist: 3/00). Comments were also made that
archaeologists were slow to take up the opportunity to investigate the site.

Other local actors, however, claimed the archaeological survey was a token gesture. One
informant, who preferred to remain nameless, stated, ‘This was an example of UNESCO
and GOAL back-tracking. There was not enough time and not enough money for the
assessment. The work was also pressured by the construction-workers desire to avoid
delays as this would cost the authorities more money. It was all done in very bad spirit.’
It was emphasised how, ‘At around the same point too a big fence was built around the
site. This was hardly a diplomatic gesture to make at this point and increased fears that
more ‘questionable’ construction methods were taking place’. Moreover, in contrast to
Holmquist’s account, many local informants stressed the major significance of the
discoveries made in the short space of time that access was give to the site.

Details of these discoveries and the sentiments of regret, frustration and anger expressed
by local informants were picked up on by the media too. The Economist, for example,
comments, ‘Eager to finish the new building, the Egyptian government allowed only
hasty excavation of part of the site. Two superb mosaics were found. What other
treasures lay there will never be known. The new library’s deep foundations have erased
all traces of the past for eternity,' emphasising, ‘It is a sad irony, the new library may actually be built over its earliest forebear, which is known to have been located in the same vicinity’ (Anon 2000: 118). The New Yorker too echoed how this brief excavation ‘gave a tantalizing glimpse of what might have been re-discovered’ adding, ‘ironically, the new library may be burying the ancient library once and for all’ (Stille 2000: 99). In interview, Halim drew together the impacts, ‘It was through these events that many people in Alexandria got their first taste of scepticism over the Bibliotheca scheme’ (Halim: 9/99).

- Authenticity/ Inauthenticity

It is here that the motifs of authenticity/ inauthenticity establish themselves across the context of ‘meltdown’ where they can be seen to operate on many different levels. Halim, argues, for example, ‘We know that the Bibliotheca is located in the area of the royal palaces site, but when the construction work itself began literally destroying the ‘authentic’ archaeological connection to the past, it brought with it a sense of the Alexandrina as a bad parody of its own origins’ (Halim: 9/99). Similarly, Clement argues, ‘It is difficult, or perhaps impossible, to live up to ancient myth and there is a great risk that the new institution will be a poor mimicry’. This particular force of criticism also revealed the ‘critical Chorus’ own sense of alienation from the project and the subsequent fears of the loss or absence of intellectual capital, as Clement adds, ‘What is needed is some indication of intellectual content rather than it being a place controlled by a depressing line of bureaucrats and politicians’ (Clement: 9/99).

These anxieties are also bound up in the sense that the project’s re-inscription within both international and local bureaucratic and political domains was seen as tantamount to ‘hijacking.’ Bakri, for example, was forceful in her attack on the ‘top-down power-mechanisms’ at play in the scheme, and argued, ‘This is one in a long-line of monumental schemes: Cheops built the pyramids, Nasser built the Aswan High Dam and Mubarak built the New Alexandrina. What the president wants the president gets’ (Bakri: 9/99). Here she emphasised, ‘They all want their Grand Project and act like Pharaohs in
order to get it.' Equally problematic connotations saw UNESCO unfavourably characterised as revivalism's New Greeks in the sense in which as Bakri argues, 'international agencies like UNESCO are treated by many with suspicion.' She explains, 'We have a 'joke' or 'saying' here in Egypt where we always refer to the UN as the UN of A – the United Nations of America! People fear being controlled by forces from 'outside', particularly from the West, which are not wanted. Some people react the same way to 'Coca-cola culture', McDonald's and Levi Jeans. This is quite reasonable and understandable! These are things people feel they have no control over and do not want to let in to their world' (Bakri: 9/99). As such echoes can be found of Saadawi’s (1997:180-181) view that the popular voice as expressed in humour and irony has the potential to articulate a coded resistance.

This latter dynamic also tapped into frustrations voiced by others within the critical Chorus (and echoed concerns earlier expressed by El-Din) over the lack of consultation with local experts and fears that foreign experts would efface local groups: or as Bakri (with great irony) put it; the fear of 'the invasion of UNESCO clones/ clowns' into the local landscape (Bakri: 9/99). It was clear too that GOAL was becoming increasingly synonymous with alternative colonising and centralising forces - this time from within Egypt - and as underpinned by a formidable culture of Caireen bureaucrats. Awad, for example, spoke of the threat of the 'Cairo-isation' of Alexandria which had re-emerged in recent times and pursued this in interview, by charactering Caireen bureaucratic culture as equally foreign to local concerns and as an antagonistic threat to local autonomy (Awad: 9/99). The Western media has similarly picked up on this dynamic: The New Yorker, for example, has commented; ‘The idea of creating a cultural revival in Alexandria by diktat from Cairo’ is ‘at odds with some of the local intellectuals and cultural institutions’, adding, ‘It is difficult to see how the library project can remake Alexandria into a hub of world culture after the government in Cairo, has for more than forty years, sucked so much of the life out of the city. Alexandria’s fortune’s have waxed and waned according to Egypt’s attitudes toward Europe, and that deep ambivalence is very much present in the library issue.’ (Stille 2000: 92).
It was in this already highly charged atmosphere that critical attention re-focused on the construction site which manifested itself as ‘meltdown’s’ space of anxiety and was characterised emotively by one local informant as ‘that wound along the Corniche’. It was, therefore, with the Alexandrina’s physical emergence that the scheme met with increased local and international attention and that the ‘official’ celebratory thesis was further tested, its limitations exposed, and its vulnerabilities picked up on and opened up for criticism. The Alexandrina’s status as an object of speculation and of potential controversy initially took hold when the image of Snohetta’s architectural design was put into media circulation following the architectural competition in 1988. Many within the international press and on the ground responded by arguing that its futuristic design exacerbated a sense of the institution as an alien object. As Clement points out, ‘You really couldn’t underline the Bibliotheca’s alien qualities if you tried than actually designing it to look some kind of tacky alien space-craft left over from an episode of Dr Who! It would be laughable if it wasn’t so expensive and potentially damaging to Alexandria’s ancient archaeological heritage’ (Clement: 9/99).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, international media commentaries pursued further the ‘alien qualities’ of the Alexandrina. *The Economist*, for example, described the institution as ‘a flying saucer crashed on the shores of Africa’ (Anon 2000: 117), *The New York Times* as a ‘UFO’ (MacFaruhar 2001: 20) and one travel journalist, as ‘a stranded spaceship from another aeon’ (Mitchell 1998:11). Bringing in ‘local responses’ one journalist repeats how ‘one wry local’ ‘quips’ about the emergent Alexandrina, ‘They should really call it Elephantina Albina’ (Anon 2000: 117). It was clear too from interviews with local informants, that the Bibliotheca’s incongruity mirrored a co-existent popular sense of detachment and alienation from the project and an anticipation of corresponding difficulties embedding this project in modern Alexandria, an urbanized Third world city which was never fully visualised within the UNESCO/ GOAL ‘celebratory propaganda’. The ineffectiveness of the latter ‘propaganda’ within the local context saw Clement pick up on the architects (overdetermined?) ‘gloss’ on the building, - repeated by Zahran in his
many presentations on the project -, and which saw Clement not only brand Zahran as 'Mr Metaphor' but the Alexandrina as a 'mound of metaphors' (Clement: 9/99). Halim with specific reference to 'the parodic effect of the jumbled letters from the world’s alphabets wrought on the outer wall' has further characterised the institution in the press as a 'Tower of Babel' (Halim 2002b: 17).

This visual discontinuity or 'clash' between the 'clean lines' of the Alexandrina and the 'chaotic patchwork' of Alexandria's 'crumbling streets' was pursued further as a major theme in the international press. A number of journalists included personal reactions to the city in their commentaries, Stille in *The New Yorker* for example, states, 'Alexandria today bears little resemblance to its glorious predecessor. It is poor and shabby, a provincial backwater in a country dominated by Cairo, the capital. The sidewalks are broken and crumbling; the streets are dark and dirty, strewn with litter and garbage, and full of potholes. The once elegant turn-of-the-century architecture is now in a state of dilapidation. Yet here, on an empty lot beside the Mediterranean, a mammoth edifice has been taking shape.' (Stille 2000: 92). This re-working of the city's image as a site of decline was, however, positioned next to further speculations regarding revivalism's 'redemptive' qualities, again *The New Yorker* article asks: 'Can rebuilding the Great Library also redeem the city?' (Stille 2000: 90).

**- Urban Shock -Therapy**

Here the Alexandrina's myths of return and redemption were aligned more directly to new therapeutics and new perspectives on culture as cure. This has its links to a contemporary discourse within the heritage domain directed towards positioning culture as the centre-point of urban revival and renewal. As such, comparisons with other cultural regeneration projects surfaced: *The Economist*, for example, speculates: "Bilbao has its Guggenheim Museum; Paris its Centre Pompidou. Soon, Egypt's long-neglected second city will once again have its Bibliotheca Alexandrina" (Anon 2000:117). The institution is further characterised as an exercise in 'urban shock-therapy' with questions raised regarding revivalism's ability to re-instate Alexandria's position as a focal point
for international visitors and investment with more local development concerns (Anon 2000:117). The old utopianism is, however, undercut by the expression of certain doubts. The Economist, for example, echoes earlier expressed sentiments to suggest that the project may be all surface and no-substance: ‘Recreating the ancient library of Alexandria sounds great and looks nice, but the project may prove to be a folly’ (Anon 2000: 117).

Chapter Six gives depth of detail to both the ‘critical Chorus’ and official governorate positions regarding the dynamic of urban revivalism from these specific ‘insider’ viewpoints. However the broad sentiments of the former position can be summed up in Halim’s fears that the wider force of cultural revivalism might be lost to a form of ‘Disneyfication’ or ‘Las Vegasation’ of the city (Halim: 9/99). Moreover, other local informants picked up on comparative references made by the international press to other ‘Grand Designs’ and their agendas of ‘urban shock-therapy’ to stress further negative aspects of the scheme and their own concerns. They highlighted, for example, how by way of contrast to both Bilbao and the Pompidou, the Alexandrina not only had a cultural remit but also a very specific ‘philosophical heritage’ which many felt was being compromised.

Similarly the increasing criticism levelled at the UK’s Millennium Dome and its ultimate failure was used to reiterate the point that a building alone does not guarantee success. It was, yet again, the Alexandrina’s cosmopolitan quality, - its framing beyond the national brief, - was picked up on this time by Bakri in order to stress the divergences between the Bibliotheca and Mitterrand’s library project (as stated in Chapter Three this is often cited as a comparative project too), ‘The Alexandrina was never envisaged as a national library, and Cairo would probably have taken that title anyway. The Bibliotheca has a very differently internationalist, cosmopolitan, intellectual legacy’ (Bakri: 9/99). Again these concerns reiterate the on-going fear that revivalism was moving away from the initial aspirations which led Abaddi and his colleagues to first raise the idea.
This scepticism was further exacerbated as the experience of 'meltdown' saw the Alexandrina increasingly regarded as a drain on local resources, and as one local had it, was, 'Alexandria's albatross'. This particular dynamic operated on a number of levels. For example, comments were made that people living near the Alexandrina’s construction site experienced in very literal terms the institution’s presence as a drain on their resources as claims were made that domestic ‘power supplies’ were being ‘effected by the building-work’ which had resulted in people experiencing ‘difficulties getting fridges and other electric appliances to operate properly’. These characterisations of the Alexandrina as a narcissistic force feeding off the city’s resources where communicated, and also potentially subverted, in another example of the circulation of popular ‘rumours’ of resistance. Here El Qot’s (perhaps overdetermined) comments that the Bibliotheca was ‘indestructible’ was met by a very effective - though apparently unsubstantiated - popular ‘rumour’ which asserted that the site’s foundations were subject to persistent flooding, a consequence, it was argued, of building the institution too near the coast. This ‘rumour’ had the air of a distopic prophecy, imbuing the project with a ‘Titanic’ quality, as these popular sources held that the flooding could not be corrected by the engineers and, therefore, would eventually lead to the modern Alexandrina’s demise.

Further ‘rumours’ also circulated concerning the escalating construction costs and, as such, echo back to Abid’s discussion group’s fears that the Bibliotheca was a ‘luxury the city couldn’t afford.’ The rumours of high costs were eventually substantiated; the initial construction figure of $65 million had ‘tripled,’ and eventually ran to a sum of nearer $220 million which gave further substance to the Alexandrina drain on resources (Stille: 2000: 97). These costs were exacerbated by delays in the project’s construction: again the official reasons cited for disruption is the outbreak of the (‘First’) Gulf War in 1991 and while the financial commitments made at Aswan were honored by Iraq and neighbouring countries the conflict brought more widespread ‘draining of coffers’ which had its considerable effects on Egypt’s own economy and saw ‘Egypt and Iraq turned into
adversaries’ (Stille 2002: 255). The initial opening date of 1995 was thus increasingly pushed backwards. The local Chorus were, however, also concerned with the running costs which are estimated at over $15 million a year, with staff salaries and acquisitions estimated at a ‘similar sum’ (Stille: 2000: 97). The press speculated too of Egypt being, ‘locked into high operating costs in perpetuity’ (Stille: 2000: 97) with one local similarly expressing the anxiety that, ‘Alexandrians will be left with the bill which is a terrible catastrophe when we have real development needs which may not get attention due to the financial burden of this institution’.

-Luxury Item

These concerns over resources took on a particularly serious edge when the Bibliotheca’s ‘meltdown’ - and more specifically its process of physical construction - became polarised against another institution which stands near the site. Informants explained how a controversy arose when the Bibliotheca’s planners failed to allocate enough room for the institution’s gardens and car-parking spaces and, in response, suggested that the building adjacent to the site – a maternity and children’s hospital– should be knocked down (see fig. 16). Halim used her position as a journalist to bring attention to this issue. Her efforts to make GOAL accountable were, however, met by an official spokesperson’s reply that the hospital was ‘incompatible aesthetically’ with no reference to crucial details such as the potential relocation of hospital patients and thus increased the sense of the official fetishisation of surface over substance (Halim 1999a: 11). As Halim adds in interview, ‘This has been a very upsetting experience and shows the Bibliotheca’s planners in a terrible moral and ethical position’ (Halim: 9/99). Some local informants I spoke to were specifically concerned that this decision came from the ‘outside’ – and that it was specifically authored by ‘foreign’ consultants from UNESCO – and as such was indicative of the ‘outsiders’ failure to understand local needs, values and viewpoints. Other informants believed Egypt’s First Lady Suzanne Mubarak as the author of this unpopular decision: a claim which has been repeated in the press (Stille 2000:97).

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5 This is an extended version of the paper written by The New Yorker journalist and writer Stille which appears in his text The Future of the Past (2002).
Fig. 16. Building work at Bibliotheca Site with adjacent maternity and children’s hospital

(photo: B. Butler)
Unsurprisingly the privileging of the Alexandrina over a hospital proved to be a particularly insensitive act, and unsurprisingly, cast the Bibliotheca as an explicitly uncaring force.

In interview Zahran and Holmquist treated this controversy in a largely dismissive way, Holmquist at UNESCO Head-Quarters initially remarked that he was ‘not familiar with the dispute’ but then, ‘remembered something about the incident,’ adding, ‘I think there was some talk years ago of relocating the hospital – so it wasn’t just a question of tearing it down and leaving the mothers on the street’ (Holmquist: 3/00). Interestingly, in his account Suzanne Mubarak was recast as a redemptive figure rather than as the villain of the piece. He stated how the First Lady made promises to relocate the hospital ‘in good time for patients to move in’. Holmquist in a (perhaps unfortunate) echo subsequently cast the incident as ‘more of an aesthetic thing. I think some people felt the building was architecturally not on a par with the Alexandrina Library building’ (Holmquist: 3/00). To date the decision is still on hold, however, half of the hospital has been closed down with no indication of GOAL’s next move on this issue. This particular drama can be understood as a defining moment in the ‘critical Chorus’ ability to assert an alternative and increasingly well-developed sense of moral-guardianship over this period of ‘meltdown’ and illustrates how the already strained relationship between GOAL and local elites intensified further over these failures to communicate and work in effective collaboration with local actors.

- Meltdown’s ‘Worse Case Scenario’

This moral and ethical dynamic to ‘meltdown’ was alternatively marked by what Abid described earlier as the over-riding fear to haunt the ‘official’ revivalist imaginary: the distopic vision of the Bibliotheca which manifests itself as a ‘clash’ with Islamist extremists (Abid: 3/00). As such, from the official stakeholders point of view meltdown’s ‘worse case scenario,’ is that of a ‘religious- hijacking.’ As previously explored too, this contemporary fear echoes back to a deeper myth/ historical layering in terms of the ancient Bibliotheca as the site of an (alleged) ‘clash’ between ‘Islam and the West’
(Ahmed 1992). It is true to say that writ large, the Bibliotheca project and, therefore, my own fieldwork period, coincided with a more general conflict between the Egyptian state and certain groups of Islamic extremists. As critics emphasise it was in the mid-1990s – the same time at which the Alexandrina's foundations were constructed – that the Islamist groups posed a serious threat to the Egyptian state (cf. Buckley 2000: 16; Janowski 2001: 180-198). This was also a time at which some extremist's attempted to pursue the agenda of establishing Sharia law courts in Egypt (Buckley 2000:16). Moreover, within the wider global arena the motif of the 'Clash of Civilisations' (Huntington 1996) was also being revived within both intellectual and political discourse and re-worked as a specific clash between 'McWorld and Jihad' (Barber 1995). It was at this time too that a new critical cosmopolitics was put into play to challenge these interventions (cf. Cheah and Robbins 1998; Meijer 1999).

The international media also picked up on these particular currents collecting around the Alexandrina. The New Yorker, for example, comments how, 'The project reflects the tensions in Egyptian society' (Stille 2000: 92). This article, like other accounts, identifies a possible – or even an anticipated – 'clash' between 'secularism and religion' which is particularised further over the aforementioned (in Chapter Four) issue of 'censorship.' Again, The New Yorker rehearses the contradictions the Bibliotheca project brings into play: '[E]ven as the government of Mohammed Hosni Mubarak spends hundreds of millions of dollars on the library project, it is stepping up censorship to placate the country’s Islamic militants', here the author quotes Hisham Kassem, who works for the Cairo Times, 'It’s a bit of a paradox that the government is building a library while it is banning books’ (Stille 2000: 92). The Economist too, outlined how, ‘Dozens of books are officially banned, and the prosecution of authors charged with assaulting Islam has become common ... In the past two years, government pressure has forced the American University in Cairo, a private institution, to remove nearly 100 titles from its library and book-shop’ (Anon 2000: 118).

On the ground, however, while there was more consciousness (and experience) of the extremes that censorship could take, there was also a keenness to draw out the nuances at
play which the media often failed to pick up on, typically, at the cost of stereotyping Egyptian ‘actors’. Clement, for example, offered a more subtle approach when he suggested in interview that: ‘Every society experiences some kind of censorship – the West in particular should not fool itself in believing it is entirely ‘open.’ There is a very important commitment by Egyptian intellectuals at the moment to openness and there is a real concern over the banning of books. But this is part of a very wide and complex debate and cannot be reduced to a clash between Islam and secularism. The word ‘secularism’ itself is not one you would typically find Egyptians using as religion is such an inseparable part of identity. The terms of this debate are really embedded in the Egyptian identity’. Picking up on the tensions at play from this alternative perspective Clement stated how: ‘The Egyptian way of life is as valid as anyone else’s but there are stresses and contradictions in this society which are now collecting around the issue of censorship. If this does indeed correspond to current moral attitudes then why build something so global and all-encompassing as a universal library? You can’t have your cake and eat it’ (Clement: 9/99).

These and other comments from local informants had the capacity to draw out further this sense of revivalism as a provocative force when intervening in this culturally sensitive area. From this perspective Abid’s earlier rehearsed references to the international librarian and archival profession’s attempts to agitate, via UNESCO and GOAL, for a mechanism to ensure the Bibliotheca would be an ‘uncensored’, ‘universal library’ – and their investment in Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses* (1988) as the litmus test - can be considered provocative too. As local informants drew out these interventions, they take on a more problematic status and could themselves be read as a failure to pick up on the specific ‘sensitivities’ within the Egyptian context. Informants, for example, stressed how the fatwa against Rushdie’s book was issued by the representatives of Shi’ite Islam and did not provoke the same controversy in Egypt which is a majority Sunni Islamic culture (see Hafez 2000). The authorities at Al Azhar (an academy and religious centre in Cairo’s Khan El Khalili district and centre-point for Sunni Islam) did not take up this issue and did not recognise the Shi’ite Ayatollah’s fatwa against Rushdie’s book (see also Appignanesi and Maitland 1989). During my fieldwork, however, a considerable
controversy did arise over one text Haydar’s *The Banquet of Seaweeds* (first published in 1983 and an object of controversy in Egypt in 1999-2000) the banning of which provoked a considerable local response and illustrated the particularly Egyptian nuances of this controversy (see Hafez 2000).

- Clash of Stereotypes

This above episode perhaps more potently than others makes explicit questions regarding revivalism’s status ‘between world’s’: in terms of the ‘universal’ and the ‘particular’ territorial context. This, in turn, highlights the difficulties and potentially oppressive nature of what Abid earlier described as the potential of the authors of any international heritage scheme to fall into the trap of assuming a sameness of context in terms of moral and ethical codes, religious and secular realms and social and political realities which map ‘across worlds’ (see also Appendix Three). It was obvious too that UNESCO/GOAL were yet to grapple with the specific dynamics of censorship in the reviverist context. In terms of the former Egyptian dynamic, Alexandrian informants used the opportunity of these discussions to clarify misunderstandings in terms of Egyptian culture and its relationship to Islam.

Here, for example, local informants stressed the need to challenge what was described as the ‘demonisation’ and ‘homogenisation’ of Islam in the Western press: in particular, in the figure of the ‘Islamic terrorist’. Significantly too, informants thus differentiated between ‘social Islam’ which was referred to as a ‘popular, peaceful, positive and improving’ force, and also valued as a key provider of ‘civil society’ (i.e. a series of Islamic NGOs have been developed in recent years including those mobilised to create schools, health centres and organised to generate job opportunities (see Buckley 2000: 11)) in the contemporary Egyptian context. ‘Social Islam’ was, however, contrasted by others with expressions of ‘fanaticism’ which many saw as a ‘foreign’, imposition and for some synonymous with what was termed as a highly ‘conservative’, imported ‘Saudi Islam’. For some informants this brand of Islam had its attractions, while others
communicated a clear rejection of what was once again dubbed as 'this unEgyptian phenomenon'.

In a further attempt to express the lack of understanding and sensitivity towards the Egyptian context, some within the 'critical Chorus' saw the Alexandrina’s library spaces (and their combination of both real and digital texts) as representing an inappropriate recreation of a elitist temple of culture: as Clement commented, ‘this is an unfortunate prioritisation in a country where much of the population is illiterate’ (Clement: 9/99). The current statistics on literacy levels show that ‘a third of men and 60% of women are illiterate’ (Buckley 2000: 18). While this criticism of elitism has been met by statements from Zahran regarding future plans to centre the Alexandrina within educational opportunities and, in particular, aspirations to marry it to Suzanne Mubarak’s scheme (currently in place and which was highly praised by many within the ‘critical Chorus’) which reprints, at low-cost, popular Egyptian fiction and history texts as part of wider literacy programmes (Zahran: 9/99): frustrations, however, regarding the more general lack of details (especially during the period of ‘meltdown’) on this and other matters exacerbated frustrations further.

The reticence (unwillingness, inability?) of GOAL and others within the official domain to give access to such details understandably provoked comment and concern, Halim for example, expressed her frustrations in the following way: ‘I have asked Zahran explicitly on a number of occasions: ‘Who will be able to use the library?’ and he replied, ‘It is open to anyone, as long they are not there simply to use the air-conditioning”’. Halim responded by stating, ‘What does that mean? Is this a coded message which means that anyone in low income groups or who doesn’t ‘look right’ better keep clear?, adding ‘It is clear that only the rich and educated will go there and that they are the only ones who will be welcome by the management’ (Halim: 9/99). Halim’s comment drew out what emerged as a repeated theme in my ethnographic interviews, that museum and library visiting in Egypt as almost exclusively the preserve of a minority of wealthy elites (see also Nourreddin’s comments in Appendix Five). She like others drew out Egypt’s restricted social mobility as keeping this a fixed grouping. Here Bourdieu’s museum’s
critiques have some resonance (cf. Bourdieu 1984). Other informants also referred to the sharp distinction made between the ‘educated’ and the ‘uneducated’ in Egypt and the ‘top-down’ fear of this becoming a blurred category.

Others still have suggested, not without irony, that there may well be very little for potential users to read, and thus also for any Islamist extremists to call to ban, as further scandals suggest that the contents of the library space (or rather the lack of them) are a more major concern. The aforementioned lack of communication within Alexandria itself was focused on by the press as a key dynamic: The New Yorker comments; ‘It was not until 1997 that El-Abaddi and other intellectuals were invited to form an advisory committee to recommend books for the library, and they haven’t been consulted very much’ (Stille 2000: 97). Here the international press also poured scorn on any idea that the current holdings represented a ‘universal’ collection by stating how, ‘To date donations have included a list of items other libraries have been glad to off-load, including a 1974 edition of the Guinness Book of records!’ (MacFaruhur 2001:20).

It was in this context too that the University of Alexandria in anticipation of the fact that its staff and students would soon be able to use the Bibliotheca’s library resources, took the step of selling off its own university collection. As Empereur commented, ‘This is another complete disaster! This collection is far better than that of the Bibliotheca. Zahran should have bought or at least incorporated this collection within their collections. Instead there is currently no decent library in the entire city!’ (Empereur: 5/00). Beneath these concerns also emerged significant scandals regarding the mismanagement of book-buying funds which, in turn, saw the media unearth even more serious accusations concerning the wider mismanagement of revivalist scheme.

- Breaking Scandals

These scandals were discussed by many within the ‘critical Chorus’. However, it was The New Yorker article which effectively ‘broke’ the news and along with other media excavations of revivalism’s messy politics, illustrated how during the period of
‘meltdown’ both UNESCO and also GOAL had their images tarnished with charges of 
corruption. *The New Yorker* exposed how power-sharing during the Bibliotheca project’s 
‘meltdown’ caused dramatic rifts within the UNESCO/ Egyptian state partnership; the 
journalistic trump card here being an interview with Giovanni Romerio a now retired 
UNESCO employee willing to disclose this insider information, as Stille explains:

‘Officially, power over the library project was supposed to be shared by UNESCO and 
the Egyptian government. But “the Egyptians are very good at creating these diabolic 
mechanisms whereby they nominally give control to a foreigner but then undermine it 
through a complex double structure,” explained Giovanni Romerio, a UNESCO official 
from Italy who was put in charge of the Executive Secretariat, which oversees day-to-day 
work on the project. Romerio quickly discovered that the real power lay with two 
committees in Cairo, one headed by Mrs. Mubarak and the other by the Minister of 
Higher Education. ‘On paper, a professor of architecture at the University of Alexandria 
named Mohsen Zahran was Romerio’s second-in-command, but in fact, Romerio said, 
“he took orders from the minister in Cairo”. Romerio said he had been constantly 
outmaneuvered by his deputy, who at one point tried to hide the fact that he had gone to 
the Frankfurt Book Fair to acquire books. “He could not tolerate sharing power,” 
Romerio, who reached retirement age in 1995, said Zahran then became the head of the 
Executive Secretariat’ (Stille 2000: 97).

The same time as this ghost from revivalism’s past returned to haunt the official narrative 
of ‘meltdown,’ UNESCO’s own equally tarnished recent past re-emerged. This came in 
the form of breaking news which made public ‘a damning independent audit funded by 
Canada’ which was described as being ‘heavily critical of almost every area of 
UNESCO’s operations’ (Henley 1999a:12). In a series of articles which appeared in the 
UK’s *The Guardian* newspaper sported headlines such as ‘Family and mistresses dip in 
UNESCO trough’, ‘A culture of cronyism,’ and ‘UNESCO Sleaze,’ which sum up, 
tabloid fashion, the main areas of controversy (see Henley 1999a; 1999b; 1999c). In these 
articles a historical résumé of the Organisation characterises it in negative terms as 
‘Prone to politicisation’ ‘in-fighting’ and ‘financial mismanagement’ and is described
further as a ‘top-heavy bureaucracy’ led by ‘a Utopian vagueness,’ which has brought the organization ‘more hostility than praise’ (Henley 1999d:15). UNESCO’s susceptibility to ‘hi-jacking’ from within is highlighted with journalists referencing, for example, the US/UK’s decision to leave the organisation amid claims that the organisation was run by a ‘Third World-Soviet slate’ (Henley 1999b: 7). The Canadian report is subsequently cited to both re-confirm and deepen UNESCO’s negative characterisation as a ‘byword for inefficiency, nepotism and corruption’ (Henley 1999a: 12). The report’s statistics thus detail how: ‘For every $1 spent in the field, $3 was spent on administration in its glass-walled Paris palace; for every person in the field promoting education, science and culture, six more could be found comfortably cosseted in the French capital’ (Henley 1999c: 5)

Furthermore, the audit also is positioned as a script for UNESCO’s own redemption: ‘The Canadian report has established what needs to be done: a much more systematic and independent procedure monitoring appointments, projects, and budgets - plus an independent hotline for staff complaints’ (Henley 1999d:15). Elections for a new Director-General were also hoped to help redeem the organisation’s reputation. The outgoing head Mayor (a key player at the Aswan Meeting) was described in the press by a UNESCO employee as, "Like Louis XIV: I am the state" (Henley 1999d:15). His replacement Koichiro Matsuuro was thus primed to take on the ‘Herculean task’ of reform. However, to exacerbate matters further accusations of ‘vote-rigging’ marked Matsuuro’s election and he himself was dubbed by other UNESCO staff-member as ‘dictatorial’ and as an ‘authoritarian.’ Staff also told the press of their ‘despair of salvaging the organisation’ (Henley 1999d:15). In this sense during the period of ‘meltdown’ Aswan’s ‘sacred dramas’ had been recast into a more messy version of a ‘Greek’ – or perhaps more globalised cosmopolitan - tragedy.

- Narcissus and Echo

The ability of the media to significantly effect revivalism’s ‘meltdown’ and the ‘critical Chorus’’ strategic use of this dynamic emerged a cause for reflection in interview
discussions. Empereur, for example, stated how, ‘The local media in Alexandria is strong in terms of challenging and resourceful individuals like Halim and El Bakri who use it to draw to people’s attention certain criticisms’ (Empereur: 5/00). He adds, ‘These episodes showed us the value of the international media too. We found ourselves in a strange situation in which the international media acts as a mirror to events taking place here in Alexandria. We discovered that it is only once the West is interested in these events – or made aware of criticisms - will they be taken seriously by the Egyptian authorities and action taken! This was true of both the Qait Bey conflict and the controversy over the digging of the Bibliotheca’s foundations which appeared in Le Monde. It is a way of validating these events in the eyes of the wider world and a means to gain support and credibility for local opposition.’

The mobilisation of this media ‘echo’ by the ‘critical Chorus’ (in either explicit collaborations with the press and/or by harnessing its critical voice) to expose the narcissisms (the destructive qualities and corruptions) of revivalism as a ‘top-down’ force was placed alongside the wider, empowering dynamics of campaigning. As Halim states, ‘As a whole this has given us some hope that there is some means of getting across the kinds of mismanagement effecting Alexandria’s cultural projects and also communicating the local anger it has provoked. The international media can also pick up on the scandals which would never make it through the mainstream Egyptian press’ (Halim: 9/99). Bakri similarly argued, ‘I think Alexandrians have proved to themselves that they are capable of mobilising themselves. It has also showed the “Powers That Be” that they cannot simply “Get away with it” and that any decent project needs to include local people – otherwise it will be resisted’ (Bakri: 9/99). A final comment made by Clement drew these dynamics together, ‘The extent of the phenomenon of criticism and resistance has been substantial and shows how easily people – who may, in other contexts, have certain differences with each other – unite in opposition in order to defend issues of heritage preservation and also to defend the Alexandrian spirit of cosmopolitanism and its sense of autonomy’ (Clement: 9/99).
This chapter has demonstrated that the 'messy politics' of 'meltdown' that marks this particular phase of the Alexandrina’s homecoming is subject to the controversies and the tragedies which result largely from official hubris. What is made explicit is that during the period of 'meltdown' the official vision of revivalism remained (again, for the most part) blind to the pre-existing institutions such as the Greco-Roman Museum and to the 'real' of Alexandria’s cosmopolitan pasts, its archaeology and the specific, autonomous traditions which are symbolically and operationally rooted in these domains. As such, the literalising of the project of homecoming is led by a vision of the Bibliotheca’s revival as a 'world in itself' which does not recognise the local landscape as a major consideration beyond either 'aesthetics' or the official objective of 'getting the construction work done'. The result being that revivalism initiates itself as a top-down destructive force which clashes with the local in terms of its heritage, hospitals, its media, its experts and its intellectuals: it therefore provokes an 'anti-voice' in those, rhetorically at least, it sought to include as supporters.

Furthermore, as shown in this chapter this sees the 'critical Chorus' take up certain strategisations during the period of 'meltdown' – notably in terms of mobilising a subversive form of 'echo' – in order to expose official narcissism and to make claims to local 'authenticity' and agency within this domain. As demonstrated this alternative force of networking gives 'voice' to those institutions, issues and individuals located 'outside' official revivalism’s own 'sacred dramas' and its official memory-work. In terms of the articulation of a grass-roots response, for example, the 'anti-voice'/ 'echo' takes on the destabilising effects of the popular imagination’s 'rumours', 'jokes' and ironies, as expressed in the renaming of the Bibliotheca as Mubarak’s 'white elephant' and/or in prophecies that the project eventually succumb to flooding. It also sees the popular imagination, the media and Alexandrian elites re-cast the Alexandrina as UFO and point the finger at Caireen and UNESCO bureaucrats as the city’s 'hijackers' and thus
characterise them in the guise of ‘outsiders’/ ‘foreigners.’ A similar expression of resistance to official ‘top-down’ hijacking emerges with the Chorus’ defence of other besieged identities’ (cf. Said 2003) in the sense of challenging negative stereotypes of Islam in order to begin to address with more subtlety the complex relationships between religion, secularism and censorship in the contemporary context. This signals the beginnings too of the Alexandrian elite’s attempts to redefine revivalism more strategically as a ‘cosmopolitan contact zone’ (cf. Clifford 1998: 369) and as a ‘site of resistance’ (cf. Abaddi: 1/97) and opposition to the narcissisms of nationalist/ globalising agendas and ‘hijackings’.

The period of ‘meltdown’ also witnessed the ghosts return from revivalism’s own past to haunt the contemporary context. As such the media resurrection of the repressed figure of Romerio and its exposure of other GOAL/ UNESCO corruption scandals reap their devastating effects. These are perhaps illustrative of the repressions/ trauma within the official stakeholders own archive/ origins. ‘Meltdown’s’ substantial disturbances also witness a shift occur in terms of revivalisms power-politics as these local actors emerge to re-instate themselves within the revivalist line of vision. This saw Abaddi and others, for example, re-establish themselves as gate-keepers albeit in an alternative, - an increasingly moral/ethical position - as revivalism’s more authentic ‘cultural conscience.’ Moreover, these local claims to greater authenticity with regard to Alexandria’s memory and materiality are given substance by various means.

It is here that a certain ‘Alexandrianisation’ of the dynamic of homecoming takes hold and sees the ‘critical Chorus’ draw upon an alternative ‘archive’ of both intellectual and material heritages. As informants were keen to assert, this is led by claims of a return to, and mobilisation of the ‘icons and images’ synonymous with the city’s ‘twin’ ancient and modern cosmopolitan eras. This spirit of ‘Alexandrianisation’ acting on the Bibliotheca’s ‘meltdown’ thus not only sees the ‘Chorus’ increasingly agitate for participation in new mediations and management of the reviveralist domain, but sees this opened up to a wider politics of archival hospitality which takes into account the broader dramas of the ‘disturbance of memory’ currently effecting the city. It is this demand for inclusion which
sees this alternative ‘Chorus’ participate in revivalism’s other key ‘tributaries’: archaeological and urban revivalism which are the subject of Chapters Six and Seven respectively. It is, therefore, to the former that I now turn.
Chapter Six

‘Spirit of Aspiration’ - Archaeological Revivalism and Recuperation
INTRODUCTION

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISTURBANCES

After six missions the initial 17 artefacts found by Kamel el Saadat and Honor Frost at the Qait Bey site are now 4,000 with Jean-Yves Empereur directing this exciting project. We also have Franck Goddio's excavations in the palace sites which have revealed more than 4,000 objects plus the superb underwater landscapes - such as Antirhodus Island, the ancient sea floor and Cape Lochias - not to mention the finds at Abu Qir. The Greek and Italian teams are also active along the coast. Now the Department of Underwater Archaeology is itself not simply supporting the foreign missions but my people are now beginning to organise our own excavations. These are the things that all the world is talking about and the reason why we are all here today.

(Darwish: 9/99)

The idea of any drowned city captures the imagination, but by any standards the lost quarter of Alexandria was special. The ghosts haunting the streets included some of the most charismatic figures of antiquity ... Whole sunken harbours have been traced, the remains of ancient buildings have been located, and the first reliable plan of the ancient city has been prepared.

(Goddio 1998: 20-21).

My aim in this chapter is to understand how the impact of the homecoming of the Bibliotheca has been affected by the specific 'tributary' of archaeological revivalism. The disturbances made to both the surface and depths of the city of Alexandria by recent land and more spectacularly still, by underwater excavations, have brought even more drama and intrigue to the scene of revivalism. As such, the dynamic of archaeological revivalism emerges as an integral part of the context of 'meltdown'. As previously rehearsed, these excavations have destabilised the traditional Western 'Myth of Return' (as premised upon an absence of archaeological remains) by drawing into centre stage
more potent objects relating to ancient Alexandria's legendary landscapes thus adding more material substance to the force of revivalism and of 'Alexandrianisation'.

The return and recuperation of 'material memory' (cf. Kwint 1999) has transformed Alexandria into a potent scene of excavation and revelation. This, in turn, makes more explicit the sense in which the contemporary city can be understood as undergoing an intense 'disturbance of memory' since Alexandria as an 'object of memory' is confronted with the materiality of its ancient past (cf. Freud 1984). This has also led to more potent archaeological 'signs and images' and 'myths and icons' including those revealed in association with the Pharos Lighthouse, Cleopatra and Napoleon's fleet as a part of the contemporary landscape and put into circulation within the wider revivalist imaginary. The search for the final resting place of Alexander the Great has also met with increased interest and is currently seducing both foreign as well as Egyptian archaeologists (cf. Fakharany: 9/99). The more recent discovery of the 'lost' city and port of Herakleion, which 'according to legend was visited by Paris and Helen of Troy' (Kennedy 2001:27) - a connection which the poet H.D. would have probably have appreciated seeing materialised - has led to even more drama. These discoveries, in turn, have seen archaeologists re-engage in long-running debates concerning Alexandria's relationship to its pre-Alexandrian origins and, in which, the landscape of Heliopolis - which so preoccupied Diop, Derrida and others - has also re-emerged as a significant feature. This has given more drama to archaeologists and the local and international press alike depicting Alexandria as a city haunted by ghosts of its ancient past (see, for example, Goddio 1998: 20-2; Nicholl 1996: 67-68).

Drawing upon interviews I had with both 'foreign' missions and members of the Department of Underwater Archaeology a complex picture of revivalism can, therefore, be built up. Archaeological revivalism, at times, emerges as a rival movement to that of the 'official' restoration of the Alexandrina for which no ancient material trace remains. As such archaeologists offer another way of reviving Alexandria in the sense of mobilising the more 'authentic' archaeological material culture in order to be more sympathetic to local and popular needs. This gesture itself brings the narrative of
homecoming closer to the more orchestrated recuperative dynamics of the operational equivalent of the Aswan Meeting: the SARCOM Workshop of 1997. As informants made clear, the SARCOM Workshop is the pivotal point around which the force of underwater archaeological revivalism and ‘meltdown’s’ major networks and NGOs are organised. As will be discussed the Workshop is responsible for introducing a series of pilot projects on the scene which sees Alexandria undergo greater museumification and heritagification.

SECTION ONE

'SPIRIT OF ASPIRATION'

An invitation from Darwish, Director of the Department of Underwater Archaeology (DUA) to use the department as my base during my fieldwork phases enabled me to understand both the significance and the scale of the archaeologists’ role in revivalism. Assisted by Ahmad Omar, a DUA archaeologist-diver, I was able to visit and undertake interviews at the DUA and also with the key foreign missions located in Alexandria and active in contemporary context. In what follows I chart out the key themes and agendas to emerge in these wider dramas of revival of and reattachment with Alexandria’s illustrious archaeological heritage.

- Myth of Alexandria

My point of departure in terms of mapping this context is the contents of interviews undertaken with the Directors of the two French missions, Franck Goddio of the European Institute of Marine Archaeology (IEASM) (Goddio: 5/00) and Jean Yves Empereur of the Centre for Alexandrian Studies (CEA) (Empereur: 5/00). It was the question of the relationship of archaeological revivalism to the ‘Myth of Alexandria’ which both men take as their initial starting point for discussion and which both men stress to be the importance of a professional scientific approach to the city’s heritage over that of any seductive, romantic draw. Goddio, for example, acknowledges that: ‘Alexandria has a particular romanticism about it which is unique... I was fascinated with

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1 I outline these research dynamics in Appendix Two.
that history,' he specified, however, ‘But my real motivation was that I wanted to see that big piece of history that was missing under the sea.’ Empereur’s response was more emphatic: ‘I didn’t come for any ‘Myth of Alexandria’’, adding, ‘My motivation was that I wanted to know why we know so little about this big famous city from Hellenistic times and why there were so few discoveries. There is a massive gap between Alexandria as literary city and its wealth of texts and the sheer lack of archaeology!’

Empereur ventured, ‘Part of the reason for this gap is that Alexandria is typically ignored by mainstream archaeology: it is of no particular interest to Egyptologists, while most Classicists tend to focus on sites in Greece. You might say that it is too Greek for one group and too Egyptian for the other’. He added how, ‘Within Egypt too Alexandria’s patrimony has suffered de-attachment. The Greco-Roman period is regarded as somehow ‘foreign’ or ‘outside’ of Egyptian history. Alexandria is often missed out or becomes the ‘gap’ between the Pharaonic and the Islamic periods… This is very frustrating for both us [the CEA] and people like Abaddi, Bakri and others who work so hard to communicate to other Egyptians the value of their Hellenistic heritage’. He argued more optimistically: ‘I do, however, think that the new discoveries will address this gap and put Alexandria back into Egyptian history and also allow it to be re-valued at international level’.

- Contemporary ‘Disturbances’

Both Empereur and Goddio turned to outline the specific dynamics of recovery in making reattachments with Alexandria’s ‘lost’ past. To illustrate, Empereur returned to the CEA’s most high profile excavation at the Qait Bey/Pharos site: ‘At the beginning it was a race against time. I was called in to take away the concrete blocks which were damaging the archaeology. We were motivated by the fact that we were saving the seventeen objects earlier recorded by Frost and Saadat: but to our astonishment there were in fact thousands of objects: columns, sphinxes and statues! It was astonishing!’ Empereur’s moment of ‘astonishment’ draws parallels with Freud’s ‘disturbance of memory’ (cf. Freud 1984). Empereur enthuses, ‘The whole experience was at first too fantastic to believe! Of course we were excited by the prospect that some of the huge
blocks were from Pharos itself. At first there was a sense that this was unbelievable and totally unexpected’.

Goddio also recalled memories of discoveries at the royal quarter – or ‘Cleopatra’s’ palace site: ‘Of course, it was more complicated than diving down and finding oneself face to face with a sunken sphinx! At the beginning there was nearly zero visibility and we could not find anything. But increasingly as we were making our survey we found very strange things and thought: ‘what is this?’ And then suddenly we found one block: – then from this one thing it was like a thread of objects leading us forward’ (see fig. 17). Once again it was more scientific concerns, and intimacies between ancient and modern geographies and geographers, rather than any romantic attachments to the mythology of Cleopatra, which were profiled: ‘When we were searching this area and making our surveys of sites we turned to Strabo’s description of the city. It is amazing to feel close to the ancients while tracing the city’s missing heritage. It is so fascinating I could not help being excited’.

- Science as Knowledge

Both men subsequently emphasised the contribution of contemporary revivalism to scientific, archaeological knowledge and the fundamental implications that contemporary discoveries have for a discourse on Alexandria’s ancient origins. Empereur commented, ‘The big advance is that for the first time we have such a vast wealth of artefacts relating to the Hellenistic past, before which time we had virtually nothing. We have ancient sources which tell us that there were many Pharaonic pieces moved from Heliopolis to decorate the city and we have surviving examples of cities like Rome which were decorated with antiquities from earlier times, including the Pharaonic period, but in Alexandria we now have the physical proof we never had before. It can now be said that in appearance the city was more Egyptian than some Western historians were prepared to take on. True academics would have known this, but those who wanted a romantic image of a ‘Greek’ city clung to this image’. Contemporary archaeological revivalism as material proof of the assertion that ancient Alexandria was ‘less Greek’ and ‘more
Fig. 17. Map of Eastern Harbour with Qait Bey/Pharos and Royal Palace site
(source: based on Foreman 1999: 163)
Egyptian' than previously thought, is thus articulated as revivalism's key archaeological breakthrough (see also Coteggiani quoted in La Riche 1998: 52).

Goddio, who worked in finance and mathematics before his turn to archaeology, outlined his team's particular contribution to this re-conceptualisation of the ancient city: 'We have brought the very best technology to excavations and from this we have been able to produce the first detailed maps of the Eastern harbour and surveys of the site of Napoleon's fleet' (the latter is the location where Nelson and Napoleon fought the Battle of the Nile 1798). Of this site Goddio stated: 'We knew that we were in the presence of the material remnants of a great historical event which had become submerged. It is when you come into contact with the personal effects of individual soldiers that the humanity of the event takes an emotional toll. We found weapons, coins and also human remains. Obviously it is too old to be classed as a grave site but we did locate skeletal remains'. He added: 'I would say that Alexandria is the place where you find the biggest concentration of underwater archaeologists of anywhere in the world. The city is now one of the global centre-points of underwater archaeology with some of the greatest discoveries emerging'.

- Media Mediations

Existing in both intimacy and tension with the dynamic of scientific modes of excavating and archiving archaeological knowledge is the media. It was here that Empereur drew out what he termed as the 'double edged' nature of the press to argue; 'Journalists and the media are only interested in personalities - like Alexander the Great and Cleopatra - not by facts or science'. He connected this to the 'rush to authenticate Pharos', asserting, 'We don't want to enter this struggle. We leave this to the press. We are only interested in publishing scientifically all the artefacts and the discoveries.' Of the CEA's own commodification of their projects in books and videos of the Qait Bey/Pharos excavations including his own text *Alexandria Rediscovered* (1998), he stated: 'These are useful in telling people what is happening here and informing both the public and archaeological communities about these projects'. He subsequently linked these
dynamics to that of funding, 'We have had support and a limited amount of sponsorship in Europe because the images and pictures Alexandria conjures up in peoples minds are strong. Westerners are usually familiar with the history of the city – the Lighthouse, the Library – even if this is from seeing the film “Cleopatra” with Elizabeth Taylor. Watching these things, however, people believe that we were full of money and that we have no needs. So perhaps the media and attempts to gain greater profile at times work against us'. Empereur stressed how the CEA’s initial sponsors ‘Came on board before the ‘discovery’ of Pharos and ‘respected the fact that we are engaged in scientific work’. By way of contrast, he explained: ‘We got offers from French sponsors - a lot of money! – who said they would pay us if we were specifically to excavate Alexander the Great’s Tomb or the Great Library. Obviously I said ‘No.’ This is not my way of working!’

Goddio similarly emphasised how he secured his main sponsors, ‘before we made the big discoveries’. His own (often romantic) dramatisation of Alexandria’s heritage in films, published books (for example, Alexandria: The Submerged Royal Quarters 1998) and in the press was more subdued in interview: ‘I was extremely surprised with the media interest. It is true that the media have pursued their interest in Cleopatra the most. The whole romanticism of the area has the power to catch the imagination. They kept saying: “Which is her palace?”, “Where did Cleopatra seduce her men?” “Where did she commit suicide?”’ Goddio added ‘I could see the interest if we had found Alexander the Great’s Tomb but in reality we had found a sunken part of the ancient city: its ancient pavement areas and Antirhodus Island. Of course, as scientists we know this is ‘treasure’ in terms of scientific knowledge but we didn’t expect the media frenzy’. He offered, ‘Perhaps because this was a drama taking place under the sea and because Cleopatra has her glamorous, enigmatic image, which Shakespeare and Hollywood helped to create, then all of these things have the ability to capture the imagination’.

It was Goddio’s team’s decision to sell film rights of both the ‘Cleopatra’ and ‘Napoleon’s’ Fleet’ excavations to the satellite Discovery Channel (a lucrative deal

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2 More details on sponsorship and on the excavations themselves can be found on the CEA’s and Franck Goddio’s respective websites (see Appendix Six).
estimated at $1 million) which created some tension with and criticism from other fieldwork informants. In interview Goddio was happy to detail, 'Yes, we have a long term agreement with the Discovery Channel – but this was a general agreement - and they are following my missions in the Philippines and in the Caribbean: it is a wider coverage'. There was, however, some admission that, 'For Discovery the associations with Cleopatra were promoted and seen as a very important project. It is exactly the kind of connection the media like to dramatise'. Goddio, in turn, drew out ‘double-edged’ responses to the landscapes he excavates: ‘Of course, you know for the French Napoleon’s defeat is not something people want to be reminded of. The British, perhaps, but not the French’.3

- Lost Landscapes and Lost Memory

It was ultimately the concern, as Empereur put it, ‘to find a balance between the need to preserve the ancient archaeology and the needs of the modern town’ that dominated discussions of revivalism. Empereur expressed both his anxieties and also the paradoxes which marks this domain: ‘The ‘Myth of Alexandria’ and its spirit and its memory are obviously alive in the West and of significant interest to intellectual elites and the media but is still not attached to the preservation of the archaeological sites’. He gave a further ‘example of the sensibility regarding Alexandria’ by adding, ‘We have had great success with new books, videos and exhibitions – like the one happening soon in London on ‘Cleopatra’4 – but this sensibility does not translate into the field where knowledge is disappearing and landscapes are being lost’. He added, ‘Revivalism has shown that a consciousness must be raised in terms of including heritage as a factor in the modern development of the town. Currently this is not considered at all by developers although this is being highlighted by many active in the local context.’ Goddio, with different nuances ended his discussion with the hope that, ‘more popular interest can be developed

3 The Discovery Channel programme Napoleon’s Fleet (1996) which focused upon these excavations is interesting in that it creates a romanticism by drawing out Goddio’s ancestral links with one of Napoleon’s officers. This was not referred to by Goddio in interview, however.

4 This was the exhibition ‘Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth’ which was exhibited at the British Museum from April- August 2001.
within Alexandria in terms of recent archaeological discoveries’ and the hope that a recuperated Bibliotheca project would provide ‘an important link in the chain’.

SECTION TWO

ALEXANDRIA BEFORE ALEXANDER

At the time of my initial visit to meet Goddio work had begun on the site which was later to be authenticated as that of Herakleion. The big impact of this discovery is that it provides the first substantial archaeological evidence of a settlement before the founding of the city of Alexandria itself. My interviews with Harry Tzalas (5/00), Director of the Hellenic Institute for the Preservation of Nautical Tradition (more commonly referred to as the ‘Greek mission’, based at Alexandria’s Greek Community complex) and Paolo Gallo (5/00) from the University of Turin (the ‘Italian mission’, whose base is located along the Corniche) give more depth to the particular dramas being fought over the dynamic of ‘origins’ in the revivalist context. As such these interviews crystallise the sense in which the ‘Myth of Alexandria’ has undergone both a (physical) confrontation with the ‘more Egyptian’ aspect of the city’s ancient Ptolemaic culture (as rehearsed above) and has been disturbed further by the emergence of an even more complex thesis and hybrid cultural drama which is bound up in the confrontation of the physical evidence of what Gallo referred to as an ‘Alexandria before Alexander.’

Tzalas outlined the specific interventions of the ‘Greek mission’: ‘Historians and archaeologists are already familiar with the notion that before the founding of Alexandria there existed a place called Rhakotis which is usually referred to as a fishing village of little significance. There has been a less influential position that has argued that in the Pharaonic period there was a more substantial settlement, much bigger than a village’. He continues: ‘We are currently undertaking the first systematic survey of submerged artefacts along the coast from Chatby to Ibrahimia which corresponds to Alexandria’s ancient Bruchion quarter. Here one would have found a great necropolis as well as constructions relating to the city’s military defences’. He emphasises, ‘We have been

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5 See also a general map of these archaeological sites in Appendix Six.
actively surveying this area using both ancient and more modern maps’. The outcome, he explains are, ‘A series of finds which we have identified as ‘anchors’ and which we are researching into with the help of the DUA. We believe that these too testify to a significant Pharaonic settlement and back up Jondet’s claims’ (see also Halim 1998:7).

Tzalas, who is an Alexandrian Greek, then added with some irony, ‘It is perhaps an unusual scenario in which a Greek Alexandrian ‘exiled’ in 1956 should return to the ultimate ‘Greek city’ – outside Greece itself – in order to recover links with the Pharaonic past!’ He subsequently stated how, ‘It is the ‘Italian mission’s’ work at Nelson island led by Paolo Gallo which is perhaps the project which is pursuing similar questions to us, at least in terms of connections to the Pharaonic past’. He adds, ‘His own interpretation, in true archaeological style, does, however, issue a challenge to our own! This is an indicator of how Alexandria has gained a positive dynamic in terms of discussions and debates over its ancient past. I am optimistic that this can be built upon by both foreign and Egyptian teams together’.

- Return to Heliopolis

Gallo, who significantly is an Egyptologist, explained how a key starting-point of his research has been the ‘Pharaonica’ (pharaonic artefacts) held in the Greco-Roman Museum collections. He stated how: ‘I believe that it was ancient ‘Orientalism’ that brought all these objects to Alexandria and that these are the links which are fascinating and which need to be studied. We must understand better who brought the Pharaonic monuments to Alexandria and then we can discover their motives and the nature of the objects meanings.’ He rehearsed how. ‘There are some objects which could have been moved to Alexandria relatively quickly under the first Ptolemies. For example, obelisks and sphinxes and this class of objects which would have had meaning in themselves’. Gallo’s particular intervention, however, also involves a scientific archaeological return to Heliopolis. He argues, ‘Eighty percent of monuments came from Heliopolis – not just the statues but blocks and obelisks - huge monuments. It is my belief that the Romans
took away these monuments and some went to Rome and some stopped here in Alexandria’.

Gallo emphasises: ‘Heliopolis would certainly not have been in use at this time. When Strabo visits Egypt, Heliopolis was already a quarry, he tells us it had been earlier destroyed by an earthquake and also that it was hit by a terrific fire’. Entering further into this on-going debate, he continues, ‘Although the site has its links to the sun cult, personally I don’t think that it was these links to the sun cult which were the motivation behind the movement of objects to Alexandria. There are plenty of people that argue what motivates ancient history is religion but I would argue that very often it is very banal reasons, such as lack of stones that motivates such things. I believe that this was part of a more literal search for quarries. Since Heliopolis was already destroyed, the logic, I believe, was that it was better to take stones from Heliopolis and then from the south’.

- Nelson Island

Gallo shifted the focus to draw in his team’s related project, ‘We started the excavations in Nelson’s Island with the same objective of tracing these links.’ The island as the name suggests, is close to Goddio’s site at Abu Qir. Interestingly Gallo’s site functions as a cultural-archaeological palimpsest of pre-Alexandrian (i.e. Pharaonic), ‘Greek’/Roman (Ptolemaic) and Early Byzantine heritage. It is also bound up in the modern colonial heritage synonymous with the Battle of the Nile. Gallo explained, ‘We have good finds already: just beside a settlement of Pharaonic houses in the Eastern part there is a huge monumental building we cannot explain yet. My idea is that it could be a temple, fortress or a pharos. I do not, however, believe that it is a city’. He further argued, ‘We believe it was built at the end of fourth-century so the reign of Ptolemy I and since there are no shards from the Roman or Byzantium period we believe it was abandoned after this.’

Turning to the Island’s more modern heritage he offers, ‘We have also found human remains from the Battle of the Nile... The English who died are buried on the island and
the Frenchmen were mostly thrown into the sea. On one of the skeletons we found a bullet. These finds obviously tie in well with Goddio’s study and this is a very interesting period indeed in Egypt’s history’. Gallo drew out the logistics of working at the site: ‘We work in what is a designated military zone so we have a difficult time bureaucracy wise, first you have to have an agreement with the SCA, and then the coast guards, and then the navy’. More optimistically he comments, ‘When I arrived there were no Egyptologists working on Alexandria’s heritage. People came here to study Alexandria from Greco-Roman perspectives. Now, with new excavations we are in a situation where we have a number of academics and archaeologists from a variety of backgrounds. This is wonderful and while we argue about what we believe this city is about, this is good and preferable to a situation in which you have no enthusiasm and no debate’.

SECTION THREE

DEPARTMENT OF UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY - ALL EGYPTIAN MISSION

A return to the interview with the DUA’s director Darwish enables me to bring together the themes of this section. Not only does Darwish, once again, set in play the dynamics of ‘Egyptianisation’ and ‘Alexandrianisation’ but also discusses the internalisation of UNESCO cultural rights discourse and in doing so his interview acts as a bridge to the next section of this chapter, the SARCOM Workshop.

- Rights of Control and Ownership

Taking stock of the DUA’s achievements Darwish (9/99) thus commented, ‘All these discoveries have opened up a new world of possibility for us.’ Although Darwish characterised the department’s initial phase of development as a time of both high aspiration and also (at times too) one of tension between the ‘foreign missions’ and ‘my people’ (the Egyptian archaeologists): he subsequently described a ‘new confidence’ emerging in terms of the DUA ‘creating healthy competition’ between ‘foreign’ missions
while also ‘exerting our overall control’. As such, the context of contemporary revivalism was identified as both the right time and the right opportunity to press forward for, ‘greater legal controls and contracts to be placed upon foreign missions’. The DUA’s sense of arrival and autonomy is clearly bound up in what Darwish outlines as ‘the rights of control and ownership over excavations and over retrieved objects’, and crucially too, ‘over the publication of finds.’ He emphasises, ‘We no longer allow foreigners to take antiquities out of the country, twenty years ago they would have had the right to take half of the finds, this was then restricted to twenty percent, ten percent and then in 1981 a decision was made that no objects leave the country and that they [the objects] are available [to ‘foreign’ teams] only for scientific publishing, filming and photographing’.

Darwish’s interventions also included his objective of, ‘sharing scientific publications with foreigners,’ he stated how, ‘when the foreign missions make their books [for commercial publication], my people do the translations and sometimes acknowledgements are made in the preface, usually under my name, but I feel we must have a greater recognition here too and share more fairly in this process’. Decisions to carve out autonomy included the department designing its own T-Shirts, Darwish explains, ‘My people are now pictured in the press wearing our own logo not those of ‘foreign’ missions as previously’. He was also conscious to distinguish – with some pride – which of ‘his’ people had located particular finds: ‘The Egyptian divers found many things at Qait Bey when working with the French mission. It was one of my people who found the beautiful statue of the priest holding a baby in the royal quarter’.

- Science and Romanticism

To some extent Darwish off-set his anxieties with trade-offs in terms of, ‘the exchanges made between us Egyptians and the ‘foreigners’ with regard to scientific knowledge and gaining experience in underwater technology.’ Science was marked out as the ultimate goal of the DUA. Alexandrian’s myth and legend, by way of contrast, was characterised by Darwish not only as ‘unscientific’ but also ‘highly exploited’. He argues, ‘Of course if you discover something significantly important the international media will come but this
needs to be balanced with a turn to science and not just to myth, this is not good'. He added, 'As scientists we have learnt that we do not have to make big announcements - both Empereur and Goddio never say they "This is Pharos" and "This is Cleopatra's Palace site" and certainly not at a scientific event ... What is said in the press is not the same as at scientific conferences! They are different worlds. We don't want to make the mistake of Nourredin [a former director of the Supreme Council of Antiquities] when he authenticated the Greek archaeological team's 'discovery' of the tomb of Alexander the Great at Siwa Oasis which proved false. So we study everything first'.

His attitude to the local media was, however, more sympathetic: he outlined the DUA's 'good relationship,' in particular, with "Alex TV" but stressed, 'As you know in Egypt there is very little popular knowledge and interest about Alexandria and its history and archaeology remain virtually unknown but we hope this will change ... We have made a film which is very respectful and full of information and the reaction was very good. But we do not work for the radio or the TV and this is the point! We must do this with dignity and science and not with gimmicks'. Interestingly Darwish also made comparisons between Alexandria's archaeological revivalism and an alternative peer group: 'We love our work and want to make something for Egypt. I always like Egypt to be in front of every development, especially science. We want Egypt to be in front in archaeology. Syria has had a ten year head start with its underwater excavations, Tunis fifteen years and Israel thirty years! We were not able to start earlier because war prevented all marine archaeology and the push towards an archaeology department'.

- Sense of Mission

This sense of mission was emphasised further: 'We started without anything... We now have more than one million Egyptian pounds. This month we are also going to receive our first boat for the department which has all the technological devices and a GPS (Global Positioning System) and an ultra sonic sonar which gives us the capacity to map sites and tell us what is on land and underwater for a range of twenty meters. We also have all the personal equipment for the divers and we are going to replace the equipment
which has been used for more than three years’. Darwish explains: ‘Over the next five to 
ten years I hope that we will expand and become big but we should go slowly, slowly. 
My business is my people now. If you have good, scientific people I don’t want my 
people to be only divers. I want to be able to tell one of my people I want him at a 
conference this month in Turkey. I want another to be in the United States. I want 
everyone interested in training and diving and in scientific studies’. He added, ‘We must 
also have the young archaeologist-divers talk with people about the underwater 
evacuations in Alexandria’s schools and cultural centres and give them a sense of the 
value of archaeological culture’. At the time of interview the DUA was undertaking 
evacuations at Ma’amura, another site along the Corniche, this was both a source of pride 
and a further indicator of revivalisms cosmopolitan dynamic: this excavation saw the first 
‘all-Egyptian’ team working on a ‘Greek’ site.

- Life Chances

While in this chapter I have featured the key archaeologists involved in directing 
evacuations, interviews were conducted with more junior members of both ‘foreign’ and 
‘Egyptian’ teams which illustrated both unity and difference within archaeological 
collaborations. Both groups, for example, saw participation in archaeological revivalism 
bound up in the capacity to bring about a certain change and transformation in terms of 
identities, careers and life-chances. Here, a senior DUA archaeologist-diver Mohammed 
Mostafa expressed this in terms of Alexandrian revivalism giving significant profile to 
underwater archaeology within the wider SCA and in terms of individuals (including 
Mostafa himself) benefiting from ‘foreign’ collaborations (Mostafa: 9/99). In Mostafa’s 
case Empereur’s CEA financed his Masters Degree in underwater archaeology in Paris. 
While this and other sponsorship collaborations with ‘foreign’ teams saw Egyptian 
archeologist-divers undertaking degree and training courses and were discussed with 
great enthusiasm by the latter group, other comments expressed some of the more 
negative aspects of this ‘new’ archaeological life-style. Another member of the DUA, for 
example, described how he saw this life-style as increasingly bound up in what he 
described as a ‘Western’ work-culture which for him and many of his colleagues, he
argued, brought disruption to family life (which was emphasised as the priority over career) the stress here was on the effects of work on festivals such as Ramadan.

By way of contrast interviews with peer group colleagues in ‘foreign’ teams were motivated more in terms of a ‘career-archaeology’ in the sense of participation in Alexandrian archaeology being understood as a means to gain CV experience and, for many, to move on. Some foreign archaeologists enjoyed living in Egypt and having exposure to its Arab-Islamic culture while others preferred the ‘freer’ (as one archaeologist couched it) ‘Western’ lifestyle and culture and/or saw their participation in revivalism as a stepping stone to work in Greece, Israel and elsewhere in the Middle East. Female divers were a particularly ‘foreign’ contribution to revivalism: the Egyptian teams while appreciating this was part of ‘Western conventions’ (as another informant had it) regarded the phenomena of female divers as ‘unEgyptian’; a point of view backed up in my interviews with the DUA’s female (archaeologically trained) office-staff.

- Host and Guests

Goddio summed up the wider relationships between foreign and Egyptian teams: ‘We are the guests and they and the hosts: this is the way it should be’. Due to the fact that the DUA archaeologists worked with each of the ‘foreign’ missions this wider relationship was subject to new nuances and, at times, real tensions. A certain sense of separateness and difference, for example, emerged between the DUA and Goddio’s team. Geographical separation was one factor: my interview with Goddio took place on his yacht - the ‘Princess Duda’ anchored off Abu Qir. To get to there I joined a small boat which was ferrying DUA archaeologists back to rejoin Goddio’s team after taking time off to perform mid-day Friday prayers at a mosque in Abu Qir. It is on ‘Goddio’s floating palace’ (as one Egyptian diver dubbed it) that Goddio and his team of divers live and work for over a month, or even two months at a time, while the Egyptian DUA diver-archaeologists came and went every few days. A sense of tension, perhaps exacerbated by this geographic separation emerged, more specifically, over Goddio’s links with the Discovery Channel: this was expressed both in terms of concern over the archaeological,
scientific methods being used in excavations (the characterisation Goddio as a ‘treasure-hunter’ was raised by some and dismissed by others) and in repeated concerns that the ‘Cleopatra’ film was ‘unEgyptian’.6

This sense of tension and separation contrasted with visits to other, mainland, ‘foreign’ mission bases: notably that of Empereur’s CEA which is permanently based in Alexandria and which emerged as an effective meeting point where Egyptian archaeologists and other visitors mingle with the CEA’s internationally diverse team to both work and socialise. As such, the CEA has an exciting air of activity, the foyer of the building, for example, is cluttered with air-tanks and notice-boards with times of dives, of meetings, and numerous other messages, written in French, Arabic and English. This gave some reality to the (earlier rehearsed) characterisations of the CEA as a ‘hybrid,’ cosmopolitan institution – a conflation of the ‘two models’ of ‘Abaddi’s Mouseion’ and ‘Khaldun’s ‘tribes’: and sums up the institution’s own on-going and largely successful ‘meltdown’ into Alexandrian environment’ (La Riche 1998:28).

- Rupture and Memorialisation

There was, however, one note of rupture that underpinned the wider genealogy of archaeological revivalism and which at times re-emerged as the fault-line. This relates to the death of the Egyptian diver-archaeologist Kamal el Saadat, who, as previously mentioned, worked with Honour Frost at the Qait Bey site in the late 1960s and early 1970s. El-Saadat, who started out as an amateur-diver, fulfils the role of ‘local hero.’ As Darwish comments, ‘There was a lot of hysteria over Kamel el Saadat death which happened after he had been diving with the French team’ (Darwish: 9/99). Although Saadat, as Darwish explains was, ‘quite aged at the time,’ and he, like other informants I spoke to stated that it was, ‘likely Saadat died of a heart attack’, a ‘rumour’ circulated

6Rumours circulated amongst Egyptian informants that the Discovery Channel’s documentary on Cleopatra (1997) had images of naked women in it, which were deemed by one person to ‘be unEgyptian’ and ‘insensitive to how Egyptians would like to portray their history.’ Having looked at this video I cannot find any evidence of such images. Theses concerns do, however, reflect a contemporary concern over the figure of Cleopatra communicating the ‘wrong’ (i.e. ‘un-Egyptian’) moral codes and conveys some sense of suspicion regarding outsiders. See also comments made by Mahdi on this subject in Appendix Five.
that, 'the French had killed him'. This 'rumour' (as rehearsed by Darwish) asserts that 'One of the French team killed Saadat because he tried to stop them trying to steal some of the archaeological treasures found at the site'. As another Egyptian informant stressed, 'Of course, this is a very difficult issue and we are now we are trying to stop this rumour'.

The rumour did have a significant popular purchase: during my fieldwork not only was it mentioned by a number of informants who expressed similar views to those above but during two public talks given by Darwish on revivalism at Alexandria's Culture Centres, this was raised as a concern by members of the audience: this was expressed by one person asking Darwish, "How can you make sure that the 'foreign missions' will not steal from us or do the same thing as they did to Saadat?" While this issue can be seen as a means for some to articulate anxieties and fears concerning the presence of 'foreign' teams within the revivalist landscape, more positive memorials to Saadat emerged. During one of my many visits to Empereur's CEA, Omar pointed out to me a framed image in a central position in the library which is dedicated to Saadat's memory and has the names of the contemporary French and Egyptian archaeological teams embroidered side by side with Saadat's name in prime position. As the previous Chapter Five and the following sections also make clear the force of revivalism and 'meltdown' has done more to unite Egyptian and 'foreign' missions in dynamic collaboration than in conflict (see also figs. 18, 19, 20, 21) 7.

7 In Fig. 19, Jean-Yves Empereur can be seen at the head of CEA and DUA archaeologists. Fig. 21 shows Franck Goddio (far right with base-ball cap) with Ibrahim Darwish next to him (in the red and white striped shirt). Darwish is next to the statue of the priest holding a baby (described earlier) which was found by DUA diver-archaeologist Mohamed Abd El Hamid who is pictured to the left of the statue.
Fig. 18. Underwater archaeologist working at Qait Bey/Pharos site

(source: Compoint in La Riche 1998: 33)

Fig. 19. Archaeologists from CEA and DUA at Qait Bey/Pharos site

(source: Compoint in La Riche 1998: 117)
Fig. 20. Underwater archaeologist working at Royal Palace site
(source: Delafosse in Foreman 1999: 173)

Fig. 21. Archaeologists from IEASM and DUA at Royal Palaces site
(source: Delafosse in Foreman 1999: 165)
Not just one of your usual scientific gatherings, the International Workshop on Submarine Archaeology and Coastal Management, [SARCOM] held in Alexandria, Egypt, from 7-11 April 1997, brought together experts from a wide range of disciplines. Underwater archaeologists, antiquity scholars and historians debated issues with coastal engineers, oceanographers and remote-sensing experts and exchanged views with urban planners, museum directors and legal experts. The Workshop was sponsored and organised by UNESCO, the University of Alexandria and the Supreme Council of Antiquities ... All of these diverse areas of expertise were united around a single goal: the wise management of cultural heritage sites along the Alexandrine coast, both onshore and underwater, many of which are gravely threatened by erosion, pollution and rapid urban development ... particular attention was focused on the pressing issues surrounding the ruins of the Alexandria Lighthouse (Pharos) and the Qait Bey Citadel, this site came to serve as a case study for broader scale action. ...

(UNESCO 1997: 1)

As previously argued, the SARCOM Workshop emerged as a pivotal point in terms of ‘meltdown’s’ operational strategy. Just as the Aswan Meeting functions as the template which makes explicit revivalism’s key actors at a diplomatic level, the SARCOM Workshop represents an attempt to establish an on-going template for revivalism as operational culture with the aim of further immersion within UNESCO frameworks and programmes and ultimately as a means to define ‘broader-scale action’ (UNESCO 1997: 1)\(^8\). SARCOM also brings about a radical shift of focus within the wider revivalist imagination by grounding a number of its basic concerns. As such the Workshop takes considerable attention away from the negative contestations which mark the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s ‘meltdown’ and centre-stages more practice based heritage ‘dilemmas’ using the ‘Qait Bey/ Pharos’ site as its central focus and as a powerful emblem of re-engagement (potential reconciliation even) between wider groups of ‘actors’ and the ‘real’ of the local-operational context (see fig. 22).

\(^8\) See also Appendix Six which provides greater detail on the SARCOM Workshop.
Fig. 22. Qait Bey/Pharos site, the focus of the SARCOM Workshop 1997
(source: Compoint in La Riche 1998: 23)
This motif of re-engagement operates on a series of levels. Most significantly this shift gives authentication and inclusion to ‘meltdown’s’ key players (its organisers, sponsors and participants (cited above)) by strategically marking out new roles and relationships in the local. Crucially, recognition and inclusion is given to the ‘critical Chorus’. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the SARCOM Workshop and the ‘Qait Bey/ Pharos Dilemma’ had a privileged place in interviews conducted with UNESCO informants (at both the Paris Head-Quarters and the Cairo field-office) and with local actors, and as such, is not only illustrative of its strong impact upon the narrative of revivalism but by virtue of the fact it brought into view new groups of informants. In the following I map out the key shifts of SARCOM’s own powerful dramas of re-attachments and re-engagement.

- Template and Voices of ‘Meltdown’

It is SARCOM’s ‘integrated approach to heritage management’ (which is oft-repeated in SARCOM literature) that emerges as the most valued motif of re-engagement and reconnection (UNESCO 1997: 1). This affords a means for re-connections to be made with the academic sphere - and thus with revivalisms initiators - while increasingly broadening out participation. The delegate list, therefore, reads as a cast list of wider revivalism and includes, for example, the involvement of Zahran and Abaddi (discussing the historical context of ancient city) and that of Egyptian archaeological teams and foreign ‘missions’: including Goddio, Empereur, Darwish, Frost, Gallo and Fattah (see Appendix Six). The Workshop’s objectives also make clear that a central focus is that of ‘local needs’ (of note here is that Alexandria’s Governor, Mahgoub, also participated) which allows the formal recuperation and re-appropriation of aspects of revivalism which were ‘lost’ when the project was re-inscribed within the international, diplomatic domain.

The Meeting is therefore effective in binding up ‘old’ and ‘new’ players in a series of new relationships. In terms of not only its organisers but its sponsors and participants SARCOM thus exchanged Aswan’s roll call of Presidents, UNESCO hierarchy, its princes, princesses, politicians and diplomats for more operational counter-parts and with the ‘experts from a wide range of disciplines’ (UNESCO 1997:1). SARCOM brought
into play a new cosmopolitics in which the key objective was the ‘exchange of experience with international community’ (UNESCO 1997:1). UNESCO’s ‘legal experts’ also participated in the Workshop, for example, Lyndel Prott, who advises states-parties in the realms of cultural rights and who is currently engaged in drafting the legal principles for the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage took part. The SARCOM Workshop, although obviously a less ‘grand event’ than Aswan, is subject to its own ‘ceremonial agendas’ and ‘ritual behaviours’ (cf. O’Brien 1968). Held in Alexandria at both University and Alexandria’s Renaissance Hotel the Workshop was also accompanied by numerous fieldwork visits to local sites. In many senses just as the Aswan Meeting looked to the Nubian Campaigns for material authentication of its collective imagination at the level of diplomatic drama and to Alexandrina paradigm for its intellectual/ cultural capital, SARCOM claims its practical/ material authenticity via its proximity to Alexandria’s physical landscape and acquires its intellectual and professional ‘expertise’ via the Workshop’s collective immersion within the domain of scientific knowledge and subject specialisms. This also saw a more holistic framing of the city in terms of its various landscapes of revivalism and most crucially of all included an official mapping of Alexandria’s coastal sites within UNESCO programmes and conventions.

- Qait Bey/ Pharos ‘Dilemma’

The Workshop’s central objective is, therefore, to unite SARCOM actors around a ‘single goal’: the ‘wise management of cultural heritage sites along the Alexandrine coast, both onshore and underwater’ with the ‘Qait Bey/ Citadel’ the object of ‘particular attention’ (UNESCO 1997:1). The Workshop proceedings similarly give full attention to both the historical context of the ‘Qait Bey/ Citadel’ site before rehearsing its current status (see Appendix Six). In many senses the success of the Workshop relied upon the recognition of and then the ‘forgetting’, or at least management of, the more contested aspects of the site’s recent history. As the official account has it, ‘[Following the] ‘public outcry … The problem, however, remained. On the one hand, the erosion threatening the Qait Bey Citadel should be urgently controlled, but on the other, the submerged archaeological site
of the Pharos needs to be conserved. In many respects, the Citadel/Pharos dilemma encapsulated the conflicting needs and interests threatening many cultural heritage sites along the Alexandrine coast, as well as elsewhere in the Mediterranean (UNESCO 1997:1).

On a strategic level this recasting sees an opening up of ‘Qait Bey/Pharos’ as a shared heritage object and as a model for ‘integrated action’ which also proves useful not only in integrating actors and landscapes but creating a dynamic/‘dilemma’ which participants could both problematise and work together to recuperate. This emphasis upon shared ‘scientific’ approaches and its associated languages/practices is of major importance. As such, the Workshop sessions offer up comparative case-studies in terms of featuring African, South America and Asia contexts. The SARCOM Workshop’s potency is ultimately its effectiveness as the point of origin for a series of pilot-projects and their inscription within UNESCO programmes. The ‘Declaration of Alexandria’ - the operational equivalent of the ‘Aswan Declaration’ - drew together the central aspects of strategisation (see Appendix Six). It also centers and inscribes further the ‘Qait Bay/Pharos’ site as the over-arching pilot-project. ‘Recommendations’ are also put into place for a ‘cross-sectoral Task Force’ to be ‘responsible for setting an overall strategy for implementing and monitoring the pilot project’ (UNESCO 1997:1).

This has, in turn, led to three crucial re-framings of revivalism. The first comes in the form of the official inscription of sections of the Alexandrian coast (notably ‘Qait Bay/Pharos’) as part of UNESCO’s ‘Coastal Zones and Small Islands’ programme which profiles issues of the management and protection of both the citadel and Alexandria’s submerged archaeological sites (again see Appendix Six). Further breakthroughs come with the Recommendations which more directly inscribe the ‘Qait Bay/Pharos’ pilot-project within a framework for the development of ‘museums’ and ‘archaeological parks’ at the site and which are anticipated to ‘rival the Sphinx underwater’ (UNESCO 1997:1). A final major intervention comes with the Recommendation that Workshop participants study the ‘possibility of inscription on the World Heritage List’ (UNESCO 1997:1). These recommendations and re-framings have proved crucial in offering up a wider
vision of revivalism which centers on both archaeological sites and a greater importance for the museums and heritage of the city. This vision also affords a means to address other issues at stake in the contemporary context such as concerns over pollution to that of tourism.

- SARCOM’S Responses

The responses to SARCOM fieldwork informants (including the ‘critical Chorus’ and UNESCO employees) were generally positive and gave strength to the Workshop’s pivotal role in the revivalist context. Two particular comments made by Professors El Banna (9/99) and Youssef Halim (9/99) from Alexandria University’s Department of Oceanography (located next to Qait Bey citadel) offer specific critical insights into the Workshop which I want to feature briefly here. Both men were involved in agitating for the Workshop and greeted its pilot projects and planned museum with great enthusiasm. They did, however, throw up some new controversies. El-Banna, for example, explained how an ‘early proposal’ was made to ‘remove the fishermen outside the harbour in order to have the whole site as a museum’. Both he and Halim responded by arguing for an ethnographic ‘pilot’ project be undertaken which eventually succeeded in convincing UNESCO and others that, as El-Banna has it, ‘the fishermen and their livelihoods represent an integral part of the site’ and part of its ‘living tradition’.

Further anxieties concerned the sustainability of projects. Halim, for example, outlined the need to ‘twin revivalism with development’ while subsequently articulating his ‘fear’ that ‘this will place heritage and archaeological projects in the domain of private business and that ‘urban revivalism could collapse at anytime if profit is prioritised over people’. It was in this coming together of the ‘three tributaries’ of revivalism that yet again utopian visions and distopic anxieties surfaced. This saw El-Banna similarly argue for a more humanised/people-centered approach to revivalism, ‘it is the memory of humanity we are dealing with and which we need to preserve,’ and finally assert, ‘Heritage and history has been used violently in the past and for profit. It is a dream – perhaps achievable,

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9 More detailed extracts from interviews held with Halim and El-Banna appear in Appendix Six.
perhaps utopian – to extend this vision of revivalism along the coastal strip from Qait Bey, across the royal quarter and up to the Bibliotheca and to unite expert and popular interest in this vision too.

CONCLUSION

‘MEMORY OF HUMANITY’ AND REVIVALISM’S ‘GHOSTINGS’

Archaeological revivalism exists in a complex though integral set of relationships to the Alexandrina’s homecoming. As this chapter has shown it can be seen as an alternative force of cultural revivalism – which at times is mobilised as an oppositional force – and at others, as the SARCOM Meeting makes explicit, is a force which is bound up in the recuperation of a more collaborative force of revivalism which binds up the official stake-holders and ‘critical Chorus’ together in an operational heritage culture aligned to popular needs/ development agendas. At best this shift can be characterised as a move away from revivalism as a ‘time of anxiety’ (and thus as marked by the oppositional voice of the ‘critical Chorus’) and towards expressions of revivalism as a ‘time of aspiration’ (Darwish: 9/99): this latter remark thus captures the sense of agency which comes with archaeological revivalism and its links with more inclusive strategies of ‘meltdown.’ This shift of positions and perspectives accommodates a more specific localisation or an ‘Alexandrianisation’ achieved in collaboration with international organisations and its various ‘actors’.

In many senses too the SARCOM Workshop sees the official stakeholders/ ‘critical Chorus’ attempt to bring about both revivalism and their own redemption, in that they ‘saved’ it from becoming bound up in negative criticism by pursuing more positive operational collaborations. It also sees the critical, oppositional force of revivalism channelled into joint action and into what is perhaps best characterised as a new therapeutics. What emerges are a series of relationships between two central objects of revivalism: Qait Bey/ Pharos and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. The SARCOM Meeting takes the official focus away from critical characterisations of the Bibliotheca

284
Alexandrina as a destructive or ‘alien’ (narcissistic) object by centring the Qait Bey/Pharos site as a ‘classic’ heritage ‘dilemma’ which thus becomes a resource capable of ‘othering’ revivalism. This is achieved by means of re-presenting the latter site as a shared object that unites diverse specialists/experts in the task of the management and preservation of this site and by offering future pilot-project schemes supported by UNESCO programmes.

This drama of excavation/preservation in its wider Alexandrian brief has also seen archaeologists engage in their own archival practice with respect to their recovery of the ‘material memory’ (Kwint 1999) of ancient city (see figs. 23 and 24). This has meant that academic/scientific discussions have been (and continue to be) at a premium and has created an environment (both intellectual and operational) in which long-running debates concerning the relationship between the Greco-Roman city and its pre-Alexandrian ‘origins’ have also been revived and pursued by archaeological teams and Alexandrian academics who now have more material evidence from which to build their interpretations and hypotheses. The links with Freud’s concept of the ‘disturbance of memory’ (cf. Freud 1984) (and its associated the motif of crisis/breakthrough) are interesting here in that the physical/material confrontation with Alexandria’s ancient past is thus responsible for the fundamental destabilisation of the Western ‘Myth of Alexandria’ and the rejection (as substantiated by material proof) of its associated ‘images and icons’ as essentially ‘Western/Greek’ ‘self-objects’ which is achieved by the assertion that the city was ‘more Egyptian’ and ‘less Greek.’

The contemporary ‘disturbance’ also provokes an ‘othering’ and a new cosmopolitics in the sense of positing an even more complex thesis of a hybrid cultural drama in terms of reviving debates on an ‘Alexandria before Alexander.’ This experience of the ‘past in presence’ is perhaps the experience by contemporary revivalism of the ‘Egyptian effect’ earlier rehearsed (Perniola 1995). I would also suggest that revivalism’s archaeological artifacts as potential ‘transitional’ objects (cf. Rycroft 1995: 115) have the capacity to give more substance to the project of the ‘narrativisation’ of loss, separation and re-attachment. As previously stated, this latter dynamic has been given more drama in the
Fig. 23. Excavated object from transported through the streets of contemporary Alexandria (source: Compoint in La Riche 1998: 115)

Fig. 24. Excavated object in desalination tank

(source: Compoint in La Riche 1998: 121)
contemporary context as archaeologists and the local and international press increasingly invest in the image/metaphor of Alexandria as a city haunted by the ghosts of its own past and, as such, heighten the ways in which recent disturbances are implicated in the opening up of repressed histories (see Goddio 1998: 20-2; Nicholl 1996: 67-68).

Significantly, ghosts in cultural-psychoanalytic literature are characterised as ultimate cosmopolitans with their power and potency bound up in their capacity to agitate for painful and problematic events and memories to be addressed in order to prevent the return of trauma, and ultimately to define a 'more stable and less haunting past' (Feuchtwang 2000a:75). As one theorist who has written specifically on archival hauntings comments: 'Ghost stories seem to be telling us about a line of repression such that what might have been silenced in the past returns' (Feuchtwang 2000b:5). This metaphor of contemporary ghostings both crystallises and anticipates further how revivalism has become increasingly embroiled in this need to address the silences, repressed memory and traumatic events which mark both the city's modern experience of cosmopolitanism/colonialism and also its recent past. These are themes I address in my final chapter.

A concluding point to extract from this chapter concerns the convergence of the motif of heritage value with the question of: 'what it is to be human?' These dynamics come back into play in terms of the ways in which operational revivalism is bound up in destabilising the notion of heritage as primarily or exclusively concerned with 'things/object' by centring the dynamic of heritage as part of wider social/cultural contexts and as committed to a moral/ethical odyssey. Post-SARCOM the potential to give recognition to the therapeutic potentials of revivalism within this project of 'what it is to be human' is crystallised further and, as such, has the ability to place alongside the traditional Grand Narrative redemptions of the Alexandrina paradigm strategies which are more sympathetic to the local. Thus the concern for material preservation to be married to a concern with the 'memory of humanity' places new considerations into the arena. On the one hand operational revivalism acquires its (perhaps) 'attainable' 'dream' of a unity of interests/action, and on the other, the plight of local fishermen, the preservation of world
heritage and extensive plans put into effect - not only by UNESCO/\textquoteleft critical Chorus\rq - but by the Governorate and private business to revive the Alexandrian landscape, vie for position. These dynamics are the focus of Chapter Seven.
Chapter Seven

Urban Shock Therapy -
Alexandria’s ‘LasVegasisation’
CHAPTER SEVEN
URBAN SHOCK THERAPY -
ALEXANDRIA'S 'LAS VEGASISATION'

INTRODUCTION
'THREE TRIBUTARIES'

'By now everyone has noticed that there is a new face to Alexandria these
days – cleared up squares, gleaming coats of paint on buildings and quieter
streets as horns have been silenced. What was once dubbed the "battered
bride of the Mediterranean" seems to be coming back into its own and is
poised to reassert itself as the premier city on the sea... Governor and
private sector have been working in astonishing harmony to fund and
implement these massive projects. The impetus for the changes is clearly the
accession of the new governor, Mohammed Abdel Salam Mahgoub, but the
implications are much greater.

(Schemm, Middle Eastern Times, 2000: 1-3).

It is in this complex post-SARCOM context that the motif of homecoming is bound up
further within revivalism's 'three tributaries' (Halim 2002b:17). As such the Bibliotheca
project, archaeological revivalism and that of popular, urban revivalism come closer
together. What emerges is a meeting of urban and cultural-archaeological revivalism
which generates both a 'flurry of projects' and promises made to transform Alexandria
from "battered bride of the Mediterranean" and to recuperate her seductive 'Siren'
status (Schemm 2000:3). As a consequence the force of urban revivalism has brought
radical change to the downtown areas of Alexandria and along the city's Corniche: the
same areas around which has been the focus of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project and
archaeological revivalism. The urban development initiative initially emerged as a
separate enterprise, authored from within the Alexandria Governorate and, as a journalist
from the Middle Eastern Times outlines above, with even more specificity, the 'impetus
for change' came with the appointment of city's new governor Mahgoub who began his
term in July 1997 (Schemm 2000:3).
Under Mahgoub’s direction ‘a new face’ has been given to the downtown area. For example, renovations and improvements have been being made to Alexandria’s central Squares (notably Mansheya district, within which Tahrir Square is located) its public gardens (notably outside GOAL offices which on my first visit looked so bedraggled) while the main line of villas along the 33 km Corniche have been painted. A massive project is also underway to extend the Corniche itself, the objective of which is to relieve traffic congestion and to redevelop Alexandria’s main coastal strip with new ‘casinos’ planned for this area. Improvements made to the refuse collection in the central downtown areas and to the nearby beaches too give a general sense of the city being ‘cleaned up’. It has been estimated that these developments have put over 200-300 million Egyptian pounds into circulation (Schemm 2000: 3).

The Middle Eastern Times has argued too that, ‘The transformation stands out as pretty radical’ (Apiku 2000:4) and certainly during my fieldwork period this visual metamorphosis of the city has had its dramatic effects in terms of creating a general sense of a city undergoing positive re-invention and recuperation. Beneath this transformation to the city’s façade, - which is the outcome of the initial phases of urban regeneration plans -, are further plans for more extensive changes to be made to the ‘infrastructures of the city’ (Schemm 2000:3). The latter strategy includes attempts to tackle the agendas of population density, of transport, sanitation, and also unemployment and literacy. The key feature of the ‘truly unprecedented’ changes relate to the involvement of the city’s ‘private sector’ within this context which is largely engineered via the Governorate’s promising tax-relief benefits to companies in return (Schemm 2000:3).

The above quoted Middle Eastern Times articles are from a special supplement dedicated to Alexandrian revivalism which gives specific detail to The Economist’s (Anon 2000) earlier rehearsed speculations on Alexandria as an experiment in ‘urban shock-therapy’, by positing contemporary revivalism’s potential as a model for not only ‘other troubled Egyptian cities’ but also more generally for ‘Third World’ city regeneration: its authors are still waiting on confirmation of the ultimate ‘successes or failures’ (Schemm 2000: 3).
As this chapter makes clear what lies beneath are new recuperations of Alexandria’s foundational ideologies: the first comes from the Governorate and business community’s revival of the city’s civic culture as a means to recuperate and re-work its commercial traditions as a model for economic development. The second concerns the newly empowered ‘critical Chorus’ alternative intellectual-operation return to cosmopolitanism values. All of which give substance to claims that: ‘[T]he Alexandria of old has become the very model of a modern city fighting its way out of decay and many Alexandrias’ (Schemm 2000: 3)

SECTION ONE
INSIDE THE GOVERNORATE

My key interview in terms of establishing the position of the Governorate on urban revivalism is that held with Professor Mostafa Senbel, a member of both the Supreme Council for Culture (SCC) and the Governorate’s Architecture Committee (Senbel: 9/99). He is also the author of the report on Alexandria’s candidature for the UNESCO Cities for Peace (Senbel 1999). Senbel, whom I interviewed in his office in Alexandria’s imposing Governorate building (fig. 25), began by comparing the contemporary context of metamorphosis to that of the time of Mohammed Ali. He argues, ‘There are similarities in terms of the extent of changes to the city: we worked with old and new traditions to develop our strategies of urban regeneration,’ thereby emphasising, ‘it was the cosmopolitan period’s civic heritage and commercial tradition which we [the Governorate] wanted to give life back to’. Pressing this connection further he states, ‘You could call Mahgoub the new – Egyptian – Mohammed Ali’ (a characterisation which the press also pursue see Schemm 2000: 9). The return of – this time an ‘Egyptian’ - Mohammed Ali, he argues, is particularly timely: ‘Sometimes we try to defy history, as in the Revolution period when Alexandria moved away from its traditional image. Right now we are trying to reconcile this and guarantee to Alexandria’s citizens that the Governorate and the commercial sector are leading them the right way forward’.

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1 A copy of this text can be found in Appendix Seven.
Fig. 25. Governorate Head-Quarters, downtown Alexandria (photo: B. Butler)
Outlining the new challenges Senbel argues, ‘Current projects do, however, differ in that unlike Mohammed Ali’s time we are not merely dealing with a large-scale project of modernisation but we are actually faced with a city in which we need to preserve the legacies – the monuments, villas and other architectural remnants – of Mohammed Ali and Ismail’s modern city at the same as the new needs of a rapidly growing urban environment’. He adds ‘As you know we have been faced with the largely unexpected, but very welcome discovery of archaeological monuments from the ancient city. We therefore have to take into account both ancient and modern worlds and their physical heritage’. Crucially it was around this other UNESCO frame-work – Alexandria’s Cities for Peace (1999) candidature - that Senbel has brought these factors together.

This particular document inscribes Alexandria’s revivalism as a ‘global performance’ with the Governor’s preface outlining the mixed partnerships and investments (Mahgoub quoted in Senbel 1999: ii) which, as Senbel reiterates, ‘make urban development viable’ by ‘encouraging private sector investment.’ He adds, ‘In the report we stress how a third of the people in this city are connected in some way to this sector.’ Here he stressed how, ‘Since the Revolution everything has centred on Cairo and when the country began to feel the impacts of Nasser’s socialist laws Alexandria’s stock exchange [located in the Mansheya complex] shut down and the companies belonging to foreigners were seized by the state and few survived. Those that did survive, even in Alexandria, relocated to Cairo’. He argues, ‘But now we are using the city’s traditions positively to take on Cairo in equal competition’.

- Alexandria Businessmen’s Association

Informants at Alexandria Businessmen’s Association (ABA) (located along Horreya Street) were able to map out in further detail the economic landscape of private business. Magda Mahmoud (9/99) the ABA’s Executive Secretary stated, for example, how ‘This is the first time for many years that Alexandria is gaining a sense of herself and understanding that this city can be a place of change, transformation and movement’. Reiterating, Senbel’s comments, she stated how, ‘The failure of Nasser’s socialist project
has had very severe impacts for Egypt economically and psychologically. Many people lost out in the Nasser and Sadat periods, not just the foreigners but Egyptians too lost money and businesses and we also lost the spirit and tradition of commercialism'. She detailed, 'The process of the nationalisation of Egypt's big companies created too many bureaucrats and our public organisations are notoriously slow and undynamic and very inward-looking'.

In a more optimistic shift she outlined: 'Although the stock exchange still operates out of Cairo, not Alexandria, privatisation has been a significant force in Egypt since President Mubarak made this announcement in the early 1990s, and it is Alexandria which had whole-heartedly seized upon this situation'. With much enthusiasm, she continued, 'Not only did we have the commercial spirit and tradition we also have a unity to our business community here which does not exist in Cairo. Many of these big Caireen companies have a vested interest in not changing things and see other businesses as rivals. In Alex [sic] we have created these links because we are a smaller number of businesses and united in knowing that participation will benefit the companies as well as the city'. She added confidently 'no-one can lose'.

In terms of charting out ambitions in the international arena Mahmoud drew upon the ABA's collaborations with the Cairo-based Economic Research Forum (ERF) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) the objective of which was that of 'promoting Alexandria as a centre for foreign investment'. She explained how Alexandria was keen to encourage the policy of 'foreign direct investment (FDI)' and of 'business networking in the Mediterranean region'. She therefore reiterates how current and future aspirations are bound up in both global and regional (i.e. Mediterranean) initiatives, collaborations and investments. Mahmoud also expressed a confidence concerning the need, 'to see outsiders as investors not invaders'. She saw the ABA's involvement both in urban revivalism and its aspirations in the wider global arena as, 'a process which is both exciting but which we need to learn from and educate ourselves in.' Mahmoud referenced the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project as an: 'example
of many of the themes we want to encourage – it is an internationally funded project which emerges from a deep Alexandrian cosmopolitan tradition’.

- Heritage Zoning

Senbel also returned to discuss the Bibliotheca’s central position in his vision. ‘Just as the Ptolemies saw it [the ancient Alexandrina] as a centre-point for their city and their own commercial activities and modernisation plans, we too need to harness schemes like this for our development needs’. He emphasised, ‘We were keen to push these factors in our UNESCO bid and to privilege Alexandria’s historical and cultural symbols as part of targets of urban planning.’ Acknowledging the present conflicts over the city’s preservation he stated, ‘One of our key concerns is to put in place ‘zonings’ within the city that will have to be taken into account during development planning. This will mean that we can keep our ‘treasures’ – the key cultural sites within the city – protected in specific zones, while at the same time creating new civic and social centres where necessary too. This will also prevent developers buying up huge areas of the city and creating row upon row of high-rise flats for profit and with no thought to how the urban population needs to have access, not only to energy and water supplies, but to green spaces, cultural and historical spaces as well as community spaces’.

Here Senbel reiterated: ‘In the past it was difficult - or even pointless! - to argue for heritage protection and zoning as the city was seen to have so little real heritage. We in Egypt focus upon antiquities as heritage and the modern cosmopolitan architecture is outside the SCA’s remit. At the SCC we neglected this too. Alexandria is a test-case. In many senses the new found heritage is allowing us to argue for these aspects of belonging and for civic spaces to be centred in the current plans’. The ‘plan to return back Alexandria as it was before’ is a repeated theme of the Cities of Peace report as are the motifs of bringing about the ‘revitalised social and cultural memories of Alexandria’ (Senbel 1999: 14), of ‘culture for all’ and that of revivalism as the medium by which “The city regains its soul”’(Senbel 1999: 16).
Senbel also articulated a shift in what he termed as the Governorate’s ‘models of urban planning’ which once again makes gestures to the dynamic of ‘what it is to be human’ by replacing the ‘mechanistic model’ with that of ‘a model which sees the city as a human being and is responsive to the complex needs in terms of cultural, social, psychological and spiritual needs as well as shelter and energy supplies’. He saw this process bound up too in, ‘The need to educate developers into understanding and respecting that any human environment needs these facilities and to prevent increases in population density’. Here Senbel reiterated how, ‘like many cities around the world the main problem in Alexandria is the huge increases in population density over the last century and, in particular, in the last fifty years’. He explained Alexandria’s satellite cities have ‘joined up’ with the ‘original historical city’ and in so doing taken some of the ‘burden of population increase’ but ‘as a consequence the sense of belonging and also its social spaces and distinct heritage’.

In the concluding pages of the report the spotlight is placed upon the Bibliotheca Alexandria, which appears in perhaps more locally acceptable terms as the “Mecca” of thinkers and cultural educators from all the worlds’ (Senbel 1999: 35). The Alexandrina is also discussed in relationship to the city-wide network of eight (public sector funded) ‘culture palaces’ with the assertion made that ‘The cultural activity in Alexandria is not a complementary activity but it is a fact and a basic part of the daily life for Alexandria’ (Senbel 1999: 34).

- Chamber of Commerce

As both Senbel and the Cities for Peace report make clear the governorate has made a number of specific ‘protocols’ with the Alexandria’s Chamber of Commerce (CC) (Senbel 1999: 15). As the report also details the CC is located at the axis of what is ‘the most important commercial street’ Sophia Zaghloul Street (Senbel 1999:24) My key informant at this location was Esam El Sammody (8/99) who, amongst other projects, was previously involved in a film documenting the CC’s centenary. Sammody rehearsed the now familiar themes of post-1950s malaise and frustration within Alexandria’s
business community before commenting, ‘The new spirit of enterprise nurtured by Mahgoub has given back life to the CC’, adding, ‘The last Governor failed to understand the Chamber’s contribution to the city, now there is the chance to be part of change’.

The new ‘protocols’ made with the governorate were detailed to include: CC members being granted the right to the free use of ‘state-owned’ land in order to display, advertise and to sell their products’ while ‘in exchange’ the business community have ‘consented to plough their profits back into urban projects and participate in the various development zones’. Sammody put these in the context of tax relief benefits which have allowed these urban projects to open up into cultural collaborations. Moreover, these ‘partnerships’ were seen as illustrative of Mahgoub’s ability to cut down on, and cut through, the red tape which stifles business communities in other parts of the country, particularly in Cairo. The ABA’s Director Hanem El-Shennawy (9/99) similarly outlined how traditional ‘charity work’ and ‘urban works schemes’ centred around projects such as ‘building hospitals’ have not only reached ‘a new level of active participation under the new Governor’ but opened but to ‘cultural projects’.

Interestingly all the above informants – Senbel, Mahmoud, Shennawy, and Sammody – drew specific attention to the new additions to the city in the form of a series of sculptures and mosaics (see figs. 26 and 27) which feature what Senbel called ‘cultural heritage-themes’ within their design. These are the most visible symbols of the Governorate and the private sector’s contemporary returns both to the modern cosmopolitan commercial tradition and also to the ancient city’s ‘Greek’-cosmopolitan origins too.
Fig. 26. ‘Greek’ vase sculpture sponsored by local Alexandrian businesses

(source: undated/ Attalla Cards, Egypt)

Fig. 27. ‘Greek’ boat sculpture sponsored by local Alexandrian businesses

(source: undated/ Attalla Cards, Egypt)
SECTION TWO

‘LAS VEGASISATION’: CRITICAL CHORUS’ RESPONSE

The so-called Hellenistic revivalism that Alexandria is witnessing is often construed as all of a piece and belonging to one and the same phenomenon. The tendency to conflate has its justifications: it is since the mid-1990s, against the backdrop of the expected but long-deferred opening of the Bibliotheca, that the resurgence of interest in the Hellenistic period has been taking place. The other tributaries that have fed into the "revivalism" ... [include] the proliferation of quasi-Greek statues and street sculptures in the city. The latter tributary originates in Alexandria Governorate's "beautification plan" whereby entrepreneurs were given free rein to put up sculptures of their choosing - an instant Hellenisation being given the green light as an appropriate setting for the Bibliotheca centrepiece - in return for publicity’

(Halim 2002b: 17)

In contrast to the more confident assertions issued by the Governorate and business community with regard to urban revivalism a more complex relationship defines the newly empowered ‘critical Chorus’ responses to this context. Moreover, critics picked up on the afore-mentioned ‘Greco-Roman’/ ‘Hellenistic’ sculptures and mosaics as the symbols by which to articulate their opposition to what Halim, in interview, further dubbed as the both a ‘cosmetic force of “beautification”’ and a ‘sad Las Vegasisation of Alexandria’ with the Bibliotheca positioned as its symbolic centre-piece (Halim: 9/99). Increasingly, the ‘critical Chorus’ involvement in this specific ‘tributary’ of urban revivalism came through participation in both UNESCO and Governorate committee structures and also through their control of NGOs.

Awad, as previously stated the director of an NGO known as the Alexandria Preservation Trust (APT), has referred in print to a ‘love-hate’ relationship between the ‘critical chorus’ and the authorities (particularly local governmental) which saw the former group once again, take on and hold in tension the roles of, firstly, anti-voice and opposition and, secondly, of critical supporters and contributors to urban regeneration (Awad quoted in
Elamrani 2001: 20). Awad argues, ‘They [the Governorate] love to receive work from us and do not pay for it, and do not even say thank you for having done this work. But they hate us when we criticize them, or try to stop them from building the wrong things’ (Awad quoted in Elamrani 2001: 20). He acknowledges, ‘It’s no use going about criticizing people all the time. We have to produce something that allows them – that helps them – conceive that you are not only criticizing but also trying to do something to help them, to do something to save the monuments and to protect them’ (Awad quoted in Elamrani 2001: 20).

This critical contribution to urban revivalism is perhaps best summed up by Awad’s decision to, firstly, contribute to the major urban development report ‘Plan 2005’ (which forms part of UNESCO Cities for Peace strategisation plan), and then subsequently demand that his name be taken off, ‘Due to concerns over how these ideas were either ignored or executed badly’ (Awad quoted in Khalil 1997: 12). Moreover, another foundational trauma marks the origins of urban revivalism which saw Awad’s ATA and an additional ‘critical Chorus’ member Abdel Abu Zahra and his Friends of the Environment (FEA) NGO successfully launch a campaign in 1993 against the UN’s World Health Organisation’s (then based in Alexandria) plans to extend their site which would have caused damage to the city’s archaeology and heritage (see Khalil 1997: 12)

Therefore, at its most polarised what Awad has further couched as the ‘Battle for Alexandria’ can be seen as a contest of cosmopolitan traditions and their interpretation and recuperation for the operational context (Awad quoted in Khalil 1997: 12). It is Clement who in interview offered clarification by distinguishing between ‘two particular elites engaging in revivalism’, arguing:

‘On the one hand you have Awad, Abaddi and others, who are themselves cosmopolitans and part of the elite intelligentsia. Their role is to have their say in the wider development of the city and the Governorate expects this. This group is also driven by their own tradition of citizenship and intellectualism which carries moral-ethical weight, so they also make it their job to also speak up for ‘the people’. And let’s face it ‘the people’ here

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2 See Appendix Seven for more information about both the APT and FEA.
have no mechanism of their own. While on the other hand, you have the financial elites which comprise of ‘up and coming’ businessmen and developers who ‘made good’ from privatisation deals and the like. This group has very little or no social conscience, and no tradition of popular commitment. In Alexandria in recent times they have shown themselves to be base profiteers’. He concludes, ‘Of course, the Governorate tries to create a workable balance between the two groups but ultimately will know which side their bread is buttered. I would sincerely hate to see the latter the group get any further control of the city. This would mean the death of archaeology and all there would be left to remember Alexandria’s heritage by would be a badly-moulded sculpture of a ‘Greek Urn’ with the logo of some Egyptian Bank smack in the middle of it’ (Clement: 9/99).

- More Greek, Less Egyptian

As previously stated, the aforementioned series of cultural heritage-themed sculptures and mosaics sponsored by private companies were honed into for particular criticism. Halim, for example, saw these as indicative of the private sectors, ‘ability to totally misunderstand Alexandria’s past,’ adding, ‘we have been promised further phases of development aimed at deeper improvements to transport systems, sanitation and poverty, however, too many people are congratulating themselves too soon for doing so little and at the same time failing to prioritise the more urgent needs’ (Halim: 9/99). The DUA’s Mohammed Mostafa similarly pointed out the ironies of the use of ancient ‘Greek’ motifs and symbols’ at a time when ‘Alexandria’s archaeological teams are discovering real evidence to show that the ancient city [i.e. Hellenistic Alexandria] was more Egyptian in appearance’ than was previously thought, thereby adding, ‘We shall soon be more Greek than Athens!’ (Mostafa: 9/99). In keeping with other critics he also argued, ‘It is a waste when all the archaeological expertise is being ignored. Companies could have consulted the Greco-Roman Museum to find ideas for their sculptures’. He also argued, ‘what we should be looking at is a mixture of all periods and what is really needed is more Islamic statues and heritage in the city otherwise this aspect of our culture will be totally missing’.
Bakri with her usual bluntness compared revivalism’s cosmetic quality as akin to ‘A human being putting on make up, cheap earrings and perfume when what is really needed is a good, long bath!’ (Bakri: 9/99). Bakri picked up on the ‘obscene contradiction’ that ‘villas around the Corniche are being ‘beautified’ while many, many more villas are being lost in other areas of the city,’ adding, ‘it is as if saving one building along the Corniche will make us close our eyes to the massive destruction taking place in other areas’. This was, unsurprisingly, a theme taken up by Awad and also by Zahra through their respective NGOs. Ironically Awad pointed out that it was Mahgoub, ‘who within a few weeks of gaining office lifted the decade-long ban on the demolition of villas’ (Awad: 9/99). Here he stated, ‘Although at that time there were developers who would ignore the ban, at least we could exert pressure on them and threaten court action. Now it is their legal right to wreck the city’. The ‘critical Chorus’ were equally skeptical of the ‘repairs and renovations’ on the houses along the Corniche, as Gallo, whose ‘Italian mission’ is based in one of the villas along the Corniche commented, ‘These villas need experts to work on them who know nineteenth and twentieth century European style architecture. Instead you find companies creating long-term problems by rushing in and filing in holes with industrial concrete mix! Professional conservators would weep at what is being done’ (Gallo: 5/00). It was pointed out that all this was taking place: ‘In the same period the campaign to save Durrell’s villa has gone largely ignored’.

- Battle for Alexandria

True to past form, it is this destructive potential of the urban development projects that have generated further criticisms. The project to extend the Corniche, for example, hailed by the Governorate as the solution to traffic congestion was hailed by Tzalas as ‘another major threat to the city’s ancient archaeological record’ (Tzalas: 5/00). He detailed ‘Ironically in the 1930s the initial construction of the Corniche resulted in the destruction of ancient tombs and buildings. It seems that despite attempts to campaign for new solutions, the same thing is about to happen again’. He emphasised that the Greek mission’s excavation off the coast of Ibrahimia, is a potential casualty (see Halim 1998: 7). With more irony the motif of ‘peace’ - the key feature of the Cities for Peace (1999)
The geographical boundedness of urban revivalism was also a repeated theme. Its first phases centred upon the city’s downtown areas and locations such as Mansheya complex but were slow to pick up on other less salubrious parts of the city. Clement argued, ‘What you are really looking at is such a small area of this vast city. All that has really happened is that a single strip – albeit the main strip – of the city has had a few coats of paint and the squares have been cleaned up … As you know you only have to walk a few streets away from the Corniche to see a very different city. You can see not only the poverty of an over populated Third World context but Islamic fundamentalist slogans painted on

3 See Appendix Two for general maps of the downtown area.
buildings. It’s a very, very different world. My worry is that this will go ignored by the ‘urban’ developers and simply exacerbate the problems and the tensions’. He further added, ‘It seems impossible to get too excited about a few cosmetic changes – in fact it’s morally suspect - when the many areas of Alexandria have no access to basic water and electricity supplies and where decent sanitation and ‘phone lines are still an absolute luxury’ (Clement: 9/99).

Moreover, the particular limitations of the ‘critical Chorus’ own cultural revivalist project within the wider context of urban development, was powerfully addressed by Mostafa, he stated, ‘We wish to use archaeological and cultural institutions for educational purposes, and,- aiming very high to harness these to real development needs-, but, I have to be very honest here and say that most Egyptians are not thinking of seven millennia of history but where they are going to get their next meal from’ (Mostafa: 9/99). Future ‘phases’ of revivalism are, however, planned to address the objective of extending revivalism’s remit. The Middle Eastern Times, for example, has highlighted a scheme to extend Alexandria’s current railway line south wards into the city’s outlying Victoria and Al Awayed districts while at the same time investing one-hundred and sixty Egyptian pounds in ‘constructing electricity stations, depots and garages’ along the same area with the ultimate aim of reaching into Alexandria’s ‘slum areas’ (Apiku 2000: 5). Within a city dubbed the ‘Capital of Memory’, the Middle Eastern Times’ journalist Apiku, poignantly refers to this project as an attempt to reach out to the ‘long forgotten people’ (Apiku 2000: 5).
SECTION THREE

REVIVALISM’S ‘URBAN MYTHS’ – MAHGOUB ‘THE BELOVED’

In a much more modest way, eliciting a popular response to revivalism was one of my on-going research objectives. From the initial stages of my research I undertook fieldwork at a number of sites, including the café complexes at Qait Bey and the Chatby beaches next to Bibliotheca Alexandrina. The emergence and impacts of urban regeneration’s ‘beautification’ projects enabled me to extend my mappings to include sites near to the sculptures and renovations, Mansheya district and also at Kom El Dikka (see Appendix Two). The new sculptures and mosaics and sites of renovation and revival (including the archaeological sites and the Bibliotheca) provided the backdrop or stage-set for new story-telling and the articulation of more ‘popular’ voices. As such, a force of ‘popular’ engagement with contemporary revivalism was detectable in these spaces which took as its focus the city’s governor Mahgoub. He emerged most effectively as the centre-point of a series of what could be described as Alexandria’s new ‘urban’ mythologies which clearly link the city’s physical reconstruction with Mahgoub as the key agent of the city’s re-enchantment. The cleaning up of the area along the Corniche (a result of improvements to refuse collection in downtown Alexandria and the repainting of villa facades), for example, was seen by many to provide a powerful metaphor for a more general sense of Magoub ‘cleaning up’ corruption in the city.

With more detail, it was explained to me that the Governor was popularly referred to as ‘the beloved’: the Arabic for ‘beloved’ being similar to (his surname) Mahgoub and offering what many saw to be an apposite phonetic connection. One of two main anecdotes or ‘stories’ circulating around Alexandria’s streets and told to me by an informant at the Qait Bey site was as follows:

‘The Governor got into a taxi car and asked the driver to start driving and gave an address which was just a short distance away. A few minutes into the drive, the driver realised that this was Mahgoub in disguise. The driver became very fearful as he had not been
able to afford proper taxi number plates on his cab and knew this was illegal. Before he could ask the Governor for his mercy, Mahgoub, with great kindness, having already understood the situation, told the driver “Not to worry” and told him to change direction and to drive along the Corniche very slowly – or at least slow enough to make sure the traffic police noticed the car. This he did. On his return drive to the Governorate building, the Governor forgave the taxi-driver but called all the policemen they had passed during the drive along the Corniche to his office. In great anger he took away their jobs for being too lazy and too careless not to spot the illegal number plates’. The informant was careful to communicate the point, ‘This is typical of our Governor. He supports the poor people and is against corruption’.

With further intrigue a second popular anecdote in circulation (this time told to me by an interviewee in Mansheya district) communicated the following scenario: ‘The Governor often goes amongst the people to test them in various ways. One day the Governor dressed up in rags like a beggar-man and set off on his way towards the hospital. It was here that he asked for treatment [the informant here explained that] Mahgoub is a diabetic like many people in Egypt and was trying to get the correct treatments [insulin] from the doctors’. He continued, ‘The doctors looked at him and because he looked poor they refused! Of course when Mahgoub took off his disguise they were very sorry. They knew they would lose their jobs for this great error’.

Many within the ‘critical Chorus’ like Bakri, Clement and also Abaddi repeated these and similar anecdotes, they combined the desire to believe with humour and healthy skepticism. Clement, for example, comments, ‘Alex is a great place for story-telling and gossip and it is a sign that there is a popular optimism peaking through at the moment. I expect that the Governor’s mythology will merge with the latest plots from the equally popular Egyptian soap operas too. In the end you can’t knock it! It’s one way in a context in which the political system offers absolutely no participation and inclusion, people can at least feel a part of things and that they have a means to make a difference’. He continues, ‘I think we all like to create Robin Hood type characters don’t we? Just so we can believe that someone is looking out for us? I find much of this moving emotionally,
and although changes are happening, in real political terms it's probably bollocks!' Having brought some ‘reality’ to his comments Clement finally adds, ‘It gives some sense, at least, of the aspirations and desires of the average Alexandrian’ (Clement: 9/99).

The city’s more marginalised voices thus effectively essentialise Mahgoub as part of a re-worked, operational equivalent of the ‘Alexandrina paradigm’ in which he emerges as the locus point of contemporary cure and (potential) redemption. In this sense, one could argue that the ‘old’ myth has been effectively popularised, with the Governor projected in the popular imagination as the ‘people’s hero’ championing the battles of the common ‘man’ against corrupt officials and others. The Governor has also emerged to take on a semi-mythical status capable of magician-like metamorphoses into a variety of guises, which see him, for example, dressed in ‘a humble person’s clothes’ ‘traveling on the tram and walking through the streets’ incognito. Thus while a repeated comment was that the Governor was, ‘like one of us’, he was also credited (with no apparent contradiction) to be ‘a dear friend of Mubarak’ and as such ‘tells him [Mubarak] the truth about his people’s love and their needs.’

It was obvious that investing the Governor as a champion of popular justice was regarded as a means to communicate both the plight and the aspirations of poor and hard-working Alexandrians and that these myths formed part of wider desires for recognition, justice, empowerment and agency. Moreover, the circulation of the above anecdotes, as demonstrated below, are increasingly bound up in the articulation of more grounded aspirations for the city. Many people I interviewed used these as a means to recoup their own notions of civic pride: some, for example, were keen to emphasise the aspiration that the re-developments led by Mahgoub would encouraged fellow Alexandrians to ‘look after and respect the city’, one informant making a wish that this would make Alexandria into a ‘decent place for children to grow up in’. Pursuing a wider wish within and outside the city the popular voice also expressed their own ‘desire for peace’: its older adherents remembering the ’67 and ’73 wars (some as veterans) while many more across the age-gap also gestured to the on-going conflicts in near-by Palestine/Israel.
SECTION FOUR

COSMOPOLITANISM AS AN
‘ENTENTE WITH THE RECENT PAST’

A component part of the contemporary context, and one of the most striking features to emerge from these interactions and crossings-over between the dynamics of cultural-archaeological revivalism, the urban revivalism and the popular imagination is that it has presented the opportunity for key actors within the ‘critical Chorus’ to simultaneously combine intellectual recuperations of cosmopolitanism and of Alexandrian autonomy with operational heritage campaigns. As this thesis has shown, from Abaddi through Fattah onwards, this has been a major aspiration and agenda of the Alexandrian elites/intellectuals. As this final section demonstrates, this agenda is actively being met and has allowed actors to engage in what Awad refers to as a ‘new embrace of cosmopolitanism’ (Awad: 9/99) which, in turn, offers these particular actors a means to repossess other key ‘signs and images’ and ‘myths and icons’ synonymous with Alexandria’s genealogy including those of ‘humanism’, ‘universalism’, ‘democracy’ and to essentialise these as part of contemporary revivalist ‘heritage values’. Moreover, the objective underpinning these particular dramas is summed up by Awad as a means of cultivating an ‘entente with recent history’.

In order to map this dynamic, in what follows I trace two different but inextricably linked trajectories. The first outlines in more intellectual-biographical detail my interviews both Awad (9/99) and Zahra (9/99): not only are they directors of NGOs and academics but as Awad makes explicit, both men are ‘products of the city’s old multi-cultural society’ and as such are both ‘Alexandrians’ and ‘Egyptian cosmopolitans’: Awad shares Egyptian and Greek ancestry, and Zahra, both Egyptian and French lineage. The other trajectory relates to the traumatic separation or departure during the 1950s of ‘foreign’ Alexandrians - known as ‘Khwaga’. This painful history of the exile has also re-emerged alongside revivalism. Here I return to my interview made with the archaeologist and writer Harry Tzalas (who was born in Alexandria, to a Greek father and an Italian mother). Tzalas left the city with other ‘Greek Alexandrians’ in 1956 but has made his
own 'homecoming' and return to Alexandria in order to be part of contemporary revivalism (Tzalas: 5/00).

- 1952 Revolution

All three interviewees were able to give more depth and new nuances to earlier accounts of Alexandria’s recent history when, like many other informants, they took as their shared point of departure the Revolution of 1952. The complex nature of the event is perhaps best summed up by Tzalas who comments: ‘At that time I was pro-Nasser and took part in anti-British demonstrations... many held in Alexandria’s Tahrir Square...It has to be said, and said quite clearly, that most of the foreigner’s privilege was based on the oppression of the people of that place. The events of 1952 gave me personally a sense of social justice which has never left me...I was truly happy to see that Alexandria was returned back to the people who really own it’

Interestingly Awad also featured Mansheya/ Tahrir Square complex in his account of this period by poignantly referring to it as ‘the place where cosmopolitanism began with the Europeans and where ironically it ended with Nasser’ and thus as a means to show the more decisive and oppressive features at play (also see Awad 1996). In a similar fashion Zahra also characterises the 1950s as synonymous with the death of cosmopolitanism, arguing that, ‘Alexandrian cosmopolitanism, like the cosmopolitans themselves, can be found lying in the Free-thinkers Cemetery’ . Awad who has one of the few archives of the pre-1950s period argued further that although ‘modern cosmopolitanism was contaminated with colonialism, it cannot simply be reduced to this.’ He also drew out how, ‘The ancient period has suffered the same reductionism.’

An illustration of this latter point can be found in Awad’s own project made in collaboration with Alexandria’s Greek community and the Greek Friends of the Bibliotheca to erect a statue of Alexander the Great in one of Alexandria’s downtown squares (fig. 28). In an echo of UNESCO’s pre-project visits the statue’s status as both a ‘foreign’/ ‘Western’ object and in this case as a ‘Greek’ gift provoked controversy
Fig. 28. Statue of Alexander the Great, downtown Alexandria (photo B. Butler)
As Awad and the other two informants made clear they saw their role in revivalism as bound up in the need to challenge this essentialist view of Alexandria's icons (including the Alexandrina, Cleopatra and Pharos) as Western objects by drawing upon and underlining the new findings of archaeologists and new research being undertaken at Alexandria University (for example, by Yehya (8/99) and Khalyl (9/99)) which consolidates and authenticates the thesis of hybrid origins and highlights non-Western influences and their associated cosmopolitics.

- Cosmopolitan Spirit

Zahra was also keen to defend a more subtle return to Alexandria's pre-1950s era in order to recuperate its 'cosmopolitan vision of a tolerant humanistic world.' He stated that despite the 'historical relationship' between 'the European and the Oriental' in which the former, 'took the dominant, stronger position,' he argued that what needed to be salvaged from this context was, 'a whole host of cultural influences which once flourished in Alexandria.' Zahra illustrated with an autobiographical vignette which relates back to the motif of 'what it is to be human':

'My grandfather was a Sheikh [cf. local Islamic holy man] who married a French woman. They used to listen to opera and classical music while reading not only Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Voltaire and Balzac but the Koran and Egyptian authors like Shawqui. They discussed everything with my mother, who later became a professor of French literature...To find something like that now is impossible: to laugh, joke, attend opera and to listen to Chopin while reading the Koran now would be seen as a contradiction'.

This attitude, he argued, has its impacts on research into the modern cosmopolitan period. He illustrated with references to his work on both Alexandria's Sporting Club (established in the colonial period by the British) and the Jewish community's contribution to this period. Regarding the latter, Zahra comments, 'I received verbal criticism which insinuated that this was an anti-Egyptian and anti-patriotic gesture'. He
connected these reactions to the prevalent attitude in which, ‘what is regarded as foreign or as ‘Western’ culture is held in suspicion’ and which, in turn, led him to stress how, ‘Occidental culture in Alexandria is now regarded as dangerous.’ Zahra, however, refused to reduce global relationships to a ‘Clash of Civilisations’ scenario and was more concerned to describe how, within Egypt itself, Alexandria’s ‘cosmopolitan spirit’ is needed ‘more than ever’. In echoes of other informants Zahra saw this as a means to challenge the separatisms and violences which motivate both ‘naive nationalism’ and ‘religious fundamentalism’. In terms of the latter he referenced extremists calls to destroy Egypt’s ‘pagan’ heritage (the physical remains of Egypt’s ancient pasts) and to the terrorist attacks on tourists, particularly that of the 1997 Luxor tragedy. Again he reiterated, ‘If we want to flourish we [Egyptians] should accept a tolerant relationship with Europeans and other foreigners and not believe that every influence from ‘outside’ is a plot against us or against Islam.’

Awad and Zahra’s identities as ‘Egyptian cosmopolitans’ and therefore as intimates, witnesses and survivors of Alexandria’s modern cosmopolitan experience found a deep empathy in revivalism. As Awad has commented in print, ‘In trying to save this cosmopolitan world, I am trying to save myself’ (Stille 2000: 99). Taking up the ‘other side’ of the story is Tzalas. Interestingly Tzalas, with some humor, described his hybrid roots affording him the accolade of ‘Citizen of the World’. His personal biography includes both an exile from Alexandria and his recent return. Tzalas described the events which saw the departure of ‘foreign’ Alexandrians - the ‘Khwaga’ - from the city as, ‘very painful and complex,’ and he stressed that, ‘the events and aftermath of this departure harmed both the people who departed and it harmed those who stayed...The balance of communities was broken.’ This traumatic experience of separation he reiterated, ‘affected, in different ways, the whole of the city,’ a sentiment echoed by many Egyptian interviewees.
Tzalas rejected what he termed as the ‘dreadful nostalgias’ which have led to ‘Westerners weeping at the loss of Alexandria,’ adding, ‘the period following a revolution is difficult for all nations. The most positive thing is that it gave Egyptians a sense a pride which was always at risk when the ‘Khwaga’ were in a powerful position.’ Looking back to the actual, ‘time of exile and departure [Tzalas left in 1956]’ he poignantly muses that ‘a certain amount is still left unexplained…it seems to me that many of us left without reason.’ He further explained how he, like many other ‘Khwagas’, were committed to ensuring that shifts in power took place which would support Egyptian self-determination, but that he considered the mass departure of ‘foreign’ communities to be an extreme and an unnecessary option. Tzalas outlined the specific reasons why, after the 1956 Suez Crisis, ‘fear and potential violence reached British, French and Jewish communities and required them to leave,’ but adds, ‘the Greeks had a different relationship with the city and its authorities - the Greek government was at fault - it panicked and called its ‘nationals’ out. It was a mistake.’ Tzalas commented that ‘repatriation’ placed him in an ‘absurd position’ in which he was made to ‘return’ to Greece -‘a place I had never been to,’ and which was also ‘just recovering from a traumatic civil war.’

Tzalas chose to spend time in South America before returning to the Mediterranean. He, like many others, harboured a, ‘dream of a return’ to Alexandria, but, he stated, ‘I didn’t want to return as a tourist - after all I am an Alexandrian.” Tzalas’ ‘homecoming’ and return was subsequently and effectively mediated via his participation in contemporary archaeology revivalism which Tzalas saw as giving him a ‘useful contributory role in Alexandria while allowing me to re-explore this very real, welcoming and heart-warming city.’ Furthermore, Tzalas’ contribution to Alexandria’s literary imagination has resulted in the publication of a volume of short stories *Farewell To Alexandria* (1999) which narrate his childhood and early adulthood in the city.
What was reflected in these particular interviews was a sense in which revivalism's recuperated cosmopolitics could be used as a resource to create what Awad described as, 'an entente with recent history' an agenda which both echoes Abaddi's (1997) earlier reference to revivalism coinciding with Egypt's 'more stable state of mind' and yet again with the psychoanalytic desire for a 'more stable and less haunting past' (Feuchtwang 2000b:3). Zahra similarly commented 'This contemporary turn towards Alexandria's cosmopolitan pasts is allowing us Egyptians to begin talking with more openness about Egypt's ancient and modern history and crucially too, about the country's future in terms of diversity, multi-culturalism and also Human Rights.' He detailed, 'The past decades have had devastating effects on both intellectual freedoms and cultural expression. Egypt's record on Human Rights is escalating with the effect that its structures of civil society are eroded from all sides'. Zahra, who I interviewed at his Friend's of the Environment office in Alexandria's San Stefano district reiterated, 'The preservation of ancient and modern culture and of the environment is always a matter of Human Rights, always a matter of equality, always a matter of democracy and always about resisting naïve and chauvinistic perceptions of the world4.'

Taking this another step further, Awad, Zahra and Tzalas were in agreement that to avoid revivalism being hijacked by top-down political and diplomatic forces, 'real goals' needed to be met in terms of Egypt's internal politics, in particular, the struggle to create a cosmopolitics of 'contemporary civil society' (cf. Zahra: 999). This unity of intent also saw Awad, whom I interview at his Awad Enterprizes office, which is also the base of the Alexandria Preservation Trust located in the city's downtown area, underline Fattah's earlier comments, to argue, 'I see a correspondence between the acknowledgement of a plurality of ancient pasts and of Egypt's commitment to carve out its future roles in the

4Here Zahra's comments (see also Appendix Seven) regarding the specific agendas collecting around the mobilisation of cosmopolitan in Egypt have interesting correspondences with Middle Eastern cultural theorists/ activists re-conceptualisations of cosmopolitanism for contemporary Middle Eastern contexts. Again an emphasis is placed upon reviving civil society voices and highlighting the agendas of Human Rights and democracy within this project (see Meiijer 1999: vii).
global arena', a process he saw as synonymous with ‘the construction of a brighter, democratic future for Egypt.’

- Leonardo and Cleo

This theme of ‘entente’ opens up to other expressions and I would argue to examples what Said describes as cosmopolitan ‘worlds in mixture’ (Said 2001a). It was here that the capacity of popular culture, in particular, to mix and mingle icons from north and south, ancient and modern worlds was most tangible. It is clear too from the number of projects which have appeared on the scene, that the regeneration of the city has become increasingly bound up in aspirations to re-invent Alexandrina’s future within the theme of ‘entente’ (however, well or badly conceived and managed). For example, in Alexandria’s public squares, the ‘Greco-Roman’ sculptures and mosaics sponsored by local business consortia, the statue to Alexander the Great erected by Awad and the ‘Greek’ community can be found juxtaposed next to statues of dignitaries, for example, that of Nubar Pasha, from the modern cosmopolitan period - previously kept ‘in storage’ - and currently being restituted by the Alexandrian authorities. The latter gesture is part of what Empereur described as ‘attempts to use the city’s patrimony to reconcile past and present.’ He did, however, contrast these gestures with the contemporary ‘neglect and ambivalence’ directed towards Nasser’s birthplace - now museum - which is located in Alexandria’s suburbs which he felt conveyed some of the current critical sentiment towards the more violent legacies of the Revolution period (Empereur: 5/00).

The aforementioned old and new architectural additions in Alexandria’s downtown areas as both objects of ‘controversy’ and potential ‘reconciliation’ formed the backdrop for more vox pop interviews. Here, for example, a new mosaic which narrates the founding of the city by Alexander the Great and depicts not only Alexander (see fig. 29), but Cleopatra and a host of other ancient icons too, became the prop and prompt for discussions which made clear that these icons are currently more ‘foreign’ to Alexandria’s youth than the contemporary ‘Western’ icons preoccupying them, such as Leonardo de Caprio, Madonna, and McDonald’s. However, interviews also showed that
Fig. 29. New mosaic featuring Alexander the Great, downtown Alexandria

(source: undated Attalla Cards, Egypt)

Fig. 30. Posters of the Spice Girls and Mecca for sale, downtown Alexandria

(photo: B. Butler)
the ancient icons and new mosaics are undergoing a form of domestication as they become increasingly synonymous with the future aspirations of Alexandria’s youth, who are beginning to see revivalism as a medium of re-engagement with the ‘outside world’. This re-engagement is being anticipated not only as the source of jobs and money (as potentially generated by tourism) but as synonymous with participation in a world of shared, global (popular) cultural exchange. By way of illustration, another vignette which, in its own way challenged the motif the ‘Clash of Civilisations’, relates to a scene in down-town Alexandria in which a poster vendor display of posters saw photographs of Mecca and of the Spice Girls positioned side by side (fig. 30): testimony to a real ‘world of mixture’ (cf. Said 2001a).

- Marginalised Memory

Contemporary Alexandrian cosmopolitanism and the theme of ‘entente’ re-connects once again with the mobilisation of the image/metaphor of Alexandria as a city haunted by the ghosts of its own past. This link is made as other commentators (echoing the ‘critical Chorus’) who take revivalism as their cue to search for the more problematic spectres of Alexandria’s modern cosmopolitanism-colonial period. Mitchell, for example, asks what happened to the ‘once richly cosmopolitan community of Jews, Greeks and other Europeans’ arguing that ‘the ghost of a Mediterranean urbanity lingers beneath the Egyptian exuberance’ (Mitchell 1998:107). Increasingly, revivalism has been embroiled in this need to address the silences, repressed memory and traumatic events which mark both the city’s modern experience of cosmopolitanism/colonialism and also the ‘history of departures’ which followed Independence in the 1950s. Such themes are powerfully echoed in similar fears and anxieties which mark academic discourse’s own ‘excavation’ of the painful and traumatic modern cosmopolitan colonial contexts: “Why dredge up this tainted and problematic world [of cosmopolitanism]?...the most defensible answer [is]...dredge it up so we know, our hands are dirty anyway” (Anderson 1998:285).

As such, one further cosmopolitan context illustrates both the limits and challenges of the revivalist project, is that of minority communities within the contemporary Alexandrian
landscape. These groups, rarely feature in post-1950s characterisations of Egyptian national identity - which posits an homogenised concept of nation, expressed in terms of the majority Arab-Muslim population, - but are comprised, for example, of Greek, Italian and Armenian communities who stayed in Alexandria after Independence and also Jewish, Nubian, Sudanese and Coptic Christian groups whose identities (in varying degrees) are still relatively hidden and bound up in the silences which continue to exacerbate feelings of marginalisation (see also Appendix Two). Perhaps the most convincing testimony of the need for revivalism to extend the inscription of memory, both within the city and outside, came from one Armenian Alexandrian who insisted, 'Everyone’s history is woven together, we each explain the other and we all need to be given a voice in terms of the future of the city.’

CONCLUSIONS

REVIVALISM’S ‘OLD’ AND ‘NEW’ COSMOPOLITICS

As this chapter has demonstrated, the coming together of the main ‘tributaries’ of revivalism: the Bibliotheca revivalist project, archaeological revivalism and popular revivalism has opened up the discourse of return and homecoming to new disputes and ‘ententes’. The Bibliotheca project, therefore, needs to be understood as part of a wider arena of revivalism which is subject to attempts at ‘urban shock-therapy’ and met by accusations of a more cosmetic ‘Las Vegasisation’. As such the city is subject to an on-going ‘Battle for Alexandria’ being fought out between the economic-commerical and cultural elites and mediated by Governorate (with differences of opinion on how well or how badly this is being managed): these tensions and clashes threaten the great gains made by the ‘critical Chorus’ while also acting as its source of potential empowerment.

As also demonstrated this context is defined (mobilised and motivated) by a number of differently nuanced returns to and recuperations of Alexandria’s ancient and modern foundational values. These are dominated by a certain dualism in terms of on the one hand the re-possession of Alexandria’s commercial traditions (by those in the
Governorate and business communities who have a vested interest) and on the other the intellectual-operational return to cosmopolitan ‘values’ made by revivalism’s other key interest group: the ‘critical Chorus’. While I argue that trying to affect a ‘popular’ purchase and engagement on revivalism illustrates both the challenges and limits of the revivist projects cosmopolitical thesis: there are glimpses of the desire on the part of the popular ‘voice’ to participate in Alexandria’s contemporary metamorphosis; the mythologisation of the figure of the Governor being its chief expression.

Moreover this engagement brings an interesting dynamic to the concept of revivalism as a force of ‘urban shock-therapy’. Not only is it clear that many Alexandrians have their own aspirations for their city – as captured in the local who wished for Alexandria to become ‘a decent place for children to grow up in’ - but that these aspirations in turn were bound up in desire for a more ‘just’, less corrupt and more inclusive notion of civil and civic participation. While contemporary urban revivalism is regarded by many as a surface-only change – a force of ‘beautification’ and ‘LasVegasisation’ which has its obvious geographical limitations - it is evident that the ‘critical Chorus’, in particular, drew upon a wider vision of cultural revivalism motivated by quests for a ‘new’ cosmopolitics based on a ‘new humanism.’ This force of recuperation not only brought into view new expressions of heritage-value as centred around Alexandria’s ‘humanistic’ values but was also capable of pursuing a further therapeutic potential of revivalism: that of creating a ‘entente with recent history’.

As this chapter demonstrates this vision of ‘entente’ operates at a number of levels and once again has correspondences with the psychoanalytic desire for a ‘more stable and less haunting past’ (Feuchtwang 2000b:3). Here, in particular, more aspirational sentiments were expressed which explored the capacity of all ‘three tributaries’ of revivalism to elicit a symbolic ‘entente’ with the ancient past while attempting to harness this to bring about more operational, therapeutic possibilities. As such, key informants, notably Awad, Zahra and Tzalas, expressed the desire to re-present revivalism as a resource for memory work and more specifically to define it - in echoes of the ‘old’ Alexandrina paradigm - as a template capable of re-engaging with ‘lost’ histories and also of mediating and/ or
'working through' the traumas, separations and sense of loss associated with the events of Egypt's recent past.

As this chapter suggests this offers a means both to re-instate and rework the city's role as 'Capital of Memory' and to recuperate its role as both a potent archival space, a theatre of mourning and as a potentially redemptive, therapeutic zone. The onus here, as the 'critical Chorus' make clear, is on the ability of both cultural and urban revivalism to marry together elite and popular aspirations in a new cosmopolitics capable of uniting civic pride with Human Rights, and acts of recognition, reconciliation and peace with the project of mobilising these in order to build bridges with contemporary 'besieged' identities within the wider landscape. This requires revivalism to include in its odyssey of homecoming the city’s minority cosmopolitan communities and to reach out to the 'long forgotten people'. The antithesis being that the 'Battle for Alexandria' and revivalism itself becomes a traumatic experience for certain actors and groups and/or a source of ambivalence and further marginalisation.
Conclusions - 
‘Windows onto Contemporary Worlds’
CONCLUSIONS
‘WINDOWS ONTO CONTEMPORARY WORLDS’

INTRODUCTION
JOURNEY’S END

[An] allegory that corresponds to one of the great myths that we find in literature, which is the myth of home, discovery, and return: the odyssey. [T]here’s a certain working out that is extremely intricate ... It’s a slightly complex thing as Cavafy observes. So, it’s not a solid return where everything ends. It’s the return where you feel that something new could begin. So that’s one kind of very powerful experience.

(Said in Barrenboim and Said 2002: 48)

After all the Bibliotheca Alexandrina is not just a pretty building ... - as stipulated in its mission – [it] is “the world’s window on Egypt... Egypt’s window to the world”...[and] Egypt’s leading cultural institution in dealing with the information revolution ...[and] a centre for both learning and dialogue’.

(Farag 2002a: 20)

Writ large the motif of the odyssey of homecoming - as Said states (above, and with a specific gesture to the Alexandrian poet Cavafy) - is a process subject to the discovery of what ‘attracts’ (life’s liberations) and also what ‘threatens’ (its oppressive traits) and subject to ‘a certain working out’ as one makes one’s way along an ‘extremely intricate’ journey towards something ‘new’ (Said in Barrenboim and Said 2002: 48). In what follows I use these motifs and their resonancy for the ‘intricate’ pathway mapped by revivalism to both re-focus my attention upon the final stages of the Bibliotheca’s homecoming: its metamorphosis into a fully operational, international institution; and to return to the key preoccupations of this thesis as a means to engage in a ‘working out’ of four main ‘conclusions’.
Fig. 31. ‘Egypt’s Fourth Pyramid’ – the completed building showing the planetarium

(photo: B. Butler)
Fig. 32. The Four Muses installed in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (photo: B. Butler)

Fig. 33. Statue of Demetrius of Phaleron, front entrance Bibliotheca Alexandrina

(photo: B. Butler)
- Egypt’s Fourth Pyramid

It is thus, ‘One thousand and six hundred years down history’s winding road’ (Farag 2002a: 20) and after a more recent history of high aspiration, intense controversy and prolonged delays, that the ‘long journey that brought the library to completion’ finally culminated in the emergence of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina as an 85, 405 square-meter cultural-complex rising up to eleven stories (Hammouda 2002: 2). Dubbed by Suzanne Mubarak as Egypt’s ‘Fourth Pyramid’, the Bibliotheca’s ‘soft opening’ (strategically staged to anticipate its official opening) was timed to coincide with the enactment of new phases in its wider development plan (see Appendix One). These have included the establishment of a more rigorous committee and legislative structure and the appointment of a General-Director to direct and manage the institution. This top job went to Ismail Serageldin, who as a former vice-president of the World Bank and one of the main candidates in the aforementioned (highly controversial) 1999 UNESCO election for Director-General, is a formidable ‘actor’ within the ‘sacred dramas’ of high international diplomacy. As an Egyptian national educated both in Egypt and the US, his cosmopolitan identity has afforded him the role of (potential) ‘reconciler’ between national, international and also intellectual and operational interests. His expertise in the fields of development and environmentalism, and urban poverty in ‘Third World’ contexts have underpinned this potential.

As ‘the man charged to walk in the footsteps of Demetrius of Phaleron’ (Farag 2002a: 20) (the first head of the ancient Alexandrina) Serageldin crystallised the Bibliotheca project’s contemporary mission as a ‘window on the world.’ It was during the ‘soft-opening’ that this motif took on a particular force and an immediacy which saw Serageldin (amongst others) increased attempts to shape the institution’s mission and philosophy to respond to the ‘real’ of the contemporary context. Serageldin’s role, for example, has become increasingly bound up in the need to address on-going fears (articulated both inside and outside Alexandria and Egypt) over potential hijackings of the institution (Serageldin 2001). These have typically been couched in terms of fears that the institution would be attacked by Islamist extremists. This fear and anxiety, as
Serageldin himself has stated, became more heightened in a global context which has become indelibly marked by the events of September 11th and after which he found himself more publicly fielding questions on risks of terrorism (Serageldin 2001).

Increasingly his comments to the press and at public events and meetings have engaged in a more particularised - this time ‘top-down’ - recasting of the Alexandrina scheme as a ‘challenge’ to the violent re-emergence of the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ thesis which followed both the terrorist attacks on the US and which has underpinned the ensuing ‘War against Terror’ (Serageldin 2001). By re-iterating a commitment to cosmopolitan values and to ‘freedom and rationality’ he issued a call to those within both the local and international ‘critical Chorus’ a rallying call to defend the project (Serageldin 2001). This call, however, also needed to be reconciled with the realities of popular Egyptian support for the Palestinian cause and the growth of hostility towards Western support for Israel.

SECTION ONE

INAUGURAL CANCELLATIONS AND CLASHES

Thus despite Serageldin’s appeals to revive the tradition of ‘dialogue between cultures’ in the ‘post 9/11- era’ as a cure-all for civilisational clashes, the build up to the Bibliotheca’s official opening saw the most violent dramas yet to directly effect the institution. My final fieldwork phase was planned to coincide with these opening events which were to have been the culmination of the institution’s own ‘sacred dramas’ based upon the production started at Aswan. On the 14 April, however, nine days before the event was to have run, the Egyptian government via the State Information Services (SIS) issued a statement postponing the inauguration events due to recent ‘Israeli acts of aggression’ which had ‘created’ an ‘unfavourable climate for the celebration’ (see Hassan Gordon 2002: 2)1. These events saw Hosni and Suzanne Mubarak issue a highly politicised ‘civilized message’ to the international community in order to condemn Israel’s violent actions. Significantly the Presidential couple appealed to the moral-ethical language and discourse of the liberal, cosmopolitan tradition which is so potently

1 A copy of which can be found in Appendix One.
symbolised by the Bibliotheca itself in order to convey their ‘message’. This act can be seen as the most explicit and effective use (within the international arena at least), of the Bibliotheca as moral-ethical resource of political statesmanship.

A dramatic shift of perspective on these events, however, comes with an alternative explanation of the Presidency’s decision to postpone. This time it is the acts of terror, violence and tragedy within the immediate vicinity of the Bibliotheca – authored by the Egyptian government itself - which are brought dramatically into view. As Hassan-Gordon writing for the Middle Eastern Times states:

‘Just meters from the steps of the Alexandria Library, at the gates of Alexandria University’s Faculty of Commerce, an Egyptian student gasped his last breath when he died of gunshot wounds during an anti-American demonstration on April 10. The death of Mohammed Ali, a business student at the university, sent a shock wave across Egyptian university campuses and stunned people all over the country. The timing couldn’t have been worse for the Alexandria Library, which had been gearing up for its grand opening on April 23. On April 14, President Hosni Mubarak announced that the library’s inauguration was postponed to an underdetermined date. The Egyptian State Information Service (SIS) quickly tried to pin the blame on Israel, stating that the opening cancellation was in solidarity with the Palestinians ... The reality though, is that the proximity of the violent demonstrators, only a stone’s throw from the library steps, was a security nightmare for event organizers. With more that 60 world leaders invited to attend the gala event, and a guest list of 300 international figures, there was a high risk that students would use the event to broadcast their fury’ (Hassan-Gordon 2002: 2).

In this shift of perspective, critical commentators thus argue that it was the internal clashes operating within Egypt, and more specifically between the Egyptian State and its people, which was opened up to become the more immediate fault-line and the cause of concern with regard to the Bibliotheca’s proposed opening. Khan, another Middle Eastern Times correspondent, for example, gives further back-ground to this context by outlining how the Israeli offensive when it began on March 29th had seen ‘anti-Israeli and
anti-American protests’ take place, ‘almost daily’ in Egypt, with this mood of protest aggravated by visits made by US Secretary of State Colin Powell to Cairo within this period (Khan 2002: 5). Typically, Cairo is regarded as the key site of protest, with the capital’s own Tahrir (Liberation) Square, Cairo University, the American University of Cairo and the Al Azhar complexes, invested as the usual spaces for demonstrations. The expectation that police would be needed as much to control riots against the government as protests against the level of violence in the Palestinian territories served only to increase anxiety around any public events presenting the opportunity for such demonstrations. As Khan, argues, ‘the government’s fear that the demonstrators could turn from attacking Israel to attacking their own rulers framed its response’ (Khan 2002: 5).

Alexandria University and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina – which are connected via a bridge – were thus drawn into these alternative inaugural events. Protests against Israel and the US which took place at these sites became increasingly directed against the Egyptian State’s violence and brutality. This was especially true following the shooting. Khan’s account of 10 April, for example, describes how ‘State-run television ran footage of students stoning the riot police and showed cars and shop windows smashed by angry crowds’ with Hassan-Gordon reiterating that the death of the single student ‘Just meters from the steps of the Alexandria Library’ sent shock-waves throughout Alexandria and nationally (Hassan-Gordon 2002: 20).

Alexandria’s Governor was pitched into a new role within these new political dramas when ‘a delegation representing the protestors’ met with him (Khan 2002: 5). In response to their demands Mahgoub, ‘promised them he would intervene with the state prosecutor ... to obtain the release of students.’ The governor, however, failed to work his magic on this occasion, and the students who had been taken to the notorious Burg al-Arab prison twenty kilometers west of Alexandria were, ‘held for a week for vandalism and the destruction of public property during the demonstrations’ (Khan 2002: 5). They were eventually released, ‘after an appeal from their parents to President Hosni Mubarak’. As was pointed out in the media reports the profile of protestors were of students, many of
the female and from 'Egypt's upper Middle Class' (Khan 2002: 5). These were, therefore, from the same constituency as those students who participated in UNESCO's pre-project visits and had expressed their anxieties over the Alexandrina project, and which, like the US cultural embassy the demonstrators attacked, was regarded as a provocative 'foreign' object.

- Repair, Reconciliation and Ambivalence

The events which collected around the Bibliotheca Alexandria's proposed opening illustrated the failure of the cosmopolitan imagination in the face of the reality of events bound up in, and witness to, more complex contemporary acts of terror and violence which were aggressively and narcissistically committed to the denial of the more 'rooted' historical and contemporary 'worlds of mixture' which became the voice of popular protest - in North and South alike - particularly if we include the anti World Trade riots in Seattle in our window onto contemporary worlds. Thus in the aftermath of the events which marked the Bibliotheca’s alternative ‘inauguration’, fears were expressed of the 'high risk' that the institution would become a focus of further protests (see Hassan-Gordon 2002: 20). It was in this context, however, that with none of the media hype of the planned official inauguration, and without any statements or spectacles which could insight explosive responses, the Bibliotheca did in fact open its doors and its 'soft-opening' continued.

Much later in the year the Alexandria’s rescheduled opening took place on 16 October 2002 with the authorities on a high state of security. Halim's commentary in Al Ahram Weekly conveys the new dramas of transformation bound up in this event: 'For three days Alexandria was all contrast, caught between the stillness of a ghost town, albeit a thoroughly sanitized one, and the highest-profile event the city has witnessed in decades' (Halim 2002c: 2). The state high security in Alexandria saw not only, 'The public sector, government offices, the university, schools - all given a holiday for the duration of the opening' but also that, 'Rumour took care of the rest: many closed shops, the stocking up on bread and cigarettes, the plans to commute by the Abu Qir train in case all other
means of transportation came to a standstill' (Halim 2002c: 2). As another commentator adds, 'some buildings and the Chatby hospital in the vicinity of the library, were evacuated' (Farag 2002a: 20). Also in play were 'initiatives to revamp the city' prompted by the event and which saw 'public squares landscaped, palm trees planted along the water’s edge and old style lampposts installed all over the town' (Farag 2002a: 20).

In this highly ‘sanitised’ ‘ghost town’ and re-designed back drop international dignitaries and diplomats took part in ‘gala celebrations’ which with a more restricted guest list than previously planned included, amongst others: the French President Jacques Chirac, President Carlo Ciampi of Italy and Greek President Costis Stepanopolou, Queen Sophia of Spain. One commentator confidently reiterating, ‘It is this legacy [of cosmopolitanism], in particular, that the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, which officially opened its doors to the world yesterday, evokes. In a world increasingly plagued by war, intolerance, bigotry and the hegemony of the “clash of civilisations” paradigm, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina rises from its ancient ashes, a symbol that another world is possible’ (Farag 2002a: 20). In this expression of new archival hospitalities and cosmopolitics, however, a major omission was made in the failure to invite Mostafa Abaddi to the opening of the institution and thus of the project that he himself initiated. Moreover, journalists taking the event as an opportunity to also take stock of the wider force of revivalism led to fears being expressed that Alexandria’s cosmetic make-overs had finally overtaken the official support (financial and otherwise) of the more ‘authentic’ force of archaeological revivalism and associated preservation campaigns (see Halim 2002b: 17).

- Soft-Opening as ‘entente’

Writ large it remains unanswerable, however, whether the Alexandrina in its historical and more recent translations has been complicit in the polarisation of conflict and terror, or has contributed to creating more critical, emancipatory movements. This sense of ambivalence and ‘mixed feelings’ echoes theorists’ scepticisms concerning both the

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2 See Appendix One for a full version of Halim’s paper.
‘dangers’ which ‘attend new elaborations of cosmopolitanism’ and their propensity to repeat ‘old’ cosmopolitical violences and clashes (see Robbins 1998:18). The various actors on the scene of revivalism obviously regarded the Alexandrina’s unveiling, with a mixture of aspiration and anxiety, as well as seeing this as the starting-point for more substantial change and transformation to take place within their contemporary city. If ‘conclusions’ or lessons can, however, be learnt from events surrounding the institution’s (failed, official) opening, from its rescheduled events – and also from the many conflicts and clashes which narrated the institution’s development from an idea to a fully-fledged international institution – it would be that of impressing upon all parties (especially the official stakeholders) an awareness of two particular dynamics.

The first, is that of the need to define and to defend a more critical and complex set of values, which are thus cosmopolitan in its wider sense, and drawn not simply from within the Alexandrina’s own genealogy but from ‘outside’ its own front steps. Secondly, in responding to these new contestations there emerged the need for contemporary revivalism as a moral-ethical force, and as a medium of intellectual-operational re-engagement, translation and reconciliation to similarly become more grounded and located. In this sense, the institution amid a world of complex ‘messy politics’ needs to be made subject to ‘guarantees’ (Clifford 1998:369) which address the ‘real’ in terms of defining both responsibilities towards both local involvement and impacts, and by asserting a commitment to a contemporary politics of inclusion. This latter commitment, in turn, needs to be an on-going project capable of making ‘excavations’ and therapeutic recuperations of the lost objects of Grand Narrative discourse in both North and South and thus reach down into the ‘hidden’ histories, marginalised memories and ‘besieged identities’ (cf. Said 2003) at local level and outside Egypt.

It is also unanswerable whether these gestures may or may not aspire to become part of what Said, - speaking in light of the September 11th attacks and the on-going clashes between Israelis and Palestinians, - has referred to as the ‘hidden’ ‘pockets of resistance, the small victories’ and the ‘positive collaborations’ which he argues, are capable of both ‘disrupt[ing] the violence of Grand Narrative injustices’ and as such of opening up the
way to a ‘more optimistic vision of the future’ (cf. Said 2001b). In outlining some of these transformations taking place within the Bibliotheca, I would argue that small glimpses of Said’s vision, particularised for this specific context, do indeed emerge at points. Significantly too these have included the ‘critical Chorus’ own ‘ententes’ with the institution. Perhaps this is best conveyed in Awad donating his archive now known as the ‘The Awad Collection’ which documents Alexandria’s modern cosmopolitan architecture and heritage to the Alexandrina on long-term loan (also see Appendix One).

SECTION TWO

FINAL FIELDWORK RETURN – COMING FULL-CIRCLE

As previously stated my final fieldwork phase was timed with the Bibliotheca’s official opening but was rescheduled to coincide with two events held in December 2002: firstly, the Centenary of Cairo Museum and its accompanying international conference “Museology in the 21st Century” and secondly, “Cultures and the Enemy Image” held at the Bibliotheca which was one of the institution’s first major conferences. Both events were occasions to discuss ‘possible futures’ (cf. Venn 2002: 65) and more specifically the future role of these and wider Egyptian cultural institutions. The former celebrations took as their focus the Cairo Museum, the same site at which an anxious and reflective Malraux made his museological musings ‘on the ruins’ of the Second World War. By way of contrast, these Centenary Events were mobilised as an effective resource for a self-confident Cultural Services to author excavations into its own genealogy and to break with its more oppressive (colonial) legacies through the performance of acts of museological memorialisation and entente; and to strategically combine these with the articulation of a number of statements concerning Egypt’s on-going pursuit of sovereignty over the nation’s museums and heritage. These dynamics are symbolised in a series of new Grand projects and exhibitions and as the culmination of my critique of the contemporary ‘Egyptianising’ dynamic a critical rehearsal of these Centennial ‘sacred dramas’ can be found in (Appendix Five).
The particular focus of my second ‘conclusion’, however, is upon a very different dynamic of memory-work in the imagination of alternative futures which dominated the second conference held at the newly inaugurated Bibliotheca. Although only a relatively short distance away from Cairo along the Desert Road, this conference took the more directed brief of engaging with the contemporary context and more specifically to address some of the more distopic realities which came into force post-9/11 and which continue to mark dialogue, dispute, intervention and impasse across North and South. In many respects, as a reaction to the violence of the preceding months, the conference was itself overtaken by events and as such was both a repository for failed dreams and a format for a response to (and at times a strategic re-working of) the assumptions that had motivated the Alexandrina project since it re-emerged with the high ideals and aspirations first generated by the Aswan Meeting.

- Cultures and the Enemy Image

To provide more detail. This event was one of the first major international conferences to be held at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. The specific immediacy of the conference topic “Cultures and the Enemy Image” and its associated issues were made explicit in conference literature:

‘This international conference is being held in the wake of September 2001 events, that is, after one year and three months precisely. During this time, new terms and concepts emerged, such as: Anti-Terrorism, International Coalition – Violence – Fundamentalism – Axis of Evil – Dialogue of Religions – Dialogue of Civilizations – Clash of Civilizations. These new terms and concepts were also accompanied by other, relatively old ones, such as: Enlightenment and Secularization... A close and meticulous examination of the above terms, concepts and names, will help in detecting the “enemy image” which loom behind them’ (Averroes and Enlightenment International Association [AE] 2002:13).
These dynamics of discussion also mark a return to what have been a series of recurring motifs in this thesis with the specific emphasis placed upon the figure of 'outsider'/ 'foreigner'/ 'the other', which as my more theoretical chapters have shown, have been a central concern of museum/ archive studies at both metaphysical and operational levels. The Conference was organised by one of Alexandria’s ‘critical Chorus’ (and as such is illustrative of the aforementioned ententes and on-going influences of this group) Adel Abu Zahra, in both his new capacity of director of Egyptian Friends of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and as a director of the Averroes and Enlightenment International Association (AE). The AE is a UNESCO member organisation and its stated aim is ‘to establish a cultural dialogue between the Islamic world and the West, represented by the Middle East, Europe and USA. The purpose of such dialogue is to promote a new global cultural environment based on the ideas and values of a new humanism which encourage rationality, pluralism, and creativity’ (AE 2002: 9). It is here too that the AE’s own curative/ redemptive formula also surfaces, ‘We think that the creation of such a new cultural environment, through dialogue, can contribute to undermining the present trends of fundamentalism and dogmaticism, which lead to terrorism and violence world-wide, and particularly in the Middle East’ (AE 2002: 9-10).

The Averroes Forum is a further dynamic of the organisation which is especially concerned to centre ‘Mediterranean identity’ in a series of monthly meetings designed to address some major topics revolving around the issue of ‘a new Mediterranean culture based on rationality, freethinking, humanism and creativity for the sake of promoting a culture of peace in the region’ (AE 2002:9-10). For the AE, a return to Enlightenment values also challenges the West’s traditional understanding of the Enlightenment as predominantly the product of European - North American philosophical discourse. As such the AE symbolically recovers Arab Muslim and ‘non-Western’ contributions by reclaiming Averroes, the rationalist Muslim philosopher who died in Cordoba in 1189, as the point of cosmopolitan crossings-over between worlds, and as ‘guiding figure’ whom the AE ‘adopt as a symbol of the would be dialogue’ (AE 2002:10).
As Abousenne, one of the AE’s Executive Committee and the conference Chair stressed in her paper, ‘We use Averroes and his philosophies as a bridge between the Arab Muslim world and the West and by returning to his key preoccupations we can draw from this new ideas, new attitudes and points of view’ (Abousenne 2002). Interestingly, the Bibliotheca’s official history stresses how Averroes ‘drew on, analysed and elaborated on Aristotle’s works’ and as such he is considered part of the institution’s own genealogy (Mustafa 2002: 20). The AE’s cosmopolitical strategy thus opens up the possibility of giving recognition to the complex and hybrid translations and filtering systems which characterise the construction of global historiographies and are present in the more complex structurings of cultural memory. These features in turn, prompts an empathetic identification between the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the AE; a link which is drawn out further by conference participants.

- Contemporary Cosmopolitics

To focus more specifically on the conference papers, the Bibliotheca’s Director Serageldin officially opened the conference by impressing upon participants - which included academics and writers across North and South - that the objective of creating a ‘dialogue’ with the international community was the ‘reason d’etre’ of not only the AE but of ‘Bibliotheca Alexandrinas old and new’ (Serageldin 2002). Serageldin’s paper, perhaps as expected, was similarly bound up in initial symbolic-metaphorical acts of reclamation, which subsequently opened up to both him and other participants making more rigorous responses to the contemporary real. As such Sergeldin began by reiterating Averroe’s position as a ‘figure’/ ‘thinker’ whose intellectualism goes ‘beyond’ the ‘dichotomisation’ synonymous with the Clash of Civilisations thesis, thus stating how, ‘The ‘enemy image’ is best regarded as an artefact of cultural expression it is therefore a ‘text’ which also has a context and our role as members of the intelligentsia is broadly defined as participating in the creation of mirrors and windows’ (Serageldin 2002). These metaphors not only echo the Alexandrina’s mission statement, that of being a ‘window on to the world,’ but also bring back into play the motif of the ‘mirroring’ and ‘reflecting’
which as Chapters One and Two demonstrate have been centred in debates on both narcissism and the project of ‘othering’.

Serageldin went on to assert, ‘In periods of stress and strain there is a tendency to restrict our sense of hospitality and to ask: are you with me or against me?’ He asked participants: ‘What do intellectuals say to these tendencies when issues are exacerbated as they are today by the uncertainties of globalisation?’ (Serageldin 2002). The key intellectual shifts and trends of the Enlightenment period which established ‘universalism’ and ‘human progress’ as cultural certainties are rehearsed by Serageldgin, as are subsequent ‘postmodernism’ destabilisations. He argues these latter interventions, ‘seem for many to be a form of nihilism and subjective relativism’ which has created a sense of the ‘world adrift’ (Serageldin 2002). It is here, however, that Serageldin argues the presence of certain ideas which act as moral/ intellectual ‘anchors’ and ‘compasses.’ Thus underlining the cosmopolitical projects of many within the ‘critical Chorus’, Serageldin argues for a critical recuperation of certain ‘lost values’ as a means to claim a ‘truly global’ discourse of justice and as a ‘moral compass’ in terms of ‘tolerance, diversity, multiplicity and pluralism’ (Serageldin 2002). More specifically he asserts, that the ‘universal idea of human rights, common humanity and tolerance has to find its way into the system’ as a means to maintain a ‘balance’ between claims to ‘cultural specificity’ and ‘universalism’ in the contemporary context (Serageldin 2002). It was this intellectual/ operational project, which Serageldin argued, conference participants - and organisations like that of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and AE - needed to keep as their own ‘anchors’ and ‘moral compasses’.

Papers presented by other participants picked up on international case-study examples which mapped across the Middle East, Europe and North America and which were placed alongside critical evaluations of texts such as Fukuyama’s The End of History (1992) and Huntington’s The Clash of Civilizations (1996). These two texts in particular met with significant rejectionism and as such became markers by which to define alternative descriptions and visions of North and South and to draw out cosmopolitan cross-overs.
The Conference also saw participants engage in the recuperation of a more ‘humanistic’ response to questions of global identity-work.

What is perhaps worth giving even more attention to, however, is that the Conference itself was subject to its own clashes and fault-lines which more than the contents of the papers themselves - which were generally optimistic in their belief that humanity and cosmopolitan dialogue of cultures would prevail over dynamics such as political and religious fundamentalism – brought to the event a certain note of impasse. It was, therefore, within in the conference rooms of the Bibliotheca that the failure or limits of engaging in a ‘dialogue between civilizations’ were to emerge. The fault-lines were expressed in terms of verbal clashes (and also silences) between participants. While these differences of opinion were bound up in a number of factors it was the ‘real’ of contemporary events: the build up to war in the Gulf, the Intifada and Israel’s on-going violences; which became the dominant issues and which had their drastic toll on previously expressed optimisms. This, in turn, with much tension, frustration and some irony (given the conference topic) saw a split emerge between ‘Western’ and ‘non-Western’ (Middle Eastern and North African) participants. Much of the anguish expressed by the latter group of participants came with the repeated assertion that the contemporary US domination of global-power networks was the real obstacle to any form of ‘dialogue’: both within the Bibliotheca’s conference rooms and in the wider world. It was the Palestinian cause which was yet again repeatedly articulated as proof of on-going US supported injustice.

By way of illustration, while the delegates from the US and Europe were committed to critiquing ‘Western’ power-networks and their associated historical and contemporary violent, imperial, narcissistic-colonising ambitions, this failed to placate the tensions within the conference room and any academic gesture towards the notion of hybridity and cosmopolitan dialogue seemed to be proved to be a nonsense when placed in proximity to the above referenced international clashes. Expressed another way, one could sense how this UN affiliated event as a microcosm of the international community and of international tension illustrated how the inequality of North-South power relationships
(crystallised more specifically by the Bush-Blair coalition) resulted in an inequality in terms of what Chomski has powerful referred to as the ‘conditions of dialogue’ (cf. Chomski 1992:127).

Some sense of exasperation with European-North American states (and thus with the conference participants who by default were cast as their representatives) was the sense that those in democratic countries should be doing more to change these conditions than issuing what seemed to be regarded as academic platitudes. Here, for example, a European academic commented that within Europe it was becoming difficult, firstly, to articulate opposition to governmental and media scape-goating of the ‘foreigner’, the ‘immigrant’ and the ‘refugee’ as ‘enemy’ and, secondly, to prevent the build up to the second Gulf War despite mass popular protests. An exasperated Egyptian participant responded by stating: ‘But you have democracy why don’t you use it!’ Another Egyptian participant immediately interrupted another ‘Western’ academic’s paper on the subject of Sept 11th by making the statement: ‘Sept 11th happens everyday for Palestinians’. These frustrations as the ‘friendly fire’ or ‘fallout’ from the larger political scene increasingly made their mark on the conference with ‘East’ and ‘West’ defining themselves in separate groups.

The conference as a microcosm of the international community interestingly saw Serageldin positioned as a hybrid ‘voice’ - or as a ‘translator’ figure - between worlds. It also saw the Bibliotheca Alexandrina as a space of diagnosis and (potential) cure open itself up to the politics and conflicts symptomatic of the contemporary moment. Perhaps the very value of the conference itself was in ‘voicing’ this note of impasse, however, distressing and frustrating this was for the gathered participants, who all shared the sense of being misunderstood. This was yet another paradox in a conference directed towards the task of defining and defending a new cosmopolitics of hospitality by means of returning to the question of: ‘what it is to be human’. The conference can also be regarded as a mirror and window onto a wider world similarly thrown into impasse by the above fault-lines and also by the struggles and traumas which define a contemporary politics of empathetic identification and solidarity with present-day ‘besieged identities’.
This ‘inaugural’ conference, therefore, as an anxiety wracked expression of attempts to conceptually-intellectually (and potentially operationally) engage with threats to future order did itself become a marker of international impasse and in so doing, I would argue, its key value is that of crystallising many of the fundamental issues currently characterising museology and cultural heritage studies own contemporary worlds and its possible futures.

SECTION THREE
RECASTING THE ‘ALEXANDRINA PARADIGM’: CONTEMPORARY CROSSINGS-OVER

Thus far I have described the final stages of the Alexandrina’s homecoming in terms of its physical revival and the ‘attractions’ and ‘threats’ which have accompanied both its ‘failed’, then sanitised official and soft-openings and also its accompanying ‘inaugural’ conference. In my third ‘conclusion’ I demonstrate how beyond the Alexandrina’s walls critics from North and South have engaged in alternative re-possessions of the Alexandrina project. I argue that these gestures underline the ‘critical Chorus’ own recuperations of Alexandria as an icon or site of resistance by further destabilising its fixed historical position as an exclusive Western ‘self object’ and by exporting and thus exposing these debates to a wider audience. I also assert that these intellectual crossings over go someway to approaching the core dilemma of the archive - and by extension of Alexandrian revivalism and the Bibliotheca’s future institutional identities – that of articulating an archival strategy and discourse ‘which holds,’ - i.e. is capable of opening up of its narrative identities to the ‘other’ without threat -, rather than that which ‘destroys’ and thus in which narrative identities are systematically destroyed in the repetition of violence and trauma (cf. Rapaport 2003: 88-89). As such these interventions offer a means of re-addressing my core thesis dynamics in terms of archival hospitality: the re-housing of memory-in-exile; object-work, and the ‘acting out’ and ‘working through’ of alternative ‘identities’ and dramas.
In the Footsteps of Alexander

I began my thesis with a rehearsal of Alexander the Great’s epic journey to Alexandria and drew out Alexander’s potency as the key figure legitimating both the city and archive’s drama of origins and by further exploring the enduring potency of these dynamics within the Western imagination and, more specifically, within the ‘old’ museological/heritage discourse. During the revivalist period Alexander’s journey and associated myth/history was the subject of a book and of a BBC TV series which saw the UK historian Michael Wood destabilise this ‘traditional’ discourse further and in doing so underline for a popular audience the interventions being made in Alexandria. Thus in his literal journey in the Footsteps of Alexander the Great (1997) having already visited Siwa, Wood’s TV series featured an episode which focused on Alexandria, and which saw him interview, amongst others, Mostafa Abaddi and showcase the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the underwater archaeological excavations.

In an interview I made with Wood, he argued, ‘The physical return of the Alexandrina, like the physical experience of re-tracing Alexander’s steps, helps break out of the rather simplified academic separations and straight-jacketing of history,’ as such, he stressed that his journey was, ‘in many ways led by an Eastern agenda’ (Wood: 3/02). Wood’s interventions reaffirmed what other Alexandrian informants made clear: that not only was the characterisation of ancient Alexandria and ancient Alexandrians as ‘Greek’ far too purist and ahistorically reductionist but that ‘the ‘Greeks’ as ancestors’ cannot simply be appropriated as ‘Western’. Wood argued that the latter thesis, ‘is a consequence of modern ‘Western’ historiographers particularly British colonial historians’ having drawn lines between East and West which had resulted in terrible exclusions.’ He emphasised how, ‘Empereur’s and Goddio’s excavations give physical proof which is a very significant both in disproving the ‘old’ purist vision’ of Hellenistic Alexandria and ‘proof of a cosmopolitism before Alexander the Great arrived on the scene’.

Wood also pursued these motifs in terms of the deviances of the city’s modern myth-poetics, ‘Cavafy, EM Forster and Durrell made Alexandria a great symbol of literature
and interestingly this has reached outside that Anglo-Greek core – which is a very narrow little literature – to stress all the characteristics of that liminal place.' With echoes of Freud’s ‘disturbance of memory’ Wood also reflected, ‘The modern city strikes one as having nothing in common with its literary image, which is, of course, really a twentieth-century reinvention of Alexandria through literature. What is really powerful is that this sees Alexandria become synonymous with memory, forgetting etc… and that this has became part of our continued response to Alexandria: including the Egyptians themselves’.

The importance of Wood’s programme, therefore, lay in its power to popularise the dynamic of cultural transmission as essentially hybrid and to draw out alternative acts of memory-work across tangible/ intangible worlds. He pursued this dynamic further by highlighting the traces and legacies of Alexander in the East by focusing, for example, on the discovery of Greek texts and manuscripts in Central Asia and upon living ‘tale tellers’ he encountered and filmed, and who form a central part of the ‘memorising cultures’ in this part of the world. In this stress on ‘cross-overs’ Wood’s concerns were also with ‘the realities of the contemporary conflicts which currently mark Alexander’s route across the ‘Mediterranean region and then into Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan.’ He took the ‘non-Western’ vantage point to argue how cultural loss and defence of roots and authenticity were critical for understanding these contexts and also current political movements such as Muslim and Hindu fundamentalism. Ironically, whether this very Western concern with loss may itself now be globalised as explanations for all conflicts and terrorism seems less relevant than the way it justifies a ‘Clash of Civilisations’ thesis. Moreover, reiterating Said’s (2003: 46) critique of the top down heritage and museumification of culture, Wood also argued that ‘Disneyifed heritage parks and reconstructions’ were an inauthentic response to the contemporary context and dangerously associated by many locals with a force of tourist consumption that exacerbates ‘inequality, tensions and conflict’.

Returning to discuss the place of the Alexandrina project within these dynamics he stated, ‘As the criticisms of the scheme have shown it is obvious that this impinges upon a great
cultural battle in modern Egypt which yet again is fixated on the sense of cultural loss which continues to pitch secularism and religion as opposites. These are debates which authors such as Khaldun profiled in his contemporary world and which Islam has been in dialogue with ever since. It is these debates that the new institution should moderate and modulate to be of any real effect and relevance.' This concern with the human response to cultural loss, excluded memory, archival hospitality and with the mediation of potentially clashing cultures was pursued further by Wood. His final gesture very powerfully recast the Alexandrina as a still potent object of empathetic identification for new constituencies: ‘I would argue that the theme which dominates the Alexandrina’s myth is that of going back to the condition of the world’s loss and that this has more relevance to ‘non-Western’ cultures within the contemporary context. In Eastern countries and also from the perspective of indigenous communities, the battle between ‘traditional’ civilizations and culture, and that of globalisation, is one of the most important struggles of our time and a lot of things going on in the world arena are to do this with struggle. If anything, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina stands as a testimony to this struggle’.

- Experiences of Loss and Reattachment

The enduring appeal of the Alexandrina as an object of empathetic identification and as a resonant template for memory-work in terms of the narrativisation of the dramas loss and reattachment had other expressions during my field-work period and a resonance across literary-poetic, metaphysical and psychoanalytic registers. My particular purchase here is on the work of the author, Penelope Lively, who recently made her own literary returns to Egypt in her memoir *Oleander, Jacaranda: A Childhood Perceived* (1999). Discussions with Lively, a British ex-pat born in Egypt who left in 1948 when aged 12 years old, illustrate new recastings Alexandria’s literary odyssey in terms of ‘writing to return’, the ‘writing cure’ and of the dynamic of mourning and recovery (Lively: 4/01).

Lively’s memoir (like Tzalas’) makes a radical break with the ‘émigré novel’ in terms of a stereotyped traditional, nostalgic writing genre, as such she argues, ‘I was interested in
excavating what I would regard as more honest memories by placing alongside any nostalgias the more complex anxieties and traumas which mark the past and also to combine these with the need to mourn and let go'. Within this project Lively has similarly recuperated the Alexandrina as a symbol of both 'vulnerability and loss.' This aspect of her work and her narration of the physicality of her own act of homecoming sees her centre upon what is now emerging as a major theme within museological/heritage discourse: that of how people re-engaging with origins - either as writers, travellers or tourists - create narratives of return which involve the revisiting of certain places, institutions, and the use of objects as part of strategies of mediation and mourning. These, in turn, often set in play complex psychological acts of commemoration and memorialisation and in some cases the revelation of past traumas. As Lively made clear too this experience is clearly bound up in the odyssey of ‘what it is to be human’.

She explained that her literary ‘return’ to Egypt and Alexandria in the course of writing her memoirs - almost fifty-years after having left the country – was a project specifically orientated ‘to see what would happen in the writing sense.’ Again a certain ‘disturbance of memory’ resonates when Lively narrates the relationships between her act of return, the physicality of the Egyptian landscape and the process of memory-work: ‘My visits to both Cairo and Alexandria were at first quite upsetting...Physically these places were dramatically different to how I remembered them and yet there was both an extraordinary ambivalence and the sense that these places seemed intensely familiar. Perhaps this is what is meant by the experience of the uncanny’. She continued, ‘It was Alexandria which disturbed me the most. I was shocked by the obliteration of the villa landscape and all the attractive houses along the Corniche. The beaches had just vanished! I couldn’t even find the shape of the coastline I remembered. I identified this at the time as quite upsetting. I imaged many ‘returnees’ must have felt this way. I felt part of my own past had been ripped away or in a sense negated as if I had invented it all!’ Lively emphasised, ‘All that I remembered and wanted to tell people about had lost its physical indicators’. With further analysis she commented, ‘We are taking about a childhood landscape [and] anyone who goes back to a place related to their childhood is looking for confirmation.'
Confirmation of themselves and their own identity and also confirmation of the past which was once there. The dramatic obliteration of the landscape and the way in which the physical landscape seemed to disinherit me was shocking.

With echoes of H.D. and the Personal Landscape Group, Lively argued that the physicality of the Egyptian landscape offered a potential model for what she described as ‘inner memory’ worlds. She stressed, ‘I have always felt that my sense of this ‘inner memory’ must reflect what I saw as a child and that in some way the extraordinary impacts of the Egyptian landscape in which everything is happening at once impressed itself on me and my psyche,’ thereby adding, the ‘palimpsest of Pharaonic, Greek, Roman, Coptic, Mamluk periods etcetera which is physically and visually available alongside the working modern world wasn’t explained to me very well as a child but I was deeply conscious of it.’ Lively continues, ‘I am sure that as human beings who seek some kind of depth in our lives we find some empathy and attraction to heritage, landscape and memory in this way’. In further statements which offer challenges to the Aristotelian model of memory Lively stated how, ‘I have never once believed or considered memory, or history either come to that, to be static or even manageable. Different connections are made constantly in our psyche across ‘memory’ and across ‘events’ which often can emerge as creative readings across relationships while at the same time opening us up to the risk of traumatic episodes. Of course this can not be ‘pictured’ as occurring within one’s head but is bodily and our senses – smell, sound, touch etc - trigger these off in an almost indescribable way’.

In a dramatic shift it was Lively’s reflection on the scheme to rebuild the Alexandrina which saw her recuperate another key aspect of the Alexandrina’s myth, she comments, ‘It is a really satisfying idea to believe that you can rebuild and reclaim what is lost’ adding, ‘I think that this is always in the mind of the traveller who retraces their steps home… Everybody at some point – goes back to where they were born - it is an absolutely atavistic thing. I think it is something that we all have to do’. Reflecting on her own ‘devastatingly painful’ departure from Egypt in 1948 Lively argues ‘my own feelings of exile and homesickness corresponded with what Eva Hoffman in Lost in
Translation [1998] calls an ‘internal elsewhere’ which describes ‘a kind of internalised, metaphysical sense of being an exile.’ Lively finally added, ‘I think if your childhood was traumatically separately from your adulthood then the desire to return becomes much more of a dramatic pitch and, therefore, much more crucial and more essential’.

Lively subsequently turned to explore not only the ‘personal comfort’ the image of the Alexandrina brought her but its further resonances and legacies to others. Firstly she picked up on how this wider sense of ‘reconstruction’ and also the formerly ‘ambivalent’ relationship to cosmopolitanism could bring ‘comfort within Egypt.’ She stated, ‘I think a generation like mine whose presence in Egypt is synonymous with cosmopolitanism have a real responsibility in the contemporary context’. Lively explained, ‘It was obvious that in the pre-1950s in such a polarised society that for the majority of people cosmopolitanism was definitely was not enriching’. Here Lively, with echoes of Tzalas, reflects on how the 1956 ‘Suez Crisis’ saw her ‘demonstrating outside [the British] parliament’ and argued that this was an event – if not the event - which enunciated the shift to a ‘postcolonial’ era: she states of her British contemporaries; ‘We were the first generation who didn’t feel like we had a birthright to the Suez Canal and a birthright to empire’.

Shifting to the ‘current climate’ Lively argued, ‘We also have the ability to become a force of reconciliation: on Egypt’s own terms, of course’. She drew out as an example a Symposium on Egyptian writers held at the British Council [in London]. This event saw Lively and other ex-pat and Egyptian authors – ‘notably a Professor of English Literature from Cairo University who is the mother of the novelist Adhaf Soueif - talk about cosmopolitanism from our different perspectives’. Lively argued, ‘I do think that people like myself are filling a void. We are a ‘voice’ for a particular aspect of that place and that time and we have the missing pieces of a wider story. It is here that the sense in which any society needs to know about it past and about its immediate past is crucial, and Egypt has had such a difficult and traumatic immediate past’.
In her final words Lively with more resonance still returned to the museological realm to argue, 'Not only is the Alexandrina remembered as a literary treasury but it is also linked to the tradition of the Temple of Muses and therefore to the Museum. The Museum, especially as a space of reflection has always fascinated me - I have used it a number of times in my work - and I recently had the great honour of being placed on the board of Trustees of the Pitt-Rivers Museum. What the model of the Alexandrina brings to the forum of discussion is this very much needed note of reflection. In the modern Museum this sense of reflection, as both a metaphysical and more literal experience is, I believe, best summed up in the way in which the glass cases convey to the viewer a double experience: - that of looking into the past while seeing yourself reflected in the glass and therefore that past as you do so. I think this sense of reflection is much needed'.

- Writing Across Anglo-Egyptian Border-lands

This sense of reflection and the cosmopolitan crossings-over of Anglo-Egyptian borderlands is a dynamic which has also featured in the work of Ahdaf Soueif. In interview, Soueif, who was born in Cairo in 1950 and grew up in both Egypt and Britain, drew out new nuances to the above themes. Echoing Lively’s closing comments Soueif detailed, for example, how her novels, in particular, In the Eye of the Sun (1992), mobilise what she described as, ‘A series of recurring scenes which feature statues and museums’ and which, she argues, ‘offer me, as author, devices by which I can give my characters ‘moments’ in which they enter a search to retrieve ‘lost’ aspects of their identity and to bring to my novels a more critical and contemplative mood’ (Soueif: 5/02). Soueif, who writes in English, placed a particular focus upon what are described as her ‘epic Anglo-Egyptian’ literary sagas - In the Eye of the Sun (1992) the narrative of which spans the 1950s era of Independence, the ‘67 and ’73 Wars and takes the novel into the contemporary context) and also Map of Love (1999), which has a larger historical framing from the nineteenth-century colonial era through to the ‘First’ Gulf War. She described her literary project as an attempt, ‘To write across the memory and the history of Egypt’ adding, ‘My interest is in showing within the literary arena not only historical
and contemporary relationships but the hybridity of cultural contact and to pursue these through my various characters’.

It is this notion of hybridity which Soueif argues is, ‘A particularly important aspect of human experience which I bring to the fore in both my novels and also my journalistic work’. She emphasises, ‘Edward Said is a great hero of mine and I absolutely admire his stand – as both an academic and a political commentator – in terms of speaking out against this terribly destructive idea that the present and the future is inescapably characterised within the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ scenario. As some-one ‘in between’ these spaces, of ‘East’ and ‘West’, and like many authors described as ‘postcolonial writers’, I felt that if my work was to be of relevance, - and also as my ‘voice’ was already becoming known in both of these contexts – the onus was on people like me to argue for a more positive force of cosmopolitanism in the world’. With more detail Soueif stated, ‘This does not mean a simple gesture towards celebrating diversity but in the current climate this means giving a voice of opposition to unacceptable power-relationships within the global arena and also to challenging stereotypes and caricatures of what are regarded by the ‘West’ as largely ‘alien’ and therefore threatening identities such as that of Islam’.

Not only did this shift allow Soueif to destabilise the motif of the ‘outsider’, ‘enemy’ but also to link this to the act of ‘translation’. She stated: ‘As you know I work as a translator [at the Al Furqan Centre for Islamic Studies in Wimbledon, London, which is where I interviewed her] and I think this makes me acutely aware of the complexities of communication and both the creativity but also what is lost in translation’. Here she stressed, ‘The Bibliotheca’s own history is inextricably linked to this project of translation which is truly colossal to think about. The idealised status of the ancient institution and the drama over its destruction, or at least its mythology of destruction, shows that people feel passionately about society’s need to understand, via translation, the stories, narratives and belief systems of other cultures. It always strikes me, and I have said this in public lectures, that as a translator you are never simply translating words, nor information, but an entire culture.’
It was here too that Soueif argued that careful translation was needed more that ever, ‘Following the September 11th attacks there has been a rejection of the fact that within the global arena we do share a common humanity. The ‘translation’ of the Middle Eastern ‘character’ in the West since this time shows a profound cultural ignorance in particular towards Islamic culture and its cultural values which has had a dehumanising effect’. Crucially here Soueif argues, ‘If fiction has a social function this is it - to get across a spirit of humanity to a people for whom that spirit is foreign – and by these means they come to know you a little better. For people who stand on the bridge between ‘East’ and ‘West’ we ourselves as individuals by default take on the role of translator. I hope in this sense such figures provide an opportunity for Western readers to empathize and gain a greater degree of insight into ‘other’ less familiar worlds which need not be understood as threatening’. The motifs and politics of empathy and ‘othering’ were taken forward by Soueif who stated how ‘a prominent journalist writing in the British press stated that Sept 11th had marked the “death of empathy” in terms of the fact that if the hijackers had had any empathy at all they would not have been able to see through their project of terror’. Here Soueif in rejecting this specific analysis of events echoed a number of intellectuals including Spivak (1993) and Rose (2003) by stating: ‘We must really reclaim this sense of empathy between culture and between human beings and not let the Huntington’s of this world see their bounded and bleak notion of the world become a reality’.

It was with this in mind that Souief’s specific project to recuperate ‘what it is to be human’ led her to undertake journalist assignments, notably a series of articles for UK’s *The Guardian* newspaper entitled ‘Under the Gun: A Palestinian Journey’ (Soueif in *The Guardian* 2000a: 2-6: 2000b: 4-7) Here Soueif uses her literal visits to the occupied territories as her critical framing and as a means to mobilise strategies of empathy and hybridity in order to both bare witness to the ‘real’ of a Palestinian people undergoing oppression and to argue the injustice of this conflict. This ability to pitch the literary in close proximity to the ‘real-politick’ is a major feature of her works of fiction too. Critics regard her novels as groundbreaking in addressing within her work both the violences wrought by colonialism in Egypt and also the political violences and traumas of post-
1950s. This, amongst other factors, including erotic scenes featured in her books has also led to her work being banned in Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East. It is, however, Soueif’s own sense of herself as a cosmopolitan figure capable of both ‘reading’ and ‘translating’ across worlds which she highlights as the common theme of her interventions and mobilises as the link to finally argue: ‘It is as such a role that the new Bibliotheca Alexandrina needs to aspire to and to sustain’.

- What it is to be human?

Soueif’s reference to Edward Said’s work as a defining feature in the intellectual destabilisation of the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ thesis and in his own on-going campaign for justice for the Palestinian people can be explored in terms of offering alternative, and I would argue, a more resonant recasting of this thesis’ central preoccupation with the question of ‘what it is to be human.’ Said’s contention that the recognition of a new humanism should no longer be tied to the spread of Western liberalism but instead be recognised as originating in an earlier phase of cultural interaction and integration which is of resonance here and which is typified in the cosmopolitan history of Alexandria (Said in Bayoumi and Rubin 2001: 433). Said subsequently argues the need to re-address the basic humanistic virtues upon which Western culture has been for so long unproblematically based and in some sense both re-evaluate and also restore their salience as part of a common purpose of understanding what it is to be human. This defence and critical recuperation of humanism takes the form of a number of strategies and has seen Said, for example, refocus on the figure of Khaldun in order to revive alternative historical debates on secularism in the ‘non-West’ and more specifically to highlight the historical role of Arab colleges and institutions within these dynamics.

Said thus argues: ‘We need to discover a new concept of humanism based on a rejuvenated idea of it, drawing also from the older traditions, including the Islamic tradition. Everyone thinks, for example, that the notion of humanism originated in Italy in the fifteenth century... the origin of the modern system of knowledge that we call humanism did not originate as Jacob Burckhardt and many others believed it did in Italy
during the fifteenth and sixteenth century Renaissance, but rather in the Arab colleges, madrasas, mosques and courts of Iraq, Sicily and Egypt, Andalusia, from the eight century on’ (Said in Bayoumi and Rubin 2001: 433). Said emphasises, ‘Those places formed the traditions and the curricula of legal, theological, as well as secular learning – the so-called studia abadiya – from which European humanists derived many of their ideas not only about learning itself, but also about the environment of learning where disputation, dissent, and argument are the order of the day. Humanism is a much less exclusive Western concept than a lot of people rather proudly think. It exists in India, in the Chinese tradition, in the Islamic tradition. I think humanism can be squared with a more humane tradition than Western liberalism, which in my opinion is bankrupt’ (Said in Bayoumi and Rubin 2001: 433).

It is here that, once again with implications for the Bibliotheca’s own ‘secular’ status, that much of Said commentary is rooted in his ongoing assertion of the need for both ‘secular criticism’ and ‘secular justice’ to respond to respond to historical and contemporary ‘secular wounds’ (Said 2003: 54). Said also takes the dynamic of humanism and of universalism and cosmopolitanism to the present day and to their expressions within human rights discourse, thus stating: ‘If you’re going to talk about human rights as a universal value, than you have to apply it in all cases’ here he points out how one key text of human rights while attempting to be universal in its coverage, ‘doesn’t even mention Palestine’ (Said in Bayoumi and Rubin 2001: 433). Moreover, in his most recent public lectures he has centred the archive, heritage and museum within this problematic and within the wider Human Rights agenda (see Halim 2003:7).

With relevance to the Alexandrina as the location for ‘human rights/ index of censorship’ archives (as outlined by Aziz in Chapter Four) Said states ‘The whole point of the kind of work that I do, and many others do it as well, is to extend the notion of human rights to cover everybody, not to restrict the notion. I have no patience at all for the argument that is frequently made in my part of the world and further East that human rights is a Western imperialism concept. That’s complete nonsense. Torture is torture. Pain is felt just as much in Singapore as Saudi Arabia, as it is in Israel, as it is in France or the
United States’ (Said in Bayoumi and Rubin 2001: 433). It is not only Said but other commentators such as Spivak (1998) (and one could add Bhabha (1994) here too) who have, in recent times argued for a reconsideration of such ‘values’ which the West (as shown throughout this thesis with specific reference to the Bibliotheca’s foundational myth/history) has attempted to claim as its exclusive ‘self objects’.

- ‘Figure’ of the ‘Alexandrian’

Revivalism and its motifs of homecoming, mirroring and modeling I would argue, have also opened up the possibility of re-engaging with the earlier rehearsed ‘Greek’, ‘Jew,’ ‘Egyptian’ identity-work (which as previously demonstrated too has a resonance in terms of metaphysical, deconstructionist and postcolonial strategies for ‘othering’) and, as such, has provided scope to define the figure of the ‘Alexandrian’. My starting point here is the work of two Alexandrians - Moustapha Safouan (an Egyptian Alexandrian born in 1930) and Youssef Chahine (a Coptic Christian of Syro-Lebanese ancestry born in 1941) the former is a psychoanalyst (who practiced in Paris under Lacan) and the latter a filmmaker (best known for his autobiographical trilogy principally set in Alexandria) which has undergone a certain level of recuperation in the contemporary context and has led new discussions ‘on being an Alexandrian’ (Halim 2002a: 5). It is these two Alexandrian’s interventions and more specifically their interest in cosmopolitanism which traces back not only to the question of: ‘what it is to be human?’ but to that other enduring metaphysical and psychoanalytic preoccupation; that of ‘love’. Crucially here too their intellectual projects offer a reading which, I argue, more directly approaches the core dilemma of the archive, - and by extension of Alexandrian revivalism and the Bibliotheca’s future institutional identities: that of articulating an archival strategy and an archival empathy/discourse ‘which holds’ rather than that which ‘destroys.’

Chahine’s intellectual project and film/fantasy-genre, for example, takes up the motif of crossings-over to produce an alternative cosmopolitics, which in his autobiographical trilogy, creates a layering of ancient, colonial and postcolonial Alexandrias expressed in
the sense of a film/ archival palimpsest\(^3\). It is Halim’s (cf. the ‘critical Chorus’) readings of Chahine’s work and more specifically his genre of cosmopolitics which addresses both the above creative vision and the ways in which Chahine mobilises Alexandria’s ‘spectres’ and ‘myths and icons’ as a means to comment upon and thus confront – via the medium of his ‘alternative cinematic aesthetic’ - repressed events and memories not only of historical traumas (including the departure of the European communities post-1950s) but the Grand narrative ‘political failures’ and violences which mark Egypt’s Independence era (Halim 2002a: 5). More particularly, Halim argues that Chahine’s alternative ‘excavations’ and his return to ‘Hellenistic scenes’ are capable of drawing out both the ‘melancholically haunting trace of old [colonial] Alexandria’ and via encounters with post-1950s events and destabilisations to translate Alexandria into the ‘very landscape of mourning’ thus creating the possibility of moving beyond the city’s characterisation as a synonym for real or perceived loss and towards its recasting as a medium of more resonant identity-work (Halim 2002a: 5).

By these means Chahine repeats key themes and sentiments found in the contemporary fieldwork context in terms of the need for the mobilisation of mechanisms and media to address and thus mediate collective and individual trauma, expressions of ‘unresolved mourning’ and ‘personal loss’ in the city’s recent past (Halim 2002a: 5). Halim also argues that Chahine’s turn to Alexandria’s ‘myths and icons’ – notably that of Alexander the Great - enables a deeper exploration and mediation of what is described as a ‘political form of mourning’ which is drawn out further in both the inclusion of more contemporary political icons within the film (including his critique of ‘petro-dollar consumerist-cum-conservative values and aesthetics’) and questions raised in terms of what is to follow and replace the ‘absence of the 1950's and '60s grand-narratives of liberation and social justice, to which Chahine and his films had subscribed’ (Halim 2002a: 5). Halim subsequently raises her own question which has further implications for contemporary revivalism by articulating a shift of focus: ‘As for Egyptian Alexandrians, let us leave behind for the moment Chahine's generation which witnessed both the colonial and postcolonial city, and focus on a younger generation of Alexandrians. Although there is a

risk of over-generalisation here too, we find occasionally among this generation a sense of self-divided grieving that can neither relinquish an earlier, unknown Alexandria, nor fully articulate what has been lost' (Halim 2002a: 5).

In even more radical acts of questioning Halim poses: 'Was Alexandria ever really cosmopolitan? And if it was, is it possible to speak of such a thing as an Alexandrian cosmopolitanism? In other words, is there something sui generis about Alexandria's cosmopolitanism? And why speak of it? These questions are also prompted by a newfound privileging, in Egypt and abroad, of Alexandrianism. There is the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project to recreate the ancient library, there is the underwater archaeological rediscovery of the ancient city in vestiges of the Pharos lighthouse and the Royal Harbour, and there is the plethora of memoirs by émigré Alexandrians seeking to recapture the time and space past of the city' (Halim 2002a: 5). Halim's critique thus involves both a note of drama and speculation which sees her own critical characterisation of Alexandria cross-over Chahine's film/fantasy-world to reflect on the acts of material recovery currently taking place within the contemporary scene of revivalism. In doing so Halim advocates and underlines the need for an on-going depth of critical consciousness in terms of understanding how contemporary recuperations of cosmopolitanism, the mourning-processes of the Alexandrian émigrés, of Egyptian Alexandrians - and crucially too the complex attachments and ambivalences of the younger generation - are currently being played out in the operational context.

- Archival Cosmopolitics

A return to Safouan's work illustrates his specific response to Alexandrian cosmopolitanism and his own recuperation of the city's icons and values. Interestingly Safouan's starting-point is the recuperation of an alternative expression of 'patriotism' which, in sympathy with Chahine, is centred upon Alexandria rather than Egypt (Safouan 1996: 396). More specifically it is bound up in Alexandria's 'pacifist tradition' which is an important mechanism through which Safouan explores his belief and desire that the Egyptian 'nationalist struggle' which emerged post-1950s should not become a 'motor for absolute hatred' (Safouan 1996: 396). Furthermore, he argues that it is from
Alexandria that he gained his ‘belief in human nature’ which he also connects to his father (a nationalist and trade unionist) instilling in him the value ‘not to succumb to hatreds, racisms etc…’ (Safouan 1996: 397). Safouan comments how he subsequently combined these values with those of Lacan’s critique of the ‘category of human being’ and the Lacanian position that: ‘there are two ways of judging someone by the colour of his skin or by what they say’ (Safouan 1996: 401). These combined influences led to Safouan defining his own intellectual project which looks beyond stereotyped categories of identity and more specifically still centres within this project both a critique of power and of authority which he sees as an obstacle to understanding: ‘what it is to be human?’

It is these perspectives which in turn underpin Safouan’s critique of psychoanalysis. His interests more specifically are in psychoanalysis’ ‘inability to match its institutions to its theory’ (Rose 2000: 3). As such Safouan positions psychoanalysis as a ‘paradigm of relationships’ with his objective that of determining how ‘power entrenches itself in an institution,’ and from this critical perspective raises questions regarding the nature of ancestry and authority (Rose 2000: 7-8). While Safouan’s focus is that of the ‘institutionalisation of psychoanalysis’ (Safouan quoted in Rose 2000: 9) I would argue there are implications for the Alexandrina’s own institutionalisation and its own relationship to power and thus to its future as a relevant archival space. Safouan’s critique thus offers a diagnostic tool in terms of highlighting the dangers of institutions asserting entrenched authoritarian, narcissistic identities.

Safouan contextualises his ideas within Lacan’s ‘radical return to Freud’ (Rose 2000: 27). What appeals to Safouan is Lacan’s politicisation of psychoanalysis which reached a pitch in 1967 when ‘on the eve of the barricades’ Lacan proposed an ‘entirely new mode of analytic institutionalisation’ (Rose 2000: 24). A ‘radical break’ was thus made with the highly hierarchical and highly institutionalised form of psychoanalysis which had emerged since Freud’s death (Rose 2000: 24). Safouan thus shares with Lacan his ‘critique of institutional forms’ and his desire to return to a model of psychoanalytic synonymous with ‘the first moments of psychoanalytic institutionalisation’ and both as ‘a dream of access to, and for, the people’ and as ‘a counter movement reaching beyond its
own doors' (Rose 2000: 32). As one critic argues it is the 'problem of authority' which marks Safouan's ‘particular relationship to Lacan’ (Rose 2000: 27). It is here that Safouan also addresses the ways in which ‘Lacan's experiment went wrong’ (Rose 2000: 32) and more specifically shows how Lacan, like Freud, not only occupies the figure of founder and legislator (Rose 2000: 33) and as such took on (or was by default allotted?) the role of a charismatic leader and succumbed to a ‘glorious isolation’ in which an authoritarianism and a ‘personality cult’ put an end to the dream of access (Rose 2000: 36). It is this personalisation of the institution and authoritarianism's paralysis of the ‘paradigm of relationships’ which Safouan addresses.

As one of Safouan’s chief critics Rose emphasises, it is the ‘problem of social authority’ which she states further is the ‘unavoidable problem of all social ties’ and which ‘at once haunt, and become the increasingly explicit theme of, Safouan’s work’ (Rose 2000: 40). With implications for the Alexandrina, his focus is upon how ‘process of institutionalisation’, takes the form of a ‘self-perpetuating process’ which as Rose argues, ‘condemns the forces of institutionalisation to reproduce the very model of institutional power which they are trying to challenge’ (Rose 2000: 9). Again with significance for the Alexandrina, Safouan’s work crystallises how, ‘No organisation, no social institution, however democratic can bypass this site of authority’ and makes clear that institutions are also subject to the forces of anarchy and utopia’ (Rose 2000: 41). With echoes of Nietzsche, Castillo and Derrida on the archive, Safouan makes clear that the narrative of ‘institutionalisation’ can be critically recast in terms of a ‘repetition’ or ‘rehearsal’ of the ‘myth promoted by Freud in Totem and Taboo’ (Safouan 2000: 62). Safouan also critiques the accompanying process of bureaucratisation and (looking to models of bureaucracy outlined by Weber, Bentham and Hobbes' ideas on political theory) how ‘sovereignty’ and ‘law’ is established within this realm (Safouan 2000: 75-76).

Here Safouan is influenced by Lacan’s own critique of the extremes of this institutionalisation and bureaucratisation and which he ultimately locates (with echoes of Malraux) in the, ‘real of the concentration camps’ and which he sees as illustrative of the dehumanising ‘consequences to be expected from the reshaping of human groups by
science, and notably from the universalisation which science brings to them' (Safouan 2000: 114). Moreover, this leads Safouan to characterise the way in which such dynamics, 'instead of leading to an administrative apparatus which incarcerates the institution as ‘moral person’ it instead becomes, ‘a prop for souls suffering from identification’ (Safouan 2000:127). It is here that Safouan argues for an alternative model of institutionalisation, which would ‘make possible a site, along the lines suggested by Claude Conte, where everyone takes on board the consequences for the institution of their own position’ (Safouan 2000:127).

Crucially too Safouan’s intellectual journey is an act of 'return' designed to recuperate ‘hidden history’ designed to give back psychoanalysis its true inspirational status' (Rose 2000: 10). Safouan’s search is thus for a ‘new mode of instituting’ which is capable of both including ‘outsiders’ within the institution and sustaining critical questioning from within and as such is bound up in extending ‘hospitality’ by giving recognition to memory-in-exile and to multiple ‘voices’ within the institutional framing and by destabilising the exclusivities and violences of narcissistic identification: as Rose comments; ‘Following a long period when the politics of psychoanalysis was seen to reside for many in its theory of desire, attention has increasingly shifted to the question of identification, to how the fictive authority of the ego is built out of the bits and pieces and voices it has felt, seen and heard’ (Rose 2000: 10).

Safouan’s project is thus to overturn what he refers to as the ‘antiseptic, academic character’ of institutionalisation which is ‘void of any reference to the unconscious or desire’ (Safouan in Rose 2000: 42). He cuts through the politics of empathy (thus bypassing critics claims that empathy is a barrier to human understanding) by calling for the opening up of a ‘third space’ capable of ‘instituting dialogue’ and in which these ‘exchanges transform their subject through mediation alone’ and in such a cosmopolitan framing the institution ‘will consider itself the designated host and guest (hote) in any given confrontation’ (Rose 2000: 15). It is here too that Safouan returns to the central concern of: ‘what it is to be human’. He does this by asserting that institutions, bureaucracies and, crucially for Safouan, analysts themselves, as mediums of power
necessarily, 'wrench themselves from the human condition' (Safouan 2000: 110). It is through a critical consideration of the dynamic of 'transference' which Safouan refers to as 'the real of analysis' that he examines the process by which the 'human condition' can be recuperated (Safouan 2000: 106-107).

The central point Safouan makes here is that the power relationship between the therapist and analysand is inconsistent with the therapeutic aim. Here Safouan draws on Lacan’s rejection of the notion of what is referred to as 'the mirage of identity' as the end-point of analysis (Rose 2000: 30). As such this reiterates how, 'identity for Lacan should never be achieved' and instead (again after Lacan) Safouan replaces this with a scenario in which both analyst and analysand together explore, 'the shared ability to mourn' (Rose 2000: 30). Safouan thus sets against the Freudian model of transference based upon a hierarchical dynamic of identification (in 'compliance with an 'ego-ideal') a process of analysis based on a 'type of mourning' in which analyst and analysand pass through the 'same experience' (Rose 2000: 30). In this process appeals to the 'unconscious' 'repeatedly empties all utterances' of 'authority' and as such the 'concept of sovereignty' is rendered 'capable of renouncing its own essential or reigning principle' (Rose 2000: 42-43).

Safouan's outlining of this as both an individual and an 'institutional dilemma' has further implications for the Alexandrina's own institutional development: as Rose expresses it, 'If it [Safouan’s work] is somehow exemplary, it is because it leaves wide open the question of the fate of institutions, of any institution trying to make a space for the unconscious to be recognised within its walls' (Rose 2000: 47). Safouan places within his vision of the institutional-psychoanalytical frame space to express and recover both the 'dignity' of analyst and analyst and thus a dynamic of empathy capable of transforming the institution as a 'site of authority' into a 'site of inspiration' (Rose 2000: 47). Interestingly, by recuperating this closing vision of the institution/analysis as a 'site of inspiration' Safouan's own 'utopian' tendencies revives a quality synonymous with the Temple of the Muses and the Alexandrina's own utopianism.
- Love Objects and Gift-Giving

The final core 'value' which dominates both Chahine's and Safouan's intellectual journeys - and as such the potential articulation of the figure of the 'Alexandrian' - is that of 'love'. Not only is the motif of 'love' one of the foundational subjects of philosophic discourse – it is, for example, the condition of 'love' which initiates Plato's *Symposium* and which Freud credits with the feelings of immortality which underpin the on-going belief/fantasy in its 'curative', 'redemptive' powers (Rycroft 1995: 96) – but also as the cultural critic Errera illustrates, 'love' is also a feature with dominates Alexandria's literary imagination (Errera 1997:138). She argues that while 'passion' and 'desire' characterise Cavafy, Durrell and E.M. Forster's engagement with the city, a subsequent generation of Alexandrian writers, – including Ibn Battuta, Makrizi, Ibn Dukmak, Mahfouz, el Kharrat, el Tounsi, – writing in Arabic 'told' ‘another tale’ in which 'Alexandria is more a place of love than of passion' (Errera 1997:138). It is this motif which has thus destabilised traditional Alexandrian literary odysseys and I would argue has implications for museums and heritage discourse in terms of opening up new dynamics of object-work and cultural transmission.

As characterised by Safouan and Chahine, 'love' works across acts of identification, empathy and of transference, and it is identified by both critics as the life-enhancing aspect of Alexandrianism. As such it is the medium of 'transference love’ which is at the core of Safouan's intellectual project and which, in now familiar 'utopian' style, he asserts as the means for analysts/institutions/bureaucracies to engage in non-exploitative relationships which he sees as fundamental to the restoration of humanity and dignity (Rose 2000: 109-110). Here comparisons can be made with critics attempts to put into play 'institutions', 'objects' and 'spaces' as part of a new cosmopolitics of 'transition' and 'hospitality': in this case to restore a humanity and dignity to a genre of 'odysseys' – in the sense of the movements and enforced displacements which define contemporary journeys of immigrants and those seeking refuge and asylum in a world increasingly marked by fetishised borderlands and national identities (see Honig 1998; Derrida 2002a, 2000b).
It is by using this same motif that Chahine powerfully defines his own (perhaps, yet again utopian) vision of a “Return to Alexandria” in which Alexandria emerges as a synonym for ‘difference’, ‘respect’, ‘beauty’ and in his words encapsulates a ‘spirit’ which is broader than that of ‘co-operation’ and which he finally identifies as ‘love’ (Chahine 1997: 172-173). Crucially too he connects this to the physical act of homecoming and to more object-work in terms of the act of gift-giving. Here Chahine argues that Alexandria and its dynamic of return and homecoming makes it possible for a vision of a world where all can enjoy the ‘pleasure of returning’ (Chahine 1997: 178). Drawing on personal experience he describes the experience of departures as synonymous with the feeling of ‘uprooting’ which is both emotional as well as physical, and states how he associates this with the way in which he experiences ‘a little twist’ as he says ‘goodbye’ (Chahine 1997: 178). Conscious of the paradox within his own statements he says, ‘It is also, perhaps because of this that I go’ (Chahine 1997: 178).

Chahine draws on the Arabic term ‘Haraka baraka’ to convey the feelings he experiences on return. Here homecoming is associated with a ‘movement’ which is considered as a ‘blessing’ and which culminates in an act of gift-giving (Chahine 1997: 178). Chahine puts the emphasis not only on what the traveller has learnt or acquired but on how this informs the relationship with the ‘other’ as crystallised in the traveller bringing back this ‘gift’ (Chahine 1997: 178). This is an act which also finds echoes in Said’s reference to the exploration of human experience as mediated by culture as a ‘voyage towards the other’ (Said in Barrenboim and Said 2002: 67). As a final endnote to this section, the association of Alexandria with ‘love’ has found its expression within the contemporary revivalist context. This comes in the form of the recuperation of a popular motto (which currently has more popular usage than the more traditional reference to Alexandria as ‘Bride of the Sea’) which appears on public hoardings throughout the downtown areas of the city and which in both Arabic and English describes Alexandria as a ‘Wave of Love’.
SECTION FOUR

‘HOMECOMING’S IMPLICATIONS FOR MUSEOLOGY AND HERITAGE

Now what’s going to happen to us without barbarians?
Those people were some kind of solution

(Cavafy, Waiting for the Barbarians: 1990 [1904]:15).

To put it quite simply, the history of the museum as a Western institution is not, and never was a closed issue; it is riddled with points of crisis and openings ...


‘You will be back’, he said. ‘And Alexandria will still be here. It is always here. And do you know why it is always here? Because it has stories. As long as it has stories it lives’.

(Kennedy 1998: 55).

In this final ‘conclusion’ I return to re-engage with my point of origin in order to draw out the implications of what has emerged as a radically recast Alexandria paradigm for academic museology and heritage studies. It is here too, as stated in my introduction, that it is possible to draw out the ways in which both my critical, theoretical return to the Alexandria project and my ethnographic, case-study account of the Alexandrina’s homecoming – and the crisis/ breakthroughs which define the ‘extremely intricate’ journey of return - can be used to direct museology/ cultural heritage discourse to a ‘different kind of place’ (cf. Said 2003: 48). In what follows I interpret this as the task of extracting from this thesis what I argue is both the basis of and argument for a more fundamental re-conceptualisation of the museum/ heritage culture’s core values and practices and a commitment to using these to articulate ‘possible futures.’
Writ large, my return to Alexandria, - as a museologist’s journey to origin -, began this process of re-conceptualisation by arguing for an initial destabilisation and an opening up of the ‘old’, Western genealogy and its associated discourse of roots and revivalism. As such I identified an entry point in terms of a return to and rethinking of the foundational values of museums and cultural heritage discourse as they map across mythic-historical, literary-metaphysical realms and onto the operational ‘real.’ From this standpoint I argue that the Alexandrina’s own story of homecoming means that the ‘old’ museology cannot be disposed off as a totalising and traumatic break espoused by Vergo (1989) in his rallying call for a ‘new’ museological discourse, nor can any significant re-conceptualisation be made without movement beyond the preoccupation with the splitting of ‘old’/‘new’.

As such, I have shown that salient features, once rejected or repressed, of the ‘old’ discourse have enjoyed a return in museological/heritage practice and as in the case of the Alexandrina are increasingly revived and recuperated by those previously excluded or made marginal from this discourse. I have further demonstrated that the crisis/breakthroughs and hybridisations exemplified in the contemporary revivalist project has provoked an ‘othering’ across epistemological and operational domains which not only transcends and thus debunks the ‘truth’ of a simple ‘old’/‘new’ binary but insists on a commitment to a more fundamental act of re-conceptualisation centred upon both alternative theorisation and a more grounded, ethnographic approach. Therefore, while I have noted that the theorisation of the ‘post-museum’ (Hooper-Greenhill 1992) makes initial intellectual gestures towards models of ‘old’/‘new’ hybridisation, my specific response, has been to bring together critical theorisations and framework currently located outside mainstream museology/heritage studies with ethnographic methods.

My point has been that the museum and heritage culture like Narcissus looking into his pool (as a ‘world in itself’) still fails to engage in alternative conceptualisations of itself within a wider global context. Not only is this due to the on-going legacies of its ‘old’ ‘Greek’ landscape/origins and its repetitive, narcissistic concern with declarations of its own death, redemption and re-instatement of its sense of omnipotence, but writ larger
still, this genealogy and sensibility persists in the assumption that museology is still largely imagined (and imagines itself) within a European/ North-American academic tradition. Moreover, these core values continue to function as museology’s resource for its own legitimization, and crucially too, for its professionalism and expert culture. I have demonstrated that as a consequence there has been a failure, in particular, to imagine ‘non-Western’ landscapes/ cultural influences other than as stereotype and as such to give a reality to their history and humanity.

I take as my guide here one critic of cosmopolitanism who asserts that the ‘imagination of possible futures’ is achievable only by accessing a movement beyond the ‘framework of the existing order of things’ (Venn 2002: 65) and consequentially that any truly effective ‘index of a break’ (Venn 2002: 75) with ‘old’ and ‘new’ oppressions requires acts of fundamental re-conceptualisation guided by questions of ethics. I have argued that this objective in all its complexity requires not only a re-focusing on the contestatory way in which museological ideas and heritage practise are received and transported in new settings but the need to address deep rooted blindspots. The latter, I have argued, concerns the failure of mainstream museology/ heritage culture, again like Narcissus, to fully confront (rather than displace within its imagined discourse of ancient origins) the violences and conflicts which mark its historical and on-going encounters with those it defines within the category of ‘other.’ This project is necessarily bound up in the accompanying need to recognise how museology’s own filtering systems and cultural lenses present a barrier – and a resultant moral/ ethical bankruptcy as many would see it – with respect of the need to acknowledge both earlier phases of cultural integration which have been largely erased from official memory (although are present as traces) and modern crossings-over: both of which the contemporary Bibliotheca project brings home.

It, therefore, seems fair to argue that when the West began to construct the myth of a return to Alexandria, few if any, would have imagined that the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and associated archaeological revivalism would be influenced - let alone principally authored - by the Egyptian state and by Egyptian cultural elites. Similarly, I would argue that the proponents of the ‘new’ museology failed to envision the subtleties and
complexities of the rise of heritage and revivalism in postcolonial Egypt (or in ex-colonial/postcolonial contexts anywhere, perhaps) and the role that global culture-brokers such as the UN/UNESCO now occupy within this increasingly messy politics. Hence, I argue, the need for the adoption of an approach and method that stresses a more diffuse notion of heritage, memory, identity, being and belonging which, as demonstrated, is accessible only through understanding peoples actions towards each other in relation to ideals and values. In theoretical terms, I have explored these in my critical excavations of "internal" critiques of Western modernity notably with reference to anti-museum/archival critiques, its deviant poetics, deconstructionist interventions and cosmopolitan, postcolonial and psychoanalytic theories which are mobilised more directly to challenge exclusive conceptualisations of North/South. In the contemporary revivalist context, as I have shown, the actor network approach and the ideals, values and realities that are the habitus to them, offer a means to map processes of revivalism as, for example, an experience of 'globalisation', Egyptianisation and 'Alexandrianisation' and also to argue the need recognise a wider role for museology/heritage in terms of - what it is to be human?

My critical return to the Alexandrina paradigm and my account of its radical transformation from an elite Western colonial paradigm into operational-model of heritage revivalism in a 'postcolonial' context thus confronts museological/heritage theory with alternative sets of values, critical approaches, theorisations, lived experiences and life-worlds which currently remain largely unrecognised. On an empirical level this has demonstrated the continued attractions of 'old' museological and heritage paradigms and their re-emergence as powerful loci of return and recuperation. It also demonstrates the return and repetition of some of the more oppressive features of this 'old' project which haunt the contemporary context in the form of distopic visions that map across historical and contemporary context and which are bound up in (or perhaps as many informants suggest, both author and exploit) fears of iconoclasm/cultural loss/impoverishment and, as such, are intimately bound up with the underside of cosmopolitan utopianism: the 'Clash of Civilisations' myth/thesis.
More than this, however, is my identification of the presence of a complex cosmopolitics which, as is clear from my Alexandrian case-study, demonstrates that these ‘old’ heritage models are also valued for the sense of ‘rootedness’ they afford contemporary ‘actors’ and the potential they possess in terms of opening up these templates to new hyridisations which correspond to contemporary needs and agendas. As such, the contemporary ‘Return to Alexandria’ illustrates that Alexandrian revivalism as well as serving to support a myth of a ‘Golden-age’ of the ‘universal’, encyclopedic archive is also effective in supporting other aspirations. As demonstrated, the Alexandria’s homecoming has brought into view the reality that heritage projects do not occur in a vacuum (ie. they are not a ‘world in themselves’) but draw pre-existing institutions, sites, agencies and their local ‘actors’ into new relationships, contestations and collaborations. My account of the Bibliotheca’s ‘meltdown’ also revealed wider dramas in which an alternative force of revivalism in the form of the excavation and the return of Alexandria’s tangible, as well as intangible ancient and more modern cosmopolitan heritages, in turn, recasts the contemporary scene as a ‘site of resistance’ which mobilises archaeologists, NGO’s and others in their commitment to give material, operational and intellectual ‘substance’ to a wider consideration of hybrid histories and identities and to resist ‘top-down’ ‘hijackings’ and revivalism’s incorporation into exclusive, fundamentalist genealogies, be they privileged Western ‘universal’ narratives or those of religion or of narrow nationalisms.

In doing so, the Alexandrina paradigm has been opened up to an increasing multi-vocality which in turn has not only offered a means to agitate for greater inclusion in the operational sphere (cf. the SARCOM Workshop) but increasingly has cast revivalism as a moral/ethical space and concern. As such, the core ‘old’ museological odysseys of how to live the ‘Good Life’ and ‘what it is to be human’ have been taken up as contemporary quests and by these means are eliciting future visions, ideals and aspirations at the level, for example, of both the elite ‘critical Chorus’ and that of the popular, urban voices of rejection and recuperation. Thus for some, revivalism has afforded a means to articulate an intellectual concern and spirit of solidarity capable of creating empathies between the exclusion of the Greco-Roman past from Egyptian national identities and a concomitant ‘politics of exclusion’ (cf. Saadawi 1997) experienced by contemporary ‘besieged
identities' (Said 2003). These dynamics map across the political/ cultural tensions which, as demonstrated, continue to marginalise the 'voices' and heritages of contemporary 'cosmopolitan' communities in Alexandria and which also stereotype and exclude a more 'popular' Islamic heritage within the wider contemporary context: both dynamics are yet to be fully acknowledged as part of 'cultural dialogue'. For others still, the myth of a return to a 'Golden-age', is expressed more simply as a vision of a cleaner, safer city - and what may perhaps be one common if not a 'universal' human aspiration worth standing by - that of creating a 'decent place for children to grow up in'.

In terms of wider North-South intellectual/ literary contemporary acts of 'crossings-over' and mirroring I have argued that the Alexandrina represents a still potent 'icon' of empathic identification/ diagnosis. Utopian ideals and operational strategies have together restored the institution as a fulcrum to narrativise a host of new aspirations and fears. The Alexandrina has thus re-emerged as a site to articulate both 'non-Western' experiences of the 'condition of loss' (cf. Wood: 3/02) and as a means for ex-pats to engage in new journeys of 'homecoming' which make gestures not only to literal returns to origin as an 'act of mourning' but open up both personal biography and works of fiction for new memory-work and acts of 'translation' across 'Western'/ Egyptian worlds (cf. Lively: 4/01; Soueif: 5/02). This has also seen the values of a 'new humanism' and of a more universally applied Human Rights culture, - no-longer tied to what has been identified as one of the most oppressive filters within the global arena that of Western liberalism -, addressed by academics, activists (cf. Said 2003) and at conferences held within the Alexandrina itself, and needs, I would argue, to be similarly addressed by museology/ heritage studies.

I have also demonstrated that the inter-relationship between metaphysical and material - fantasy and real - worlds is a core part of this 'humanisation' of museology/ heritage studies. More specifically, I have drawn out these dynamics with reference to the capacity of contemporary revivalism to both destabilize the 'old' model of Grand narrative redemptions while simultaneously recuperating its role as a locus for the narrativisation of loss and trauma and also in terms of its potency to bring about an
'entente with the recent past' via acts of 'working through', 'mourning' and the 'acting out' of other deferrals/ therapeutics. It is here that I argue that Freud's idea of the 'compromise formation' which stresses the ways in which the 'health' of individuals/institutions depends upon a 'compromise' being made between real/fantasy worlds thus offers a useful model (see Davies (1998) on its application to the Freud Museum) which takes account of binary tensions to create a third space of 'entente'. I have shown how, for example, Safouan's psychoanalytic critique of institutions similarly offers a - perhaps 'utopian' - model for the 'imagination of possible futures' for the Bibliotheca (and by extension for the wider museum/heritage culture) which finds correspondences too with critic's attempts to put into play 'institutions', 'objects' and other 'contact zones' as part of an alternative cosmopolitics of 'transition' and 'hospitality': not least to offer representation, 'refuge' and 'asylum' (echoing Bazin's own agendas) to contemporary peoples and 'memory-in-exile' (Derrida 2002a).

Moreover this reinvestment in Alexandria as a recuperated 'Capital of Memory' supports calls made by Rowlands on new possibilities for museology/heritage discourse to go beyond the Aristotelian model of memory-work and towards a new and alternative therapeutics (Rowlands 2002). My own more practical interventions and future aspirations relate to my involvement in the UNESCO/ Memory of the World programme (MOW). In papers given in MOW International conferences in Mexico (2000) and Korea (2001) I have used my thesis research to argue for the use of similar ethnographic techniques within the MOW's pilot projects: a strategy which, had it been in place, would have meant that the kinds of anxieties expressed in UNESCO's pre-project field-visits on the Bibliotheca could have been acknowledged and addressed from the outset (see Appendix Four). My wider objective would be to take my research work further in a collaboration ideally connected with the Bibliotheca's own Memory of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project with the aim of encouraging a more widespread ethnographic archival programme. This proposed scheme would pursue the motif of the city's 'old' and 'new' 'cosmopolitanisms' and as such draw in diverse communities, viewpoints and perspectives, in order to document the city's contemporary 'recent memory' and to extend its 'multi-vocalism' (Appendix Four).
Finally, while there is no simple 'working out' of museological/heritage discourse's new odysseys and no simple 'working through' of the inevitable points of impasse and irreconcilability to be encountered in the future (i.e. what 'holds' and what 'destroys'): what is clear in the contemporary context is the need to re-address the basic humanistic virtues which have gone largely unproblematised. From this too needs to come the re-evaluation and also the recuperation of their salience as part of a common purpose of understanding - what it is to be human - and as part of the necessary project of centring these 'values' in a re-worked intellectual-operational 'cosmopolitics' and as part of attempts to create a more relevant, responsible and responsive North-South museological/heritage dialogue. I would argue that of all the of 'signs and images' and 'myths and icons' which appear in this thesis a symbolic starting point towards this fundamental re-conceptualisation, and one which also takes forward this thesis' on-going project of confronting museology/heritage theory with alternative sets of values, critical approaches, theorisations and lived experiences, concerns a return to two key motifs found within museology, cosmopolitanism and Alexandria's foundational dramas.

These motifs are that of the 'image of home' and of museum/archive 'as shelter and safe place' (cf. Dikec 2002:235) and that of recurrent claims (from Bazin, UNESCO and the contemporary Bibliotheca onwards) of the museum as a response to and cure for war trauma. It is perhaps the cruelest of ironies then, that those whose vision of origins is rehearsed in epic form as the immigrant, diaspora story of traumatic displacement and homecoming, – as legitimated through the medium of Alexander the Great's Odyssey Eastwards - should fix these motifs as exclusive 'self objects' and, as such, offer a self-defined precedent for and complicity with 'old' and 'new' 'political abuses' of these motifs from North and South (Dikec 2002:235). I would argue the need, in particular, to re-conceptualise these motifs as a potent 'index of a break' in order for alternative mobilisation in the contemporary moment. Not only does this mean consolidating and centering psychoanalysis, postcolonial and memory studies, for example, as resonant foundations for contemporary museum/heritage culture but equally that recognition and the same status be given to trauma, conflict, and refugee studies and Human Rights
discourse as a basis for museological/ heritage discourses' greater moral-ethical definition and future action.

At a time when the global community is stood (yet again, as all too often) ‘on the ruins’ of new wars (notably recently in Afghanistan and Iraq) which have seen both the large-scale loss of heritage as museums have been looted, sites obliterated, and even more loss of life as countless human beings have become new casualties of conflict and displaced as refugees: one particular recasting of the Alexandrina paradigm found in my fieldwork context seems the most salient endnote. It demonstrates that, against the grain, small but hugely significant acts of metamorphoses and odysseys of transformation are indeed possible. My illustration concerns the repossessing of the core component of ‘writing to return’ which significantly and strategically has been translated into the call for the return of a potent contemporary ‘lost landscape’ and ‘memory-in-exile’ which has shadowed this thesis. As a key member of Alexandria’s ‘Arab Writers Club’ commented to me in interview the major preoccupation of the city’s young, contemporary writers is ‘the subject of Palestine’. This recasting, like this wider thesis, crystallises the ways in which cultural objects including the commodity of heritage have always met with a degree of resistance, hybridisation, contestation, appropriation and mobilisation for contemporary needs and agendas: it also illustrates how the Alexandrina paradigm can be ‘gifted’ (cf. Safouan 2000/ Chahine 1997) for use and recuperation by the contemporary ‘besieged’ subject (cf. Said 2003).
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Return to Alexandria:

Cultural Revivalism and the Alexandria Project

Presented for a PhD by Beverley J. Butler.

September 2003
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Appendix One

**Bibliotheca Alexandrina – Development Phases and Project Structure** 8

**Introduction**

**Section One: Recent Historical Background and Key Events/Phases**

**Section Two: The Aswan Meeting of the 1990**

**Section Three: Inauguration Law no.1 and Presidential Decree No. 76. 2001**

**Section Four: Accounts of the Bibliotheca’s Cancelled Opening (April 2002) and formal Opening (October 2002).**

**Section Five: Images and Contents of the Completed Bibliotheca Alexandrina.**

## Appendix Two

**Research History and Methods -**

**Mapping the force of Contemporary Revivalism** 51

**Introduction**

**Section One: Revivalist Landscape**

**Section Two: Networks of Contemporary Revivalism**

**Section Three: Research Time-table**

**Section Four: Memory-Work and Narrativisation**
Appendix Three

UNESCO – Revivalism’s International Culture-Broker

Introduction

Section One: Development and Main Phases
Section Two: UNESCO Constitution
Section Three: UNESCO’S ‘Meltdown’ and Partnerships with NGOs
Section Four: UNESCO’S Memory-work and Archival Personality

Appendix Four

The Memory of the World Programme

Introduction

Section One: ‘Safeguarding the documentary heritage of humanity’
Section Two: ‘The Memory of Alexandria and Contemporary Heritage Revivalism’
Section Three: ‘Some Comments on the Memory of the World (MOW) Guidelines’

Appendix Five

The ‘Egyptianisation’ of Revivalism

Introduction

Section One: Re-attachments with Ancient Pasts
Section Two: ‘Mixture of Worth’
Section Three: ‘Excluded Heritages’
Section Four: Egyptian Museum Centenary Celebrations and “Museology in the 21st Century” Conference
Section Five: ‘Museology in the 21st Century - Programme"
Appendix Six

Archaeological Revivalism and the SARCOM Workshop 1997

Introduction
Section One: Archaeological Revivalism – Historical Background and Key Events/Phases
Section Two: SARCOM Workshop 1997
Section Three: ‘Voices’ of the SARCOM Workshop
Section Four: Alexandria as Tourist Space

Appendix Seven

Urban Regeneration and Cities for Peace Report

Introduction
Section One: Material relating to Adel Abu Zahra and the Friends of the Environment Association (FEA)
Section Two: Material relating to Mohammed Awad and the Alexandria Preservation Trust (APT)
Section Three: Cities for Peace Report (see attached folder)

Appendix Eight

‘Definition’ of Terms/Concepts (also see folder attached)
LIST OF FIGURES

Volume Two

Fig. 1. Front view of Bibliotheca Alexandrina
    (source: Mostafa 2002: 3) 35

Fig. 2. Side view of Bibliotheca Alexandrina with the exterior wall featuring 'universal
    scripts' (source: Mostafa 2002: 77) 36

Fig. 3. Suzanne Mubarak on visit to Bibliotheca Alexandrina
    (source: Attia in Mostafa 2002: 85) 38

Fig. 4. Hosni Mubarak, holding the dream of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina with inserts
    show images of the interior library spaces (source: Mostafa 2002: 63) 39

Fig. 5. Statue raised by underwater archaeologists, entrance of Bibliotheca Alexandrina
    (source: Media Link 2001: 1) 40

Fig. 6. Antiquities Museum (source: Media Link 2001: 41) 42

Fig. 7. Awad Collection catalogue, front page
    (source: Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002a) 44

Fig. 8. Planetarium with Science Museum below; Qait Bey in the background
    (source: Mostafa 2002: 14) 46

Fig. 9. Manuscript Museum, exhibition space
    (source: Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002d: 7) 47

Fig. 10. Manuscript Museum, a piece of the Kiswa of the Holy Kaaba
    (source: Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002d: 19) 47
Fig. 11. Interior of library space, showing digital collections and exhibition space  
(photo: B. Butler)  
50

Fig. 12. Interior of library space, student group on balcony  
(photo: B. Butler)  
50

Fig. 13. Map of Central Alexandria, showing Qait Bey and Bibliotheca Site  
(source: based on Richardson 2001: 480)  
58

Fig. 14. Main Fieldwork Phases  
66

Fig. 15. Map of downtown Alexandria  
(source: based on Richardson 2001: 488- 489)  
74

Fig. 16. Ahmad Omar assisting with interviews held at Qait Bey café  
(photo: B. Butler)  
75

Fig. 17. Families on Chatby Beaches  
(photo: B. Butler)  
75

Fig. 18. Kom El Dikka, discussing Sayed Darwish  
(source: B. Butler)  
76

Fig. 19. Workmen at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina construction site  
(source: B. Butler)  
76

Fig. 20. Petros VII, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Alexandria (photo: B. Butler)  
78
Fig. 21. Sheikh Hassan, Islamic Centre, downtown Alexandria
   (photo: B. Butler)  

Fig. 22. Mr Nubia Nubia and family, Nubian Tourist Bazaar, near to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (photo: B. Butler)

Fig. 23. Interior of Nubian Tourist Bazaar with pictures of (left to right) Sadat and Nasser, and (top, hidden beneath objects) Mubarak (photo: B. Butler)

Fig. 24. Map of Alexandria, from Qait Bey to Abu Qir, featuring underwater archaeological sites (source: based on Richardson 2001: 480-481)
Appendix One

Bibliotheca Alexandrina –
Development Phases and Project Structure
Introduction

The purpose of this Appendix is to give some background detail to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s development phases and the structure of the project. It contains:

Section One: Recent Historical Background and Key Events/Phases

Section Two: The Aswan Meeting 1990. This includes:

- Aswan Declaration on the Bibliotheca Alexandrina 1990.

Section Three: Inauguration Law No. 1. 2001 and Presidential decree No. 76. 2001 on the management and the financial and administrative affairs of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina

Section Four: Account of the Bibliotheca’s Cancelled Opening April 2002


Account of the Bibliotheca’s formal Opening October 2002

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Section Five: Images and Contents of the Completed Bibliotheca Alexandrina.
SECTION ONE

RECENT HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND KEY EVENTS/ PHASES

[The following information is taken from the Bibliotheca Alexandrina website (http://www.bibalex.gov.eg); from GOAL 1990 and Mostafa 2002) with additional sources where stated]

1. The idea of revivalism is initiated by academics at the University of Alexandria in 1974. Mostafa El-Abaddi, Professor of Greco-Roman Studies, led these discussions and gained the support of Dr. Lutfi Doweidar the (then) President of the University.

2. A preparatory committee responsible for the Revival of the Ancient Library of Alexandria is established in 1985 with the participation of prominent men of journalism and literature in Egypt, for the preparation of preliminary studies and plan of action for the project. The preparatory committee begin to contact concerned officials of the Egyptian Government and make initial contact with UNESCO.

3. In May 1985 the Board of the University of Alexandria pledged a four hectare plot of land on the waterfront for building the institution. This gift of land – estimated to be worth US $60 million – is illustrative of the substantial governmental contribution to the scheme. The site is historically significant as it is located in the 'same royal quarter where the ancient library once stood' (GOAL 1990:9).

4. President Hosni Mubarak adopts the project nationally in 1985 and Dr Fathi Sorour the (then) Minster of Education assumed the responsibility for developing the scheme as an international project and as such formalised links with UNESCO.

5. The then UNESCO director Ahmed Muktar Embu makes the first international appeal to sponsor the project in 1987. Feasibility studies were made by UNESCO. The UNDP

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1 UNESCO (http://www.unesco.org) also has a mirror site.
provided a grant to support the studies and preparations. Seminars and conferences were also co-ordinated between Alexandria, Cairo and Paris to research into the history of the ancient institution.

6. Under the new UNESCO director Federico Mayor the first appeal is again reiterated by UNESCO’s executive council and general conference in 1987.

7. On 26 June 1988 President Hosni Mubarak in the presence of UNESCO's Director-General Federico Mayor laid the cornerstone of the new Revival of the Ancient Library of Alexandria project. The event was attended by the UNESCO director, the Governor of Alexandria, the President of Alexandria University, and a group of statesmen, national and world figures.

8. Presidential Decree No. 523 issued in 1988 established “The General Organisation of the Alexandria Library” (GOAL) to be responsible for the implementation of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Revival of the Ancient Library Library of Alexandria project, and for its operation and continuity. According to this Presidential Decree the project was included in the Government Development plan (1988/1992). The scheme was formally affiliated to the Ministry of Education.

9. The Egyptian Government with the co-operation of UNESCO and the financial support of the UNDP held an International Architectural Competition in consultancy with the International Union of architects (IUA). The architectural programme was prepared and approved by an International panel of architects and librarians. The competition announcement was issued by UNESCO and IUA in October, 1988.

10. Approximately 1400 architects from 77 nations apply to submit their designs. 524 projects are submitted for review by an international jury of 6 architects and 3 librarians. A special ceremony to announce the winner takes place on 25 September 1989 under the auspices of Egypt’s First Lady Suzanne Mubarak in the new Conference Centre (which is adjacent to the University of Alexandria and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina site).
11. The Norwegian team Snohetta Landskap-Arkitektur (in collaboration with Hamza Associates who carried out the engineering designs) wins the first prize of US $60,000. The second prize of US $35,000 was won by Italian architect Manfredi Nicoletti, and the third prize of US $25,000 was awarded to the Brazilian team led by Fernando Ramaz. The jury has also selected 13 projects which were awarded special mentions and cited 13 others as worth of special merits.

12. The Aswan Meeting of 12 February 1990 described as the 'greatest international cultural summit of this Century' (GOAL 1990: 10) is the occasion of the Inaugural Meeting of the International Commission for the Revival of the Ancient Library of Alexandria. The Meeting is held in Aswan, the scene of the earlier Egyptian Government/UNESCO salvage campaigns of the Nubian monuments. The Meeting is hosted by Hosni and Suzanne Mubarak and held in the presence of UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor. Its participants include Kings, Queens, Princes, Princesses, Prime Ministers, Ministers and notable dignitaries in the fields of science, literature and art. After the proclamation of the Aswan Declaration (see Section Two), it was signed by the members of the International Commission as a pledge of commitment to support the project.

13. Arab countries take the initiative of financially supporting the project followed by other foreign countries. As the official proceedings show, '[US] $64 million were pledged by Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Iraq within 24 hours of the proclamation of the Aswan Declaration/ (GOAL 1990: 7). Saddam Hussein donated the largest financial contribution (US $21 million) to the Alexandrina project.

[The project was suspended from 1990-1994 on account of the Gulf war]

14. The construction of the project begins in 1995 and is carried out by Arab Contractors with the participation of Italian and British companies. Dr Mohsen Zahran becomes GOAL Director and Project Manager during the construction phase. The International Executive Secretariat is established to over-see the project development.
The key construction phases are as follows:

**Phase 1:**
Foundations and Geotechnical Engineering - Contractors: Radio/Trevi (Italy) / Arab Contractor (Egypt).

The construction work began on 15/5/1995 and was completed on 31/12/1996, at the cost of US$ 59 million. The construction work involved the most advanced technology. The largest circular reinforced Diaphragm Wall in the world, 160m diameter, was a major engineering achievement, along with more than 600 bored bell-bottom piles.

**Phase 2:**
Structures, Services, Fit-Out and External Works - Contractors: Balfour Beatty (UK) / Aab Contractors (Egypt).

The work began on 27/12/1996, at the cost of US$ 117 million. Architects/Engineers (Consultant to the BA): Snøhetta (Norway) / Hamza Associates (Egypt) (see Mostafa 2002: 72-73).

1. UNESCO encourages the establishment of International Friends Groups to support the Bibliotheca project and to be active in raising funds and securing donations of books.

16. New policies are developed in 2001 with the advent of the Inauguration. Law no. 1, which rendered the Bibliotheca Alexandrina an autonomous body affiliated directly to the President. Regulations for the library's financial and administrative affairs are specified in the Decree no. 76 for the year 2001. The Decree provided for a three-tier management which includes (i) the Council of Patrons (ii) the Board of Trustees and (iii) the Director of the Library, who is in charge of executive responsibilities (see full version of these documents in Section Three).

17. Ismail Serageldin, a former vice-president of the World Bank is appointed as Director.
18. In 2001 the Bibliotheca Alexandrina establishes its Mission Statement: to be;

- The window of Egypt on the world
- The window of the world on Egypt
- An instrument for rising to the digital challenge
- A centre for dialogue and debate between peoples and civilizations

19. Egypt’s First Lady Suzanne Mubarak subsequently dubs the Bibliotheca Alexandrina as ‘Egypt’s Fourth Pyramid’

20. The Bibliotheca Alexandrina celebrated the installation of the First Book on its shelf at the beginning of August 2001.

21. During October 2001, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina led its ‘Soft-Opening’ in which the library was experimentally opened to the public for one month.

22. Opening Gala planned for 23 April 23 is cancelled.

23. A rescheduled Gala Opening took place on 16 October 2002. The event although downsized included a of guest amongst others: the French President Jacques Chirac, President Carlo Ciampi of Italy and Greek President Costis Stepanopolou, Queen Sophia of Spain. For detailed coverage of events see Halim 2002b, 2002c; Hammouda 2002; Farag 2002.

24. The Bibliotheca Alexandrina is fully inaugurated and comprises of:

- The Library of real and digital texts
- The planetarium
- The Conference Centre
- The International School for Information Studies (ISIS)
- Centre for Documentation and Research
- Science Museum
- Calligraphy Museum
- Manuscript Museum
- The Centre for the Preservation of Rare Books and Documents

A tour of these destinations can be found on http://www.bibalex.gov.eg. and on the UNESCO mirror site http://www.unesco.org). The Bibliotheca Alexandrina web-site also contains information on the ancient library; has more detail on the construction phases and on past events/forthcoming events.
SECTION TWO

THE ASWAN MEETING 1990

INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE
REVIVAL OF THE ANCIENT LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA

Programme

Inauguration of the Meeting of the International Commission
by H.E. President Hosni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt
at the Hotel Cataract ("Club 1902").

Adjournment of the Meeting
Resumption of the Meeting

- Opening Speeches by:

  Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak
  Mr. Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO

- Keynote address by Mr. Francois Mitterrand,
  President of the French Republic.

- Presentation of the film "Bibliotheca Alexandrina" and explanation of the Library design
  by the Snohetta team, prize-winner of the International Architectural Competition.

- Reading of the Aswan Declaration, by Dr. Ahmed Fathi Sorour.

- Statements by members of the Commission, and signature of the Aswan Declaration.
- Statement by President Hosni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt

-Closure

(source: GOAL 1990: 15)
ASWAN DECLARATION ON THE BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA 1990

At the beginning of the third century before our era, a great enterprise was conceived in ancient Alexandria, meeting-place of peoples and cultures: the edification of a Library in the lineage of Aristotle’s Lyceum, transposing Alexander’s dreams of empire into a quest for universal knowledge.

On the eve of the third millennium and under the patronage of President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak, the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt is seeking, in co-operation with UNESCO and with the financial support of UNDP and other public and private sources, to revive the Ancient Library of Alexandria by restating its universal legacy in modern terms.

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina will stand as a testimony to a decisive moment in the history of human thought - the attempt to constitute a summum of knowledge, to assemble the writings of all the peoples. It will bear witness to an original undertaking that, in embracing the totality and diversity of human experience, became the matrix for a new spirit of critical inquiry, for a heightened perception of knowledge as a collaborative process.

The Ancient Library of Alexandria and its associated Museum gave birth to a new intellectual dynamic. By gathering together all the known sources of knowledge and organizing them for the purposes of scholarly study and investigation, they marked the foundation of the modern notion of the research institute and, therefore, of the university.

Within this haven of learning, the arts and sciences flourished for some six centuries alongside scholarship. The classification and exegesis of the classical literary canon nourished the poetic wit of Callimachus and the pastoral muse of Theocritus. Study of the theories of the masters of Greek thought, informed by the new Alexandrian spirit of critical and empirical inquiry, yielded major insights and advances in those branches of science associated with the names of Euclid, Herophilus, Erastosthenes, Aristarchus, Ptolemy, Strabo, Archimedes and Heron.

The achievements of Alexandrian science, lost to the West for over a millennium before their partial recovery via Constantinople and classical Arabic and Islamic cultures, were to be instrumental in launching the European Renaissance on its quest for new worlds. In this and as the transmitter of Greek civilization in general, the Ancient Library of Alexandria survives as a vital link in a living tradition.

On the site of the palace of the Ptolemies, the new Alexandrina will give modern expression to an ancient endeavour. A splendid contemporary design for the Library has already been adopted through an international architectural competition. Detailed plans exist for a facility embodying the latest computer technology and serving as a public research library.
Conceived in the framework of the World Decade for Cultural Development, this institution will be open to researchers not only from the Mediterranean countries but from all over the world.

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina - a link with the past and an opening onto the future - will be a unique in being the first library on such a scale to designed and constructed with the assistance of the international community acting through the United Nations system.

We, the members of the International Commission for the revival of the Ancient Library of Alexandria, meeting at its inaugural session in Aswan in February 1990 under the chairmanship of Mrs. Susan Mubarak, pledge our wholehearted support and commitment to this end the appeal made by the Director-General of Unesco in 1987.

We call upon all governments, international governmental and non-governmental organizations, public and private institutions, funding agencies, librarians and archivists, and the peoples of all countries to participate, by means of voluntary contributions of all kinds, in the efforts initiated by the Egyptian Government to revive the Library of Alexandria, to assemble and preserve its collections, to train the necessary staff and to ensure the Library’s functioning.

We call on scholars, writers and artists and all those whose tasks is to inform through the written and spoken word to help generate awareness of the international project for the revival of the Library of Alexandria and support for this historic venture. Finally, we urge all governments to donate to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina such works in their possession as will help to constitute and enhance the Library’s collection, in recognition of the unique gift made by the Ancient Library of Alexandria to our common heritage.

Signatories

Susanne AGNELLI
Senator, Secretary to Foreign Affairs (Italy)
Queen Noor AL-HUSSEIN of Jordan

Yahya Bin Mahfoudh AL-MANTHERI
Minister of Education and Youth
(Sultanate of Oman)

Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan AL-NAHYAN
President of the United Arab Emirates

Prince Turki Ibn Abdal-Aziz AL-SAUD
Founder and President of the arab Student Aid International (ASAI)
(Saudi Arabia)
Daniel BOORSTIN
Historian, Librarian of Congress Emeritus
(United States)

Lord BRIGGS
Provost, Worcester College, Oxford
(United Kingdom)

Gro Harlem BRUNDTLAND
Member of Parliament
(Norway)

Princess CAROLINE de Monaco

Hans-Peter GEH
President of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)
(Federal Republic of Germany)

Abdul-Aziz HUSSAIN
Adviser to His Highness the Amir of Kuwait

Dmitri Sergeevich LIKHACHEV
Academician
(USSR)

Melina MERCOURI
Member of the Parliament
(Greece)

François MITTERAND
President of the French Republic

Suzanne MUBARAK
(Egypt)

Queen SOFIA of Spain

Ahmed Fathi SOROUR
Minister of Education, Chairman of the General Organization of the Alexandria Library
(GOAL)
(Egypt)

Mr José Israel VARGAS
Former Chair of the Executive Board of Unesco
(Brazil)

(source: GOAL: 1990: 99)
SECTION THREE

INAUGURATION LAW No.1 2001

In the name of the People

The President

The People's Assembly has enacted the following law and we have hereby issued it:

Article 1.

The Library of Alexandria is a public juridical person headquartered in the City of Alexandria, attached to the President of the Republic, and it is an Egyptian center of cultural radiance, a beacon for thought, culture and science, to encompass the product of the human mind in cultures old and new in all languages.

Article 2.

The Library comprises the Library, the Planetarium and the Conference Center and it is to have the following cultural and scientific institutions established within it:

1. International School for Information Studies (ISIS).
2. Center for Documentation and Research.
5. Manuscript Museum.
6. Center for the Preservation of Rare Books and Documents.

And other cultural or scientific institutions may be added or established by a decree of the President of the Republic, and the President of the republic shall by decree define the legal status of the institutions mentioned in this article.
Article 3.

The Library shall undertake all the activities that serve its mission, and shall undertake all actions related to so doing, of which:

1. Obtaining studies, books, periodicals, manuscripts, papyruses and other items that are related to the Egyptian civilization in its different periods, and related to the scientific, intellectual and cultural heritage of the countries of the world.

2. Collecting originals or copies of the manuscripts that represent the intellectual achievements of the Islamic and Arab World in ancient and modern languages.

3. Collecting materials connected to the biographies and achievements of eminent persons in the realms of thought, science, politics and religion throughout human history.

4. Undertaking studies connected to the historical, geographic, cultural and religious aspects of the Mediterranean region, the Middle East, Egypt and Alexandria more specifically.

Article 4.

The President of the Republic shall determine by decree the manner in which the Library shall be supervised and administered, and the manner in which its administrative and financial affairs shall be run, in a manner compatible with the nature of its activities and to enable it to achieve its mission, and this without being tied by the administrative regulations specified in any other law.
**Article 5.**

The resources of the Library shall be comprised of:

1. The allocations provided for it by the state.
2. The assistance, gifts, donations, bequests, and financial contributions form Egypt or abroad.
3. The loans that will be secured for its benefit.
4. The payments it shall receive for its services and the returns on the invested funds.
5. Any other sources that may be ascribed to the Library by the law.

**Article 6.**

The Library shall have an independent budget, and its financial year shall start with the financial year of the government's budget and end with its ending.

And the Library shall have a separate account in the Central Bank of Egypt or in a commercial bank subject to the approval of the Minister of Finance, and it shall deposit in said account the proceeds of its resources, and the surpluses in that account will be carried forward from one financial year to the next.

**Article 7.**

Within the confines of its purposes, the Library and its affiliated bodies shall be exempt from general taxation of its surpluses and the revenues of its current activities, and from all duties for registration and declaration, and its imports of scientific materiel shall be exempt of custom taxes.
Article 8.

Presidential decree No.523 for 1988, establishing the General Organization for the Library of Alexandria, shall remain operative in all matters that do not contravene this law, until the Presidential decree mentioned in Article Four of this law shall be enacted.

Thereupon, all the assets, rights and obligations of the abolished organization shall revert to the Library.

Article 9.

This law shall be published in the Official Journal and shall enter into force the day following its publication.

Set the official seal of the State, and is to be executed as a law of the State.

(Signed)

Hosny Mubarak

(source: Mostafa 2002: 65-66)
PRESIDENTIAL DECREE No. 76 2001

Concerning the organization of the supervision of the Library of Alexandria and the manner of its management and the conduct of its financial and administrative affairs

The President

After reviewing the Constitution
And Law No. 1 of 2001 concerning the Library of Alexandria
And the agreement of the Council of Ministers
Has decreed

Article 1.

The Library of Alexandria is a public juridical person headquartered in Alexandria and attached to the President.

Article 2.

The library of Alexandria shall be managed by:
(a) A Council of Patrons.
(b) A Board of Trustees.
(c) The Director-General.

Article 3.

The Council of Patrons.
The Council of Patrons is composed of a number of prominent persons from different parts of the world, numbering not less than eight and no more than twenty-four, to be chosen by invitation of the President of the Republic, and one of these persons shall be the Director-General of the UNESCO.

The President or his designate shall be the Chair of the Council of Patrons, and the Minister of Higher Education shall be the Secretary of the Council.
The Council shall have the responsibility of supporting the Library and following up on its activities and shall express its views on the direction of such activities.

The Council shall meet once every three years at the invitation of its Chair.
Article 4.

The Board of Trustees.
The Board of Trustees shall be composed of a number of eminent persons of scientific (intellectual) standing or international experience, among Egyptians and non-Egyptians. They shall number no less than fifteen and no more than thirty, of whom five shall be ex-officio members of the Egyptian Government, namely: the Minister of Higher Education, the Minister of Culture, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Governor of Alexandria and the President of the University of Alexandria.

The Chair of the Council of Patrons shall be the Chair of the Board of Trustees, and said Chair shall choose a member of the Board to act for the Chair in case of the Chair's absence.

The first Board of Trustees shall be named by a decree issued by the President of the Republic, and for the non-ex-officio members of that Board, the duration of their membership shall be two years. After that period, the Board membership shall be renewed by a third every year.

Other than this first Board, the non-ex-officio members of the Board shall be appointed by a decision of the Board of Trustees on nomination of one of the members. Membership shall be for three years, renewable for one additional term.

The Board of Trustees is the decision-making power on the matters of the Library, and will be responsible for defining its general policies, for the administration and planning of its activities and for the establishment of its administrative and financial regulations.

The Board shall meet once a year and can hold exceptional (additional) meetings by invitation of its Chair or at the request of no less than half of its members.

The meeting of the Board shall be deemed legal if a majority of the members are in attendance, and decisions shall be by simple majority of those present. In case of equal votes, the side with the presiding Chair's vote will prevail.

The Board may constitute from its membership committees to which it may assign the execution of specific tasks, or the preparation of particular studies or the execution of research.

The Library shall bear the cost of travel and honoraria associated with the attendance of the Board meetings or the committees established by it.
Article 5.

The Director-General.
The Board of Trustees shall appoint the Director-General of the Library for a period of five years, renewable, and shall determine the Director-General's compensation. This appointment shall be by a decision of the Board supported by two thirds of its attending members, and it is essential that the candidate be a person of international standing, wide culture, and managerial and technical competence.

The Director-General is the Chief Executive Officer of the Library, and is entrusted with the execution of the policies established by the Board of Trustees. The Director-General shall prepare the agenda for the Board meetings, and shall attend the meetings, but shall not vote on decisions before the Board.

The Director-General shall be the head of the staff, and shall appoint the staff, promote them and terminate their services, in accordance with the legal statutes they will serve under. The Director-General shall be the legal representative of the Library before the judiciary and in its dealings with others.

Article 6.

Administrative and Financial Regulations and Statutes for Staff.
The Director-General shall prepare the Administrative and Financial Regulations and Statutes for Staff in a manner that is compatible with the nature of the Library's activities and that would enable it to execute its mission without being bound by other administrative statutes specified in other laws, and these regulations and statutes shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees for their approval.

Upon approval by the Board of Trustees, the Statutes for Staff shall be the legal statutes that shall govern the relationship between the Library and its staff.

Article 7.

Budget and Auditors.
The Library shall have an independent budget and the surplus shall be carried over from one fiscal year to the next.

Without prejudice to the supervision of the Government Accounting Office, the Board of Trustees shall appoint the external auditors and shall receive their reports.
Article 8.

This Decree shall be published in the Official Journal and shall be operative from the date of its publication.

(Signed)

Hosny Mubarak

(source: Mostafa 2002: 67-68)
Just meters from the steps of the Alexandria Library, at the gates of the Alexandria University Faculty of Commerce, an Egyptian student gasped his last breath when he died of shotgun wounds during an anti-American demonstration on April 10.

The death of Muhammad Ali, a business student at the university, sent a shock wave across Egyptian university campuses and stunned people all over the country. The timing couldn’t have been worse for the Alexandria Library, which had been gearing up for its grand opening on April 23.

On April 14, President Hosni Mubarak announced that the library’s inauguration was postponed to an undetermined date. The Egyptian State Information Service (SIS) quickly tried to pin the blame on Israel, stating that the opening cancellation was in solidarity with the Palestinians. "The
decision comes... as a homage to Palestinian martyrs who fell in defense of their land and in sympathy with their families," said an SIS press release.

SIS reported that Mubarak, "expressed his sorrow for the disgraceful, agonizing tragedies Israel has caused to the region and the world, which have shaken human conscience worldwide and created an unfavorable climate for the celebration."

The reality though, is that the proximity of the violent demonstrations, only a stone's throw from the library steps, was a security nightmare for event organizers. With more than 60 world leaders invited to attend the gala event, and a guest list of 300 international figures, there was a high risk that students would use the event to broadcast their fury.

The Egyptian government toyed with closing the University of Alexandria for a week to ensure opening events went smoothly, but with students seething with anger over the death of one of their number, the decision was made to cancel the event rather than provoke an already tense situation.

Khaled Azab, head of media relations for the library, told the Middle East Times that the student demonstrations had nothing to do with the decision to postpone the opening. Standing on a raised footbridge that links the library with the Faculty of Commerce, Azab pointed across the street and said that the students could have easily damaged the library during the previous week's demonstrations, but left the majestic circular building untouched.

"The inauguration was not cancelled because of some accident in Alexandria," says Azab, referring to the Egyptian riot police's decision to use live ammunition to control the surging crowds of protesting students.

"People are very angry over the Israeli aggression. The president didn't want to make a big ceremony because people are angry," continued Azab.

However, closer to home, human rights groups were already starting to point toward the Egyptian government for
mishandling the demonstrations.

The Association of Human Rights Legal Aid (AHRLA) lashed out at the police for shooting Muhammad Ali, as well as for the mass arrests of students. "Security forces do not abstain from suppressive practices... we appeal to the competent authorities not to suppress protests against Israeli violations," said an AHRLA statement.

Sixty-nine students were arrested and held for a week for vandalism and destruction of public property during demonstrations. They were released last Sunday after an appeal from their parents to President Hosni Mubarak.

Despite the cancellation of the gala inauguration, the library will throw its doors open to the public on April 25.

An impressive architectural feat, the library is a simple circle that inclines towards the sea and is located a short distance from the site of the original Alexandria Library.

Partly submerged beneath the ground, it is 11 stories high and can hold up to eight million books. The total cost of the library was $220 million and it has taken 11 years to complete.
Pageant, past and present
Hala Halim witnesses a city transformed for the opening of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina

For three days Alexandria was all contrast, caught between the stillness of a ghost town, albeit a thoroughly sanitised one, and the highest-profile event the city has witnessed in decades. The public sector, government offices, the university, schools -- all were given a holiday for the duration of the opening of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Rumour took care of the rest: the many closed shops, the stocking up on bread and cigarettes, the plans to commute by the Abu Qir train in case all other means of transportation came to a standstill. And through the becalmed city convoys drove across the revamped Corniche from Montazah Palace, to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, to Ras Al-Tin Palace in a programme where speeches and performances variously made a bid for peace and highlighted intercultural dialogue, cosmopolitanism and hybridity.

The sought-after mediatory role of an institution whose ancient Mediterranean appeal has gained it the support of the international community was thrown into relief against the current realities of the Middle East and the world post-11 September. At a press conference in Montazah, following lengthy bilateral talks about the region, President Hosni Mubarak and President Jacques Chirac expressed commitment to expending all efforts to avoid war in Iraq, as well as to contain Israeli-Palestinian violence through a return to the negotiating table.
Folkloric music troupes and children with flowers greeted the guests -- heads of state, from France, Greece, Romania, the Maldives, together with Queen Sofia of Spain, Queen Rania of Jordan, and representatives of the UNESCO and the Vatican -- arriving at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. After the uncovering of the memorial stone, homage was paid to Mrs Suzanne Mubarak, head of the Board of Trustees of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, by different associations of Friends of the Library around the world. Minister of Culture Farouk Hosni then read a speech by Nobel laureate Naguib Mahfouz.

In his address at the inauguration ceremony, President Mubarak stated that "the dedicated efforts that have supported the project of the revival of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, on the same site from which it vanished 1,600 years ago, were motivated by a profound understanding of the signal role of the ancient library and its international role, and of the need to reassert the values it stood for, especially in view of the changes overtaking the world." The president went on to elaborate on the issues encapsulated in the opening of the library -- of intellectual interaction and coexistence, of the universality of human heritage that transcends national, cultural and religious constituent elements, of the Arabo-Islamic contribution to that heritage, and of the need to link past achievements with present technological advancement in such a way as to ensure an even distribution between the rich and the poor of scientific progress. The speech ended with an appeal for "a world where mutual coexistence and understanding reign, and peace and security prevail".

The concert that followed brought a cosmopolitan repertoire of song recitals from different continents, including two lyrics -- those representing Asia and Europe -- centering on the theme of peace, and ending on the deliberately hybridised note of Beethoven's Ode to Joy arranged for Egyptian folk instruments and accompanied by an Arabic lyric.

Compositeness, in a specifically Alexandrian context, was elaborated in the show "Alexandria: A Beacon and a Civilisation", presented by the Ministry of Culture, directed
On the morning of the second day of the festivities, Mrs Mubarak and a number of international guests inaugurated the Bibliotheca Alexandrina's museums and permanent exhibitions, including the Antiquities Museum and the Science Museum. Among Mrs Mubarak's activities during the three-day event was a programme commemorating the centenary of the Nobel Peace Prize.

On the evening of the second day, security held up for over an hour the two concerts scheduled -- one by the London Chamber Players in conjunction with the Bibliotheca Alexandrina Chamber Orchestra and another, entitled "Alexandria-Athens: Two Cities Behind the Mediterranean Sea", which comprised readings from and musical renditions of 13 poems by Constantine P Cavafy -- as well as the distribution of the programme. But then the guests waiting outside in the plaza of the Bibliotheca were entertained by an impromptu dance by a Macedonian troupe in Alexandria as part of a likewise revivalist Greek-Egyptian event, taking place on the fringe of the library opening --- namely the unveiling of the statue of Alexander the Great.
SECTION FOUR

IMAGES AND CONTENTS OF THE COMPLETED BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA

- Exterior Views of the Completed Building

Fig. 1. Front view of Bibliotheca Alexandrina.
(source: Mostafa 2002: 3)

Fig. 2. Side view of Bibliotheca Alexandrina with the exterior wall featuring ‘universal scripts’ (source: Mostafa 2002: 77)

The architectural firm Snohetta’s ‘design concept’ for the Bibliotheca is outlined as follows:

‘The design concept is a simple circle inclined towards the sea, partly submerged in a pool of water, the image of the ancient Egyptian sun, that in contemporary terms will illuminate the world and human civilization. Moreover, an inclined roof allows indirect daylight and a clear view of the sea. Designed as an arrow, an elevated passageway links the University of Alexandria to the Corniche. The building is surrounded by a wall clad with Aswan granite engraved with calligraphic letters and representative inscriptions from the world civilizations. This timely conceptualization symbolises a unique form cum function which combines the heritage of the region with the intended revival of cultural radiance to reach the corners of the universe’ (Snohetta in GOAL 1996: 2).

The ‘Facts & Figures’ of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina complex are:
Total floors: 11
Total floor areas: 85,405 m²
Building Height: 33 m
Universal Library: 36,770 m²
Cultural Activities: 4210 m²
Technical Services and Operational Support: 10,860 m²
International School of Information Studies (ISIS): 3500 m²
Conference Center, Ancillary Services, and other areas: 30,840 m²
Books: 200,000 at inauguration / up to 8 million ultimately.
Periodicals: 1500 / 4000
Audio-Visual and Multimedia Materials: 10,000 / 50,000
Manuscripts and Rare Books: 10,000 / 50,000
Maps: 50,000
Computer Data Bases: OPAC, Internet access to the information superhighways.
(source: Mostafa 2002: 23)
Fig. 1. Front view of Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

(source: Mostafa 2002: 3)
Fig. 2. Side view of Bibliotheca Alexandrina with the exterior wall featuring ‘universal scripts’ (source: Mostafa 2002: 77)
- Presidential Patronage

The Presidential couple have continued to align themselves to the Bibliotheca project. Not only is the Bibliotheca Alexandrina a Presidential project but in Law 1. 2001 Suzanne Mubarak was made head of the Board of Trustees.

Fig. 3. Suzanne Mubarak on visit to Bibliotheca Alexandrina

Pictured left to right: Director Ismail Serageldin (front in grey suit) Alexandria’s Governor Mohammed Abdel Salam Mahgoub (black suite, blue tie) set back in between Serageldin and the First Lady Suzanne Mubarak. At the extreme right and corner of the image in Dr. Moshen Zahran (source: Attia in Mostafa 2002: 85)

Fig. 4. Hosni Mubarak, holding the dream of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina.
Inserts show images of the interior library spaces (source: Mostafa 2002: 63).

- Critical Chorus ‘Ententes’

The critical Chorus’ influences and presence can also be found in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina

Fig. 5. Statue raised by underwater archaeologists, entrance of Bibliotheca Alexandrina
(source: Media Link 2001: 1).

The statue is believed to be of Ptolemy I who commissioned the ancient library. It is one of the artefacts lifted from the Qait Bey/ Pharos site. It now is on display at the entrance of the Bibliotheca.
Fig. 3. Suzanne Mubarak on visit to Bibliotheca Alexandrina
(source: Attia in Mostafa 2002: 85)
A Dream Comes True

Fig. 4. Hosni Mubarak, holding the dream of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina

(source: Mostafa 2002: 63)
Fig. 5. Statue raised by underwater archaeologists, entrance of Bibliotheca Alexandrina
(source: Media Link 2001: 1).
Fig. 6. **Antiquities Museum** (source: Media Link 2001: 41), housed inside the Bibliotheca Alexandrina the museum contains items found during the controversial excavations of the construction site in 1993. The official commentary on the museum is as follows:

'This museum was the gift of the Ministry of Culture to the new Bibliotheca Alexandrina. It houses some 1100 pieces and the immense statue of Ptolemy salvaged from the sea near the site of the ancient lighthouse displayed at the entrance to the Library Complex from Port Said Street completes the collection. The museum's pieces are organized approximately chronologically from the time of Pharaohs (including a special room for mummies) to the Ptolemies, to the Roman period, to Coptic Egypt, to Islamic Egypt until the period of Napoleon's expedition to Egypt. The most recent exhibit being some lead printer's letters salvaged from the French ships sunk in AbuQir harbor. A special room is devoted to the antiquities found on the site of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina when digging for the foundations for the new building.

There are many spectacular pieces in this collection which is probably the only one to cover all of Egypt's history so succinctly and elegantly. Each visitor will have their personal favorites, but this writer feels that at least two pieces truly stand out with the best of the best in the world: the black statue of Isis on the left hand side upon entering the museum, where the artistry of the sculptor to show sheer transparent cloth in black basalt is stunning to this day, some 2100 years later. The other piece is the colored mosaic of a dog next to an overturned vessel where the elegance of the composition and the realism of the colors and the expressiveness of the dog speak to us to millennia later. The uncanny similarity to the famous 20th century advertisement for RCA Victor's "his maters voice" recordings will stun any visitor old enough to remember the old wax and vinyl records where that label flourished! Other notable pieces include sculptures of girls studying at the ancient library (terra cotta figurines) and a statue of a dreaming child from the Roman period, as well as a spectacular Bible-stand from the Coptic tradition and an exquisite lamp from the Mamluk period of Sultan Hasan.

The showcases for the archeological Museum were contributed by the Greek Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Culture, the J.F. Costopolous Foundation and the National Bank of Greece. Mrs. Anastasia Milopoulou, member of the Board for the Greek/Egyptian Friendship Leagues, was the fundraiser and coordinator of this project. ...It is truly an international cooperation for this contribution: the [exhibition] cases are designed and manufactured in Greece, the special glass is from Germany, the optical lighting is from Denmark, the hand-woven raw silk used inside the cases is from Italy, and the wood for the cases is from Norway. Mrs. Katerina Koskina, museologist and art historian and curator for the J.F. Costopolous Foundation, worked with the Egyptian Antiquities Department to prepare for the Museum exhibition. Dr. Mostafa El Abbadi, Prof. of History, also worked with the Antiquities Department to select the artifacts that are displayed there. Dr. Hussein Shaboury, Exhibition Expert, completely redesigned and redecorated the Antiquities Museum space to create a refined ambiance showing the antiquities off in the best way' (Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002a: 4-5).
Fig. 6. Antiquities Museum (source: Media Link 2001: 41).
The ‘Awad Collection’ an archive relating to Alexandria’s ancient and modern cosmopolitan periods has been placed on long-term loan by Mohammed Awad and currently has an exhibition of selected aspects of its contents within the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s exhibition/library spaces. The exhibition is described as follows:

‘Impressions of Alexandria is a collection of original engravings, lithographs and maps that reveal artists’ and travelers’ impressions of Alexandria from the 15th to the 19th centuries. It also includes rare photographs of the city from the early 19th to the mid 20th centuries, and highlights the cultural life of the cosmopolitan city as portrayed by its prominent writers and artists. The exhibition is therefore a vivid documentation of the “city, half-imagined (Yet wholly real)”, as described by Durrell in the Alexandria quartet. Educated at Victoria College, Alexandria, Dr. Mohamed Awad is a lecturer at the Faculty of Engineering (Alexandria University), a practicing architect, historian and founder of the Alexandria preservation trust’ (Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002b: 3).

- Museum Complexes

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina also contains a Science Museum and Planetarium. These spaces are described as follows:

Science Museum

‘The Science Museum is housed in the reversed pyramid underneath the Planetarium. It has a glazed surface that forms the structure into which the Planetarium is lowered so that it appears to “float”. An adjacent area called the “Planetarium Gallery” extends the Science Museum exhibitions. The exhibition is a contribution from the French Ministry of Culture and unfolds the history of science as it developed in Alexandria to the present day. We cannot fail to mention Erasistratus and Herophilus of Chalcedon, founders of “scientific medicine”; Herophilus, who was among the first to work with anatomy and definition of organs, circulation, neurology; and Galen, who was the last of the great ancient medical doctors and who was responsible for transmitting so much of the previous work to us. Then there was Ctesibius, the brilliant devisor of the water clock, Euclid the famous mathematician, and Heron the inventor’ (Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002c: 3-4).
Impressions of Alexandria

An Exhibition of
The Awad Collection

Fig. 7. Awad Collection catalogue, front page (source: Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002).
**Planetarium**

'You are invited to visit the BA Planetarium. If you have already been to a planetarium, you would know what a planetarium is about. If not, then your visit will be interesting and very exciting. You will discover a gigantic world of attraction that is full of knowledge about the sky, constellations, moon, stars, galaxies, and planets. You will be introduced to a number of different animated shows, accompanied by a great sound system that takes you faraway to discover the place where we live. So the planetarium is a show hall or a pedagogical theatre where you can watch scientific films and astronomical shows.

The architectural design of the BA Planetarium is very characteristic and unique. It takes the form of a sphere suspended in the air. Inside the sphere, there is a theatre that holds 99 seats inclined to the back to let the audience enjoy the best comfortable position for observing the sky. The screen takes the shape of a semi-sphere of 14 meters of diameter, produced with a special anti-reflection material.

Fig. 8. Planetarium with Science Museum with Science Museum below; Qait Bey in the background (source: Mostafa 2002:1 4).

**The Manuscript Museum**

The Manuscript Museum is a key link between the Museum complexes, the Calligraphy Institute, the Centre for the Preservation of Rare Books and Documents and the Library collections and is described as follows:

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina is committed to help institutions catalogue and preserve their manuscripts for posterity, as part of the national goal for the preservation of heritage. There are other libraries in Alexandria affiliated to various institutions and religious organizations, including the Mosque of Sidi Mursi Aboul Abbass, and the Library of Al Azhar in Alexandria, among others, whose collections are being catalogued and indexed by Bibliotheca Alexandrina staff. The museum displays only a very small part of the collections entrusted to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. These collections now include 6,700 rare manuscripts comprising some 10,500 titles, as well as rare books from Egypt and elsewhere. The Library also houses vast microfilm and microfiche collections and CD's of digital copies of many manuscripts including notable collections for the Suez Canal and the Escorial and Cordoba Collections from Spain' (Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002d: 3-4).

Fig. 9. Manuscript Museum, exhibition space (source: Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002d: 7). Fig. 10. Manuscript Museum, a piece of the Kiswa of the Holy Kaaba (source: Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002d: 19). The Kiswa, a decorative black brocade cover of the Kaaba, is embroidered in gold with Koranic verses. It was donated to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina by the grandchildren of the Egyptian economist Talaat Harb (see Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002d: 21).
Fig. 8. Planetarium with Science Museum below; Qait Bey in the background
(source: Mostafa 2002:14).
Fig. 9. Manuscript Museum, exhibition space

Fig. 10. Manuscript Museum, a piece of the Kiswa of the Holy Kaaba
(source: Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002d: 19).
Library Complexes

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina Library complex consists of:

- The Main Library
- The Taha Hussein Library
- The Young People Library
- The Children Library
- The Multimedia Library.
- The Microfilm Reading Room.
- The Manuscripts Reading Room.
- The Rare Books Reading Room.

The official commentary explains:

'The Main Library is a Universal Library designed to serve the public and researchers. The Library collection is displayed over 7 levels from the Roots of Knowledge to the New Technologies.

The Taha Hussein Library is a facility to open doors to the blind and visually impaired. All that appears on a computer screen can be read in Braille or heard using a special program. By browsing through the OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog), they can select the material they need, deposit it on a scanner connected to a workstation, and either read it in Braille or listen to it: a whole new world is now at their fingertips. The Taha Hussein Library is located in the level (B3).

The Young People Library is a special library to orient 12-to-18-years-old to all the services and facilities in the Main Library. It is located in the first floor.

The Children Library is a new addition to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina for children aged 6 to 12. While promoting reading and research abilities, it prepares them to the use of the Main Library, with all its services and facilities. It is also located in the first floor, next to the Young People Library.

One of the main features of the library is its Multimedia Library, which offers a selective collection of CD/DVD, audiocassettes, video tapes, records, slides and photos covering all aspects of culture.

The Microfilm Reading Room allows researchers to read manuscripts, documents, daily newspapers and special book collections on microfilm. It is located in the level (B1).

The Manuscripts Reading Room, located in the level (B1), contains the manuscript collection of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, which includes manuscripts in Arabic, Turkish and Persian. Access is limited to post-graduate researchers.
The Rare Books Reading Room, also located in the level (B1), contains the rare book collection of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. The collection includes books published before 1920 as well as facsimile prints, limited editions and dedicated books. Access is limited to post-graduate researchers’ (Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002d: 5-6).

- **Internet Archives and ‘Wayback Machine’**

The promises of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s digital library to engage in a new universalising project to digitally catalogue all the texts in the contemporary world and also to make available on line a record of all websites globally is currently being pursued but is very much ‘work-in-progress’.

The ‘Internet Archive’ is the core mechanism which is part of this venture: its official objective is to; ‘Build a digital library of Internet sites and other cultural artifacts in digital form’ (Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002d: 2). The related project to make available the ‘historical’ memory of web-sites in terms of giving access to previous versions of their text and images is also being pursued. This currently takes the form of the ‘Wayback Machine’ located within the Bibliotheca’s ‘Internet Archive’ which ‘allows researchers to surf websites as they used to be’ (Bibliotheca Alexandrina 2002d: 3). This can be accessed on [http://www.archivebibalex.gov.eg/web](http://www.archivebibalex.gov.eg/web).

Fig. 11. Interior of library space, showing digital collections and prints from the Awad Collection (photo: B. Butler).

Fig. 12. Interior of library space, student group on balcony (photo: B. Butler).
Fig. 11 Interior of library space, digital collections and prints from the Awad Collection

(source: B. Butler)

Fig. 12 Interior of library space, student group on visitor’s balcony (photo: B. Butler)
Appendix Two

Research History and Methods – Mapping the force of Contemporary Revivalism
APPENDIX TWO

RESEARCH HISTORY AND METHODS - MAPPING THE FORCE OF CONTEMPORARY REVIVALISM

Introduction

The purpose of this Appendix is to give some background detail to this piece of research, to outline my research timetable and to describe in more depth the methods and the research questions which informed my successive fieldwork phases.

SECTION ONE

REVIVALIST LANDSCAPE

The point of origin for this thesis was a visit to Alexandria made in 1995. This was in response to an invitation to take part in a Med-Campus project and to participate by giving lecturers and seminars on museology and heritage theory. Although I had visited Egypt before and was familiar with what are generally regarded to be the country’s iconic heritage monuments and sites: - for example, the Pyramids in Giza and the Egyptian, Coptic and Islamic museums in Cairo; the valley of the kings and temples in Luxor and the monuments salvaged with UNESCO’s support in Aswan; - this was my first visit to Alexandria itself. My perceptions of the city before my first visit were largely informed by the ‘Myth of Alexandria’ and as such broadly corresponded to the characterisations which I critically analyse in Chapter One.

I did, however, have a more specific purchase on Alexandria’s myth-history which relates to the investments made in the city’s myth and memory by museology and heritage studies. As outlined in detail in my text, this is a reference to a traditional genre of

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1 This series of projects came under the wider umbrella of EUROMED TOURISM with its London base at Roehampton Institute (Surrey University). As explained in what follows this inter-university co-operation network which net-works Mediterranean institutions pursued the topic of sustainable tourism and its relationship to connectivities such as heritage, museums, development etc.
museological/heritage discourse which situates Alexandria’s ancient Mouseion/Library within its own discourse of ancient origins, as both an idealised, originary ancient ancestor and as the model/blueprint for subsequent ‘revivals’ of the museum/archive from the Renaissance onwards. In the case of heritage studies this is particularised further to claim the Alexandrina - as the casualty of what is understood as an originary act of iconoclasm - as the model by which the traditional heritage paradigm of loss and preservation establishes its roots. I was conscious too that my visit to Alexandria as a pilgrimage or museologist’s ‘return to origin’ was a complex proposition and as such was problematised by recent shifts in museological/heritage theory which (again as demonstrated in my thesis text) has seen ‘new’ museologists in their desire to break with this ‘old’ discourse and place the birth of the museum/heritage culture firmly into modernity symbolised this act in their rejection of the Alexandrina paradigm (Vergo 1989).

It was, however, during my visit to Alexandria that the literal experience of traveling to the city set in play further destabilisations with regard to both ‘old’ and ‘new’ museological/heritage claims to possess/reject the Alexandrina paradigm: this came with my discovery of the contemporary UNESCO supported scheme to revive the ancient Mouseion/library. As clearly set out in my introduction this sense of the crossing-over and destabilisation which is crystallised in the contemporary act of repossession became the starting point of my more detailed attempts to formulate an alternative, critical ‘return’ to the Alexandrina paradigm which combines a re-conceptualisation of the foundational values museology/heritage studies with more grounded research. It was here too that the hybridising dynamics exemplified in the contemporary revivalist scheme not only describe an ‘othering’ which goes beyond the polarised categories of ‘old’ and ‘new’ museologists but also finds its expression in the motif of cosmopolitan which at the same time as being revived as a key icon of the revivalist project was also being recuperated by postcolonial, cultural theorists and anthropologists for alternative critical mobilisations (cf. Cheah and Robbins 1998: Meijer 1999; Featherstone 2002).
In terms of defining my critical approach to this context my participation in the Med-Campus project opened up a series of important perspectives. For example, the project offered a means to engage in discussions of anthropological and ethnographic approaches towards Alexandria’s (and more widely, Egypt’s) identity-work and to place this within the specific dynamics of tourism, museums and heritage. This was approached at the level of academic/ theoretical interventions (see, for example, Selwyn 1996) and with reference to more operational dynamics such as policy-making and strategies of operational implementation within the Alexandrian and the wider Egyptian context. A particular commitment was made to draw out the relationships between tourism, heritage and cultural development and the accompanying social impacts of these dynamics. The objective here was that of defining ethnographic research projects which were responsive to eliciting local viewpoints and needs and highlighting the concept of sustainability.2 Class-room discussions were therefore combined with visits to key cultural organisations, agencies and sites within the Alexandrian landscape. As such this offered an introduction to locations/ institutions which I would build upon in my successive fieldwork visits. From this starting point I was also able to begin to particularise my investigations in terms of the implications of Alexandrian revivalism for museology and heritage studies.3

- Guidebook Mythologies

A final key dynamic which impressed itself on me during my first visit to Alexandria and which I pursue as a major research theme which maps across the more theoretical chapters of my thesis before becoming a central preoccupation of my subsequent fieldwork is that of the relationship between imaginary and literal worlds. While this is dealt with from different perspectives in my successive chapters, I want to use this motif in what follows to give a broad characterisation of these how these dynamics operate

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2 The Med Campus projects included ethnographic studies such as the impacts of tourism in Siwa Oasis and in Dahab, Sinai (for the latter, for example, see Aziz 2001).

3 Prior to my PhD I had conducted other ethnographic projects. For example, in a very different context I engaged in an ethnographic study of the protests of resistance against road-building schemes in the Leytonstone and Wanstead areas of London (See Butler 1996).
within the contemporary fieldwork context and by these means introduce the Alexandrian revivalist landscape. Drawing upon a critical tradition initiated by Barthes\(^4\) (1992 [1957]) I do this with reference to extracts from two guidebooks: the first current with my initial visit to Alexandria in 1995 and the second a revised edition current with my final fieldwork visit in 2002. This first text provides some sense of the 'pre-revival landscape' and rehearses the now familiar image of Alexandria as a declining, abandoned city.

'EM Forster observed that “Few cities have made so magnificent an entry into history as Alexandria”... Visitors to modern Alexandria must be prepared to, however, for some disappointment. A search for physical testimonies to the Alexandria of antiquity will be largely in vain. There is very little left of the buildings and monuments that graced it during the Hellenistic and post-Hellenistic period, making Alexandria the most renowned city of the ancient world after Athens and Rome. An odd column or two on the skyline, dank catacombs deep under modern pavements, a Roman pillar propping up the gateway to some pre-Revolutionary patrician villa are all that is left of this glorious past... [T]he city takes on a resigned air and seems to go back into hibernation, tired, it would appear, of competing for prominence in a changed world. Having twice been the busiest and most cosmopolitan commercial centre in the Eastern Mediterranean, Alexandria now seems to exist largely as a city of memories’ (Youssef and Rodenbeck: 1993: 223).

The above guidebook commentary can in general terms be regarded as a popular expression and translation of the ‘Myth of Alexandria’ mobilised specifically for the tourist imagination. It illustrates the contradictions and paradoxes too of attempts to search for, and to map, the dominant Western Alexandrian myth-poetics onto the realities of the literal landscape of contemporary Alexandria. The authors of the guidebook, for example, warn that the visitor (cf. ‘Western’/ international tourist) could well face ‘disappointment’ when encountering the modern city, this is a theme which was repeated with considerable force and detail by fieldwork informants (see, for example, Aziz in Appendix Six). The failure of the city to provide the monumentalism required to give

\(^4\) This is a reference to Barthes’ landmark text in which he studies the ‘mythologies’ at play in the ‘Blue-Guide’ (see Barthes: 1992 [1957]). In what follows my focus is upon two ‘Rough Guides’ which are generally considered to be a more populist genre.
physical substance to Alexandria’s romantic myth-histories serves to further reiterate the entropic vision of Alexandria this time, with echoes of Durrell, as a ‘city of memories’ (Youssef and Rodenbeck: 1993: 223). The authors also make it clear that that the city’s surviving ancient heritage, for example, Pompey’s Pillar, the catacombs and the Greco-Roman Museum cannot compete with the aforementioned iconic heritage sites of the Giza Pyramids, the Valley of the Kings of Queens and the Nubian monuments.

A more critical reading can then reveal that in the event of a literal visit/ return, the ‘Myth of Alexandria’ is both legitimated on one level and thrown into crisis on another. Thus in an apparent contradiction the ‘Myth of Alexandria’ is both confirmed (i.e. in the above sense that it provides literal proof of ‘decline’ and loss) but, as the guidebook also illustrates, it faces a crisis in terms of the nature and appearance of that decline. As critics working within the academic arena (for example, Errera 1997) and fieldwork informants (see Fattah and El-Din in Chapter Five) make clear Alexandria’s ‘decline’ is imagined differently by the West – typically it conjures up a vision of an empty space populated only (if at all) by the fading remnants of the city’s late nineteenth-century European architecture – and as such it fails to take into account the realities of contemporary Alexandria as (to quote the same tourist guide) ‘an over-populated Third World urbanised, Islamic city’ (Youssef and Rodenbeck: 1993: 223). These particular contradictions and paradoxes reiterate comments made by Errera, that part of the West’s investment in Alexandria has always been based on the idea that you never actually visit the still existing modern city (Errera 1997).

- Physical Transformations of Alexandria

To link these dynamics to the sense of metamorphosis which took place in terms of the physical transformation of the Alexandrian landscape during the period of revivalism, and therefore of my fieldwork phases, a commentary taken from the second guidebook current at the time of my final fieldwork visit expresses a very different scene. This updated text shifts from its rehearsal of Alexandria’s ‘glorious past’ and its historical highs and lows to draw out the dynamics of the city’s contemporary cultural revival.
Significantly, the guide highlights the Bibliotheca Alexandrina scheme as the centre-point of this new dynamic of change and the underwater archaeological excavations as the accompanying, emergent objects of Alexandria’s physical re-birth. Here the text focuses upon the Alexandria’s central downtown landscape. It reads:

‘Alexandria turns its back on the rest of Egypt and faces the Mediterranean, as if contemplating its glorious past; a hybrid city characterised by Durrell as the “Capital of Memory”. One of the great cities of antiquity, Alex slumbered for 1300 years until it was revived by Mohammed Ali and transformed by Europeans, who gave the city its present shape and made it synonymous with cosmopolitanism and decadence. This era came to an end with in the 1950s with the mass flight of non-Egyptians and a dose of revolutionary puritanism… Though “old” Alexandrian’s undoubtedly regret the changes since Suez, Durrell’s complaint that they produced “leaden conformity” and rendered Alexandria “depressing beyond endurance” seems jaundiced and unjustified.

...Although the Eastern harbour is no longer the busy port of ancient times, its graceful curve is definitely appealing... This promontory has shrunk since the days when it enclosed the royal harbour, but recent underwater excavations have uncovered evidence of Cleopatra’s palace (where she committed suicide) and possibly the Lighthouse of Pharos. Plans are afoot to make the site into the world’s first underwater museum…Naguib Mahfouz located his fictional Pension Miramar near its junction with the mainland, just beyond which rises the Bibliotheca Alexandria, the greatest library in the ancient world… In 1987, UNESCO agreed to support the creation of a new library, intended to cover all fields of knowledge and attract researchers from the whole Mediterranean region. The competition to build it was won by a Norwegian-Austrian team of architects, whose bold design tilts to face the sea, with an elevated passageway linking it to Alexandria University, further inland’ (Richardson 2001: 495-6).

It is, therefore, Alexandria’s central downtown strip which is re-presented as a scene of major cultural regeneration (see fig. 13). This strip of land from Qait Bey to Alexandria University thus encompasses the key cultural revival sites: that of the ‘Pharos’ site, and

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Fig. 13. Map of Central Alexandria, showing:

Qait Bey and Bibliotheca Site

(source: based on Richardson 2001: 480)
further along the Eastern harbour, that of ‘Cleopatra’s’ or the royal palace site, and further still, the Bibliotheca Alexandria site. This central sweep of Alexandria’s Corniche is the central locus too of my ethnographic mappings and is the landscape both within which, and from which point, I chart out the key trajectories of contemporary. This latest guidebook entry is also effective in challenging the ‘Western’ myth of decline as ‘jaundiced and unjust’ this time by effectively communicating a sense of the presence of the ‘living city’ in its intimate proximity and entangled relationships to the contemporary cultural revivalist sites. The author states how:

‘At the Qaitbey end, fishermen cast rods and mend nets while the fresh catch is marked and shipwrights show off their hulls to anyone visiting the boatyard. Nearer to Al-Mursi’s Mosque, the Corniche is flanked by stately palms and weathered colonial mansions, calling to mind the set of Casablanca, an effect spoilt by the crass new buildings further east around the bay. Walking along the Corniche from Sa’ad Zaghloul to Al-Mursi takes roughly half an hour and is strongly recommended.... it’s a good six-kilometre trek right around the harbour from Qaitbey Fort to Silsileh (“the Chain”)’ (Richardson: 2001: 495-6).

With more detail, the contemporary landscape is depicted in terms of the co-existence of fishermen and archaeologists round the Qait Bey site; mosques in close quarter to the submerged ancient heritage and ‘Casablanca-esque’ colonial nineteenth-century mansions alongside new twentieth/ twenty-first century buildings. The latter (‘crass buildings’) are defined in contrast to the aforementioned positive response to the monumentalist futuristic architectural features of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Depicted here then is a contemporary city, which is of a very different character to both the pre-1950s modern cosmopolitan city and from the idealised vision depicted in Western myth/history. As official statistics show, Alexandria then is home to four million inhabitants, with over two million more in Alexandria’s rapidly growing ‘over-spill’ suburbs

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5 A number of names both of people and of places featured in this thesis are subject to a number of different spellings: I have standardised these for obvious reasons of clarity throughout my text. For example, I use Qait Bey (rather than Qaitbey or Qayet Bey as sometimes appears); Bibliotheca (the official spelling rather than Bibliotheka); Mubarak rather than Mobarak and Chatby rather than Shatby beaches.
(Egyptian Tourist Board 1997: 7). Although it is no longer Egypt’s capital it has a vital role nationally. It is the country’s first sea-port and its second largest industrial centre (after the capital Cairo) with 40% of all Egyptian industry located here (Egyptian Tourist Board: 1997:8). However, since the 1950s the city is no-longer the place of European cosmopolitan communities and, by way of contrast, its broad characterisation post-1950 has been that of ‘a monoglot city, one race, one creed, and fundamentally Islamic’ (Awad 1996: 56).

As Chapter Seven shows, however, Awad (an Alexandrian architect and Professor of Architecture who features as one of my key informants) and others have sought to draw out alternative expressions of ‘cosmopolitanism in the local’ and the diversity to be found within Alexandria’s minority and marginalised groups. This has been used in order to challenge this view of post-1950s Egypt as an homogenised population. Significantly too, although not (yet?) inscribed on the international tourist circuit, Alexandria is Egypt’s first domestic summer resort and also attracts visitors from other Middle Eastern and Arab nations who gravitate towards the city’s beaches for the cool Mediterranean breezes and for the Casinos and cafeterias which line Alexandria’s Corniche (see also Aziz in Appendix Six).

SECTION TWO

NETWORKS OF CONTEMPORARY REVIVALISM

During my fieldwork phases I was able to study this landscape as it underwent substantial change. The trope of my mappings with regard to the scene of revivalism obviously takes these descriptions beyond the guidebook brief in order to draw out a resonant ethnographic space. I focused in on the central landscape of Alexandria’s Corniche, - where the Bibliotheca Alexandria and the key archaeological excavations are located – before drawing out the relationships of revivalism to a series of institutions, organisations archives and actor-networks which took my mappings both further ‘into’ Alexandria’s downtown urban landscape and further ‘outside’, for example, to global links with UNESCO, revivalism chief cultural broker. My reasons for using these network critiques
are outlined in my introduction and thus whilst I have been influenced in this thesis by writings on actor network theory (Callon 1998; Latour 1993, 1999; Law and Hassard 1999) in what follows I specify more fully my own particular take on this approach in terms of its advantages and disadvantages in understanding the complex object constituted by the Alexandrina project.

A major concern of mine was to avoid the macro-micro distinction that often accompanies studies that purport to relate international agencies, the state and local level networks involved in the actualisation of a project such as the Alexandrina. Whether it is UNESCO or the Egyptian government, it is inappropriate to treat these as institutions with abstract policies and modes of implementation that only have any real human effect when internalised by local actors which in my case could be limited to Alexandria. Instead my concern has been to show that abstractions such as the State or UNESCO are in reality the effects of particular persons operating with varying degrees of knowledge about the past, the interests of their careers, the global networks of interests that influence their opinion as to what constitutes a desirable project and the likelihood of its implementation. Given that globalisation is itself broadly best conceived as a dynamic of flows (capital, information, images, persons etc) rather than discrete positions as implied by the languages of First and Third Worldism, studying such networks of actors is also consistent with the dynamic of interaction rather than institutional oppositions and conflicts. However certain caveats need to be added to what I mean here by actor networks, flows and dynamics.

I examine how international cultural heritage projects are constructed or 'formatted' through the operations of a range of social actors including politicians, bureaucrats, intellectuals, administrators and 'publics'. In this context, cultural heritage projects are instituted as spaces in which all actions are analysed in terms of combinations, associations, relations and strategies of positioning. Agents are not by nature calculative and optimising, rather it is the space that defines that action should be calculative or not as the case may be. They do so to the extent that is compatible with their own training and expertise, also with the extent to which a project is entangled or disentangled from its
social ties. When disentangled, heritage projects can be placed within what Callon calls a 'frame of calculation' (Callon 1998).

It may well be to the advantage of international bureaucrats to emphasise this process of disentangling to maximise the rationality of what is perceived to be effective decision making and to the advantage of local politicians and administrators to emphasise the embedding of projects in social ties and long term expectations so as to make the project more responsive to local aspirations. Audits by funding agencies concerned with achieving 'best value' may be another source of abstraction whereas intellectual elites, both global and local, may configure value in terms of how the heritage project enlarges or recovers a sense of identity through locally embedded continuity. But it is also the case that disentangling projects from social ties is not a simple abstraction: the very process of disentangling actually entangles things in new contexts. The passage by which the Alexandrina project was disentangled from its origins in intellectual/political aspirations in Egypt to restore the past to it becoming a major international UNESCO programme led to it being re-embedded in a network of Egyptian and international political ties including by the end its role in the Palestinian question.

It is the patient description of these potentially conflicting and obfuscating processes that has been the main purpose of my thesis. My chapters are the object of continuous framing and reframing of heritage projects by a wide array of social actors. I have also followed Latour in not limiting the notion of actor to persons and instead recognising that 'actors' better describes the processes by which persons and objects are interchangeably agent like in their capacity to have an effect. When Latour (1999: 35) describes the slogan 'Guns kill people' by counterpoising the alternative 'Guns don't kill people, people kill people' (The National Rifle Association response in America), he uses this example to stress that the reality we have to study is the hybrid gun-person - that the materiality of the gun does change the situation and transform the angry citizen into a murderous lunatic. In similar fashion, I have been concerned to show that the physical building of the Alexandrina or the archaeological objects discovered in Qait Bey cannot be separated from the agency of persons and in fact fuse with them to create hybrid person/objects in
the space constituted by each of these heritage projects. As 'actants', rather than actors, subjectivity is allowed to permeate the person/object relation and also in the language of the thesis such that symbolic inversions are specifically used to demonstrate the potency of buildings and objects within the discourses of 'revival', 'conservation' and 'restoration' that rely on the institution of various practices, knowledges and spaces.

I should stress therefore that by actor network theory I follow Callon (1998) and others in avoiding any implication to earlier writings on the actor theory that stress the role of rational, calculating individuals versus structural abstractions. Whilst this response to structuralism, is certainly part of the value of the approach, it is precisely its ability to re-engage with 'institutions'; through the concept of framing and re-framing that provides me with the means to show how decisions are 'entangled' with relations of dependence, affection, duty, tradition, power and convention and are not simply the products of mutual self interest. This is not to deny that rational calculation may not be part of this process but rather to point to the contexts when such behaviour is compatible with such an approach and when they are not and who does or does not realise this. The advantage for me also is that this has allowed me to integrate literary, political, economic and cultural arguments in the construction of those spaces that superficially we then choose to define as cultural heritage.

SECTION THREE

RESEARCH TIMETABLE

My status as part-time lecturer to a large extent dictated much of the planning and structure of my research, particularly in terms of the timing and nature of my fieldwork sessions. The necessity of teaching at UCL meant my fieldwork needed to be organised into phases rather than as a block. The positives of this brief were that while I was in London teaching I could focus upon the more theoretical framings of my thesis and, for example, critically return to investigate the sources and frames upon which the Western imagination and 'old' museological attachment to the 'Myth of Alexandria' is constructed. This phased approach to research planning also meant that I was able to
make a number of fieldwork ‘returns’ to Alexandria which allowed me to gain a sense of the change and transformation effected by revivalism. More specifically I was able to take advantage of the fact that my fieldwork phases corresponded with certain ‘phases’ within revivalism itself. I was, therefore, able to pick up in detail on the shifts in terms of the key events, contestations, recuperations and changing sense of ownership of revivalism which dominated each phase. These shifts/ phases, in turn, now form my respective thesis chapters. I was also able to combine long-term and more broad-ranging research objectives with more targeted research questions which were capable of responding to emergent issues and concerns. This also gave my work a fluidity in terms of allowing me to centre my attention on specific groups of ‘actors’ and/or particular landscapes at relevant points while both revivalism and my research was in progress.

This approach also offered me more scope in terms of attempting to construct a resonant critical framing for contemporary revivalism. Rather than pursuing a fixed framing which risks fixing meaning-making within the ethnographic context from the on-set, as detailed below, I was able, yet again, to combine long-term, broad-ranging critical methodologies which, writ large, sought to convey a sense of the operational dynamics of revivalism as a ‘living force’ with more targeted critical perspectives and inquiries. The latter of which were able to pick up on subtleties, complexities and changing nature of revivalism in order to draw out, for example, more subtle understandings of the attachments (or lack of them) of contemporary Alexandrian communities to the city’s ancient pasts. Moreover, this sense of crossings-over between London and Alexandria (and also, for example, UNESCO’s Paris Head-Quarters) - and therefore between theoretical and fieldwork concerns - meant that I was able to use the critical perspectives/ organising motifs which feature in Chapters One and Two to bring insights into the contemporary ethnographic context.

Similarly, I was able to use my empirical research to challenge, disturb and to return to critically re-address the limitations of contemporary theoretical museology and cultural heritage discourse. As previously mentioned too the dynamic of cosmopolitanism emerged in the fieldwork, revivalist context to insist that this be recognised as a central
thrust. I, therefore, turned to the theoretical, academic perspectives (fully outlined in my introduction) on cosmopolitanism in order to understand in depth of the many and varied ‘returns’ to cosmopolitanism being made within the revivalist context and also the revival of the ‘clash of civilisations’ myth/fault-line being made within the broader, global arena during this same period.

A further positive of this ‘phased’ approach to research planning (see fig 14) was that I was also able to combine my four main fieldwork phases in Alexandria (1997, 1999, 2000, 2002) with further fieldwork visits which accompanied two Summer School teaching sessions in Cairo and Luxor (1996, 1997). Moreover, my UNESCO-related field-work investigations saw me combine visits to the Paris Head-Quarters (1998, 2000) with participation in Memory of the World programme conferences, committee meetings and comparative field-work visits in Mexico (2000), South Korea and Laos (2001). Conference papers given at World Archaeological Congresses in Croatia (1998) and South Africa (1999): at the ‘Encounters with Egypt’ conference held at UCL (2001) and the ‘Postcolonialism and Political Correctness’ conference organised by the University of Rabat/University of Nottingham held in Casablanca, Morocco; enabled me to test out and get feedback on my ‘work in progress’ (see Butler 2001a; 2001b: also Butler (forthcoming 2003).

- Research Questions

As outlined in my introduction from the early stages of my research I was led by a purposefully wide brief within which my broad research question was that of: - What effect is revivalism/the homecoming of the Bibliotheca having? My objective has been to explore this question with reference to both the fieldwork context and also to relate my findings to their impacts on mainstream museum/heritage studies. I was also interested in testing out two more particularised research questions: the first being; - to what extent is contemporary revivalism to be understood in terms of a repetition of the privileged images and mythologies of Alexandria as associated with the West’s historical purchase on the Alexandria paradigm? Here the focus was more on the polarised ‘West’/‘non-
Fig. 14  Main Fieldwork Phases

1995: Med-Campus visit to Egypt (September)  
Registration for MPhil/PhD (part/time) (October).

1996: Med-Campus visit to Alexandria and field-trip to Siwa Oasis (January).

1996: Teaching on Summer School at Tabbin Institute, Cairo,  
followed by a visit to Alexandria (June/July).

1997: Fieldwork Phase One: Alexandria (January/February)  
[I interrupted my research from Sept 1996-1997 to raise grant funding]

1997: Teaching on Summer School at Tabbin Institute, Cairo,  
Teaching on Summer School in Luxor co-ordinated by Cairo University  
followed by a visit to Alexandria (June/July).

of origins and heritage revivalism’ (see Butler 2001a) given at the World Archaeological  
Congress, Brac Croatia (May).

1998: Visit to UNESCO’s Paris Head-Quarters and to see “La Gloire d’Alexandrie”  
at Musee du Petit Palais (July).

1999: Paper ‘Egypt: Landscape of the Imagination’ (see Butler 2001b) given at the  
World Archaeological Congress in Cape Town South Africa (January).


2000: Fieldwork Phase Three: Alexandria (April/May)

2000: Visit to UNESCO’s Paris Head-Quarters (March)

2000: UNESCO Memory of the World Programme Conference, Manzanillo, Mexico  
(September).

2001: Return To Alexandria: The Alexandria Paradigm as ‘Redemptive Formula’ in its  
PostColonial Context, keynote paper given at ‘Postcolonialism and Political Correctness’  
conference organised by the University of Rabat/ University of Nottingham conference  
held in Casablanca, Morocco.

2001: UNESCO Memory of the World Programme Committee Meeting, South Korea and  
comparative fieldwork visit to Laos (April/May).

2001: Paper ‘Egyptianizing’ the Alexandrina: The Contemporary Revival of the Ancient  
Mouseion/Library’ (see Butler Forthcoming 2003) given at UCL’s ‘Encounters with  
Egypt’ Conference (December).

2002: Fieldwork Phase Four: Attend Centenary of the Cairo Museum and participate in  
conference ‘Museology in the 21st Century’. Attend conference at the Bibliotheca  
Alexandrina ‘Cultures and the Enemy Image’ (December).
Western’ positions on revivalism and upon testing the assertion: - is revivalism synonymous with the ‘return of the West’? Alternatively, however, I sought to set in play and to begin to draw out with more subtlety: - how is this drama of the encounter between the Alexandria as myth/literary landscape and Alexandria as material landscape being used to open-up and reformulate the Alexandrina paradigm. Both of these above perspectives had a sustained resonance within my research and with the reviverist context and were questions I would return to recast from the standpoint of different theoretical frameworks, different ‘actors’ in the field, different reviverist phases and from this starting point develop more particularised purchases on ideas and events.

As previously rehearsed, my ethnographic cartography thus began to take shape in terms of the structure which finally emerges in this thesis as my successive chapter contents. I briefly rehearse these again below, this time drawing out in more detail the more logistical aspects of the aforementioned mappings.

- Academic, Diplomatic and Institutional Spheres

My first fieldwork phase was dominated by an account of the relationship between the initial emergence of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina scheme as an ‘idea’ revived by academics at the University of Alexandria and the re-inscription of the project as a ‘partnership’ between UNESCO and the Egyptian government. Broadly defined this account appears in my completed thesis as Chapters Three and Four. My research investigations took me to interview informants working within Alexandria’s academic sphere and at UNESCO and GOAL. It is by these means, I was able to pick up on the key themes and to trace the key trajectories which were to dominate this early phase of revivalism. My broader objective was to identify potential sources and resources for data collection and thus, on a very basic level, to examine more fully the feasibility of conducting a fieldwork-based study in Alexandria. Perhaps unsurprisingly too, I engaged in the process of identifying the key spaces, places, individuals and organisations directly involved in authoring the first phases of revivalism. It was also a time during which I was

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6 The General Organisation of the Alexandria Library (GOAL).
also able to determine too my own ability to deal with the logistics of gaining access to
the key players of revivalism and thus to learn to work within and Egyptian context (I
return to discuss these dynamics in more detail latter in this section).

In Alexandria itself my key mappings relate not only to my visits to meet and interview
key actors such as Abaddi (who first raised the idea of reviving the Alexandrina) and
Zahran (who was GOAL’s Director during the engineering phases of the project) but to
the Bibliotheca’s construction site. It is important to state here that my repeat visits to the
GOAL offices, provided me with not only a number of interviews (both in terms of repeat
interviews with Zahran and with other GOAL employees) but also provided a bench­
mark of change and transformation of project at the level of both public relations and
policy and also at the levels of the psychical construction of the building. Similarly my
visits to UNESCO’s Paris Head-Quarters (and my attendance at UNESCO conferences in
Mexico and Korea) afforded me a particular purchase on the revivalist scheme from the
experiences and point of view of UNESCO as the chief international ‘culture-brokers’
involved in revivalism - my guiding research question here was: – how is revivalism
being understood from UNESCO’s particular perspective and within its specific
contexts?

These GOAL/ UNESCO visits also required of me the essential task of immersing myself
in the sources, official literatures and languages relating to operational revivalism. My
particular interest here, therefore, has been to understand and critically rehearse ‘official’
revivalism’s account of itself. Not only do these interviews and sources convey a sense of
the project being held in tension between these, and other worldviews and cosmopolitan
settings, but also outline the complexities and nuances of the UNESCO/ GOAL
partnership and power-sharing. Analyses of the high diplomacy of the Aswan Meeting of
1990 and the strategisation of expert and NGO networks in the ‘local’, for example,
allowed me to explore in more detail the interrelationships of both the ‘top-down’ and the
more ‘grassroots’ operational networking which constitute the key dynamics of a
UNESCO supported contemporary international heritage project.
I also built upon these interviews and sources by conducting further research into the relationship of Alexandrian revivalism to Egypt’s national cultural and museum agencies. Interviews here took me to the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) Cairo Headquarters (a place which I made repeat visits to) and to speak with representatives of UNESCO’s Cairo fieldwork-office and representatives of Arab ICOM. These sources enabled me, in particular, to place contemporary concerns and agendas within the wider dynamics of post-1950s acts of national repossession and the ‘Egyptianisation’ of museums and heritage organisations which historically have been dominated by European colonial elites (see Appendix Five). From the various perspectives/ sources listed above I was able to draw out accounts of the ‘origins’ of revivalism and begin to build up a sense of the relationships between the physical emergence of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the underwater archaeological excavations. At the initial stages too aspirations to bring these two revivalist ‘tributaries’ together with the dynamic of urban regeneration were emerging as a dominant concern. These were profiled further in 1997 with the appointment of Alexandria’s new Governor Mahgoub who centred these issues within his own political concerns.

- Cultural Elites, Media Voices and Archaeological Missions

The second shift or phase of revivalism, and also of my ethnographic research, takes forward the above dynamics. My initial focus of attention was upon the emergence of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina as an architectural object and the, at times turbulent process, of the institution embedding itself within the local. It was here that I conducted interviews with Alexandria’s intellectuals, its cultural elites (many of whom are active in the media) and with museum professionals and archaeological teams in order to understand, firstly, the relationship of the emergent institution to pre-existing institutions, organisations and networks and, secondly, the involvement and complicity of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (and therefore GOAL/UNESCO) in a series of more particularised clashes and scandals within both the local and the international context. Writ large my approach has been to map these informants’ accounts of episodes of contestation and co-operation as the key nodal points on my ethnographic cartography and by these means recast the scene of
revivalism in all its conflict and tension. What was clear from these particular interviews and accompanying media accounts is that this stage of revivalism is best understood as an antagonistic field. Not only is this context marked by the 'official' stake-holder’s pursuit of what many regarded as the colonialising and narcissistic agendas and practices synonymous with the Alexandrina paradigm historically but also the emergence of revivalism’s ‘anti-voice’ mobilised by the above outlined Alexandria actors.

This polarisation of positions was also made evident in the sense in which the force of cultural revivalism had become embroiled in tensions between, for example, the old neo-Romantic imagination and new agendas of development; religion and secularism; and with competing forms of renaissance and revivalism operating both within Egypt and in the wider global arena which seek to categorise and compartmentalise global identity-work. What more detailed research helped to draw out, however, was that between these binary positions exists the dynamics of crossings-over and of entangled, contested relationships in which not one, but many competing accounts of revivalism emerged. Here I was able to map not only attempts to ignore, reject, transform these forces but also to harmonise, ‘globalise’, ‘Egyptianise’, ‘Alexandrianise’ and popularise dominant revivalist discourses and thus attempts were made to supply other ‘hidden’, local and alternative meanings.

Here too I was able to bring more fully into view the archaeological landscapes and the intellectual and operational interventions of the archaeological teams as an integral part of the revivalist context. At this phase in my research I engaged the help of an assistant Ahmad Omar, from the Alexandria-based Department of Underwater Archaeology (DUA). Omar was in many senses the ‘gatekeeper’ in terms of the archaeological domain and assisted me in terms of locating contacts within this sphere. This arrangement offered me a further depth of understanding of revivalism dynamics as I spent both my second and successive fieldwork phases (from 1999 onwards) based at the DUA. It was by focusing in on the archaeological dynamic within the contemporary context that I was able to understand the meanings of and responses to the 1997 SARCOM Workshop, which as demonstrated in Chapter Six emerges as the operational equivalent of the
Aswan Meeting 1990, and thus saw revivalism in its wider sense opened up to new collaborations and aspirations.

From SARCOM literature and various actors (i.e. in Alexandria, Paris and Cairo) I was able to give an account of the transforming dialectical dynamics of the revivals\textsuperscript{ist} context and the process by which a greater sense of ownership and control of revivalism was given and/or perhaps was claimed by local actors. Moreover, the Recommendations of the SARCOM Workshop and its accompanying pilot projects institute attempts to strategise Alexandrian revivalism in order to formally take into account, in more grounded, operational terms, local needs and the agendas of urban regeneration thus embedding these concerns within as the future phases of revivalism. The Workshop also opens up new possibilities in terms of creating a pilot-project to test the viability of developing an underwater museum at the Qait Bey/ Pharos site, which itself is anticipated to be the starting point of a wider to aspirations to re-invent Alexandria as an international tourist destination (see Chapter Six and Appendix Six). The Bibliotheca project is similarly anticipated by many to be part of this re-invention. In order to gain a purchase on these particular dynamic I undertook interviews with informants involved in areas such as environmentalism development and tourism and attached to either state institutions or NGO's.

- Popular, Urban Revivalism and Contemporary Cosmopolitics

It is the revivalist concern with the operational dynamics of urban revivalism and Alexandria’s proposed international reinvention which emerged as the subsequent phase/shift within the revivalist, and my own thesis, narrative. In order to map the voices, institutions and landscapes which define this particular component of revivalism I took as my starting point interviews undertaken at the Alexandria’s Governorate (the ‘official’ authors of urban revivalism) and at the city’s Chamber of Commerce and with representatives of the local business community (the latter two groups are the key financial supports and contributors to this project). From these interviews and other key sources and reports (see Chapter Seven and Appendix Seven) I was able to draw out how
recent operational interventions (which have included renovations to Alexandria’s central squares its public gardens and to a line of villas along the central downtown strip) have been underpinned and authenticated by the Governorate and business community’s revival of a pre-1950s model the civic culture. This recuperation and re-working of civic tradition, as demonstrated in Chapter Seven, explicitly draws upon the city’s pre-1950s modern cosmopolitan period in order to define its commercial traditions and as a model for contemporary economic development.

I was able to return to draw out further the Alexandrian cultural elite’s critical interventions into this context and place these alongside ‘official’ accounts of the motivations and outcomes of urban revivalism. This offered a means to map the conflicts and antagonisms which marked this particular domain and which were led by the cultural elite’s campaigns to highlight and halt the destructive features of popular, urban revivalism and to agitate for the initial – ‘cosmetic’ as many saw it – phases of revivalism to be followed by more effective attempts to tackle deeper rooted urban development needs (such as the need to tackle issues of population density, transport, sanitation, unemployment and literacy) and for the force of urban revivalism to embrace more of the city than the central area around the Corniche. What was clear too was that while the participation of Alexandrian elites in these schemes may, at times, come through their inclusion on Governorate committees, their more interventionist involvement came through alternatively networked collaborations and also through their control of NGOs. A significant feature here is that the elites also authenticate their position and intellectual-operation interventions by means of their own particular return to Alexandria’s cosmopolitanism values. This force of recuperation not only brought into view new expressions of heritage-value as centred around Alexandria’s more ‘humanistic’ values but was also an attempt to pursuing a further potential of revivalism: that of creating positive re-possessions and re-attachments with the city’s recent history and its contemporary cosmopolitanism.

A further fieldwork objective was to combine these elite responses with more popular reactions to the transformations taking place in the city. As stated in Chapter Seven
eliciting a popular response to revivalism was one of my on-going research objectives and as I state in my conclusion is a dynamic I intend to develop in more detail in the future. From the initial stages of my research I undertook fieldwork at a number of sites, including the café complexes at Qait Bey and the Chatby beaches next to Bibliotheca Alexandrina (these sites appear on the previous fig. 13; see also figs. 15, 16 and 17). The emergence and impacts of urban regeneration and its associated ‘beautification’ projects enabled me to extend my mappings to include sites near to the sculptures and renovations, into Mansheya complex, to Kom El Dikka\(^7\) (a popular social centre-point located in downtown Alexandria see fig.18) and also to downtown internet cafes.\(^8\) New sculptural additions and mosaics thus provided the backdrop or stage-set for new storytelling and the articulation of more ‘popular’ voices. From these contexts I was able, for example, to pick up on the circulation of rumours concerning the persistent flooding of the Alexandrina (see Chapter Five) and the anecdotes relating to the Governor (see Chapter Seven) and more general reactions to the construction of the Bibliotheca scheme and associated archaeological and urban revivalism which I feature at relevant points in my text. I also included in my ethnography interviews with work-men at the Bibliotheca construction site (fig. 19).

\(^7\) As illustrated in Appendix Six Kom El Dikka is highlighted in future projects of urban revivalism. It is also the area in which a number of workshops are located that relate to local crafts/heritage. Re. fig. 18, the particular focus of the visit was to find out more about the composer Sayed Darwish (1892-1923) who famously wrote anthems synonymous with the national movement for Independence and who was born in Kom El Dikka. The photograph is of a group involved in a campaign to preserve Darwish’s birthplace/former home and who are showing me a book of Dawish’s musical compositions.

\(^8\) My internet café interviews were undertaken as a means to gain popular views on revivalism and also to obtain a more popular purchase on the issues thrown up by new technology and the worldwide web in the contemporary context. This comes in response to trying to understand in more depth the impacts of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in terms of its digital library and its wider embrace of new technologies and also the broader questions of censorship which it has brought to the fore. Due to the fact that the majority of internet café users are young people it also allowed me to understand the responses of this particular constituency to the internet and write larger still to revivalism. From this on-going research what emerged was a broad understanding of the internet/worldwide web as a medium from which to extract information and thus, for example, to support education/learning/businesses etc... On a more personal level informants also valued the internet/cyber cafes as an increasingly integral part of their identity in the sense of them acquiring agency in terms of communicating with an ‘external’ globalised world and by these means understanding this as part of the imagination of both individual and collective futures. As relatively uncensored spaces, cyber cafes were characterised by a number of informants as sites of resistance and as sites of aspiration too. I hope to feature these interviews as sources in future research on these specific aspects of revivalism.
Key to Map

- Mansheya Complex
- Greco-Roman Museum
- Governorate Building
- Kom El Dikka

Fig. 15. Map of downtown Alexandria, (source: based on Richardson 2001: 488-489)
Fig. 16  Ahmad Omar assisting with interviews held at Qait Bey café.
(source: B. Butler)

Fig. 17  Families on Chatby Beaches. (source B. Butler)
Fig. 18  Kom El Dikka, discussing Sayed Darwish.

(photo: B. Butler)

Fig. 19  Workmen at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina construction site.

(photo: B. Butler)
When drawing out popular aspirations for the city from the above contexts I have also sought to investigate both the limits and challenges of the revivalist project in terms of the ability to include the presence of Alexandria’s ‘cosmopolitan’ communities which rarely feature in post-1950s characterisations of Egyptian national identity within this discourse. I therefore undertook initial interviews with ‘survivors’ of the pre-1950s ‘foreign’ communities, for example, Greek, Italian and Armenian groups who stayed in Alexandria after Independence. I also began attempts to draw into focus Jewish, Nubian, Sudanese and Coptic Christian communities. These are groups whose identities (in varying degrees) are still relatively hidden and bound up in the silences which continue to exacerbate feelings of marginalisation. This shift of perspectives also allowed me to map the spaces, places, organisations, spokespeople and landscapes associated with these groups. See, for example, figs. 20 and 21, which show representatives of Alexandria’s religious communities whom I interviewed while figs 22 and 23 are of a Nubian family who own a tourist Bazaar near to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and who were keen to discuss the changes revivalism has brought to the city.

Taking my cue from both ‘local’ informants and my readings of recent texts on cosmopolitanism, I define this dynamic more specifically in terms of the relationship between the elite cosmopolitics which underpins ‘official’ revivalisms and that of ‘urban’, ‘minority’, ‘marginalised’ and ‘discrepant’ ‘cosmopolitanisms’ in the local (see Clifford 1998). My argument here is that this the most convincing testimony for the need for revivalism to extend the inscription of memory further is located in this potential to marry together both cultural and urban revivalism and elite and popular aspirations in order to define an alternative cosmopolitics capable of uniting civic traditions with acts of recognition and reconciliation and by mobilising these in order to build bridges with contemporary ‘besieged’ identities (cf. Said 2003) within the wider landscape.

9 Again as stated in my conclusions these are the areas I would like to develop further in terms of a project which would have as its objective a more extensive programme of ethnographic research. I am currently pursuing the possibility of defining such a project in collaboration with both the Memory of the World Programme and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina itself.
Fig 20 Petros VII, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Alexandria (photo: B. Butler)

Fig 21 Sheikh Hassan, Islamic Centre, downtown Alexandria (photo: B. Butler).
Fig.22 Mr Nubia Nubia and family, Nubian Tourist Bazaar, near to Bibliotheca Alexandrina (photo: B. Butler)

Fig.23 Interior of Nubian Tourist Bazaar with pictures of (left to right) Sadat and Nasser, and (top hidden beneath objects) Mubarak (photo: B. Butler)
SECTION FOUR

MEMORY-WORK AND NARRATIVISATION

The process of memory-work and acts of ‘narrativisation’ and the potencies of these dynamics as they across conceptual worlds and more grounded contexts are crucial elements underpinning my research. While my thesis introduction outlines my more theoretical engagements with memory-work here I want to stress how these particular dynamics inform my process of ‘writing up.’ The overall objective of my ‘writing’ of the ethnographic context has thus been both to convey a sense of revivalism ‘in action’ and as a ‘living force’, and to underline the ways in which the accompanying motifs of fluidity, multi-vocality and of changing perspectives also attest to the shaping and redefinition of the revivialist ‘memory’ (i.e. ‘revivalism’s’ account of ‘itself’ and the ‘voices’ which narrate its wider context). As I argue in my introduction I am aware, and moreover I am interested in, what might be described as the relative position that the same context investigated, or interview held, in 1995, might produce a different story when revisited in 2003.

I further argue that the ‘event’ (cf. Sahlins 1985, 2000) of revivalism and both the literal and psychic ‘disturbances’ which have defined its ‘force’ make available a certain kind of ethnographic ‘return’ and ‘excavation’ which is capable of drawing out acts of memory-work for further scrutiny. These dynamics, as demonstrated in my thesis text, operate on a number of levels and open up opportunities to investigate revivalism in terms of the new encounters and dramas between psychic and literal worlds: metaphorical and material landscapes; ancient and modern heritages; ‘authentic’ and cosmopolitan identities and in terms of its Grand Narrative redemptions and its more subtle, subversive therapeutics. Not only do these provide an effective means to understand the contemporary dynamic of return and reattachment with ‘lost’ heritages but, prompted by interviews and other sources found in the field, this has allowed me to investigate the psychodynamics of this trajectory in terms of contemporary strategies towards the narrativisation of loss and trauma. This has seen me recast the scene of revivalism as
witness to the ‘return’ of repressed and traumatic memory and met by attempts, as one actor put to it, to bring about an ‘entente’ with the recent past.

One of my key focuses has also been on the ways in which this destabilisation has opened up contemporary revivalism and the Alexandria paradigm to new acts of memory-work expressed in terms of an increasing multi-vocality. This, in turn, has allowed me to map the ‘voices’ which revivalism has set into play and to use these to uncover, for example, ‘official’ and ‘alternative’ articulations of identity and memory-work (operative at amongst others, global, national and local level and upon individual registers) and the ‘new’ silences, repressions and exclusions which mark this scene. I argue that this forms part of a wider, complex trajectory in which revivalism, and also the ‘anti-voice’ and cosmopolitical dynamics with accompany it, are bound up in complex processes of objectification and subjectification, and of externalisation and internalisation which extend from the global imagination to personal biography. An exploration of this trajectory also allows me to understand acts of ‘narrativisation’ in terms of the use of objects and images which are mobilised as a means to articulate new, old, lost and recuperated identities.

I identify the ‘presence’ of both the oppressive and more liberating aspects of memory-work at play within the revivalist context and I argue that some of the contemporary ‘disturbances’ have rendered revivalism itself as a traumatic experience for some actors and groups. As such, I have been conscious that revivalism has not only witnessed the creation of new collaborations and given recognition to a new politics of inclusion but has also issues new threats of exclusion and marginalisation. My involvement in the Memory of the World programme has been, in part, an attempt to argue for more widespread ethnographic archival project. This proposed scheme would pursue the motif of the city’s ‘old’ and ‘new’ cosmopolitanisms and as such draw in diverse communities, viewpoints and perspectives, in order to document the city’s contemporary ‘recent memory’ and to extend its ‘multi-vocalism’ (see also Appendix Four).
- ‘Khwaga Complex’

It is worth noting here too that I am also conscious of the fact that discussions/ interviews with informants are more than the product of accounts based upon the simple retrieval of the ‘memory’ of an ‘event’ but are themselves complex acts of remembering, forgetting and reflecting which are subject to a host of contingencies in terms of the projection of identity-work they entail and the intersubjectivities involved. Obviously my own position and identity within the revivalist landscape is an important dynamic and I accept that my own role as an ‘actor’ requires of me a self-reflection in terms of my attitudes and my reactions to ethnographic contexts and events and other ‘actors’ responses to me. As is perhaps to be expected reactions to my presence in the ‘field’ saw me defined within a number of pre-existing/established categorisations regarding nationality, professional status and gender. To make some general observations concerning the former dynamic, as a ‘Westerner’ working in Egypt some of the responses to my presence can be best summed up by what one informant described as the ‘Khwaga Complex’. This is a ‘label’ referred to by a number of other people during my visits which is used to convey the way in which ‘foreigners’ are often automatically afforded by with a privileged status. This is explained as part of historical respect for ‘foreigners’ although, as one commentator highlights, it has echoes of colonial relationships embedded within it which brings its tensions too (Rodenbeck 1998: 213).

Although always conscious of my status as ‘foreigner’ I found no explicit hostility to my ‘Britishness’ on a day-to-day level but as the final section of this appendix and my thesis conclusion demonstrates events such as the ‘First’ and ‘Second’ Gulf Wars, the popular Egyptian support for the Palestinian cause and the growth of hostility towards ‘Western’ support for Israel had their significant impacts on revivalism and saw see me, at times, positioned as part of a ‘Western’ culture which is regarded as highly problematic in terms of its complicities within these contexts. I address these dynamics in more detail in my thesis conclusions. At other times, however, for example at the time of the deaths of Princess Diana and Dodi El-Fayed in 1997, a certain Anglo-Egyptian sympathetic imagination came into force which appeared to be bound up in shared sentiments of grief.
and mourning and/or the recognition that this was an event of some significance/
celebrity which in consequence provoked a certain amount of discussion/ gossip across
North and South.

I was conscious too that my status as a lecturer at UCL was generally highly regarded (as
is that of PhD candidature) which helped me to legitimate my research in the fieldwork
context and to gain access to the key institutions, organisations and actors involved in
revivalism. The vast majority of these institutions and groups were willing to give their
time and assistance to me and although Egyptian state organisations are heavily
bureaucratised, hierarchical with state military underpinnings I found a certain ‘openness’
towards (or management of?) researchers which would perhaps have been difficult to
replicate if working in the UK /‘West.’10 My increased involvement with UNESCO and
more particularly in Memory of the World programme had a great effect in terms of
transforming and thus re-defining my status more clearly as a ‘participant-observer’
within this particular context. The fact that I had participated not only in the Med-
Campus projects but had I also lectured on Summer School training courses organised by
the Supreme Council of Antiquities at the Tabbin Institute in Cairo and in Luxor during
my field-work period and attended various Conference (for example, the Centenary of the
Egyptian Museum in Cairo 2002) also helped to gain a sense of contributing as well as
learning from these various meetings and encounters.

Perhaps the underside of the fieldwork experience was that to be a young(ish), obviously
‘Western’-looking female working (almost) alone in Alexandria occasionally manifest
itself in terms of being cast in various negative stereotypes. This was communicated to
me most vividly and with great humour by one informant, Asmal El Bakri, an
Alexandrian film-maker and critical supporter of contemporary revivalism, who (as I

10 See Chapter Five in which Fattah and El-Din discuss how the post-1950s the nationalisation of state
institutions was accompanied by a ‘militarisation’ of these domains. These agencies were (and continue to
be) orchestrated by the central forces of government which itself sustains its position by controlling the
military. Therefore many ‘top’ positions within such places are held by military or ex-military whom I
encountered during my field-work. It is, however, worth noting that during my visits to the military-
controlled museums located at El Alamein and Port Said I was able to interview the military-curators and to
photograph and look in archives at relatively short notice which, once again, I doubt a ‘foreigner’ visiting
the ‘West’ and asking for the same treatment would have been offered the same hospitality and assistance.
state in my thesis text) is known for her outspokenness and ironic interventions. On appearing at the door of her apartment with Omar to conduct an interview, Bakri on seeing us both cried out in mock-horror ‘[To me] You with the blonde hair! [And to Omar] you with the beard! You look like the epitome of the wanton Western woman and the Islamic terrorist!’ Usually, however, the reaction was not this extreme.11

- Field-work Assistant

As previously mentioned I engaged the help of an assistant, Ahmad Omar, an archaeologist-diver from the Alexandria-based Department of Underwater Archaeology (DUA). As previously stated too, Omar was in many senses the ‘gatekeeper’ in terms of the archaeological domain and assisted me in terms of locating contacts within this sphere. This arrangement offered me a means to understand the dynamics of archaeological revivalism in more depth and the various relationships between the interventions made by archaeologists and the wider ‘tributaries’ of ‘urban’ revivalism and the Bibliotheca project. My continued work with Omar led to me spending my successive fieldwork phases (from 1999 onwards) based at the DUA. As a consequence this afforded me some sense of being ‘embedded’ and thus included (to some extent) within the revivalist context. Omar also took the role of translator when required. The majority of my interviews were conducted in English (most Egyptian elites speak both English and French), however, as I am a non-Arabic speaker Omar helped in particular, with translations of interviews which were held in more popular settings and in which only Arabic was spoken.

Working in Egypt did mean learning a whole new logistics in terms of the organisation of the working day. The lack of access to telephones particularly in the early stages of my research period and the formalised procedures of fixing appointments with informants

11 More seriously, a number of the ‘Western’ female visitors to Alexandria that I spoke to expressed a certain contradictory experience in which, despite their attempts to ‘cover-up’ in a way that they felt would be acceptable within an Islamic culture, they commented on the enormous attention they received in Egypt, but more particularly in Alexandria, which has fewer ‘Western’ visitors (especially compared to, for example, Luxor and Cairo). This attention embraced both positive responses and some of the negative connotations referred to by Bakri above.
meant that the first hour or so of my day was taken up at public telephone centres in
downtown Alexandria arranging meetings with various contacts. I would then visit the
informants I had previously made appointments with. After an afternoon break visits
would begin again as the ‘office hours’ of many informants would extend until
circa.10.30pm. When not meeting informants I would go to one of the sites previously
mentioned, for example, at Qait Bey, the Chatby Beaches and Mansheya/ Tahrir Square,
at which I conducted on-going research.

- Revivalism and the ‘Event’

On a final note, the relationship of the ‘event’ of Alexandrian revivalism to other events,
both within and outside Egypt had their significant impacts on revivalism and my own
ethnography in a number of ways. One of the on-going concerns was that Alexandrian
revivalism coincided with a time in which a number of major conflicts have dominated
both the global arena and more specifically the Middle Eastern context. While I draw out
this contingency when and where relevant in my text I want to flag up some of the more
important episodes which were to dominate my fieldwork. Both the ‘First’ and ‘Second’
Gulf Wars, for example, have had their consequences for the revivalist scheme. As I
highlight in Chapter Three, it was Iraq, (followed by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab
Emirates) who made the first and most substantial financial donation to the Bibliotheca
project and in doing so acquired for Saddam Hussein status as a major patron of the
scheme. The subsequent out-break of the First Gulf War, therefore, brought significant
disruption in terms of maintaining these links and to extracting contributions as amongst
other dynamics (including of course loss of lives), economies - not only in Iraq but very
severely too, in Egypt - suffered significant disruption. This brought significant delays to
the Bibliotheca scheme and led to the ‘suspension of the project’ between 1990-1994 (see

Within Egypt too the ‘terrorist’ attacks on tourists in Luxor in 1997, for example,
emerged as a recurring theme in fieldwork interviews held in both in Egypt and Paris (see
Appendix Three). The Luxor tragedy which been described as ‘The single most tragic
episode of violence in the 1990s', saw fifty-eight tourists and four Egyptian police murdered at the key tourist site of Hatshepsut's Temple in Luxor, Upper Egypt (Janowski 2000: 188-9). As explored in my text, concerns were voiced in interview that this escalation in terror and violence would render current cultural heritage revivalism in Egypt increasingly problematic. A number of informants were also keen to relate this incident to a broader context of internal struggles between the Egyptian state and Islamist groups which are estimated to have claimed over 1000 lives in the period 1990 (see Chapter Five and also Janowski 2000: 188-9). At the UNESCO Head-Quarters it was the Taliban's (then) threatened demolition of the Bamiyan Buddhas and new ethnic conflicts in Eastern Europe (which specifically targeted the destruction of culture as part of strategies to 'authenticate' 'pure' ethnic identities and as a means to deny/ erase cosmopolitan influences) which subsequently dominated discussions of the place of 'universal' heritage within these contemporary struggles (again see Appendix Three).

Other events such as (the aforementioned) death of Princess Diana in 1997, the Egyptian Presidential Referendum and a failed assassination attempt on President Mubarak in 1999, for example, emerged as further points of discussion/ gossip. These, and all the above events/ subjects, were thus present in attempts made by various actors within the revivalist context to place their own acts of world-making, their anxieties and concerns and their articulation of possible futures within diverse framings and contingencies. Moreover, more recent events such as the September 11th attacks, the on-going conflict between Israel and the Palestinian people and the build up to the 'Second' Gulf War have had their significant impacts on the scene of revivalism and on this thesis. In my conclusions, for example, I demonstrate how the convergence of the impacts of the above conflicts (and also internal tensions in Egypt) led to the dramatic postponement of the already much delayed Official Opening of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. I also illustrate, with reference to the "Cultures and Enemy Image" conference held at the Bibliotheca Alexandria not long afterwards in 2002, how polarisations were created in terms of 'Western'/ 'Non-Western' participants and, as such, this made clear that at a time when more and more reality 'appears' to be given to the myth/thesis of the 'Clash of Civilisations' this requires the newly opened Bibliotheca Alexandrina - rather than risk
becoming a repository for failed dreams – to become both an intellectual-operational format for a response to (and a strategic re-working of) the assumptions that have motivated the project in order that these be recast to be of resonance to the contemporary real. In my conclusions I argue, the need for mainstream museology/heritage studies to do the same.
Appendix Three

UNESCO – Revivalism’s
International Culture- Broker
APPENDIX THREE

UNESCO – REVIVALISM’S INTERNATIONAL CULTURE-BROKER

INTRODUCTION

This appendix contains background information on UNESCO and selected interviews with UNESCO staff members. These sources are intended to give further detail and context to both the Organisation itself and to certain aspects of Alexandrian revivalism highlighted in my thesis text. They also offer greater clarification to my guiding research question: how is revivalism being understood from UNESCO’s particular perspective as revivalism’s chief international culture broker?

SECTION ONE

UNESCO’S DEVELOPMENT AND MAIN PHASES

Material taken from the UNESCO website (http://www.unesco.org), recent histories (Lacoste 1994; Mayor 1995) and from (both old and new) critiques of UNESCO (O’Brien 1968; Hoggart 1978; Derrida 2002b) give detail to what I refer to in Chapter Three as the main phases of UNESCO’s institutional history and activities. With more detail these follow the broad shifts outlined below:

Phase One: 1940-50s - This first phase is defined as UNESCO’s ‘Age of Idealism’ (Lacoste 1994: 11) which sees UNESCO emerge from the ashes of the Second World War and take up its UN Constitutional commitment to the reconstitution and regeneration of the post-war context by means of its promotion of educational, scientific and cultural networks internationally (see the Constitutional Preamble in Section Two to follow). This early phase of UNESCO’s history is dominated by European allied nations who subsequently dominate the Organisation and lead its intellectual and operational inscription of internationalism, cosmopolitanism and peace. UNESCO’s main predecessors are defined as: The International Committee of Intellectual Co-operation
(CICI), Geneva 1922-1946 (its executing body was the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation (IICI)) and The International Bureau of Education (IBE); participation in these organisations included such figures as Einstein and Freud.

Phase Two: 1960s-1970s - UNESCO’s effective identity shifts from that of the intellectual domain to that of development. It is during this period that the Nubian Campaigns took place and building upon the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954), UNESCO put into play legislation concerning, most notably, the illegal trafficking of Cultural Property (1970) and the World Heritage Convention (1972). It was also a time in which decolonisation meant that ‘new nations’ came to dominate UNESCO in numerical terms and ‘Cold War’ political divides marked this context. These factors, Hoggart argues, not only saw UNESCO likened to an aid agency but also saw it embroiled in conflicts regarding, for example, policy on Apartheid South Africa, the Arab-Israeli conflict and saw the Organisation dependent on US financial support (see Hoggart 1978).

Phase Three: 1980s – [to date] - A final key shift began in the 1980s and still continues which has seen UNESCO embroiled in acts of reinvention. The decision of the US and UK to leave the Organisation in 1985 has had its considerable impacts as have the subsequent charges of corruption (see Chapter Five) which have seen UNESCO both demonised and attempt to re-inscribe (redeem) a ‘good image’ on the world stage. These acts of re-invention permeate other areas too and have seen UNESCO launch new programmes/Conventions/ legislation, for example, in the domains of Intangible Heritage (1997); Intellectual Cultural Property (in progress); Cultural Tourism Charter 1998; Underwater Cultural Heritage¹. Alexandrian revivalism in terms of both the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project as one of UNESCO’s premier international projects and the city’s underwater archaeological sites as part of ground-breaking UNESCO pilot projects are a key part of these acts of re-invention.

¹ These are discussed in the interviews that follow also see UNESCO 1999 and UNESCO website (http://www.unesco.org).
As the interviews included within this Appendix also demonstrate it is the Taliban’s (then) threatened demolition of the Bamiyan Buddhas and new ethnic conflicts in Eastern Europe which specifically targeted the destruction of culture as part of strategies to ‘authenticate’ ‘pure’ ethnic identities and to deny/ erase cosmopolitan influences which emerge to dominate discussions. The ‘terrorist’ attacks which took place in Luxor in 1997 are also a focus of attention.

- UNESCO’s Institutional Memory and Cosmopolitical Frames

Of importance here is that this appendix gives detail to UNESCO’s foundational history and values, - its utopian, redemptive urges and its underpinning cosmopolitics, - and also to the sense of metamorphosis and transformation that UNESCO has undergone in the recent past and, therefore, during the period of my PhD research. During the writing of this thesis, and as previously mentioned, UNESCO was also the focus of a more self-reflexive (although still largely celebratory) examination of its institutional history and memory-work written from ‘inside’ (see Lacoste 1994; Mayor 1995). Lacoste’s recent history of UNESCO The Story of a Grand Design (1994), for example, is characterised by the author as an attempt to ‘safeguard UNESCO’s memory... by tracing back the complete ancestry’ and ‘recalling the role played by its main protagonists and the great figures who guided its footsteps’ (Lacoste 1994: 17).2 The former UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor (who was a key player in the ‘sacred dramas’ of the Aswan Meeting) has also recently written and reflected on UNESCO’s history and its potential future direction and in so doing pursued the motif of memory-work in a text entitled The Memory of the Future (1995). Alongside these institutional critiques can also be placed critical examinations and re-workings of UNESCO’s ‘universal’ heritage values (see Cleere 1995; 1996; 2001). Also see my interview with Cleere (3/00) to follow.

At the higher reaches of the academy, adding to the early ‘game theory’ critiques of O’Brien (1968) and Hoggart (1978) (which feature in my thesis text) and following in the

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2 Lacoste was a long-term employee of UNESCO. O’Brien and Hoggart, by way of contrast, participated in the UN and UNESCO respectively for specific periods and ultimately remained critical of these Organisations.
footsteps of other intellectuals-philosophers such as the anthropologist Levi-Strauss (see Hylland-Eriksen 2001), UNESCO has recently been the subject of Derrida's attention. This was the result of Derrida's participation in the first International Conference for Humanistic Discourses hosted by UNESCO in May 1991. The paper he presented 'The Right to Philosophy from the Cosmopolitical Point of View', is published in *Ethics, Institutions, and the Right to Philosophy* (2002b). Taking Kant's notion of the 'cosmopolitical' as his starting point and engaging in a deconstructive 'reading' of UNESCO - which he regards as 'Kantian in spirit' (Derrida 2002b: 71) - Derrida calls for a 're-envisioning' of the institution at a philosophical/ ethical level in order that its cosmopolitics be of resonance for the contemporary post-Kantian 'global condition' (Derrida 2002b: ix). Derrida's preoccupations also turn to the notion of origins and of memory. By characterising UNESCO as a 'philosophical act' and an example of the 'Occidental archive' he makes an argument for the contemporary Organisation to engage in alternative mobilisations of its cosmopolitics in order to break-out of its own preoccupation with the vision of a 'Greek origin' and 'Greek memory' which, Derrida argues, is bound up in an Occidental ontological/ metaphysical tradition whose violences have 'displaced', 'amongst others' 'Egyptian, Jewish, Arabic' memory' (Derrida 2002b: 40).

Derrida's point is to argue that 'even at origin, in its Greek moment, there was already some hybridization, some grafts, at work, some differential element' (Derrida 2002b: 40). It is this hybrising force which Derrida sees as UNESCO's subversive force in the contemporary context and highlights that approaching UNESCO from the 'cosmopolitical point of view' reveals how the Organisation (as archive/ philosopheme) necessarily creates/ participates in an 'othering' of its foundational values. Derrida's final appeal is for a new ethics to more purposefully act on this context and to 're-envision' the institution as part of a 'new internationalism' (no longer tied to exclusively Kantian universalising values) which will 'open up UNESCO's logic and its existence' as a 'world institution' (Derrida 2002b: 74). Furthermore, it is the global citizen's 'right to philosophy' and to Human Rights which form an integral and inextricably linked part of
SECTION TWO

UNESCO CONSTITUTION (taken from Hoggart 1978: 201- 213)
APPENDIX

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Adopted in London on 16 November 1945 and amended by the General Conference at its second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, twelfth, fifteenth, seventeenth and nineteenth sessions.

The Governments of the States Parties to this Constitution on behalf of their peoples declare:

That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed;

That ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war;

That the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races;

That the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfil in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern;

That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.

For these reasons, the States Parties to this Constitution, believing in full and equal opportunities for education for all, in the unrestricted pursuit of objective truth, and in the free exchange of ideas and knowledge, are agreed and determined to develop and to increase the means of communication between their peoples and to employ these means for the purposes of mutual understanding and a truer and more perfect knowledge of each other's lives;
In consequence whereof they do hereby create the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization for the purpose of advancing, through the educational and scientific and cultural relations of the peoples of the world, the objectives of international peace and of the common welfare of mankind for which the United Nations Organization was established and which its Charter proclaims.

**Article I  Purpose and functions**

1. The purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations.

2. To realize this purpose the Organization will:
   a. Collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image;
   b. Give fresh impulse to popular education and to the spread of culture;
      By collaborating with Members, at their request, in the development of educational activities;
      By instituting collaboration among the nations to advance the ideal of equality of educational opportunity without regard to race, sex or any distinctions, economic or social;
      By suggesting educational methods best suited to prepare the children of the world for the responsibilities of freedom;
   c. Maintain, increase and diffuse knowledge;
      By assuring the conservation and protection of the world's inheritance of books, works of art and monuments of history and science, and recommending to the nations concerned the necessary international conventions;
      By encouraging co-operation among the nations in all branches of intellectual activity, including the international exchange of persons active in the fields of education, science and culture and the exchange of publications, objects of artistic and scientific interest and other materials of information;
      By initiating methods of international co-operation calculated to give the people of all countries access to the printed and published materials produced by any of them.

3. With a view to preserving the independence, integrity and fruitful diversity of the cultures and educational systems of the States members of this Organization, the Organization is prohibited from intervening in matters which are essentially within their domestic jurisdiction.

**Article II  Membership**


2. Subject to the conditions of the Agreement between this Organization and the United Nations Organization, approved pursuant to Article X of this Constitution, States not members of the United Nations Organization may be admitted to membership of the Organization, upon recommendation of the Executive Board, by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Conference.

3. Territories or groups of territories which are not responsible for the conduct of their international relations may be admitted as Associate Members by the General Conference by a two-thirds majority of Members present and voting, upon application made on behalf of such territory or group of territories by the Member or other authority having responsibility for their international relations. The nature and extent of the rights and obligations of Associate Members shall be determined by the General Conference.

4. Members of the Organization which are suspended from the exercise of the rights and privileges of membership of the United Nations Organization shall, upon the request of the latter, be suspended from the rights and privileges of this Organization.

5. Members of the Organization which are expelled from the United Nations Organization shall automatically cease to be members of this Organization.

6. Any Member State or Associate Member of the Organization may withdraw from the Organization by notice addressed to the Director-General. Such notice shall take effect on 31 December of the year following that during which the notice was given. No such withdrawal shall affect the financial obligations owed to the Organization on the date the withdrawal takes effect. Notice of withdrawal by an Associate Member shall be given on its behalf by the Member.

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1: Paragraph adopted by the General Conference at its sixth session (1951) (6C/Resolutiona, p. 83). See below, p. 21, resolution 41.2 concerning the rights and obligations of Associate Members, adopted by the General Conference.
State or other authority having responsibility for its international relations.éro

**Article III Organ**
The Organization shall include a General Conference, an Executive Board and a Secretariat.

**Article IV The General Conference**

**A. Composition**
1. The General Conference shall consist of the representatives of the States members of the Organization. The Government of each Member State shall appoint not more than five delegates, who shall be selected after consultation with the National Commission, if established, or with educational, scientific and cultural bodies.

**B. Functions**
2. The General Conference shall determine the policies and the main lines of work of the Organization. It shall take decisions on programmes submitted to it by the Executive Board.éro
3. The General Conference shall, when it deems desirable and in accordance with the regulations to be made by it, summon international conferences of States on education, the sciences and humanities or the dissemination of knowledge; non-governmental conferences on the same subjects may be summoned by the General Conference or by the Executive Board in accordance with such regulations.
4. The General Conference shall, in adopting proposals for submission to the Member States, distinguish between recommendations and international conventions submitted for their approval. In the former case a majority vote shall suffice; in the latter case a two-thirds majority shall be required. Each of the Member States shall submit recommendations or conventions to its competent authorities within a period of one year from the close of the session of the General Conference at which they were adopted.
5. Subject to the provisions of Article V, paragraph 5(c), the General Conference shall advise the United Nations Organization on the educational, scientific and cultural aspects of matters of concern to the latter; in accordance with the terms and procedure agreed upon between the appropriate authorities of the two Organizations.
6. The General Conference shall receive and consider the reports sent to the Organization by Member States on the action taken upon the recommendations and conventions referred to in paragraph 4 above or, if it so decides, analytical summaries of these reports.
7. The General Conference shall elect the members of the Executive Board and, on the recommendation of the Board, shall appoint the Director-General.

**C. Voting**
8. Each Member State shall have one vote in the General Conference. Decisions shall be made by a simple majority except in cases in which a two-thirds majority is required by the provisions of this Constitution, or of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference. A majority shall be a majority of the Members present and voting.
9. A Member State shall have no vote in the General Conference if the total amount of contributions due from it exceeds the total amount of contributions payable by it for the current year and the immediately preceding calendar year.
10. The General Conference may nevertheless permit such a Member State to vote, if it is satisfied that failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member Nation.

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3. Paragraph amended by the General Conference at its seventh session (1953) (7C/Resolutions, p. 103).
4. Paragraph amended by the General Conference at its seventh session (1952) (7C/Resolutions, pp. 103-4).
5. Paragraph amended by the General Conference at its seventh session (1952) (7C/Resolutions, p. 104).
7. These provisions are the following: Article II.2 (admission of new Member States which are not members of the United Nations, on the recommendation of the Executive Board); II.3 (admission of Associate Members); IV.4 (adoption of international conventions submitted for approval of Member States); IV.13 (admission of observers of non-governmental or semi-governmental organizations); XIII.1 (amendments to the Constitution); XIII.2 (adoption of regulations governing the procedure for amendments of the Constitution).
8. See Rule 81, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference.
10. Sub-paragraph adopted by the General Conference at its fourth session (1949) and amended at its sixth (1951) and seventh (1952) sessions (4C/Resolutions, p. 9, 6C/Resolutions, p. 85 and 7C/Resolutions, p. 104).
11. Sub-paragraph adopted by the General Conference at its fourth session (1949) (4C/Resolutions, p. 9).
D. Procedure

9. a The General Conference shall meet in ordinary session every two years. It may meet in extraordinary session if it decides to do so itself or if summoned by the Executive Board, or on the demand of at least one-third of the Member States.\textsuperscript{12}
b At each session the location of its next ordinary session shall be designated by the General Conference. The location of an extraordinary session shall be decided by the General Conference if the session is summoned by it, or otherwise by the Executive Board.\textsuperscript{13}

to the diversity of cultures and a balanced geographical distribution.

10. The General Conference shall adopt its own rules of procedure. It shall at each session elect a President and other officers.\textsuperscript{14}

11. The General Conference shall set up special and technical committees and such other subordinate bodies as may be necessary for its purposes.

12. The General Conference shall cause arrangements to be made for public access to meetings, subject to such regulations as it shall prescribe.

E. Observers

13. The General Conference, on the recommendation of the Executive Board and by a two-thirds majority may, subject to its rules of procedure, invite as observers at specified sessions of the Conference or of its Commissions representatives of international organizations, such as those referred to in Article XI, paragraph 4.

14. When consultative arrangements have been approved by the Executive Board for such international non-governmental or semi-governmental organizations in the manner provided in Article XI, paragraph 4, those organizations shall be invited to send observers to sessions of the General Conference and its Commissions.\textsuperscript{15}

Article V Executive Board

A. Composition

1. The Executive Board shall be elected by the General Conference from among the delegates appointed by the Member States and shall consist of forty-five members each of whom shall represent the Government of the State of which he is a national. The President of the General Conference shall sit ex officio in an advisory capacity on the Executive Board.\textsuperscript{16}

2. In electing the members of the Executive Board the General Conference shall endeavour to include persons competent in the arts, the humanities, the sciences, education and the diffusion of ideas, and qualified by their experience and capacity to fulfil the administrative and executive duties of the Board. It shall also have regard to the diversity of cultures and a balanced geographical distribution.

3. Members of the Board shall serve from the close of the session of the General Conference which elected them until the close of the second ordinary session of the General Conference following that election. They shall not be immediately eligible for a second term. The General Conference shall, at each of its ordinary sessions, elect the number of members required to fill vacancies occurring at the end of the session.\textsuperscript{17}

4.a In the event of the death or resignation of a member of the Executive Board, his replacement for the remainder of his term shall be appointed by the Executive Board on the nomination of the Government of the State the former member represented.

b The Government making the nomination and the Executive Board shall have regard to the factors set forth in paragraph 2 of this Article.

c When exceptional circumstances arise, which, in the considered opinion of the represented State, make it indispensable for its representative to be replaced, even if he does not tender his resignation, measures shall be taken in accordance with the provisions of sub-paragraph (a) above.\textsuperscript{18}

12. Sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) amended by the General Conference at its third (1948) and seventh (1952) sessions (3C/110, p. 113 and 7C/Resolutions, p. 104).

13. Sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) amended by the General Conference at its third (1948) and seventh (1952) sessions (3C/110, p. 113 and 7C/Resolutions, p. 104).
\textsuperscript{14} \textsuperscript{15}.


15. Paragraph adopted by the General Conference at its third session (1948) (3C/110, p. 113).
B. Functions

5.a The Executive Board shall prepare the agenda for the General Conference. It shall examine the programme of work for the Organization and corresponding budget estimates submitted to it by the Director-General in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article VI and shall submit them with such recommendations as it considers desirable to the General Conference.19

b The Executive Board, acting under the authority of the General Conference, shall be responsible for the execution of the programme adopted by the Conference. In accordance with the decisions of the General Conference and having regard to circumstances arising between two ordinary sessions, the Executive Board shall take all necessary measures to ensure the effective and rational execution of the programme by the Director-General.19

c Between ordinary sessions of the General Conference, the Board may discharge the functions of adviser to the United Nations, set forth in Article IV, paragraph 5, whenever the problem upon which advice is sought has already been dealt with in principle by the Conference, or when the solution is implicit in decisions of the Conference.19

6. The Executive Board shall recommend to the General Conference the admission of new Members to the Organization.

7. Subject to the decisions of the General Conference, the Executive Board shall adopt its own rules of procedure. It shall elect its officers from among its members.

8. The Executive Board shall meet in regular session at least twice a year and may meet in special session if convoked by the Chairman on his own initiative or upon the request of six members of the Board.

9. The Chairman of the Executive Board shall present, on behalf of the Board, to each ordinary session of the General Conference, with or without comments, the reports on the activities of the Organization which the Director-General is required to prepare in accordance with the provisions of Article VI.3(b).20

10. The Executive Board shall make all necessary arrangements to consult the representatives of international organizations or qualified persons concerned with questions within its competence.

11. Between sessions of the General Conference, the Executive Board may request advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice on legal questions arising within the field of the Organization's activities.21

12. Although the members of the Executive Board are representative of their respective Governments they shall exercise the powers delegated to them by the General Conference on behalf of the Conference as a whole.22

C. Transitional provisions

13. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 3 of this Article,

a Members of the Executive Board elected prior to the seventeenth session of the General Conference shall serve until the end of the term for which they were elected.

b Members of the Executive Board appointed, prior to the seventeenth session of the General Conference, by the Board in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 of this Article to replace members with a four-year term shall be eligible for a second term of four years.23

Article VI Secretariat

1. The Secretariat shall consist of a Director-General and such staff as may be required.

2. The Director-General shall be nominated by the Executive Board and appointed by the General Conference for a period of six years, under such conditions as the Conference may approve, and shall be eligible for reappointment. He shall be the chief administrative officer of the Organization.

3. a The Director-General, or a deputy designated by him, shall participate, without the right to vote, in all meetings of the General Conference, of the Executive Board, and of the Committees of the Organization. He shall formulate proposals for appropriate action by the Conference and the Board, and shall prepare for submission to the Board a draft programme of work for the Organization with corresponding budget estimates.24

b The Director-General shall prepare and communicate to Member States and to the Executive Board periodical reports on the...
activities of the Organization. The General Conference shall determine the periods to be covered by these reports.25

4. The Director-General shall appoint the staff of the Secretariat in accordance with staff regulations to be approved by the General Conference. Subject to the paramount consideration of securing the highest standards of integrity, efficiency and technical competence, appointment to the staff shall be on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

5. The responsibilities of the Director-General and of the staff shall be exclusively international in character. In the discharge of their duties they shall not seek or receive instructions from any Government or from any authority external to the Organization. They shall refrain from any action which might prejudice their position as international officials. Each State member of the Organization undertakes to respect the international character of the responsibilities of the Director-General and the staff, and not to seek to influence them in the discharge of their duties.

6. Nothing in this Article shall preclude the Organization from entering into special arrangements within the United Nations Organization for common services and staff and for the interchange of personnel.

Article VII  National Co-operating Bodies
1. Each Member State shall make such arrangements as suit its particular conditions for the purpose of associating its principal bodies interested in educational, scientific and cultural matters with the work of the Organization, preferably by the formation of a National Commission broadly representative of the Government and such bodies.

2. National Commissions or National Co-operating Bodies, where they exist, shall act in an advisory capacity to their respective delegations to the General Conference and to their Governments in matters relating to the Organization and shall function as agencies of liaison in all matters of interest to it.

3. The Organization may, on the request of a Member State, delegate, either temporarily or permanently, a member of its Secretariat to serve on the National Commission of that State, in order to assist in the development of its work.

Article VIII  Reports by Member States
Each Member State shall submit to the Organization, at such times and in such manner as shall be determined by the General Conference, reports on the laws, regulations and statistics relating to its educational, scientific and cultural institutions and activities, and on the action taken upon the recommendations and conventions referred to in Article IV, paragraph 4.26

Article IX  Budget
1. The Budget shall be administered by the Organization.
2. The General Conference shall approve and give final effect to the budget and to the apportionment of financial responsibility among the States members of the Organization subject to such arrangement with the United Nations as may be provided in the agreement to be entered into pursuant to Article X.

3. The Director-General, with the approval of the Executive Board, may receive gifts, bequests, and subventions directly from Governments, public and private institutions, associations and private persons.

Article X  Relations with the United Nations Organization
This Organization shall be brought into relation with the United Nations Organization, as soon as practicable, as one of the Specialized Agencies referred to in Article 57 of the Charter of the United Nations. This relationship shall be effected through an agreement with the United Nations Organization under Article 63 of the Charter, which agreement shall be subject to the approval of the General Conference of this Organization. The agreement shall provide for effective co-operation between the two Organizations in the pursuit of their common purposes, and at the same time shall recognize the autonomy of this Organization, within the fields of its competence as defined in this Constitution. Such agreement may, among other matters, provide for the approval and financing of the budget of the Organization by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Article XI  Relations with other Specialized International Organizations and Agencies
1. This Organization may co-operate with other specialized intergovernmental organizations and agencies whose interests and activities are related to its purposes. To this end the Director-General, acting under the general authority of the Executive Board, may establish effective working relationships with such organizations and agencies and establish such joint committees as may be necessary to assure effective co-operation. Any formal arrangements


they come into force. The draft texts of proposed amendments shall be communicated by the Director-General to the Member States at least six months in advance of their consideration by the General Conference.

2. The General Conference shall have power to adopt by a two-thirds majority rules of procedure for carrying out the provisions of this Article.

Article XIV Interpretation
1. The English and French texts of this Constitution shall be regarded as equally authoritative.
2. Any question or dispute concerning the interpretation of this Constitution shall be referred for determination to the International Court of Justice or to an arbitral tribunal, as the General Conference may determine under its rules of procedure.

Article XV Entry into force
1. This Constitution shall be subject to acceptance. The instrument of acceptance shall be deposited with the Government of the United Kingdom.
2. This Constitution shall remain open for signature in the archives of the Government of the United Kingdom. Signature may take place either before or after the deposit of the instrument of acceptance. No acceptance shall be valid unless preceded or followed by signature.
3. This Constitution shall come into force when it has been accepted by twenty of its signatories. Subsequent acceptances shall take effect immediately.
4. The Government of the United Kingdom will inform all Members of the United Nations of the receipt of all instruments of acceptance and of the date on which the Constitution comes into force in accordance with the preceding paragraph.

In faith whereof, the undersigned, duly authorized to that effect, have signed this Constitution in the English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic. Done in London the sixteenth day of November, one thousand nine hundred and forty-five, in a single copy, in the English and French languages, of which certified copies will be communicated by the Government of the United Kingdom to the Governments of all the Members of the United Nations.
SECTION THREE

CONTEMPORARY RECONCEPTUALISATIONS OF WORLD HERITAGE

The first of the UNESCO informants I want to feature here is Henry Cleere, Director of ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) (Cleere: 3/00). This interview is significant in that it is able to give depth of detail to two particular dynamics which have their implications for the broader context of the Bibliotheca’s homecoming. Firstly, Cleere addresses the contemporary culture of change within UNESCO by outlining the mobilisation of new, ‘global strategies’ for change which are aimed at re-conceptualising UNESCO’s philosophy and mission beyond its foundational Eurocentric framing and more specifically are motivated by the need to be responsive to non-Western and non-monumental characterisations of cultural heritage. Cleere’s interview thus saw him critically return to the UNESCO’s foundational values and visions with specific reference to the definitions of ‘heritage’ and characterisations of ‘culture’ which underpin UNESCO’s core heritage programme that of the World Heritage Convention (WHC).

Cleere’s critical account therefore has specific resonance for the Alexandrian revivalist context in terms of the SARCOM Workshop’s Recommendation to inscribe Alexandria’s land and underwater sites on the World Heritage List (WHL)\(^3\) it also goes further by problematising the key, foundational assumptions and characterisations which both UNESCO and the wider heritage culture – and as my wider thesis has shown the Alexandrina paradigm and Alexandrian revivalism - are implicated in and seek to perpetuate. The second key dynamic Cleere draws out is an initial understanding of the work of NGOs within the context of cultural heritage projects. As head of ICOMOS, the Paris-based international NGO which advises UNESCO on the WHC’s listing of sites, Cleere was able to offer an insight into the specific relationship here between UNESCO and one of its key NGOs. This latter dynamic is subsequently taken forward by other UNESCO informants.

\(^3\) This agenda is still being actively pursued.
I met Cleere in ICOMOS's Head-Quarters which are located across from the main UNESCO buildings in a neighbouring street. The relationship of the two organisations is mirrored in this geographical separation. ICOMOS's role as an advisory organisation is to work in close co-operation with UNESCO, but ultimately it is of independent status and located 'outside' the UN organisation. My visit coincided with a key date in ICOMOS's calendar which required Cleere to make presentations of the sites states-parties had put up for nomination for inscription of the WHL to a UNESCO/ICOMOS Committee. My interview benefited from Cleere's deep immersion in the operational aspects of WHL which allowed him to combined his critical account of this process of heritage inscription within critiques of what he referred to as 'the Eurocentric definitions of culture which underpin the Convention'. As such Cleere's interview can be seen as a contribution to what has recently emerged initially an internal debate between ICOMOS and UNESCO in terms of its philosophy and institutional/operational practice which has subsequently addressed itself to academic domain (see Cleere, 1995; 1996, 2000, 2001; Tichen 1996)

Interestingly Cleere began his discussion by outlining the central place of the Nubian Campaigns in what he termed as, 'the validation of the both the idea and the operational practice of World heritage' and by more explicitly citing the Campaigns as, 'the original foundations upon which the WHC was built'. In reiterating how the Campaigns established UNESCO's credentials in the cultural heritage domain he emphasised, 'The Nubian Campaigns are still the largest archaeological salvage operation UNESCO has done to date'. This led Cleere to discuss, in greater depth the salvage paradigm embedded at the heart of UNESCO. Echoing a number of other informants he traced these dynamics back to UNESCO's origins in the post-war period and its Constitutional commitment to reconstitution and regeneration and by drawing out how this 'spirit of regeneration', as he called it, is particularised in terms of both UNESCO's emphasis on heritage protection, preservation and revivalism, and crucially too, how this pervades the 'underlying concepts upon which UNESCO's definitions of culture and of heritage are based'. Here
he outlined what Mayor made explicit at the Aswan Meeting 1990 (see Chapter Three) that the UNESCO heritage paradigm is an essentially redemptive paradigm in the most acute sense of it being motivated by the fear of impoverishment and loss, and more particularly, by what Cleere refers to as the 'disappearance, destruction and neglect of heritage sites'.

Cleere states how: ‘UNESCO has always had as its major the preservation and conservation of heritage in the face of loss, whether that is the threat of armed conflict, illegal trade, natural disasters or more everyday benign neglect of sites. The Hague Convention [of 1954] shows how important this was from the very beginning. The idea of protecting cultural property during armed conflict was an obvious concern for those who had witnessed the destruction caused by the Second World War. The Hague Convention is related to the Blue Shield programmes which are also put into action in emergency situations. The Convention of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage [1972] followed after the Convention on the Illicit Import and Export of Cultural Property [1970]. These are the three core UNESCO founding Conventions and are part of what in UNESCO terminology is called ‘normative action’ and require States Parties to sign up to put these Conventions into force. The Nubian Campaigns were a bridge between The Hague Convention and the World Heritage Convention and showed that operational action and international campaigns were possible. Since this time UNESCO has developed this operational action further’.

With more depth still Cleere argued, ‘The Aswan Campaign sums up UNESCO’s still dominant definition of heritage and the original assumptions underlying the WHC’, adding, ‘The Convention underwent planning in 1960s and was set up in the 1970s to define and list sites of natural, cultural and mixed heritage sites, and in doing so, protect and preserve them’. The success of the project, Cleere argued, is illustrated in the importance states-parties place on proprieties being included on the WHL, he explained, ‘inscription on the World Heritage list is held in great esteem and demand is great’ and stressed how, ‘The ultimate accolade for an archaeological site or monument has become inscription on the World Heritage List.’ He reiterated too how the granting of the ‘World
Heritage’ logo is ‘a key part of the authentication process.’ Writ larger still one can draw out how the WHC’s systematisation of heritage as both concept and operational action has established UNESCO in its role as the dominant as authenticator and legitimator of heritage in global terms.

- Outstanding Universal Value

Cleere subsequently shifted the focus of his narrative to combine an account of what he referred to as, ‘The technical side of ICOMOS’s work’ with some of the more complex and ultimately exclusionary aspects of the WHC.’ He began by rehearsing the basic components of the Convention while at the same time problematising them and was equally keen to problematise ICOMOS’s own involvement in the process of inscription. Cleere approached his critique of the Convention by focusing in on what have now become almost infamous within academic heritage critiques: the ‘six assessment criteria’ enshrined in the WHC’s operational guidelines. These criteria which are in place to assist the assessment of sites up for nomination significantly contain, what in recent times has been much critiqued: that of ‘World Heritage Value’ and more specifically the concepts it enshrines. The guidelines, for example, include references to

4 Cleere has outlined these in print: ‘As set out in Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the WHC, a cultural property (to use the UNESCO term) should:

1. represent a masterpiece of human creative genius; or
2. exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture, monumental arts or town-planning and landscape design, or;
3. bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a civilization or cultural tradition which is living or which has disappeared, or;
4. be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history, or;
5. be an outstanding example of a traditional settlement or land use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), especially when it became vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change, or;
6. be directly or tangibly associated with events of living traditions, with ideas or beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance (the Committee considers that this criterion should justify inclusion on the list only in exceptional circumstances and in conjunction with other criteria, cultural or natural)’ (Cleere 2001: 23).
the qualities of - 'genius', 'masterpiece', 'unique', 'outstanding', 'exceptional', 'universal' 'civilization', 'tradition' and 'monumental' heritage. These criteria as Cleere reiterated in our interview, most potently and problematically gather around concept of 'outstanding universal value' (OUV).

OUV has been the focus of a number of critiques and provided the means for Cleere to outline the more critical recastings of UNESCO's universalising imagination which, as my thesis demonstrates, is a core element of both the Aswan Meeting and of the Bibliotheca project itself. Cleere described how, writ large, within the domain of the WHC, critical interventions were being made in order to shift the 'operational and philosophical interpretation of the term 'universal' from an absolute to a more relative usage.' Cleere emphasised how the 'test of authenticity' for cultural heritage and 'conditions of integrity' for natural heritage have also undergone the same critical immersion in terms this shift (see Tichen 1996; McBryde 1997). As he and other critics have shown the motif of OUV was never explicitly defined within the Convention guidelines in order that to create what Cleere referred to as its 'broadness of definition' which was initially at least assumed to guarantee an 'inclusiveness' capable of being responsive to a variety of expressions of heritage across 'national and historical boundaries.' This idea of 'universality' was, therefore, assumed to be synonymous with 'diversity' and aligned to the wider UNESCO cosmopolitical brief. The need to 'bring the dynamic of change to the WHC' was made more explicit by Cleere when he outlined how, 'What was regarded in the past as Universal heritage has really been a Eurocentric idea of heritage and this Eurocentric bias has had dramatic effects in terms of recreating within the WHC a “Wonders of the World” approach towards heritage'.

- 'Wonders of the World'

Cleere used this motif of the "Wonders of the World" as a broad metaphor for what he referred to in more detail as, 'The Western, or more particularly, the European bias that drives the WHC. This Eurocentrism shows that the definitions of heritage which underpin the List derive from Western – and more particularly - Classical philosophy and
aesthetics. This means that a big emphasis has been placed upon monumental and art-historical approaches to landscapes. These are with hindsight – remember the Convention is over 25 years old! - now regarded to be limiting categories’. With more depth, Cleere outlined how, ‘The list as it stands shows that ‘heritage value’ has been interpreted in terms of these ‘Western values’ and has led to an emphasis being placed on the inscription of properties relating to the classical (Greco-Roman) period, notably archaeological sites which are mainly situated in Mediterranean countries. Also you will find an emphasis too on European architecture which has meant a certain focus being placed on historic towns, palaces and cathedrals and also upon Christian monuments. So you get an emphasis here on properties from the Middle Ages with a focus on Renaissance and then latterly on neo-classical design’. Cleere continues, ‘This Eurocentric dynamic can also be found in non-Western nominations and listings. The Western emphasis (and WHC’s emphasis) upon monumental structures means that while the remnants of the ‘old civilizations’ generally find inscription it also means that the majority of other properties listed relate to the heritage created by non-native ‘incomer-colonisers’ and are therefore often related to either ancient or more modern acts of European colonialism’.

Within UNESCO’s imaginary geography then, this bias has led to a dominant emphasis in terms of a mapping of the West’s landscape of origins and of its colonial interventions vis-à-vis non-Western contexts. This repetition of Western/Eurocentric values and the inscription of the material remnants of the dominant Western presence across ancient and modern worlds is a powerful dynamic by which the WHL can be seen as an objectification and authentication of the values, the odysseys, landscapes and perspectives which are also foundational to the ‘old’ museological paradigms and which replicate the West’s (so-called) encyclopaedic, ‘universal’, histories and genealogies. Pursuing this dynamic further Cleere outlined how the European dominance of this particular cartography is currently on the increase. Here, for example, he referred to the ‘unhealthy competition which has grown up between European nations in terms of getting properties listed’. Writ large the result has been that the WHL has emerged as a tool which validates and thus gives substance to both Western superiority and to
European states-party sovereignty, and as such demands a conformity by other nation states to the same characterisations of heritage and culture in order to secure inscription. In consequence, this has seen both non-Western cultures and contexts and marginalised cultures within the West suffer further marginalisation and exclusion.

Cleere shifted the focus to emphasise how this Eurocentrism and its exclusionary practices are increasingly coming in for both re-conceptualisation and practical revision, ‘The whole point of the meeting I attended yesterday was to make the list more representative. For example, at the present moment more than 50% of the cultural properties WHL are in Europe. Italy has approximately 31% on the list and Spain 29%. Three-quarters are cultural heritage sites and mainly archaeological and monumental sites and one-quarter natural. We [UNESCO/ ICOMOS] are attempting to bring radical changes in terms of inscriptions. At the moment major areas of the world remain absent from the list’.

Cleere has previously drawn attention to the WHC’s lack of fluidity in the understanding non-European heritage paradigms by turning the scenario of ‘heritage value’ on its head, ‘The cultural value of the Romanesque Duomo of Modena (Italy) may not be recognizable as such to those whose cultural apogee is represented by the wooden Buddhist temple of Horyu-ji (Japan), while to indigenous societies in Australia or New Guinea both would be no more than piles of stones without aesthetic or spiritual significance. Similarly, the sacred nature of a grove in West Africa or a massive monolith such as Uluru can be appreciated by very few people from cultures that accord a special place to the Taj Mahal (India) or the statue of Liberty’ (Cleere 2001: 24).

5 In print Cleere has provided more precise statistics, for example, he has analysed the WHL of 2000: revealing how out of ‘630 sites and monuments on WHL ... 55% are situated in European countries’ with the percentage predominance of ‘Western’ heritage going ‘up to 60% if US and Canada are included’ (Cleere 2001: 25). At the other end of the spectrum Asia has only ‘14%’ of listings ‘the bulk of which [are in] China and India’; while Latin America and the Caribbean have only 12% of listings; the Arab states 11%; Africa 4%; and Australia and Oceania a ‘mere 1%’ (Cleere 2001: 25).
In interview Cleere took the opportunity to rehearse the specific dynamics of UNESCO/ICOMOS’s attempts to recuperate and redeem the UNESCO Convention and expand its dynamics of mapping. The process of re-invention began in the mid-1990s and as such has been heavily informed by a certain ‘politics of recognition’ (cf. Rowlands 2002) which makes its gestures towards the inclusion of those groups made absent or marginal. Therefore, ‘World heritage’ discourse can be seen in part to be informed by the same shifts which, firstly, motivate the interventions of the ‘new’ museology and, secondly, a more complex and messy heritage politics which characterises contemporary Alexandrian revivalism. In UNESCO’s case this dynamic of change and transformation took place under the broad umbrella of UNESCO’s ‘global strategy.’ Cleere explained how, ‘The global strategy was established as a means to bring changes to the listing mechanism of the WHC - obviously we cannot make changes to the Convention itself - and make the WHL more representative’. Moreover, he explained that it is ‘the concept of OUV that is at the centre of the strategy’ adding how, ‘new attempts have been put in play to widen its applicability and in terms of opening it up to a wider range of new heritage contexts’.

The two main thrusts of the ‘global strategy’ were subsequently outlined by Cleere. The first is that of a focus being placed on particular regions that are currently under-represented within the WHL as Cleere explained, ‘We tried to encourage nominations from certain regions, in particular, sub-Saharan Africa. Only 8 countries have been listed in Africa and therefore such a huge continent represents only 4% of properties. Meetings were held, for example, in Dakar, Harare and Addis Ababa to encourage participation. We also held meetings in Australia and Fiji in order to discuss under-representation in the Oceania region. As part of this strategy it has been important to offer unrepresented regions help in terms of preparing nominations which often arises as an obstacle. We also

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6 The language used by Cleere in print underlines this sense in which UNESCO/ICOMOS are attempting to recuperate and redeem the WHC: this can be found in his references for the need to ‘remedy this situation’ and to bring ‘correctives’ into ‘play’ (Cleere 1996: 230).
offered assistance in terms of management, conservation and training too.’ It is, however, the second thrust of the global strategy that has engaged more directly in a fundamental re-conceptualisation of definitions/categories of heritage with the result that in 1992, ‘a recommendation was made to introduce a new category of the ‘cultural landscape’’. As Cleere stressed this has allowed what he termed as ‘non-monumental heritage’ to find inclusion the WHL, and with more detail he stated how, ‘It is now possible for whole areas of the world including the non-monumental landscapes of sub-Saharan Africa to be inscribed. We have had new nominations from Cameroon and Nigeria as a result of this. In terms of new inscriptions which have had a great breakthrough in terms of a successful listing of a site of rice terraces in the Philippines’. Cleere laid a specific emphasis on the fact that, ‘The new category of the cultural landscape will also enable indigenous cultures to find inclusion too’. He also linked this dynamic of change to a wider transformation in terms of the other inclusions which has seen categories, for example, of ‘traditional landscapes’, ‘vernacular architecture’, ‘industrial heritage’, ‘non-urban architecture ‘and that of architecture of the twentieth century’ receiving UNESCO’s attention too (see also Cleere 2001).

- Continuity and Violent Discontinuity

Cleere’s account of the recent transformations of the WHC was, however, subject to some destabilisations and exclusionary forces of its own. Not only did Cleere have to make the admission that, ‘The global strategy while a significant step forward conceptually hasn’t yet produced the interested we hoped in the field,’ (again see Cleere 2001) but added, ‘we are also faced with a contemporary context in which cultural heritage is increasingly used by others in highly negative terms and for exclusionary purposes’. By way of example, he stated how, ‘Cultural heritage is employed as a potent symbol of cultural identity which has become very powerful, in particular, in the ex-colonial contexts but can also produce difficulties in terms of placing its own exclusions on ‘minority’ and indigenous cultures located within nation, despite our attempts to respond to the latter’s characterisations of heritage’. Cleere pursued this point further by
exploring the relationship of contemporary conflicts to the dynamics of both state-sovereignty and designations of 'world'/ 'universal' heritage. Here he stated how, 'The one thing about the WHC is that the sovereignty of the state party is maintained and you can’t overrule that. I was speaking to various states-parties’ representatives yesterday agonising over various statements in the Conventions – all the time they remained a need to assert and maintain their sovereignty. The rejection of a site is often taken as a personal blow to the nation concerned. It’s a difficult one and there are clashes'.

He reiterated, ‘Often states-party do not give adequate representation to indigenous and other minority groups, particularly if politically they disturb a wider story of national unity. Often new nations prefer to see monumental landscapes listed even if they relate to former colonial powers rather than, say, their own minority groups non-monumental landscapes get listed’. Cleere continued, ‘Some nations may also nominate sites through diplomatic pressures (often, in turn, tied to economic pressures) but at the same time these states-parties see ‘universal’ or ‘world’ heritage as a threat to status and rights as sovereign state. Also you may get a context where the political push comes from the head of state, with or without the support of national elites, and you might find there is a lack of popular interest in the site’.

Cleere brought more depth to this context by arguing that ‘on the ground’ the twin dynamics of ‘universal heritage’ and ‘nation-state sovereignty’ often polarises in terms of a conflict between what he referred to as ‘geo-cultural provinces’ and ‘modern national frontiers’. He argued, ‘The UNESCO/ ICOMOS viewpoint tends to be that we think of properties in terms of geo-historical periodisation rather than their relationships to individual countries and their contemporary national cultural identities.’ To clarify his remarks, he tailored his comments (for my benefit) to the Egyptian context: ‘It is a problem when you have what are perceived to be fairly violent discontinuities in terms of the heritage which defines any given geographical area: for example, in Egypt you have the different periods which significantly include the Pharaonic, Greco-Roman, Arab periods; in these three layers there’s a fair amount of continuity between the Pharaonic and Greco-Roman period but the break with the Greco-Roman and the Arab period is
usually seen as vast. I am conscious that there have been difficulties getting proper representations of each of these periods. Egypt has really concentrated on the Pharaonic period and the Islamic period with Islamic Cairo and that’s about it. There is nothing, as far as I am aware on the pre-historic, pre-Pharaonic period and the Greco-Roman past has never really been profiled before and certainly has not been given special privilege as a symbol of national identity’.

- UNESCO’s Return to Alexandria

When pressing Cleere for his opinion on Egypt’s contemporary ‘Return to Alexandria’ and to the Greco-Roman past he answered, ‘This has a tie-in with Mubarak’s political agendas and which obviously has some urban intellectuals within Egypt and more directly Alexandria supporting him. It is a chance for him to associate himself with the West which will serve him well diplomatically. I am sure too that Alexandria will benefit from a new culture centre and library. I am also sure, however, that the fellahin living in the villages along the Nile would not be part of this ‘revival’’. This brought Cleere to talk about the more popular attachment to Arab-Islamic culture. Cleere here stated how, ‘More popular heritage needs to be included alongside the more monumental heritage and for these to exist side by side. Following the Luxor tragedy there has been a big concern that certain extremist groups might manipulate the situation further for their own gain. In fact iconoclasm has recently and quite violently emerged as one of the most significant concerns for UNESCO’.

Here Cleere drew on other conflictual contexts to illustrate his concern, ‘Culture is increasingly being used negatively, for example, in the former Yugoslavia there is no doubt about it – conflicts there have seen Serbs target Catholic churches and the Croats target Orthodox churches. The destruction of mosques too has been devastating. If you go to Dubrovnik you can see where the Serbian mortar shells have destroyed the central town which is also a World Heritage Site’. As if in a repeat of Abid’s ‘worst case scenario’ Cleere stated how, ‘The real test-case of potential iconoclasm and of a scenario in which national sovereignty is polarised against the concept of Universal and World
heritage has to be that of Afghanistan where the great Buddha carves on the cliffs are under the threat of disfigurement. This is also a case in which religion is used as a weapon too against diversity.

In a final gesture to the contemporary Alexandrian context Cleere stated how: 'This is why the project happening in Alexandria is so symbolic and is an attempt at bringing diversity and cosmopolitanism back to Alexandria. This would have been unthinkable in Nasser’s time. Not only is the project part of a revival of Mediterranean culture but the fact that foreign archaeologists like Empereur’s French team are contributing shows a real breakthrough. In the past this context was a place of archaeological imperialism. This is a case, potentially at least, in which a number of advantages have emerged. Mubarak can have his diplomatic glory, the city can have its new centre for intellectual and archaeological revivalism, and both foreign and Egyptian archaeologists and heritage experts can benefit from sharing an experience of rediscovering heritage which – at least in the case of Pharos – is a more inclusive revival of what is a bona fide “Wonder of the World.”'

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7 The Taliban’s threat to destroy the Buddhas was a particular concern during my March 2000 visit to UNESCO. The Buddhas were, of course, destroyed the following year.
SECTION THREE

UNESCO'S 'MELTDOWN' AND 'PARTNERSHIPS' WITH NGOs

Cleere's interview also provides a link with what Aziz in Chapter Four characterises as the second phase of UNESCO's two-fold inscription of projects: the first being the aforementioned top-down, states-party diplomatic inscription and the second its operational networking. In this section I thus combine Cleere's more directed discussion of ICOMOS's role in such contexts with comments from UNESCO's other contacts in this domain. I therefore draw upon my discussions with Herve Barre who is Head of the Research and Development Unit located within UNESCO's Culture Division and De Premerge the co-ordinator of UNESCO networks in the Mediterranean Region. These latter two informants were able to supply me with specific information regarding the 1997 SACROM Workshop's operational networking. This detailed information (selected extracts of which are gathered together in Appendix Six) provides a more grounded perspective on Alexandrian revivalism by providing examples which illustrate the dynamics which underpin a project's 'meltdown.' In interview, however, I was able to discuss with the above informants a broader, critical perspective on UNESCO's co-ordination and strategisation of networks - predominantly of NGOs - as a means to enable 'actors' from local, regional and international civil-society to form their own 'partnerships' with UNESCO-supported projects.

- 'UNESCO's' 'Operational Strategisation'

UNESCO's directives on NGOs and are outlined in terms of twin aims, firstly, 'To enable UNESCO to secure advice, technical cooperation and documentation from non-governmental organizations' and secondly, to 'enable such organizations, which represent important sections of public opinion, to express the views of their members' (UNESCO 2000:3). The above informants all stressed the integral role of NGO networks in UNESCO's work and UNESCO's own commitment to extending these links in the future (see also UNESCO 2000). Barre, for example, began his interview by offering a
wider historical brief on this context by stating how, 'From its beginnings UNESCO has shown its commitment to such partnerships. While it is the states-parties that first approach UNESCO with a project or scheme, a crucial second layer of involvement which UNESCO supports and helps sustain is that of networks and partnerships which are driven by NGOs'. This 'second layer,' as Barre commented further is marked by its own duality, 'As a model of engagement it offers a means for UNESCO to support not only national, governmental concerns but the 'voices' of civil society and for these in turn to unite in the operational context'. A great emphasis was placed by Barre upon NGOs as both a synonym for 'civil society' and for 'operational strategisation.'

Drawing on his own experience within the Culture Division, Barre gave more depth by drawing upon an analogy which conveyed an interesting link in terms of UNESCO and its associated NGOs cosmopolitics: 'Just as within the Culture Division we maintain our commitment to 'World heritage' in terms of its 'universal' qualities and as part of a wider need to respect diversity and pluralism in the global context, so too we interpret NGO and other net-working strategies in the same way. What we try to do is to use these networks to create a more diverse and more representative network for projects. The activities of NGOs are designed to bring to projects and programmes more diverse views, expert skills and multiple 'voices' of opinion. So, for example, the fact that I am here in Europe but that I am interested in the Egyptian Pyramids and that they stay there and that they are not destroyed is what UNESCO would like to transmit to the people through the civil society networks everywhere in the world. The 'universality' of cultural heritage – not only that which is near me – but that which I understand as the common heritage is fundamental to all aspects of our work. Like biodiversity and trio-diversity the need for variety and multiplicity within public culture and civil society should be considered as vital for the 'health' of the global community.' Barre subsequently underlined how, 'We have our UNESCO philosophy to respect and while we are a non-interventionist organisation and cannot interfere in national contexts, we do uphold UNESCO's general principles in all aspects of our work. We also try to make sure all the organisations which we work with internationally also respect UNESCO's objectives of dialogue and mutual understanding.
Significantly Barre also cited the Nubian Campaigns as providing the point of origin and the model for this type of operational engagement. Here he offered a differently nuanced perspective on this Campaign, 'Egypt is a place of emblematic and spectacular cultural heritage. Egypt symbolises the founding of our Cultural Heritage programme. What interests me is that the Nubian monuments salvage operations showed that UNESCO could be the catalyst for mobilising the international community and international networks. It was in Nubia that for the first time different countries took responsibility for different parts of the rescue programme. This was a new dynamic in terms of bringing technical skills, funding, as well as moral support to the campaigns. Since then, of course a number of formalised procedures have been put in operation. The presence of the Paris based NGOs – like ICOMOS – and also ICCROM in Rome has been a great bonus'.

Having characterised the Nubian Campaigns as a foundational ‘model’ for UNESCO’s operational dynamics, Barre was just as willing to outline some of the ambivalences and ‘points of conflict’ which marked this context too, ‘Of course the Egyptians had to ask for UNESCO’s support for the campaigns and while it is difficult to judge how committed a states-party is emotionally and politically to safe-guarding the ‘World’ heritage within its territorial geographical boundaries. The Nubian campaigns showed that development needs – i.e. building a dam to feed the Egyptian people -, and the international community’s concerns to safeguard heritage they themselves felt emotionally and politically committed to was indeed possible. In this case, though the campaigns had its own points of conflict, it was ultimately a success for all partners’.

Barre did, however, stress how the vast majority of projects do not have the high profile and accompanying high politics of the Aswan Campaign 1990. He proceeded therefore to outline what he referred to as a more, ‘typical and basic format which the SARCOM Meeting [1997] in Alexandria followed.’ He detailed, ‘In a working context our strategising and networking would bring in mechanisms in order give assistance and
advice in the field. We are concerned in particular to advise member states mainly from
the South who have less resources available to them. We try therefore, to raise awareness
of the complexity of the issues and give as many people at local, regional and
international a stake in the project. We organise seminars with relevant authorities, we
also insist on having around the table specialists. For example, as with SARCOM, we
bring together representatives from a host of different domains: from the environmental
sector, from organisations concerned with development issues and also increasingly with
those involved in the tourism industry. We also bring in people from the public sector:
ministers, academics, researchers, museum experts who meet up with directors, site
managers and archaeologist etc... People work together, share knowledge and expertise
on a range of specific topics. Often this concerns questions of how best to manage a site
and the financial resources required. Within our division our particular task is to try to
combine the mission of recording the heritage with the necessity of promoting local
development needs. We work in partnership with the United Nations Development Fund
(UNDF) so development is a major concern. This demands an understanding of how to
use cultural heritage sites to assist development, keeping in mind that this heritage must
be protected. This is the big issue which we deal with in terms of strategies'.

With more detail still he explained how: ‘The next step, - which is what is now taking
place in Alexandria -, is that we encourage member states to proceed to define more
closely a number of pilot-studies, a number of committees structures and ultimately to
work with us in order to draw up guidelines in order that the member-states commit
themselves to implementing and sustaining the project. Then if they [the gathered
participants] want to, these recommendations can be worked in with national regulations
and national heritage laws and requirements. We offer them a panel of experts to work on
this’. Once again drawing on SARCOM as an example he stated how, ‘At SARCOM a
more initial concern was with the conservation of the Qait Bey site and the immediate
threats to the structure. Also via discussions with Alexandrian experts we understood that
environmental issues were a priority. The Workshop also revealed that issues of what we
call ‘historic urban city development’ and also tourist development are currently
emerging as a potential concerns. These are the kinds of issues we can help to bring to light and opening up for discussion'.

- Tourism as Inter-cultural Contact

While Barre, like other informants both in Paris and Alexandria, made clear that the specific links between Alexandrian revivalism and aspirations to re-invent Alexandria as an international tourist destination, - although significantly buoyed up by both the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s potential capacity to bring in visitors and crucially too SARCOM’s own Recommendation by the proposed re-development of Qait Bey/Pharos - were, as yet, still at the discussion stages. He did, however, characterise what he referred to as a ‘growing trend and at times a desperate need to combine cultural development and urban regeneration with the force of tourism’, emphasising how, ‘These often exist in an uneasy relationship and this is a crucial dynamic being played out in Alexandria at the moment as the city anticipates increased tourism’. As an expression of the possible futures being created by the force of Alexandrian revivalism Barre rehearsed in more detail UNESCO and its NGOs engagement with this dynamic.

Barre was keen to argue the need for a ‘subtle approach to understanding the force of tourism.’¹⁸ He was willing to firstly acknowledge the exploitative aspects of this dynamic and stated, ‘Tourism in the case of many third world contexts including Egypt is related to the risk of the North coming South and from this perspective tourism has quite rightly been seen as a destructive force’. He continued to argue that the characterisation of tourists as ‘destroyers’ or ‘neo-colonialists’ ‘doesn’t represent the whole picture just the negative extreme’. Barre argued further that UNESCO NGO networks are mobilised to prevent this kind of polarisations between hosts and guests. He states, ‘sometimes tourism is seen as an essential evil but often it is not simply tourism which is responsible for all that has been bad for the local population and in fact tourists from the North are

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¹⁸ Barre’s comments can be placed in the context of academic critiques of the field of tourism: see for example, Smith 1989; MacCannell, 1989; Urry 1990; Selwyn 1996 and Rojek and Urry 1997. See also my interview with Aziz (an academic and consultant in Tourism) in Appendix Six.
increasingly more aware about what to do and what not to do'. As also underlined by UNESCO's Cairo-fieldwork employee Mahdi (see Appendix Five) Barre argued that 'Often it is the states-parties who want money from tourism (as we all know this increasingly is becoming a major national industry across North and South) but do not put into place investment in infrastructures and allow locals and tourists to be polarised in conflict. In other cases states-parties may be prepared to make investments but need expert advice on how to do this'. He added, 'There are, however, ironies too that without tourists some sites in the South would not be protected but when tourism comes you need to protect these sites from the force of tourism itself. Too much tourism does harm but too little also!'

He argued that the specific strategy pursued by his department that of 'embedding tourism within key UNESCO frameworks and by placing an emphasis on peace-keeping' and commented further, 'What we try to do with NGOs within the Cultural Heritage Sector is to show that tourism can be used as a peaceful way to promote culture. One of the chief requirements here is that the local population has to benefit from tourism in terms of inter-cultural contacts and that they will also be able to meet different habits without feeling threatened and/ or exploited. So this goal is our major goal'. He also explained that just as international tourism is a new phenomenon within the Alexandrian cultural heritage context, UNESCO's own engagement is quite recent in terms of its formalised responses and as such Barre referred to the UNESCO's Cultural Tourism Charter [1998] as 'a major breakthrough which will doubtless allow us to be more effective in this area' (see also UNESCO 1999). Interestingly too Barre subsequently inverted the usual focus on the hosts within the tourist relationship in order to highlight the need for the tourists as guests to undergo 'education' thus adding, 'I would argue that it is tourists who need to be sensitised more to foreign contexts and this can be done through quite imaginative means and a more equal engagement between hosts and guests. Again it is a matter of drawing into discussion local voices and those of civil society in order to make this a happy relationship'. He finally added, 'This now has to be managed as part of Alexandrian revivalism'.

119
Grassroots Participation

The need to draw civil society voices and public opinion into such contexts and dialogues via networks of NGOs and through the medium of pilot-projects and committee structures is stressed further by Barre and also by Cleere. The latter, for example, highlighted what he described as 'a typical scenario' in terms of this process of 'drawing out voices' by arguing, 'Most projects as you know are initially about high diplomacy and for the states-party concerned they therefore involve political manoeuvring at governmental level. There is nothing particularly negative about that. As the project is taken up by UNESCO other organisations like my own we put into play non-governmental networks. These networks which become involved in the grassroots may never be a concern for the states-parties who may be quite happy to let the local and regional experts (with our assistance) 'get on with it'. However he highlighting both the supportive but also the critical edge that NGOs can bring to campaigns. Drawing on his work with ICOMOS he stated how, 'NGOs provide a very significant role in terms of both complementing and at times criticising (when necessary!) states-parties in their engagements with UNESCO-projects and issues of heritage more generally' adding, 'they may also, at certain times, feel it necessary to bring critical reflection on UNESCO’s own actions'. This is in addition, Cleere further argues, to the very hard work done in terms of technical ‘expert’ support, for example'.

Barre in pursuing the same dynamic argued, 'In European countries you generally have a more dynamic relationship with public opinion which has its political expression, its media expressions and those at the level of civil society. So, for example, when some promoters want to build shops or compromise in some way the integrity of an important heritage site, you have the mechanism to mobilise public opinion and everything stops. Public opinion is very important to protect heritage sites'. Both informants subsequently turned to Egypt as an example of how public opinion from ‘outside’ can bring international pressure to bear ‘inside’ a nation-state, as Cleere put it, 'In Egypt there was the big controversy over plans to construct a motorway near the Pyramids. Here pressure
was placed on Egyptian authorities by public opinion which came from outside Egypt. There were a number of campaigns, but the one in the UK was particularly effective and was well-managed through the press.' Barre added how, ‘This campaign which grew up in Britain in the media was able to support the anti-voice to the roads scheme in Egypt. This is really the aim of internationalising public opinion and of the international campaign – that of having a pro and anti voice – and that there is some mechanism in place to give support to the anti-voice⁹.

As a means to press these points home Cleere also detailed further interventions supported by ICOMOS members, including ‘protests at the Auschwitz site over plans to build a supermarket’ and another ‘ill-conceived scheme to install a sound and light show at the Buddhist temple at Borobodur in Indonesia’. Barre drew these points together, by drawing out a key UNESCO motif that of the dynamic of ‘citizenship’. Here he emphasised, ‘The idea of accessing the grass-roots is incredibly important. It is the citizen who is ultimately the best conservator. Everybody has to be a citizen – it should not be just a matter of the experts and the elites’. Here he added how, ‘UNESCOs line on these aspects is its moral-ethical position of supporting forums for dialogue.’

- Alexandria’s Internationalisation of Voices

Barre, argued how, with specific reference to the SARCOM Workshop and its continued networking strategies: ‘In Alexandria at the moment one can witness the beginnings of internationalisation of local voices. It is a very complex situation. You have a very big urban population living in Alexandria and its industrial strip and its port. A care must be taken to make sure revivalism works alongside already existing industries. Many people and areas of the world have this problem of how to combine these features, certainly in the case of historic cities’. Turning more specifically to the Alexandrina project, he states, ‘With this important UNESCO supported project the dynamic of openness and dialogue

⁹ This, for course, holds some irony in terms of the revivalist context in Alexandria in which local elites mobilised an ‘anti-voice’ against the destructive interventions made by UNESCO itself (in collaboration with GOAL). I return to address this point later in this appendix. As expressed in the subsequent comments of both Barre and Premerge the Alexandrina is considered from a symbolic perspective rather than in terms of the controversy highlighted in Chapter Five.
centres upon a very powerful symbolic level.’ Picking up on some symbolic, celebratory characterisations, he argued further, ‘Ancient Alexandria was a very open society translating Greek books into Arabic and then into Western European languages. This is also a dimension of the new project, it will become a vibrant translating centre’. He thereby added, ‘if such an institution is revived in the modern world it has to function in its universal scope and not be limited to the local situation. Both the local and the universal should be considered together - to be a good citizen of the world you also have to be a good local citizen otherwise you have no roots. This allows people to have an openness to other cultures but also a sense of home.’

This symbolic centring of Alexandrian revivalism was taken further forward by Premerge, who as the co-ordinator of UNESCO’s Mediterranean programmes, had the ability to particularise the dynamics of meltdown ‘networks’ and NGOs further within this regional context. Premerge’s own contact with the Alexandrian context centred around NGO networks involved in archaeological revivalism. It was the dynamic of archaeology that Premerge first focused upon, ‘There is an increasing emphasis upon the dynamic of cultural heritage and archaeology within the Mediterranean region.’ Here with echoes of Barre he emphasised how, ‘Archaeological sites help clarify the symbolic aspects of a culture. This is happening in Alexandria at the moment as it is reclaiming its cosmopolitanism. Most people are interested in archaeological and historical traces in the Mediterranean. It is a great resource for building a peoples’ identity. In many senses the whole of the Mediterranean as a macro-region has been understood in terms of an ancient golden-age and as an ancient depository of wisdom’.

- Microcosm of Conflict

Premerge, drew out not only the liberating but also the more oppressive aspects of this heritage by stating, ‘The Mediterranean has been struggling with this image.’ He thus pitched against this golden-age image of the region the ways in which, ‘The contemporary Mediterranean is also a microcosm of all the problems on the planet – everything is there nationalism, ethnic cleansing, religious extremism – it is a powerful
and conflictual region. It is a context in which there exists a powerful micro politics, one which is grappling with questions of democracy, liberalism; where religious pluralism versus autocracy and where various fundamentalisms and theocracy can be found’. Here he added, ‘For us UNESCO’s engagement with the Mediterranean is a sort of laboratory or testing ground for many future aspirations and conflicts. Because in many ways what happens there is more acute than elsewhere mainly because it is so small’. Premerge, however, affords Alexandria a specific place in this crucible of aspiration and contestation, ‘Alexandria is not only a depository of ancient wisdom – but the scene of political action. It is also a place which is combining archaeological revivalism with the revival of civil society. Things often get blocked politically between nations in the Mediterranean – civil society, however, can work through these. Civil society and culture is one of the means to resist oppressive features, particularly those of the nation-state and to open-up collaborations and dialogues through networks and programmes. This way Mediterranean cultures can delve into many shared fields and hope to build a better peaceful future’.

Here Premerge drew out the specific unity between Mediterranean elites, ‘Mediterranean culture and civilisation – North and South – have many points of conflict, however, the elites feel that they have more and more in common than before. Cultural heritage and archaeology is used to make symbolic links. Preserving culture, therefore, is also a means of preserving and pursuing such links further. Alexandria’s symbolic role is as meeting point of East and West is a symbolic step forward. The networks of NGOs can make this a reality too by attracting people from the West to support revivalism while at the same time offering a rallying point for local Alexandrians’. He emphasised, in particular, how ‘UNESCO’s purpose is to authenticate this sense of dialogic civil society’.

- Dialogic Civil Society

Premerge then detailed previous schemes in which UNESCO, in partnership with NGOs, promoted this dynamic of a ‘dialogic civil society’ across North and South Mediterranean regions, ‘In the past we have concentrated upon ‘common issues’ within this microcosm
of North/ South to promote such dialogue. In particular we have tried to get rid of the negative image and negative history that exists in the Mediterranean between often polarised North/ South positions’. Here he added, ‘We have had some successes and some failures, this at least give us the chance to learn what is and what is not acceptable across these borders’. He detailed further how, ‘We have had success with projects which bring school children in these regions together to learn about shared heritage. In particular we try to bring people together, this is particularly rewarding in the case of bringing Israeli and Palestinian groups together within shared projects. Once again in such a context UNESCO authenticates the plural narrative’.

Premerge also gave examples of what not to do, ‘this aspect of sharing has to be approached carefully. We had a series of projects in operation which were concerned with the revision of schools text books in the Mediterranean region. We used these as a means to revisit controversial events. We had one project, for example, which took as its focus the Crusades. We soon found out, however, that maybe there are people in the North who are ready to criticise the Crusades but in the South they are not ready at all. It is very difficult. People have since argued that we should not start with controversial problems and that this won’t work – but select common themes which are more discreet’. This context in turn suggests that there is an inequality in terms of what critics have termed as the ‘conditions of dialogue’ (cf. Chomski 1992: 127) and that the North’s attempts to engage in critical reviews of a conflictual past are often regarded as provocative. Premerge argued how an emphasis in recent years has been placed upon what he referred to as a ‘global approach’ to the Mediterranean and ‘upon celebratory dialogues in which both ancient and modern worlds are focused in on’. Premerge argues, ‘Alexandria is, of course, in a powerful position within this more uniting ethic. Perhaps once North and South Mediterranean cultures can celebrate symbolic ‘meeting points’ and ‘translating centres’ then it builds a foundation for more critical and open dialogues in the future’. He emphasised how, ‘In the contemporary context we need these spaces of dialogue and unity more than ever’.
- Culture as Weapon

It was clear from this particular group of interviews that a key dynamic underpinning discussions which demands attention is that of the contemporary conflicts which as Barre put it, ‘are part of movements which deny diversity and use culture as a weapon’ and as such threaten UNESCO’s foundational values of universality, cosmopolitanism and its NGOs’ commitment to revitalising civil society. Barre defined this further as an, ‘anti-universal, anti-democratic force based upon a search for a particular past which denies diversity and multiculturalism and refuses to take into account the universal vision’. He added, ‘Some societies don’t want to assume that they are multi-cultural and that this can be explored in a positive way as a richness within a wider national identity. They reject the notion of “universality” in order to pursue more chauvinistic ideas of culture. It is a problem you find often on the border territories of many places and this feeds contemporary conflicts. All these problems are coming out at the moment’. Barre subsequently referred to his ‘own recent experience of witnessing the destruction in Macedonia and Afghanistan’. Here he stressed UNESCO desire through its NGOs to, ‘maintain and promote cultural diversity without provoking aggression.’

Once again he picked up on the Egyptian context in order to pursue these points, ‘There are significant implications which pick up on certain paradoxes which exist in Egypt at the moment and which are also touchstones for violence. The Pharaonic past, for example, is what interests most tourists. Although one can visit Islamic or Old Cairo the tourist promotion is focused on the Pyramids. More diversity, however, is needed. What happened in Luxor [i.e. the ‘terrorist’ attacks at Hatshepsut’s Temple in 1997] is an extreme scenario but highlights a problem which underlies the contemporary Egyptian context. This was part of attempts to destroy heritage which was described as ‘pagan’ and ‘non-Islamic’\(^1\). UNESCO condemned the attacks which took place in Luxor by saying there is no pure ethnic culture and that this is a stupidity. We take the scientific line.

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\(^{10}\) The reasons for the 1997 attacks in Luxor remain much debated. Some informants both in Paris UNESCO and also in Alexandria pursued the above reasoning. However, see Mahdi’s (a heritage/tourism consultant who works with UNESCO’s Cairo-field-work) and Aziz’s (an academic and consultant in Tourism) alternative explanatory accounts in Appendix Five and Appendix Six respectively.
Luxor is the extreme scenario of a more deeply rooted problem of multi-cultural society. UNESCO tries to impress that this is a multicultural world.’

- Reinvention and Interventionism

What emerged from these three informants is a sense in which alongside UNESCO’s more idealised diplomatic Grand Narrative redemptive formula their exist more subtler pockets of regeneration, recuperation and even resistance, which operate between international civil societies with the aim of bringing a voice to the ‘grassroots.’ This ‘voice’ in return was imagined not as a diplomatic ‘chorus’ of approval like that performed at Aswan but potentially as an anti-voice which in Barre’s words, ‘offered a more democratic context in which UNESCO supported projects could flourish’. This question of democracy is a complex one in UN/ UNESCO domains, as Premerge states, ‘UNESCO as a global organisation works by necessity in non-democratic contexts, in which the press and media undergo severe censorship, and in which civil society and public culture are either highly regulated or non-existent. UNESCO tries to combine its non-interventionist principles with democratic peace-keeping values, often, paradoxically, these can provoke conflict or be rendered ineffective in autocracies’.

It was also clear from both UNESCO informants and UNESCO literature that the wider dynamic of reinvention had penetrated into this domain too. At the time of my visit to UNESCO new ‘frameworks’ were being discussed in terms of the UNESCO/ NGO partnerships. Cleere, for example, was eager to discuss his own ideas in terms of ICOMOS’s potential re-invention. Here he stressed what he described as the development of a more proactive rather than simply reactive role for heritage NGOs, including his own. He stated how, ‘Often the momentum of NGO work – whether this is in terms of its advisory ‘expert’ role can or its wider concerns in terms of revitalising civil society and public culture – can be very quickly lost’. Echoing Abid’s comments regarding the Alexandrina project, Cleere similarly argued that both UNESCO and its NGOs needed to affirm its commitment to contexts for a longer time period in order to sustain change and bring about longer term improvements’.
In terms of ICOMOS's work Cleere stated that a, 'more structured system needs to be put in place to make sure that sites, once inscribed on the WHL, are monitored in terms of conservation reports, site surveys etc... This would enable us to avoid the destruction, deterioration and to stop any looting of sites which always a risk. Currently there are few means open to us to prevent such things happening. Of course, UNESCO does not 'own' a site but we obviously have some stake in it. ICOMOS members at national level might alert us to some misdemeanour. We are now developing a mechanism which means that states-parties after a certain period (every five or six years) need to submit a report so that we can be sure that the 'qualities' which got the site the inscription in the first place are being maintained'. Cleere also stated how 'a good deterrent in this context would be removal from the WHL. I would back this decision'. Much has also been made of new strategies in terms of 'bilateral aid' in terms of 'First' and 'Third' world nations forming partnerships in order for sites within the latter context to find inscription. Cleere, for example, highlighted France's support for the inscription of the Buddhist centre of Luang Prabang in Laos.

It was here too that Cleere spoke of the potential for greater interventionism, 'This is a difficult one to pursue at a time in which even the 'experts' who visit sites for inscription can be cast as neo-colonialists who arrive with their 'Western' ideas which disrupt local contexts. This is also true of wider UN culture which is coming in for severe criticism. Once again we need to strike a balance and in ICOMOS's case respond better to national civil society committees and their own concerns over sites. Other critics, this time in print, have argued that the reinvention of NGOs working within the heritage and archaeological domain needs to go further. In particular, their roles as 'watchdogs' have been stressed and more pro-active organisations such as the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) and Greenpeace have been highlighted as models for possible emulation (see Cleere 2000).
- Alternative Anti-voices

On a final note, and as previously highlighted, at a certain point in our discussions Cleere referred to the fact that the 'anti-voice' mobilised via such networks, 'may also, at certain times, feel it necessary to bring critical reflection on UNESCO's own actions'. This, of course, has resonance for the contemporary Alexandrian context. As such it is possible to undercut and problematise some of the above sentiments expressed at UNESCO's Paris Head-Quarters by bringing into view the conflicts which occurred during the Bibliotheca project's 'meltdown' between the Alexandrian elites (the 'critical Chorus') and UNESCO/GOAL with the former mobilising themselves against the latter's destructive actions (see Chapter Five). Not only did the Alexandrian elites express their critical voices on UNESCO/GOAL's ineffective management of the construction phase vis-à-vis its destructive effects on the city's archaeology but also by organising a campaign via the local and international media to halt the demolition of the threatened maternity and children's hospital and also to prevent damage being done at the Qait Bey/Pharos site. In this particular case the 'anti-voice' which was raised against UNESCO went unsupported within the then existing UNESCO frameworks. Alexandrian elites thus found support from 'local' (i.e. both 'foreign' and Egyptian) archaeological teams, intellectuals and those active in the sphere of culture and conservation.

As Chapter Seven makes clear the key vehicles in terms of giving voice to Alexandria's heritage dilemmas have been local Alexandrian NGOs notably Mohammed Awad's Alexandria Preservation Association and Adel Abu Zahra's Friends of the Environment (see Chapter Seven and Appendix Seven). What this drama also highlights once again is the failure of UNESCO to put in place local networks to accompany the Bibliotheca's 'meltdown' and how the SARCOM Workshop (the demand for which was largely prompted by Alexandrians themselves (see Chapter Six)) was the first real occasion at which participation by locals was made possible. This failure to strategise the Alexandrinas's networks with the local and the gap between this and the SARCOM Meeting's interventions was acknowledged by a number of those I spoke with at Paris and regarded as the antithesis of what UNESCO tries to achieve in such contexts.
SECTION FOUR

UNESCO'S MEMORY-WORK AND ARCHIVAL PERSONALITY

As previously stated my visits to Paris communicated an acute sense of UNESCO undergoing a time of change and re-invention. In this concluding section I focus upon two informants who give more depth to this particular dynamic. The first is Mme. Ramzi, the Head of Promotions for World Heritage, whose interview brings into play UNESCO's new heritage programmes, notably that of 'Intangible heritage,' (which only emerged at a key concern in 1997), and their significance for the reviveralist context (Ramzi 3/00). Crucially too Ramzi is an Egyptian and a Coptic Christian (which emerged as significant to her narrative) and as such this enabled her to bring greater insight to the contestations which mark the Egyptian context, and more specifically, what she referred to as the 'struggle between modernity and tradition' and its implications for Alexandrian revivalism. I also return to my interview with Abid (3/00) in order to outline in more detail the Memory of the World programme (MOW) and its place within the Alexandrian context.\footnote{The more formal frame-works of the MOW programme can also be found in Appendix Four.}

Ramzi began her interview by taking a now familiar starting point to illustrate UNESCO's characterisations of both tangible and intangible heritage, 'The epitome of our understanding of tangible heritage has to be that of the Aswan Campaign it is one of the greatest examples of monumental world heritage and of a monumental salvage operation. From the time of the co-operation between Egypt and UNESCO with respect of the Nubian Monuments, the idea and the reality of 'World' or 'Universal' heritage became part of the psyche of the international community. Recently UNESCO has built on this success by outlining its new programmes in intangible heritage'. Here it was clear that this latter intervention has brought with it a shift in terms of heritage value. Ramzi thus continues, 'In its designation of the new intangible heritage projects and programmes UNESCO has been concerned to think about people rather than exclusively about buildings, monuments and objects. This has allowed us to take a more people-
centred approach to heritage and to make clear that it is people who communicate the past through their traditions and in their roles as story-tellers, craftsmen or as dancers. This has enabled us to give a value and priority to popular and common culture as well as the great monuments on the World Heritage List and to get a balance between these aspects'. Interestingly too Ramzi asserts, 'This shift has also made explicit that heritage and culture can be defined as that which is contained in people's memories and which needs to be passed on to future generations so that it is not lost.'

This latter motif of 'memory' was one of the strongest aspects to emerge from both Ramzi's and also Abid's interview and as such it was used as a broad synonym for UNESCO's shift of focus towards intangible heritage. Ramzi, for example, highlighted 'the central value and role of memory', in terms of UNESCO's 'safeguarding role and its objective to preserve knowledge passed on through living people in the performance of traditional skills'. Here she added, 'It also is a valuable means for particular groups, in particular, indigenous peoples to protect their culture and memory by appealing to intangible and intellectual property rights' (see also UNESCO 1999). Abid drew out these same dynamics but this time by highlighting the ways in which 'new technologies are increasingly being used in UNESCO's new intangible heritage programmes' and by emphasising how 'a key part of this safeguarding role will be a whole new series of archival and memory-spaces located on the web'. Crucially too Abid outlined how the ancient Alexandrina has been revived more specifically as a key motif within the Memory of the World Programme (MOW) which is the formalised framework programme for this project of digital archiving.

While I have gathered more detailed literature on the MOW in Appendix Four, in interview Abid gave greater detail to the development of the programme and to the new empathetic identifications being made between UNESCO and the Alexandrina paradigm. 'The MOW programme started in 1992; the context was that of the break-up of Eastern European countries with the focal point on the Sarajevo Library. We were asked to assist in more general terms to save the documentary heritage, the manuscript collections and archives which were being lost not only through conflict but through the general
disruption of culture in these areas. As you know UNESCO are developing all kinds of projects in the area of intangible heritage as these offer a means for understanding culture and heritage in terms of identity and memory. In developing the programme my mind turned to the Ancient Alexandrina’s Library - particularly as UNESCO is also involved in reviving it - which also suffered destruction and brought with it a great loss to the memory humankind’. Here he emphasised, ‘For the archive and library world it is a powerful reminder of the need to preserve the past. By using the Alexandrina as our icon it shows the aims of our programme. Of course we are concerned with not simply great archives but with smaller collections which are under threat of deterioration and destruction’.

Abid also emphasised the wider politics of the context in which the MOW emerged, ‘The pressure came from the ‘political’ background; UNESCO works this way; decisions are taken in a political context. So in 1992 the Director General said; “There are so many people asking me to do something in this area. I would like the Secretariat to give me some ideas”. So I wrote saying it is true this is a difficult situation and that both ancient and modern collections are suffering very, very badly in many parts of the world, not only in the former communist countries but in Latin America, Africa and South East Asia, for example, where the climate conditions are very difficult and it was true that there was a strong need for new programmes to preserve archives. I argued that with new technology we could also make this widely available while preserving this too’. Thus in Abid’s vision the MOW brought together the Alexandrina as a symbolic/ iconic ‘ancient ancestor’ and as the paradigmatic expression of archival loss, with a new notion of the redemptive formula this time played out within the realms of the internet, the world wide web and CD ROM.

The bureaucratic framing of the MOW, its specific aims and objectives and its pilot-projects were subsequently outlined by Abid (again see Appendix Four) which interestingly replicate the basic format of the WHC and thus also seek to ‘list’ collections and individual books in the same way as the WHL inscribes physical heritage sites and landscapes. Within these framings/ founding documents of the MOW Aziz has also
pursued further the motif of memory, for example he states, ‘Memory is the cornerstone
to a well balanced personality: that holds true for individuals and for peoples. The
collective memory of the peoples of the world is of vital importance in preserving
cultural identities, in bridging the past and the present and in shaping the future. The
documentary heritage residing in libraries and archives constitutes a major part of that
memory and reflects the diversity of peoples, languages and cultures. But that memory is
fragile…’ (Abid 1997 - see Appendix Four for the full version of this paper).

In interview Abid commented further on the resonance between mind, memory and the
archival imagination by stating, ‘I think there is a great tendency - which has a powerful
emotional aspect to it - to think of the archive, like the mind, as a store for knowledge
and to see memory is the medium which moves between the mind and the ‘outside’
world. This is useful too when thinking of how human beings conceptualise themselves
with regard to their own histories and past – to the wider world of history and events –
and to the world of electronic and digital technologies which I think people are only
really beginning to become conscious of’. It is here that Abid brings together what could
be defined as the traditional, Aristotelian characterisations of memory embedded within
the MOW with the new conceptualisations and mobilisations of memory which he saw
digital/ electronic media bringing into force.

- Universalising Imagination

Correspondences can be found too between Aziz’s above comments and characterisations
and Ramzi’s own use of the metaphors of the ‘mind’ and of the ‘personality’ to map out
the relationships between the relationship between tangible and intangible heritage.
Interestingly too she referenced the Egyptian landscape in order to press her point and to
highlight what is at stake in these particular conceptualisations. With echoes of other
UNESCO informants she comments, ‘Recently there has been a very specific and
worrying trend in which people try to ‘cut up’ history and heritage into different periods
and to use this to define specific identities. It is happening in many places in the world at
the moment and in Egypt this has seen an emphasis placed on regarding the Pharaonic,
the Coptic and the Islamic heritage, for example, as very separate phenomena. But with
the notion of an integrated ‘universal’ heritage which includes both tangible and
intangible it is now possible to demonstrate more clearly the continuity of the Egyptian
mind and to argue that the personality of the modern Egyptian is Pharaonic, plus Islamic,
plus Mediterranean, plus African and so-forth and so on – and to show that we are the
product of all of this’.

Ramzi continued, ‘In Egypt there is also a big fight between modernism and
conservativism which fails to acknowledge the links between people and which
concentrates on differences’. Here she emphasised, ‘This conflict has come out in the
different responses to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project and the wider debates on
revivalism. This also shows that there is a clash emerging in terms of different ethical,
moral and personal codes’. In detailing what is meant by ‘modernisation’ in the Egyptian
context Ramzi identified a particular strand of what others might call ‘Westernisation’,
‘There are many things which Egyptian’s feel comes from outside of Egypt. For example
you see the American ‘McDonalds’ which are new and all over the place. You see this is
a new phenomena being debated within Egypt because these are new cultural forces
which come from outside and which did not exist many years ago – it is a new situation
which people are trying to respond to’. Ramzi subsequently turned to characterise the
‘conservative’ line, ‘It is very complicated position to explain and I cannot make it very
simple. It has many strands - some economic, some political and some religious - and is
born of people’s fear of the very big changes to Egypt which they see as a threat to
traditional values’. Thereby adding, ‘There are some groups who have unfortunately
picked up on this trend towards fear and inwardness’.

Here Ramzi herself picked up on the ‘religious extremism in Egypt’ which she stated is
‘Not religious but political, and like McDonald’s, it comes from ‘outside’ Egypt. We
have noticed this is a new violence which began in places like Afghanistan and now there
is a new element and has crept inside of Egypt’. Ramzi subsequently expressed her
‘shock’ at the attacks which took place in Luxor in 1997 which she saw as part of this
‘new violence’. By this same token she applauded UNESCO’s condemnation of the
Taliban’s threats to destroy the non-Islamic heritage within Afghanistan’s nation-state boundaries. It was at this point too that she argued the need to preserve UNESCO’s commitment to both the notion of ‘universal heritage’ and to its underpinning ‘cosmopolitan ethic’. She also expressed the value of this commitment on a more personal level, by detailing, ‘I am Coptic Egyptian OK, but my own heritage is not just Coptic, it is Pharaonic, it is Islamic – it is Khan El Khalili, it is the Pyramids - and Luxor is mine too! In France where I now live I can enjoy the Eiffel Tower and in the villages near where I live the church is the property of everyone – even if you are not Christian. It is your visual heritage and your emotional heritage too’.

- Emotional Restitution of Identity

Ramzi proceeded to argue that, ‘Egypt, like everywhere else needs to turn more positively to both her ancient and modern heritages in all their varieties and to revive the emotional context of these attachments too. It is not only in debates over specific objects such as the Rosetta stone but in the emotional restitution of identity which is of importance to the heart and one’s pride’. Here she argued, ‘I want to emphasise it is not just the Pharaonic past – but the Hellenistic, the Coptic, the Islamic past etc… All the heritage of Egypt: for a long time it was just the Pharaonic – now with the Bibliotheca Alexandrina all the pasts are being recognised. It shows that Egyptians are now committed more than ever to preserving universal heritage’. In common with a number of other UNESCO informants she thus reiterated, ‘The Alexandrina can be seen as a positive step towards acknowledging such variety. Mubarak and his wife are indicating to the Egyptian nation and to the wider world that they want to look to the international community via UNESCO to gain supports in reviving all these associations’. Ramzi added, ‘It is not only through the Alexandrina – which of course is the more important project - but also Mubarak has shown great interest in the Nubian Museum [built in collaboration with UNESCO] and is also the president of honour of the International Friends of Museums in Egypt.’
Ramzi was also keen to illustrate the balance between the tangible and intangible heritage within Egypt’s new embrace of its diverse heritage, again her focus was upon the Alexandrian context, ‘The revival project in Alexandrina has its traditional aspects in that it will be monumental in design and therefore an impressive expression of tangible heritage. Through its new archive networks and its digital library it will also be able to preserve intangible heritage. Other aspects of Alexandrian revivalism are very much associated with UNESCO’s new projects and programmes this includes, of course, the development of a Charter for Underwater Archaeology which is very, very new and Alexandria is a very exciting example. Alexandria is also trying revive itself economically with this project through attracting more tourists and UNESCO, of course, is building up its guidelines in the area of Cultural Tourism. We also have the new Nubian Museum and plans for a whole series of museums inside the Alexandrina and the very exciting project of an underwater museum at the Pharos site. Since the Alexandrina project and the archaeological discoveries Alexandria has become a focal point for interest in heritage12.

- Cosmopolitan Futures

Ramzi’s final comments shifted to address some of the more complex issues marking the future of Alexandrian revivalism, she outlined, ‘The essential question is how to make Egypt’s development needs integrate more effectively with the revival of heritage, history and culture. This is the question which is arising in Alexandria at the moment. For many years ago we put national identity before the economy but now it is changed. Egypt has to be a realist but also reclaim her own identity in terms of her more diverse ancient past as she also revives it for foreign audiences. This is very, very difficult and has to be supported by the Government, by elites so that all people will benefit. For example, if you ask some people who drink Coca cola on the citadel [Qait Bey/ Pharos site], I’m sure they won’t have heard about any of the ancient history and monuments which are being revived. Education must be a priority within this context, this is a crucial dynamic.’ She

12 Ramzi made references to the scheme to develop a museum complex at the Giza pyramids site. This project was then at the discussion stage but was featured more fully at the Centenary of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo which I attended in December 2002 (see Appendix Five).
also highlights how, 'If these needs can be incorporated with the economic dynamic of tourism – which is one of Egypt’s biggest industries – and to genuinely work towards the development not only of people’s living standards but their sense of themselves and their aspirations then revivalism can be considered as fulfilling its potential’.

The idea of a renewed interest in Alexandria reaching outside Egypt and as such mobilising further its universal, cosmopolitical dynamic was brought together in Ramzi’s closing remark, here she argued, ‘The changes in Alexandria are of the utmost good for the city, country and the international community. This was brought home to me when I visited the exhibition at the Petit Palais *The Glories Of Alexandria*, [which was on display from 7th May - 26 July 1998] which made me proud to share my Egyptian roots with fellow Parisians and all other visitors. It illustrated the potential for everyone to share in the recovery not of just of the library lost thousands of years ago but also the wonderful objects which are being salvaged from the Mediterranean’. Here she added. ‘It is only by these means can the Egyptian nation express its maturity and share its heritage with the rest of the world without feeling threatened but feeling pride. It is a social and emotional maturity rather than a political maturity which we hope will follow. People will soon see that the trend towards conservativism is not in the interests of Egypt. I have a confidence that the kind of messages sent out by the Alexandrina will help build up this maturity and help a wider struggle in which the more democratic force of modernisation and development will with this kind of support and commitment pull through’.

136
Appendix Four

The Memory of the World Programme
APPENDIX FOUR

THE MEMORY OF THE WORLD PROGRAMME

INTRODUCTION

This appendix contains detailed information regarding UNESCO's Memory of the World programme. It consists of three papers:

SECTION ONE


SECTION TWO


SECTION THREE

- Butler, B. 2000b. 'Some Comments on the Memory of the World (MOW) Guidelines.' Unpublished. This paper was written in support of a proposal made by Abid for the inclusion of sociological/ ethnographic foundations within the MOW guidelines. It was circulated in 9/12/00 to those named in the document itself.

These latter two papers outline my more practical involvement in the UNESCO/ Memory of the World programme (MOW).

1 This paper can also be found on (http://www.org/webworld/memory/aziz.htm/).
MEMORY OF THE WORLD -

Preserving our Documentary Heritage

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Abstract

The paper outlines the main features of "Memory of the World", a UNESCO Programme to safeguard endangered documentary heritage, democratize access to it, increase awareness of its significance and distribute, on a large scale, products derived from it. Criteria to list documentary heritage on the "Memory of the World" Register and to select projects are set out, together with a brief account of the Programme's technical, legal and financial framework.

A number of pilot projects are briefly described. They consist mainly in digitization programmes and a CD-ROM series featuring a selection of manuscripts from the National Library in Prague, the Radzivill Chronicle in Saint Petersburg, medieval manuscripts concerning the symbolic figure Saint Sophia, patron saint of the capital of Bulgaria, a collection of Yemenite manuscripts including the Koranic fragments at Sana'a, a preservation project of astronomical manuscripts of Kandilli Observatory in Istanbul, a selection of manuscripts from the Egyptian National Library and another selection from Vilnius University Library reflecting in turn medieval Arab and European scientific advancement, a few thousand photographs from the nineteenth century illustrating the history of some ten countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, an inventory of nineteenth century Latin American newspapers and their state of preservation and an ambitious project called "Memory of Russia".

Memory is the cornerstone to a well balanced personality: that holds true for individuals and for peoples. The collective memory of the peoples of the world is of vital importance in preserving cultural identities, in bridging the past and the present and in shaping the future. The documentary heritage residing in libraries and archives constitutes a major part of that memory and reflects the diversity of peoples, languages and cultures. But that memory is fragile.

A considerable proportion of the world's documentary heritage disappears through "natural" causes: acidified paper that crumbs to dust, leather, parchment, film and magnetic tape attacked by light, heat, humidity or dust. The cinema, for instance, is in danger of losing most of the works that have made it the art of the century. Thousands of kilometers of film could just fade away unless they are restored and preserved as soon as possible. Nitrate fires in France and Mexico, for example, have caused important losses.

As well as insidious causes of decay, accidents regularly afflict libraries and archives. Floods, fires, hurricanes, storms, earthquakes... the list is very long of disasters which are difficult to guard against except by taking preventive measures. The recent catastrophe in Japan immediately comes to mind. One thinks also of the earthquake which did such heavy damage to Japan in 1923, including the destruction of 700,000 volumes of the Imperial University Library in Tokyo. Among the losses were records of the Tokugawa Government and many manuscripts and old prints. Worldwide distress was also caused in 1966 in Italy when the river Arno flooded library basements in Florence. More than two million books suffered water damage and restoration is still under way.

It would take a very long time to compile a list of all the libraries and archives destroyed or seriously damaged by acts of war, bombardment and fire, whether deliberate or accidental. The Library of Alexandria is probably the most famous historical example, but how many other known and unknown treasures have vanished in China, Constantinople, Warsaw, or more recently in Cambodia, Bucharest, Saint Petersburg and Sarajevo? There are so many more, and sadly the list cannot be closed - not to mention holdings dispersed following the accidental or deliberate displacement of archives and libraries.

There is no help against the destructive forces of nature: you cannot stop an earthquake or a flood, but it is a sad reflection that the most grievous losses have generally been the result of human action, whether through neglect or through willful destruction.
Preservation and Access

Recognizing that urgent action was required to stem the disappearance of vast parts of the world’s documentary memory, in 1992 UNESCO launched the “Memory of the World” Programme to protect and promote that heritage.

The first objective of the Programme is to ensure the preservation, by the most appropriate means, of documentary heritage which has world significance and to encourage the preservation of documentary heritage which has national and regional significance. A twin objective is making this heritage accessible to as many people as possible, using the most appropriate technology, both inside and outside the countries in which it is physically located.

Preservation of the documentary heritage and increased access to it complement one another. Access facilitates protection and preservation ensures access. For example, digitized materials can be accessed by many people and demand for access can stimulate preservation work.

Another element of the Programme is to raise awareness in the Member States of their documentary heritage, in particular aspects of that heritage which are significant in terms of a common world memory.

Finally, the Programme seeks to develop products based on this documentary heritage and make them available for wide distribution, while ensuring that the originals are maintained in the best possible conditions of conservation and security. High quality text, sound and image banks could be compiled and made available on local and global networks and reproductions could be derived in all sorts of forms such as compact discs, albums, books, postcards, microfilms, etc. Any proceeds from the sale of related products will then be ploughed back into the Programme.

Programme scope and structure

The scope of the Programme is, therefore, vast and involves a variety of partners, ranging from students, scholars and the general public to owners, providers and producers of information and manufacturers of end products. An International Advisory Committee for the “Memory of the World” Programme was appointed by the Director-General of UNESCO to guide the planning and implementation of the Programme as a whole and make recommendations concerning fund-raising, the allocation of funds and the granting of the “Memory of the World” label to the projects selected, including those not receiving financial support from the Programme. The Statutes of this Committee, approved by the Executive Board of UNESCO in May 1996, provide in particular for close co-operation with competent NGOs such as IFLA and ICA and stress the need to facilitate access to endangered documentary heritage by the greatest number, using state-of-the-art technology. The Committee held two meetings (Pultusk, Poland, September 1993 and Paris, France, May 1995). It recommended, at its first meeting that the concept of documentary heritage be extended to include, besides manuscripts and other rare and valuable documents in libraries and archives, documents in any medium: in particular, audiovisual documents, computerized recordings and oral traditions, the importance of which varies from region to region. In all these fields there is a need for protection, sometimes as a matter of urgency if we are to prevent collective amnesia and set up world cultural exchange.

The Programme should make governments aware of the need to protect their documentary heritage, release potential for action, support the activities of professional, national, regional and international organizations and stimulate initiatives.

At the national level, it is recommended that a committee be appointed, firstly to select projects according to the criteria agreed upon and submit them to the International Advisory Committee and, thereafter, to follow them up. The committee membership should include
experts able to make an active contribution to the projects and users' representatives. Persons submitting projects must ensure that the rights of the owners of the holdings or collections are protected. In addition, each project will set up its own scientific committee of specialists to determine the general thrust of the project and to supervise its organization. "Memory of the World" National Committees have been set up in 26 countries (Austria, Belarus, Bulgaria, Canada, Cape Verde, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Finland, Hungary, Lithuania, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Nepal, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Sweden, Tanzania, Thailand, Venezuela and Zaire) and others are considering the creation of such a Committee. Jordan and Syria have indicated that national institutions are already performing the role of National Committee.

Lastly, whenever the need arises, a regional committee may select projects of a regional nature, taking local characteristics into consideration, with a view to submitting them to the International Committee.

An example of efficient regional follow-up to the establishment of the Programme is the Experts meeting held in December 1994, in Kuala Lumpur for the definition of an Asian component of the "Memory of the World" Programme. Participants from 20 countries discussed problems facing custodians of national documentary heritage materials which are generally endangered because of neglect, adverse physical and climatic conditions, political instability... The meeting agreed to take steps to ensure that Member States establish a mechanism at the national and regional levels to identify projects receivable under the "Memory of the World" Programme, as well as to establish individual country inventories of documentary heritage materials, prepare a programme for preservation and conservation of such materials, and promotion and marketing strategies to generate resources to finance the programme.

Similar conclusions were reached by a Sub-regional meeting on the "Memory of the World", held in Budapest from 9 to 10 March 1995. The meeting was attended by participants from Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia. While digitization is a powerful tool to facilitate access and thereby help to preserve the originals, participants stressed that it has limits and could not replace conventional preservation work. During the meeting, a co-operative sub-regional project was designed. It is expected that the project will enable the participating institutions to test digitization techniques and equipment and assess the related financial, legal and dissemination aspects. A training session took place in this context in the National Library in Prague in November 1996.

The First International Conference on "Memory of the World" was held in Oslo from 3-5 June 1996. Some 150 delegates from 65 countries participated in the Conference, which highlighted the results achieved by the Programme and the need for regional and national plans for preservation and access. The Conference adopted a resolution urging all countries to establish "Memory of the World" Committees and to become active participants in the Programme. The Proceedings are available from UNESCO and can also be copied from its Web Site.

"Memory of the World" Register

The participants in the Second Meeting of the International Advisory Committee, held in Paris in May 1995, agreed that a "Memory of the World" Register be developed. This Register will list all documentary heritage which has been identified by the Committee as meeting the selection criteria for world significance, similar in some ways to UNESCO's World Heritage List. However, the nomination and registration of documents under the "Memory of the World" label will have no legal or financial implications.

The "Memory of the World" Register, a compendium of documents, manuscripts, oral traditions, audiovisual materials, library and archive holdings of universal value, will be a significant document in itself, as well as an inspiration to nations and regions to identify, list and preserve their documentary heritage.
Individual countries are encouraged to set up their own documentary heritage registers in parallel to the "Memory of the World" Register. National registers identify the documentary inheritance of the nation. The national registers will increase awareness of the importance of the national documentary heritage and the need for a co-ordinated and integrated policy to ensure that endangered documentary heritage is preserved. Groups of nations like the Scandinavian countries or the Baltic States may compile regional registers to list documentary heritage which is integral to their collective memory.

A nomination form was sent out on 2 February 1996 to all UNESCO's Member States and international professional associations, inviting them to identify documentary heritage nominated for the "Memory of the World" Register. 33 countries have proposed the nomination of elements of their documentary heritage for the Register.

Selection criteria

Each register - World, Regional and National - must be based on clearly-defined criteria for assessing the cultural value of documentary heritage. Documentary heritage is of world significance if it has had a major influence on the history of the world, transcending the boundaries of a national culture; if it reflects in an outstanding way a period of momentous change in world affairs or makes an outstanding contribution to our understanding of the world at a particularly important time in its history; if it contains important information about a place which made a crucial contribution to major developments in world history or culture; if it has a special association with the life or works of a person or people who have made an outstanding contribution to world history or culture; if it gives particularly valuable information on an important subject or major theme of world history or culture; if it is an important example of an outstanding form or style; if it has outstanding cultural and social or spiritual value which transcends a national culture.

In addition to these seven major criteria, two further criteria should be taken into account. These may enhance the world significance of documentary heritage, though they are not sufficient in themselves to establish its value: the significance of documentary heritage may be enhanced if it has a high degree of integrity or completeness or if it is unique or rare.

The criteria will be tested by the International Advisory Committee and weighting factors will be developed to reflect the relative importance of the criteria. The criteria for documentary heritage to be entered on National or Regional Registers are to be decided by the relevant National or Regional Committees. It is recommended, however, that the World Register criteria be used as a model.

Proposals for documentary heritage to receive resources through the "Memory of the World" Programme may be made by National and Regional Committees, Governments, NGOs, the International Advisory Committee or other professional bodies in the country or region. Documentary heritage proposed for support will be of World Register status. Support will require the documentary heritage to meet criteria to be set by the International Advisory Committee.

Restrictions on access to documentary heritage will not systematically prevent entry on a Register but may reduce the possibility of receiving support through the "Memory of the World" Programme.

Furthermore, the Pultusk meeting recommended that some degree of priority be given to operations affecting several countries, national projects with a regional or international dimension and projects carried out in co-operation or in partnership, while not overlooking minorities and their cultures. Particular attention will be paid to reconstructing the memory of peoples in the case of collections or holdings that have been displaced or scattered.
Pilot projects

1) Prague

A digitization programme was launched by the National Library in Prague, in cooperation with a private firm, Albertina Ltd. A demonstration CD-ROM was first published in 1993, featuring some of the most precious manuscripts and other documents in the historic collections of the National Library, with annotations in Czech, English and French. In addition, a CD-ROM series has been starting with the release of the first two discs in early May 1995. Digitizing the most beautiful manuscripts and old prints of the National Library will facilitate access to these treasures without exposing the originals to heavy use, thus contributing to their preservation. In addition, while colours and ink react with paper, parchment, silk and other traditional media, digital information does not fade with the passing of time and could be easily transferred from CD-ROM to more durable media to come in the future.

2) The Radzivill Chronicle

Written in old Russian, this monumental work reveals the history of Russia and its neighbors from the fifth to the early thirteenth century in pictorial form, representing events described in the manuscript with more than six hundred colour illustrations. Known to the scholarly community according to its ownership in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Radzivill, or Kenigsberg Chronicle, is the most ancient surviving example of the art of Russian illuminated chronicle. It is a fifteenth century copy of a thirteenth century archetype held by the Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg (BAN). The Radzivill Chronicle's combination of text and illustration places this manuscript in the company of such acknowledged masterpieces as the Madrid copy of the Greek Illuminated Chronicle of Ioann Scilipa, the Vatican copy of the Bulgarian Translated Chronicle of Konstantin Manassia, the Budapest copy of the Hungarian Illuminated Chronicle, and the copies of the Big French Chronicles. Among these, the Radzivill is distinguished for the richness and quantity of its illustrations.

The increasing fragility of the original manuscript, together with its preeminence in the Russian literature, has left BAN to share a dilemma faced by libraries around the world charged with the care and wise use of cultural treasures. Handling of the Radzivill Chronicle, itself, must be restricted to preserve its material well-being. At the same time, the scholarly and scientific enterprise to which the Library is dedicated argues for access to this important document for serious research. This is why the Library has turned to a digital medium - to display the manuscript in full color while preserving the original. A prototype Photo CD is produced with the support of UNESCO and the Library of Congress, as a pilot project and a demonstration of the use of digital media in the service of preservation.

3) Saint Sophia

Devised by a group of Bulgarian and French writers, the “Saint Sophia” project is an attempt at a multimedia edition of Bulgarian manuscripts on an interactive compact disc. The disc evokes the symbolic figure of Saint Sophia, patron saint of Sofia, capital city of Bulgaria, in Bulgarian history, literature and civilization from the eleventh to the seventeenth centuries.

The documents selected include primarily the facsimile reproduction, in the form of digital images, of Bulgarian manuscripts, including the oldest one known: the eleventh-century Book of Apostolic Epistles of Enina. They are supplemented by reproductions of illuminations, frontispieces and decorative motifs, and by photographs of various historic and archaeological sites. There are also printed transcriptions in Old Bulgarian of some manuscripts and their translations into modern Bulgarian, English where such translations exist, and French.
4) The Sana'a manuscripts

In 1972, after heavy rain, a section of the wall of the Great Mosque of Sana'a collapsed. Work on the roof brought to light manuscripts which had been concealed in the ceiling in ancient times. They are parchment and paper fragments representing approximately one thousand different volumes, the oldest of which date back to the first century of the Hegira. Most are extracts from the Koran and are of considerable interest for the linguistic, religious and paleographic study of the literature of the early centuries of the Hegira and of the Arabic language. The fortuitous and extraordinary discovery of these documents and their unique character make this find a remarkable event which will mobilize efforts and expertise on an international scale. Thanks to the active participation of Germany, a plan of work on the fragments was begun, which led to the construction of a House of Manuscripts, the restoration of some 12,000 fragments of parchment (out of 15,000), their storage, identification and classification and the training of Yemeni restorers and photographers.

Research work on illuminated fragments and on bindings was carried out with a grant from the Getty Institute. This work, together with papers read at congresses and articles in academic journals, shows just how remarkable the collection is. The Yemeni authorities concur in the view that the collection is the equivalent of a historic building of exceptional heritage quality. A UNESCO mission visited Sana'a at their request to consider including a pilot project on the Yemeni collections in the "Memory of the World" Programme.

A National Committee for the project has been set up to identify the most suitable documents. A demonstration disc based on a selection of manuscripts including some of the Koranic fragments has been published, in co-operation with the Regional Information Technology and Software Engineering Centre (RITSEC), Cairo, Egypt. This CD-ROM offers an introduction to the Arabic calligraphy illustrated by Yemenite manuscripts, especially the Koranic fragments. Descriptions and comments are provided in Arabic, English and French.

5) Memoria de Iberoamerica

The project, submitted to UNESCO by the "Asociación de Bibliotecas Nacionales de Iberoamerica" (ABINIA) is concerned, in its first stage, with protecting the nineteenth-century press published in Latin America and improving access to it for historians and interested members of the public.

ABINIA had previously organized a series of activities on the occasion of the Five Hundredth Anniversary of the Encounter between Two Worlds, in response to the desire to encourage appreciation of the documentary heritage of the Iberian world.

Among these activities was the compilation of a database indexing 90,000 books from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, a traveling exhibition and the reissue of the most important historical works in the context of the Five Hundredth Anniversary. The national libraries of twelve countries (Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, Peru, Portugal and Venezuela) are taking part in the project on the nineteenth-century press. It has led to the drawing up of a computerized inventory of some 6,000 newspaper titles and other press organs.

The second phase of the project is to arrange for the conservation of the listed collections and their transfer to microfilm and digital form with a view to exchanges between national libraries, the organization of exhibitions and special publications.

6) Manuscripts of Kandilli Observatory

The aim of this project is the preservation of a collection of about 1300 works on astronomy in three languages (Turkish, Persian and Arabic) held in the Library of Kandilli Observatory and Earthquake Research Institute at Bogaziçi University in Istanbul.
UNESCO's contribution covered the preparation and publication of the catalogue of these manuscripts and the production of a CD-ROM consisting of the catalogue and sample pages from most of the manuscripts.

7) Memory of Russia

This project deals with preserving and improving access to the collection of XVth and XVIth Century Slavic manuscripts held by the Russian State Library in Moscow. It also includes the archives of many of the major Russian authors such as Dostoevsky and Pushkin.

8) African Postcards

The old postcards chosen for this project constitute a pictorial treasure and are related to the 16 countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). These postcards are very rare because they are scattered in many countries, mostly in Europe. Only their presentation on a CD-ROM or a Web Site could bring them together, at least partially, under one theme or in an historical and geographical framework. The CD-ROM, prepared in collaboration with the Association Images et Mémoires and ICG-Mémoire Directe, features 3,000 postcards, which represents only a small part of the 50,000 which exist for the same period (1890-1930) and the same countries. This first achievement should show the way to even more sophisticated ones.

9) Treasures of Dar Al Kutub

This project, reproducing on CD-ROM a selection of precious manuscripts of the National Library in Cairo (Dar Al Kutub), offers a guided tour among the splendors of the Arab culture and its contribution to the enhancement of knowledge in numerous scientific fields.

10) Manuscripts of Vilnius University

This project is in many ways similar to the preceding one. It concerns collections of manuscripts, incunabula and old atlases kept at the Vilnius University Library and its aim is to illustrate, through a series of CD-ROMs and on Internet, European contributions to scientific advancement between the XVth and the XVIIIth century.

11) Photographic collections in Latin America and the Caribbean

The huge number of photographic collections scattered around the world led the promoters of this project to limit its scope, in a first stage, to Latin America and the Caribbean and to public collections of the XIXth century held in national archives and libraries.

Through the prints stored in the stocks, often in inadequate preservation conditions, it is the whole life of the nations which resurges with its important moments and the portraits of those who have influenced the course of history.

The coupling of a CD-ROM containing 3,000 to 5,000 prints illustrating the main stages of the history of some ten countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and of a presentation on the Web of a representative sample of images (video quality) with comments in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish, will enhance the value of this fragile heritage, in danger of disappearing. It is hoped that this will then help libraries and archives to ensure that preservation of their photographic collections is a priority.

All these projects were funded under the UNESCO Regular Programme. A number of other projects received funding under the Participation Programme. These include the safeguarding of manuscripts of Antonin Dvorak and Bedrich Smetana, held by the Museum of Czech Music in Prague; provision of equipment and training in Algeria, Cuba, Poland, Venezuela; reproduction and repatriation in Antigua of historical records held in foreign repositories; publication of "Libro de los Pareceres de la Real Audiencia de Guatemala 1573-1655";
reproduction of the hand-written card file of the 11th-17th century Russian language to CD-ROM to promote access to this collection...

Some thirty other projects are under consideration. These include, for example, a project in Albania, the restoration and preservation of 7000 hours of audio materials of Chinese folk music, preservation of Tamil palm-leaf manuscripts in India, preservation of Vietnam film heritage, preservation of Lao manuscripts, preservation of a Jewish musical collection in Kiev, safeguarding of manuscripts of ancient cities in Mauritania... Extrabudgetary funding for some of these projects is being negotiated. This includes Norwegian funding for the preservation of, and enhanced access to, the slave trade archives in Africa and funding from the European Union for the preservation and promotion of heritage collections in a number of Mediterranean countries. The last project will be implemented by the Centre de conservation du livre à Arles, France, in close co-operation with UNESCO.

Technical framework

From the examples mentioned above, it emerges clearly that the two basic principles which guide the "Memory of the World" Programme are the preservation of documents, holdings and collections and the democratization of access to them. The two principles are intrinsically linked, since access is conducive to protection and preservation ensures access.

The essential steps for carrying out any project in the "Memory of the World" programme are: selecting and preparing the documents, ensuring that they are placed in a suitable physical environment, photographing them where necessary, digitizing them, describing and annotating them, providing the staff to perform these tasks with appropriate ad hoc training where necessary, translating bibliographical descriptions where necessary, or even the texts themselves, and ensuring that the resultant product is distributed as widely as possible.

Provision has been made for the establishment of two sub-committees, the first to make regular assessments of the technology that might be used by the Programme and the second to study methods for marketing and selling the Programme's products throughout the world. The first Committee held three meetings devoted to digitization of documents. It reviewed recent developments in digitization and prepared preservation standards and technical guidelines with a table showing, for each type of carrier (texts and still images on the one hand and sound and moving images on the other hand) the recommended digitization standards for access and preservation. It was suggested that a programme of digitization of documents is the best compromise between the conflicting demands for wider access to collections and for greater protection of the documents.

The Sub-Committee also recommended that digital copies of manuscripts and old printed material under "Memory of the World" use the Hypertext Markup Language (HTML 2.0) as the basic presentation tool in order to provide the widest possible access.

As to the preservation of the originals, a publication will compile annotated lists of the most relevant standards. It will cover:

- Paper, leather, parchment, palm-leaves...
- Photographic material
- Micrographic material
- Audiovisual material
- Electronic records
- Electronic publications

Each brochure will discuss the general problem, draw the list of relevant standards, relating them to each other and pinpointing gaps, provide implementation guidelines and checklists and discuss Third World issues such as climatic and financial conditions, grassroot and traditional preservation techniques and minimum standards.
Lastly, so that UNESCO can play its role to the full as co-ordinator and catalyst, three inventories in the form of regularly updated databases are being created in co-operation with IFLA, ICA and other competent professional bodies such as FID, FIAF, FIAT and IASA.

1) Inventory of library collections and archive holdings which have suffered irreparable destruction since 1900: This inventory, published as "Lost Memory - Libraries and archives destroyed in the twentieth century" (CII-96/WS/1), is an attempt to list major disasters that destroyed or caused irreparable damage to libraries and archives during the present century. Thousands of libraries and archives have been destroyed or badly damaged in the course of fighting during the two world wars, notably in France, Germany, Italy and Poland. War has also been the cause of untold destruction to libraries and archives more recently in former Yugoslavia and in many other countries.

The document, prepared by J. van Albada (ICA) and H. van der Hoeven (IFLA) lists lost documentary heritage in more than 100 countries. This inventory is not meant to be a sort of funerary monument but is intended to alert public opinion and sensitize the professional community and local and national authorities to the disappearance of archival and library treasures and to draw attention to the urgent need to safeguard endangered documentary heritage.

2) World list of endangered library collections and archive holdings: To date more than 60 countries have proposed collections and holdings to be included in the list of endangered documentary heritage. The International Association of Sound Archives has conducted a survey carried out by George Boston, in the context of this exercise, that shows that the most endangered carriers are not necessarily the oldest. In the audio domain, substantial numbers of acetate discs and tapes are lost each year. All unique acetate recordings at risk need to be copied swiftly to a new format.

3) Inventory of ongoing operations to protect documentary heritage: Documentary heritage has been lost in the past and will continue to disappear in the future. The aim of "Memory of the World" is to ensure that significant material is identified and saved. Today's technology enables us to identify the location of important documentary heritage and gain access to it. This inventory, prepared under contract with IFLA by Jan Lyall, list major preservation activities currently in progress. The information in this document (CII-96/WS/7) was obtained through a questionnaire which was widely distributed in English, French, German, Japanese and Spanish, using the IFLA Preservation and Conservation (PAC) network. The survey was intended to collect information from libraries with collections of national significance in order to identify problems in various parts of the world and to obtain a snapshot of current preservation activities. More than 200 responses were received and input into the computer.

This database, as well as the previous one, running on CDS/ISIS, will be updated regularly and the data analysis facilitated by use of IDAMS, a statistical package developed by UNESCO and featuring an interface with CDS/ISIS. The two lists will constitute the indispensable basis for the Programme along with the "Memory of the World" Register.

Furthermore, in recognition of the impact of cinema on the world, it was decided, as part of the centenary celebration, to compile and publish, in the context of the "Memory of the World" Programme, a list of approximately 15 films each country considers to be representative of its most significant film heritage. This list is available at not cost from PGI under the title "National Cinematographic Heritage" (CII-95/WS/7).

Finally, UNESCO has published recently guidelines on the Programme's technical, legal and financial framework and its working structures. This text is to be available in all UNESCO official languages, free-of-charge, under the title "Memory of the World - General Guidelines to Safeguard Documentary Heritage " (CII-95/WS-11).
Legal and financial context

Working in partnership in an international context means that a legal framework is an absolute necessity if "Memory of the World" is to be managed in a properly accountable manner. The framework must nevertheless remain sufficiently flexible to guarantee the originality of each project and take account of the diversity of national legislation.

It is essential that the rights of the owners of the collections and holdings in a project are respected and that the relationship between the owners and the technical and commercial partners is clearly defined, particularly with regard to the division of rights among the various parties, the allocation of rights of ownership to the images produced and the sharing of the profits from the sales of products made from images. It also seems clear, however, that excessive protection which might limit access to the documents would run counter to one of the Programme's fundamental principles. The International Advisory Committee recommended, at its second meeting, that UNESCO pay careful attention to legal questions affecting the intellectual heritage in the new context of increasing use of electronic storage media in libraries and archives, in particular to provide for freedom of access within the limits set by national and international legislation.

INFOethics, an International Congress on Ethical, Legal and Social aspects of Digital Information was held from 10 to 12 March 1997, in Monaco. The Congress proposed, in particular, the setting-up of an international commission on INFOethics, the launching, under the auspices of UNESCO, of a large-scale co-operative effort among all professions concerned with the archiving, preservation and conservation of digital information, an initiative that would result in the elaboration of a professional code of conduct; it stressed the importance of authors moral rights in the new environment of global flow of digital information. UNESCO’s objective here is to develop a scale of values in cyberspace, to reinforce the free flow of information and to head off any over-reaction that might lead to excessive regulations of the communication networks.

Finally, with regard to financial support, an international fund is being set up within UNESCO to finance some of the Programme’s projects. These will include, as a priority, projects with a regional or international dimension. Other projects which meet the agreed criteria could use the "Memory of the World" label without necessarily receiving aid from UNESCO or the fund. A UNESCO special account has been opened for the "Memory of the World" (Ref. 406 INT 61).

Each "Memory of the World" project will be an entity in itself, especially as far as finance is concerned. While profit can never be a prerequisite for carrying out a project, each project must strike a financial balance between, on the one hand, the investment needed for digitizing, reproducing, and distributing products and for preparing the reproduced collections and holdings for conservation and, on the other, initial contributions from local or outside funds and royalties from possible sale of products. This balance will not be achieved without the participation of sponsors and technical and financial partners. The search for partners is an important, not to say decisive, phase of all "Memory of the World" projects.

The Sub-Committee on Marketing held its first meeting in Oslo, in July 1996. The Group outlined a fund-raising strategy for the Programme, together with a promotional and marketing plan and a legal framework. The meeting agreed that there was a possibility for "Memory of the World" to seek partnership with major companies active in creating and preserving memory and knowledge. It was also stressed that the Programme needed to be marketed first for the professions, through their associations and publications. The participants also suggested that famous writers and winners of literary prizes should be invited to rally the Programme and publicize its aims and achievements.
Conclusion

As soon as it was launched, the "Memory of the World" Programme began to arouse great interest. Requests for assistance, sometimes even appeals for help, regularly reach UNESCO. It is a daunting task and only the mobilization of all the parties concerned can translate declarations of intent into a vast world workshop to rescue, reproduce and disseminate endangered documentary treasures.

For further information, please visit UNESCO's web site:

http://www.unesco.org/cii

Sources:


"Memory of the World" - A survey of current library preservation activities (CII-96/WS-7)

SECTION TWO

The Memory of Alexandria and Contemporary Heritage Revivalism

Paper Given at 2nd International Conference of the Memory of the World Programme, Colima, Mexico, 27-29th September 2000a. (Unpublished)

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Introduction:

This paper has two key aims: (i) firstly, to give an update on the development of one of the Memory of the World pilot projects located at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Egypt and (ii) secondly, to argue the potential for a more contemporary, ethnographic perspective on what might be called the ‘sharing of memory’ to be developed within the wider Memory of the World programme.

Background: The Ancient and Modern Alexandrinas’

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina – or more emotively – the New Alexandrina, is a project jointly managed by UNESCO and the Egyptian government, which seeks to revive or recreate the ancient Mouseion/Library on what is believed to be its original site, in Alexandria, Egypt. The potency of the contemporary project draws upon the powerful hold that its ancient counterpart continues to exert upon the collective imagination/collective memory. Historical descriptions of the institution, built in the third century B.C. by Ptolemy Soter in the city founded by Alexander the Great, are patchy and problematic. However, in its mythology – as opposed to documented/documentable history - the Alexandrina brings together, firstly, a vision (often idealised) of the golden-age of the archive of ‘universal’, encyclopaedic knowledge and, secondly, with its destruction, an equally emotive narrative of the traumatic loss of an ancient ancestor and the concomitant irreparable loss of world memory.
However, the Alexandrina's is also a myth of redemption and is further bound up in seductive desires to effect the recovery, restoration and preservation of the spirit, if not the substance, of 'universal' heritage/memory: significantly, these philosophies—to safeguard, restore, preserve—remain at the heart of heritage culture and UNESCO's and Memory of the World's own missions.

The New Alexandrina

Here, then, is the well-spring of the ideas of revivalism which characterise the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. The project attempts to replicate, in modern form, the key components of the ancient institution. Where once was a Temple of the Muses is now a museum's complex dedicated to the disciplines of science, calligraphy and archaeology. This is supplemented with a planetarium and restoration and conservation laboratories, while a substantial part of the building will be occupied by a library of both 'real' and digital texts.

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina's architecture and its imagery are a key part of what might be described as the project's new mythologising. The building itself is made up of a series of 'objects': circles (the information complex and planetarium globe) and pyramids (the science museum) [slides one and two of the Snohetta building design]. The main body of the building is likened to an Egyptian sun/moon disc. The exterior walls are decorated with characters from almost all known scripts and alphabets to evoke a sense of universal culture and the 'layers of time'. The Alexandrina is projected into modernity via the symbolism of the roof structure of the library which is designed to look like a computer microchip. As previously stated it is also the location for the 'Memory of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina' pilot project.

Contemporary Memory-Work

The Memory of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (MBA) differs somewhat from the usual Memory of the World pilot projects (MOW), the majority of which focus upon specific specialist historical collections. The Alexandrina's own enigmatic quality has shaped a rather different project. The MOA is concerned not only with preserving elements of the past but also with recording the present for future generations. The
MOA is thus currently projected into two parts: the first, the ‘ancient memory’ is almost exclusively based upon Professor Mostafa El-Abaddi’s book *The Life and Fate of the Alexandria Library* [1990], the book is significant in that it highlights the Alexandrina’s creative influences between the institution and the Arab world: a feature absent from many previous studies (Fathallah: 5/00)². Meanwhile the Alexandrina’s ‘modern memory’ is based on video footage of current building work: with no surviving images of the ancient Alexandrina, this close documentation of the institution’s development is a directed attempt to avoid a repeat of such losses in the future. In keeping with other MOW projects new electronic/digital technology is the chief medium of recording/preservation and also of the future distribution and dissemination of this information.

The New Alexandrina staff are, however, keen to develop the pilot project and this is where my own purchase on the MOA emerges (Fathallah: 5/00). I am currently undertaking research in Alexandria which more broadly seeks to understand the intellectual and operational dimensions of the contemporary revival of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. A key part of my work has been to place an emphasis upon themes of cosmopolitanism, diversity, memory and attachments between Alexandria’s contemporary communities and the city’s ancient pasts. My main method for pursuing these themes has been ethnographic research undertaken over the last four years in the city of Alexandria; the objective of which has been to map the ‘memory-work’ of selected groups within the Alexandrian landscape. Obviously these two projects: the MBA and my own research work have key points of common interest. In what follows I outline some of the initial findings of my ethnographic work in order to draw out further these shared links and their implications for the wider MOW.

**Alexandria as ‘Capital of Memory’**

The starting point for my ethnographic research work in Alexandria was the Bibliotheca itself. What interests me is that the contemporary project marks a dramatic departure from historical attempts to ‘revive’ the Alexandrina, these have

² Omneya Fathallah who is based in the General Organisation of the Alexandria Library (GOAL) Head-Quarters in Alexandria currently heads part one of the MBA project. Fathallah is the key source for the following information on the Memory of Alexandria (5/00).
typically fallen within a privileged 'western' (often, colonial) genealogy. For example, the Alexandria became the ‘blueprint’/ model for the ‘western’ museum/archives from the Renaissance onwards. One effect of this appropriation has been that the modern city of Alexandria, with its relative poverty of ancient material culture, has become negatively characterised as the ‘Capital of Memory’ and as a site of decline and nostalgia.

By way of contrast, I have sought to focus upon ways in which recent revivalism has opened up Alexandria’s ‘traditional’ mythology to reformulation and redevelopment and thus is illustrative of some of the subtleties and complexities of the rise of heritage and of urban revivalism in post/ex-colonial contexts. My objective has been to create an ethnography of ‘revivalism as a living force’ and by these means inscribe aspects of Alexandria’s ‘living memory’. I draw out, in particular, the ways in which the New Alexandrina is becoming centred within a wider context of heritage revivalism which is being further change and transformation to the dominant characterisations of the city. Underwater excavations are currently taking place at Fort Qait Bey, where Pharos, the lighthouse which was one of the wonders of the ancient world, once stood, and at the royal palace site in the Eastern harbour of Alexandria which is synonymous with the figure of Cleopatra. These excavations are, for the first time, providing dramatic information about the ancient city [slides of underwater excavations]. My research emphasises that the MBA pilot project has the potential to be centred in these wider dramas of excavation and revelation (cf. Fathallah: 5/00) and I would also argue that this, in turn, opens up the potential for the MOW as a whole to develop its own networks in this way.

Ethnography: Preliminary Research and MOW Content

While acknowledging that the MBA pilot project has a wider brief than most I would like to take a moment to suggest that ethnographic research - which can be undertaken in partnership, for example, with university departments – can offer a number of very practical advantages to any MOW project, whether undertaken as preliminary research or whether included in the content of memory schemes. Perhaps most significantly it can be used as a means to embed MOW projects in local contexts and to actively define and network pilot projects by identifying a broader and more
responsive group of interest groups/ stake-holders. Financial partnerships, for example, may be one priority to be explored by this method.

Ethnography can also provide a means to align MOW pilot projects with broader objectives which mark both the MOW and UNESCO’s commitments to sharing access to heritage and culture. Here, the process of inscribing ‘living memory’ has correspondences with UNESCO’s new conceptualisations of ‘intangible heritage’; which casts individuals as ‘living treasures’ and as agents of cultural transmission. These dynamics can be brought together with a form of ethnographic inscription which offers a means to define, for example, contemporary urban environments by means of a dynamic of memory-work which can actively inscribe not only dominant histories/ contemporary ‘actors’ but also memories/ communities made marginal or excluded from dominant accounts by mapping new places, spaces and contexts and by these means opening memory to multi-vocalism, pluralism, debate and dialogue.

**Official Stakeholders: International Press and Polarising Positions**

Now to move into my ethnographic work proper. The official stake-holders of the Bibliotheca have been effective in inscribing a new dialogue between the wider global community (represented by UNESCO) and the Egyptian nation (represented by the Egyptian government and closely identified with the president Hosni Mubarak and the First Lady Suzanne Mubarak). A key moment in this process came with the Aswan Meeting of February 1990, the official launch of the project, which re-worked this commitment to ‘universal’ heritage in presence of international grouping of politicians, diplomats and royalty. However, as perhaps as is only to be expected the return of ‘universal’ heritage has also been met with some controversy. Critics, journalists and others have chosen to draw out a series of polarised positions and have presented the New Alexandrina as embroiled in internal national tensions between, for example, religion and secularism and the old romantic, neo-colonial imagination, and new agendas of urban development. Specific critical attention has cast doubt on the success of current attempts to re-create a ‘universal’ library in a climate in which Egypt is witnessing an escalation in the banning of books (see, for example, Stille 2000, writing in *The New Yorker*).
Between these polarised positions, however, is a discourse of revivalism which I have been able to feature in my fieldwork which is capable of drawing out other meanings and also articulating a role for the MOW project. This new encounter between ancient and modern Alexandria and between East and West provokes a wider consideration of Alexandria’s hybrid heritages which resist incorporation into exclusive genealogies, be they privileged western ‘universal’ narratives or those of religion, secularism or of narrow nationalisms.

Cultural Elites: Re-working Alexandria’s Cosmopolitan Spirit

One group of stake-holders centred within my ethnography who are playing a key part in defining this more complex understanding of Alexandrian heritage and memory are the Alexandrian cultural elites. This group, who work variously within the spheres of culture, arts, education, preservation and the environment, operate within both state owned institutions and also orchestrate a network of influence which makes links to a number of NGO’s. In fact, it was from within this group, more specifically academics from Alexandria University that the project originally emerged and initial links with UNESCO were formed. These elites are a powerful network of people who contribute in terms of supplying the cultural/intellectual capital to revivalism. They are currently re-working what has been referred to as Alexandria’s ‘cosmopolitan spirit’. This is no defence of colonialism – ancient or modern - but a means to bring out the complexities of Egypt’s relationships with other nations historically and to reformulate ideas on ‘difference’, tolerance and hybridity in the contemporary context. Informants here were keen to emphasise that Alexandria’s Hellenistic past – and the golden-age of the Mouseion/library – functions as a ‘site of resistance’ for Egyptian/ Alexandrian intellectuals and is one which is capable of being mobilised in contemporary contexts as a means to resist exclusive/ fundamentalist definitions of culture, nation, ethnicity and religion. The contemporary ‘Return to Alexandria’ on this conceptual-operational level is currently being used as a means to acknowledge various Egyptian pasts and not to privilege certain of these to the exclusion of others. Partnerships are already being formed between elites and teams of ‘foreign’ archaeologists to achieve this objective.
Minority Cultures: Difference within the Local

These attempts to rework notions of difference and multiculturalism have opened up possibilities for bringing a number of minority groups into discussions of memory and identity. Here, 'cosmopolitanism' can be seen to operate at a local level. Many of those I interviewed emphasised that minority communities rarely feature in post-independence characterisations of Egyptian national identity which posits an 'homogenised' concept of nation in terms of the majority Arab-Muslim population. These include, amongst others, the survivors of pre-1950s 'foreign' communities, for example, Greek, Italian and Armenian groups in Alexandria, with Jewish communities, with Nubian and Sudanese groups and with Egyptian nationals, including Coptic Christians. One unexpected feature here was through this memory inscription I gained access to a post-1950s history of the departure of foreign communities which continued to exert its influence on both ex-pats and Egyptians. This traumatic experience of separation can be seen to have affected, in different ways, the whole of the city. As one Armenian Alexandrian informant stated: 'Everyone's history is woven together, we each explain the other'. Once again via my ethnographic research I gained access to number of organisations and networks, both in Alexandria and overseas (notably the Bibliotheca's International Friends Organisations), many of which were interested in conducting oral history reminiscence groups. Here, the sense of communities as living 'cultural treasures', was most pronounced as was the accompanying need for those who feel marginalised within the city to use culture to gain a sense of ownership of place.

Urban Shock-Therapy: The Modern City under Re-Development.

Moreover, what was really building up in terms of the Alexandrian revivalist context was the absence of Alexandria's popular 'urban memory'. The contemporary city, which is home to over 4 million people (six million if one includes Alexandria's overspill suburbs) is no longer Alexander's 'utopia'; but has a very different characterisation to that of its ancient ancestor. Alexandria has a vital role nationally and is second only to Egypt's capital Cairo. It is also the country's first seaport, and its second largest industrial centre with 40% of all Egyptian industry located there. The city is Egypt's first domestic summer resort and is currently using cultural
revivalism in an attempt to reinvent itself as an international tourist and conference venue (Egyptian Tourist Board 1997).

Over the last two years renovations have been made to downtown Alexandria, for example, the Corniche which runs along this central downtown strip has undergone renovation, improvements have also been made in refuse collection to surrounding streets and squares and gardens have been redeveloped [slides of downtown Alexandria]. Much of this ‘urban regeneration’ has been organised by the Alexandria Governorate and financed by local companies through tax relief incentives. Companies have also picked up on cultural revivalism too and under the direction of elites/ academics pressure is being brought to bear to twin improvements with basic development needs of the less salubrious areas of the city. Significantly, The Middle Eastern Times (2000) has recently hailed Alexandria as a ‘model’ for the regeneration of third world cities and The Economist (2000) has dubbed it as an exercise in ‘urban shock-therapy.’

Moreover, these renovations as visual signs of transformation and the accompanying popular attitudes towards this change and metamorphosis enabled me to explore a local, urban engagement with the city and its memory. I took to interview people in cafes, shops and on building sites at various locations within the city to pick up on undercurrent of change that cultural revivalism is creating and to explore a co-existent urban revivalism. Some of the younger people I interviewed hoped that revivalism would bring not only jobs and money (notably from tourism) but more sustained and mutually productive contact with the ‘outside world’. Interestingly, these ‘popular voices’ showed that currently Alexandria’s youth are more familiar with contemporary global icons such as the Spice Girls, McDonald’s, Madonna and Leonardo de Caprio than with ancient icons associated with the ancient city such as Cleopatra, Alexander the Great, the Library and Pharos. Older people were more keen to emphasise the vision of a cleaner, safer city -- and what may perhaps be one common if not a ‘universal’ aspiration worth standing by -- that of creating a ‘decent place for children to grow up in’. 

158
Conclusions

In my concluding comments I want to return briefly to my point of departure: - the potency of Alexandrina as a ‘redemptive’ formula and its relevancy for the wider MOW programme. The Alexandrina has previously been characterised within a traditional Aristotelian model of memory; which sees memory, like the archive, as a container from which knowledge can only be acquired, lost or recovered. Ethnographic fieldwork and discussions with the New Alexandrina’s staff illustrate that contemporary revivalism in harnessing the spirit of transformation has opened it up to multi-vocalism and a more dynamic form of ‘memory-work’. The Alexandrina as well as serving to support a myth of a golden-age of the ‘universal’ encyclopaedic archive is thus currently being opened up in order to support a multitude of new aspirations as articulated from diverse contexts. I would suggest that this newer more democratic and dynamic people-centred model of memory-work offers a means to re-connect with the most potent of all lessons conveyed by the ancient Alexandrina: that of the need to archive ‘living memory’ before it is lost forever.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my thanks to Omneya Fathallah for providing detail on the Memory of the Bibliotheca Alexandria project.
SECTION THREE
Some Comments on the Memory of the World (MOW) Guidelines

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Introduction

The following comments are made in support of Aziz Abid's proposal for the inclusion of sociological/ethnographic foundations within the MOW guidelines.

Aims/ Objectives

The purpose of this document is to provoke discussion and debate (its circulation at this initial stage is restricted to Aziz Abid and Guy Petherbridge only).

Outline of Contents

My comments are divided into the following four sections:

1. General Comments: Homogenization and Sensitisation

2. Comparative Comments: Learning from Critiques of the World Heritage Convention and World Heritage List

3. Access to Memory: Defining Sociological and Ethnographic Methodologies

4. Memory Work: 'Container' and 'Active' Models

Concluding Comments: Taking Responsibility – the MOW as Moral/ Ethical Space

3 These are guidelines:
http://portal.unesco.org/ci/ev.php7URL_ID=5916&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201&rel
load=1035467887
1. General Comments: Homogenization and Sensitisation

1.1 My central argument in support of inclusion is that currently the MOW guidelines act as an ‘homogenising force’: this stems from the fact that the objective of preservation [see 2.2.1] dominates the document in terms of the language used, the assumptions held and the ideologies/philosophies which underpin the guidelines. This objective obviously fulfils the very necessary task of defining ‘collections’; setting professional standards and giving clear criteria for inclusion on the MOW List.

1.2 The argument I would like to pursue is that any ‘standardisation’ process needs to be integrated with guidelines which are responsive towards ‘sensitisation’ and thus seek to acknowledge difference, diversity and dialogue. I fully understand that the ‘complementary objectives’ of Access, Distribution and Awareness [2.2.1] are currently in place to effect this ‘mission’ and that many other very valuable references are made to similar objectives and aims [ie Aziz in a previous e-mail 30/11/00 referred to 2.6.Peoples of the World and Chapter 9].

1.3 At the present moment, however, these references are ‘scattered’ and therefore their potential effects are negotiated or compromised by this fact. I would argue that these need to be maximised - detailed and profiled further - in order to be made ‘useful’. Currently these references to social and cultural context are overshadowed by the ‘preservation paradigm’ referred to above: one which universalises ‘Western’ assumptions4 and definitions of the ‘archive’, ‘collections’, ‘culture’ and ‘memory’ and thus has the potential to act as an agent of exclusion and discrimination rather than of inclusion. Indeed, if the MOW seeks to be truly representative of ‘World’ Memory: cultural diversity, multiculturalism, local, regional and national contexts and contestations; alternative understandings of cultural heritage, archives, collection, memory etcetera and, in particular, ‘non-western’ and ‘indigenous’ characterisations need expression and to be fully integrated into the MOW guidelines.

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4 Obviously ‘Western’ is a problematic term, however, this does encapsulate the Eurocentricity of ‘dominant’ characterisations. Similar criticisms have been leveled at the World Heritage Convention and the World Heritage List: see Section 2.
1.4 I would further argue that the point of access by which one could agitate for such inclusion/integration can be found in UNESCO's assumption of 'the role co-ordinator, catalyst in order to 'sensitise' the MOW programme [see 2.1.3 current guidelines]'. This drive towards 'sensitisation' has obviously been a significant effort in attempts by UNESCO and other international agencies to take up responsibilities in national contexts, and more specifically, in regional and local communities, and with reference to 'minority' groups and those made marginal by dominant cultures.

1.5 Indeed, in order to make the MOW more than an exercise by representatives of international library and archivist groups and professional associations to raise an international campaign to 'save' (conserve and preserve) 'collections' from destruction (although worthy in itself) and to standardise professional guidelines/conduct in these contexts, I feel that UNESCO needs to stress its own purchase on the MOW more specifically in terms of the aforementioned stated commitment to 'sensitisation'. To attain this the MOW needs to situate its 'collections', like the MOW programme itself, in their respective social worlds and cultural contexts. Currently the MOW guidelines give more emphasis to decontextualisation than contextualisation: this is where a sociological and ethnographic foundation becomes crucial in offering a complementary force which grounds collections in their various social/cultural worldings and in their moral/ethical frameworks.

1.6 A final 'general' comment takes further the creative potential of 'contextualisation' which I consider to be one of the most exciting features of the MOW and the point at which UNESCO's strength is located. The MOW programme itself embraces a diversity of projects and 'collections' and therefore this intensifies the need to create guidelines that are responsive and responsible

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5 References are made [see guideline 2.1.3] to UNESCO's role to 'To sensitise governments, international organisations and private and public foundations'. Also references are made [guideline 2.3.3] to Cultural Sensitivities and the need to: 'Consult relevant communities ... their wishes and cultural sensitivities will be taken into account in determining access provisions'.

6 Current contextualisation of 'collections' within the MOW is made almost exclusively with reference to 'expert cultures' (archivists, librarians etc...) and professional standards. This has led to detachment from wider social/cultural contexts.
enough to embrace, for example, the needs of 'paper conservation' alongside 'people empowerment'. The former is meaningless in exclusion and the latter is currently a relatively untapped resource for the MOW as a whole.

1.7 Contextualisation of the MOW invites creative possibilities for the formation of a myriad of 'support'/ 'sensitisation' networks which transcend the 'physical' boundaries of 'archives' and 'collections': these could be active in both identifying and defining 'stakeholdership' at local, regional, global levels etcetera. Digitisation is obviously one such strategy but is nevertheless 'partial', however, there is much scope to place digitisation and other expressions of Access and Distribution already outlined in current guidelines, alongside more sustained 'sensitisation' programmes.


2.1 Many references have been made – in current guidelines (e.g 2.3.1) and during the recent Mexico conference - to the usefulness of the WHC and WHL as providing a 'model' (obviously modified) for the MOW. I would argue that the MOW could benefit from examining not simply the 'successes' but the failures of these programmes (including UNESCO's and ICOMOS's self-criticisms).

2.2 As previously mentioned, general criticisms have been made in terms of the capacity of the World Heritage Convention to 'universalise' 'Western' paradigms of heritage, preservation, conservation (cf. Tichen 1996). A related criticism is that the WHC and WHL promotes a dependency on 'Western' 'expert' cultures at the cost of 'local knowledge' and 'expertise'. This emphasises the need for contemporary cultural projects – including the MOW – to be active in

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7 I would stress that digitisation is not synonymous with access and inclusion, the world distribution of telephone lines etcetera, for example, reveals the partial nature of access to new technologies and furthermore in some contexts such technology is considered to be a colonising force. As such digitisation is also potentially excluding and discriminatory.

8 Section 3 attempts to outline what is meant by 'sensitisation' based on sociological/ ethnographic methodologies.
problematising and breaking down such circles of dependency and in defining ways in which to share control and ownership of 'collections' and decision making with a range of local, regional stakeholders etcetera and thus open projects up to multi-vocalism.

2.3 A further criticism picks up in more detail on the 'Western', Eurocentric bias of attempts to 'measure' 'outstanding universal value'. This aspect has famously been criticised by the head of ICOMOS (Henry Cleere) for perpetuating and demanding conformity to exclusive 'Western' assumptions of culture, in particular, an art-aesthetic view of landscape. (see Cleere 1995: 1996: 2000). These criticisms have been influential in recasting the WHL criteria as discriminatory. The current northern European domination of the WHL is held as proof (see Tichen 1996).

2.4 The 'Global strategy' (GS) launched by UNESCO/ICOMOS in 1994 is an obvious attempt to acknowledge and 'correct' current inequalities and thus make the WHL more inclusive/ representative9. The GS has itself, however, been heavily criticised for not going far enough in terms of fully encompassing and understanding, in particular 'non-western' and 'indigenous' definitions of/ approaches to cultural heritage (Cleere 2000).

2.5 My concern here is that the MOW guidelines in their current framework risk repeating some of the exclusive characterisations of culture being perpetuated by the WHC/ WHL just at the time when the WHC/ WHL are moving away from these. It therefore seems even more critical that the MOW addresses these issues - in particular, in terms of the nature of existing guidelines - in its relatively early stages, rather than retrospectively. I would argue that the proposed inclusion of sociological/ ethnographic foundations could do just that. Again this requires that

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9 The definition of the program of global strategy is as follows: 'The global strategy is both a conceptual framework and a pragmatic and operational methodology for implementing the world heritage convention. It takes into account broader definitions of categories of heritage which have outstanding universal value, to ensure a more balance and representative site list and by encouraging countries to become states parties to the convention, to prepare tentative lists and to harmonise them and to prepare nominations of properties for categories and regions currently not well represented on the list'. (From Proceedings of Expert Meeting on Global Strategy and the Thematic Studies for a Representative World Heritage Site List, UNESCO Paris, June 1994: unpublished).

164
the MOW develops its sensitivity in terms of the inclusion of different, diverse, alternative characterisations of ‘collections’/ ‘archives’/ ‘memory’ etcetera.

3 Access to Memory: Defining a Sociological and Ethnographic Foundation

In this section I want to attempt to outline what ‘sensitisation’ based on sociological/ ethnographic methodologies may mean.

3.1 The first step in defining a sociological/ ethnographic foundation for the MOW is the need to bring together the ‘scattered’/ disparate references in current guidelines to what might be broadly defined as sociological/ cultural contextualisation (i.e 2.6.Peoples of the World and Chapter 9 and others), in order to consolidate these features and to give more coherence and clarity to their aims/ objectives. Perhaps once brought together these could form the beginnings of a section of guidelines (a chapter was mooted by Aziz) with the more ‘user-friendly’ title of ‘Access to Memory’ or ‘Sharing of Memory’? I would argue that in the guidelines document as a whole this proposed inclusion would provide an effective interface, in particular, between on one hand, the MOW objectives/ selection criteria for listing/ management framework, and on the other, guidelines re. Awareness Raising (promotion/ publicity/ marketing/ education etcetera): thus integrating all the ‘three’ key sections.

3.2 A further means of engaging the MOW in social/ cultural contexts would be to match/ or twin its ‘collections’ and pilot projects with other existing UNESCO programmes already in operation (and possibly programmes ‘outside’ UNESCO) which do fulfil a sociological criteria. For example, just as the MOW has sought to match ‘collections’ with potential sources of funding, the MOW similarly needs to be active in matching ‘collections’/ pilot projects to wider programmes/ networks. For example, the UNESCO’s Virtual Library of the Mediterranean: Spaces of Diversity; Roads of Dialogue; Routes of Faith programmes, are just some examples of the many vehicles which already start to make links between the MOW and a series of different types of projects (e.g. for example, those concerning archives, heritage sites, museums, educational institutions); and with different ‘expert’ cultures, institutions and publics etcetera and with diverse
stakeholders at macro and micro levels. Perhaps more importantly, such ‘matching’ of projects offers an effective (and relatively easy) means to embed the MOW in wider programmes committed to needs of, amongst other agendas, development, education, social inclusion, cultural rights: in some cases, more specifically expressed as the strengthening (and/or revival) of civil society and urban regeneration\(^{10}\), and in others, for example, post-war reconstruction, reconciliation and peace\(^{11}\).

3.3 Whilst I consider the above suggestions to be valuable starting points, more depth needs to be gained by the MOW’s engagement with social/ ethnographic methodologies ‘proper’. A typical research model would begin with attempts to ‘describe’ - and even be active in ‘creating’ - contexts for collections/ projects: this is usually achieved by means of a mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods – structured and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders/ interest groups and informants. Focus/ discussion groups with potential ‘users’; with ‘programming staff’; institutional actors, community representatives and with ‘non-users’ etcetera would offer a significant starting point for further ethnographic research. The commitment to the establishment of effective long-term sensitisation networks would need to follow.

3.4 I would argue that the diversity of MOW ‘collections’ and its pilot projects require an equally ‘tailored’ approach towards the application of methods in order for these to be responsive to the needs/ requirements of their respective contexts. I would further argue that sociological/ ethnographic research, which can be undertaken in partnership with university departments (thus picking up on the MOW’s objective to make links with educational institutions), can offer a number of very practical benefits to any MOW project, whether undertaken as preliminary research or whether included in the content of memory schemes.\(^{12}\) From such a body of research the needs or profile of certain interest groups can be drawn out,

\(^{10}\) As for example, in UNESCO’s Re-inventing Cultural Cities Programme.

\(^{11}\) Here I am thinking of UNESCO’s Universities for Peace network.

\(^{12}\) For example, the Memory of Bibliotheca Alexandrina project plans to include contemporary oral testimony in its contents.
and, for example, can be used as a means to pick up on potential financial partnerships and/or to gain an understanding of local purchases/ or lack of them.\textsuperscript{13}

3.5 However, my particular recommendation would be for the MOW to engage in more holistic and sustained research. Sociological/ ethnographic work is increasingly understood as an 'active' and creative process which can usefully be explored and exploited for its capacity to actively define and network a broader and more responsive group of stakeholders. Research work thus often aims to challenge the idea that stakeholders are a pre-constituted group of 'experts' and thus can be active in creating a wider sense of ownership and control of projects; in particular with groups previously excluded/ made marginal. This newer more responsive approach to context and stakeholdership has the potential to embed MOW projects in a series of diverse networks.\textsuperscript{14}

3.6 To offer some illustration, my research work in Alexandria obviously benefits from using this more 'holistic' model. As outlined in my paper at the Mexico conference there has been much local ambivalence and at times resistance to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (i.e. the wider UNESCO/ Egyptian government revival project within which the MOW’s pilot project the Memory of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina is housed). Field work in Alexandria has revealed a failure to engage with the local context and thus with the needs of local sensitisation and of cultural, social, urban development. Other MOW may equally discriminate and exclude. Ethnographic work with a wide variety of 'stakeholders' has gone some way to map local voices and thus to open up revivalism to multi-vocalism. One of the effects here is that that Bibliotheca Alexandrina staff are keen to develop the pilot project in a number of ways and want to emphasise, 1. that the MBA should be of relevancy to the wider contemporary city; 2. that it be interactive, 3. engage in dialogue, 4. that it create a dynamic relationship between past, present and future and finally, 5. that it be active in creating networks between international and local stake-holders (Fathallah: 5/00). The implications of which is the need to

\textsuperscript{13} I prefer to recommend the approach outlined in 3.5 which is more 'holistic'.

\textsuperscript{14} As previously mentioned the MOW invites creative possibilities for the formation of 'stakeholder' status capable of including both 'local' purchases and interest groups which transcend the 'physical' boundaries of 'archives' and 'collections'.

167
embed the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the Memory of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in a more relevant, responsive and responsible dialogue at macro-micro levels.

3.7 I would thus argue that the MOW’s pilot projects which focus upon more specific specialist historical ‘collections’ have just as much to benefit from a modified use of such research. I understand research work in Alexandria to be untypical of MOW projects as a whole (i.e. in that MOW pilot project is inextricably linked to a major UNESCO revival project), however, if ‘matching’ of projects were to take place the Memory of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina would actually represent a typical MOW scenario. Moreover, I would also challenge the idea that sociological/ethnographic research should be confined to ‘non-western’ contexts: ‘anthropologising the West’ has been a significant feature of academic theory and practice in recent years which has offered insights into the particular needs/requirements of contexts typically universalised and often, ironically, left unstudied. Equally, in a global environment these terms ‘West/non-west’, North/South are made unstable by the hybridities, complexities, contradictions, collaborations and conflictual macro-micro relationships which mark the operational context and which can be usefully drawn out by sociological/ethnographic studies.

3.8 A further argument in support of a broader sociological/ethnography approach is that it has many correspondences with UNESCO’s new conceptualisations of ‘intangible heritage’; which casts individuals as ‘living treasures’ and agents of cultural transmission. The inclusion of ‘intangible’ heritage is obviously part of attempts by UNESCO to be more receptive to characterisations of culture and memory previously excluded or made marginal. The MOW is obviously well-placed to engage with/creatively straddle the line between both the designations of tangible and intangible heritage and to work in creative partnership with both. References are already present in current MOW guidelines (see 2.4.7) to ‘Oral Traditions’ as a point of inclusion, for example, the text reads: ‘The memory of the world is also kept alive by oral tradition ... the Memory of the World Programme will encourage the maintenance and the documenting of this tradition through the use of technology. This is imperative in many societies where
traditional ways of maintaining memory are being eroded'. Again this aspect needs to be profiled and further detailed and placed aside new attempts to broaden understandings of different characterisations of 'archive,'15 'collections', 'memory' etcetera.

3.9 One further context which requires inclusion and is currently unreferenced is that which relates to 'indigenous' cultures and 'indigenous' 'collections' and 'archives'. For example, here, the relationship between sacred sites, keeping places and archives/ collections of sacred and secret sacred material needs responsible inclusion into the MOW programme. Often these contexts radically challenge 'Western' ideas of, not only, conservation, preservation but also public access (Simpson 1996). These issues need addressing.

3.10 Finally, returning to the value of a sociological/ ethnographic chapter/ section as an effective interface, in particular, between, firstly, the MOW objectives/ selection criteria for listing/ management, and, secondly, guidelines re. Awareness Raising (promotion/ publicity/ marketing/ education etcetera: I would argue that this enhances possibilities that social and cultural concerns and contexts (including those of development, regeneration, education etcetera) can be integrated throughout MOW i.e. they would indeed be part of the MOW's foundations and therefore its moral/ ethical framework.

4. MOW and Memory Work: Container and Active Models

In this final section I want to concentrate on concepts of memory. The use of the term 'Memory' is the key defining and distinguishing feature of the MOW and yet is currently under-developed within the guidelines. I would argue that a more critical appreciation of this term could provide the MOW with a more subtle philosophical framework which yet again profiles a more 'people-centred' rather than 'paper-centred' view of 'collections'.

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15 This brings to mind the oft-quoted statement made by Amadou Hampate Ba of Mali to a UNESCO meeting, 'In Africa when an old man dies, a library disappears' (see Lacoste 1994: 139).
41. The MOW is currently characterised within a broadly Aristotelian model of
memory; one which sees memory like the archive, as a ‘container’ from which
‘knowledge’ can only be acquired, lost or recovered (cf. Forty and Kuchler
1999). The general theory of culture which has emerged from this Aristotelian
model attaches itself to the type of preservational paradigm outlined at the start
of this document (see MOW guidelines 2.2.1). This paradigm which sees culture
as subject to an entropic trajectory of decay and destruction is inextricably
linked to desires (campaigns) to effect the recovery, restoration and revival of
memory/ culture/ knowledge. Furthermore, this is the scenario upon which the
philosophy, language and practice of preservation/ conservation is based (see,
for example, Lowenthal 1996) and which continues to lie at the heart of the
heritage culture and of UNESCO’s and Memory of the World’s own missions:
e.g. the objectives – to safeguard, restore, preserve – ‘universal’/ ‘world’
documentary etcetera) heritage.  

4.2 However, current academic research into ‘memory’ which borrows heavily
from the disciplines of psychology, psychoanalysis, cultural theory and
anthropology has drawn attention to the limitations of the Aristotelian model
in understanding the complexities of memory, knowledge, culture. Many of
these critiques have posited that a more ‘active’ model of memory work is
required in order to describe the complex actions of remembering and
forgetting and their relationship to repression, consciousness and lived
experience (cf. Forty and Kuchler 1999). I would argue that this newer, more
democratic, dynamic, ‘people-centred’ model of memory-work, allows
creative possibilities for the MOW to engage in new areas of debate. This
‘active’ model of memory-work has been particularly valuable in attempts to
understand the subtle relationship between, for example, culture, memory,
collective identities, personhood and embodiment which, in turn, have
provided a means to centre, in particular, the culture of those previously made

16 The legend of the Alexandrian Library is usually pressed into the service of this broadly Aristotelian
preservation paradigm: i.e. its loss damaged the ‘memory of the world’. Similarly, the destruction of
Sarajevo Library in more recent times typically evokes a similar response. (Abid makes this argument
in a paper given at the first International MOW conference, Memory of the World: Preserving our
Documentary Heritage (see (http://www.org/webworld/memory/aziz.htm)).
marginal (including a more responsible engagement with ‘non-western’ and ‘indigenous’ contexts and cultural practices). Furthermore, these have been a key force in efforts to support the related campaigns and demands for equality, empowerment, social/‘culture’ justice etcetera.

4.3 This ‘active’ model of memory work is also crucial in order to gain an understanding of contexts in which attempts have and are being made to translate silences, pain, trauma (as failed memory) into a sense of healing, wholeness and regeneration (see Forty and Kuchler 1999; Radstone 2000). In recent times there has emerged an increased demand for ‘material memory’ (cf. Kwint 1999) - in the form of archives, collections, museums, heritage sites, etcetera - to be centred as a ‘resource’ for the narrativisation of histories and experiences of loss, trauma and wounding. I would argue that many of the current MOW ‘collections’ could have a role in such contexts. For example, the MOW draws attention to the contemporary context in which ‘archives’ and ‘collections’ are made vulnerable by war, social upheaval, looting, dispersal and illegal trading etcetera (guidelines 1.1). It seems incumbent on the MOW to attempt to understand and engage with these contexts/ agendas. Furthermore, the MOW is already engaging with specific collections which are of an overtly ‘sensitive’ nature, for example, those which pertain to the Slave Trade, Human Rights, Censorship, and to add to these, the Mexico conference had presentations from archivists concerned with, for example, - archives of repression in Paraguay and genocide in Rwanda. Once again, I feel there is much potential for centring these archives in attempts to empower those who feel a sense of loss and grievance as part of projects of reparation (in its Kleinian sense).

4.4 Finally, I would argue that at a time when the cultural heritage, archives, collections and museums etc are also being pressed into the service of violent ‘cultural fundamentalism’ (i.e. as occurred in Sarajevo, Ayodhya, and elsewhere) it is even more crucial that the MOW takes a stand.

17 The relationship of the MOW with the Blue Shield Programme is obviously important here.
5. Concluding Comments:

Taking Responsibility - the MOW as Moral/Ethical Space

My final comments reiterate key points and emphasise the following:

- the homogenising force of current guidelines and the need to sensitize the MOW
- the need to avoid replicating the exclusions and discriminations of the WHC/WHL
- the creative possibilities of matching ‘collections’/ pilot projects to programmes which have a grounding in social/ cultural contexts and in the needs of development, social inclusion, human and cultural rights etcetera.
- the potential for the MOW to engage in more detailed ethnographic research with the aim, for example, of engaging with various ‘stakeholders’, creating new interest groups and giving recognition (where appropriate) to definitions/ characterisations of archives, collections, cultures and memory previously made marginal or excluded.
- the need to engage critically with the concept of ‘memory’ and to centre the MOW within attempts to ‘heal’, reconcile and to ‘narrativise’ trauma; a particularly important objective at a time when the global community is witnessing the growth of ‘cultural fundamentalism’.

Finally, I would argue that all these forces operating on the MOW have the power to make explicit the MOW’s position as a moral-ethical space. While it is important to stress the ‘possibilities’, ‘benefits’, ‘advantages’ of the inclusion of a sociological/ ethnographic foundation to the MOW guidelines. The flip-side of this has to be that for the MOW to ignore this potential would equally leave the programme open to accusations of failing to take up its responsibilities.

Beverley Butler 9/12/00
Appendix Five

The ‘Egyptianisation’

of Revivalism
APPENDIX FIVE

THE 'EGYPTIANISATION' OF REVIVALISM

INTRODUCTION

This appendix gives context to the inscription and impacts of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project and wider Alexandrian revivalism at the level of Egypt's national cultural agencies. I have, therefore, drawn together both interviews and printed sources which offered me a means to investigate what is perhaps best described as the 'Egyptianisation' of revivalism.

My approach is two-fold. In the first part of this appendix I focus upon interviews undertaken in Cairo with informants from: the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA), UNESCO's Cairo fieldwork offices and with ICOM's Arab World representative and the Director of the Pyramids.

In the second part I provide an outline of the key dynamics of the 2002 Centenary Celebrations of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo and its accompanying conference "Museology in the 21st Century" which represent the culmination of this 'Egyptianising' trajectory within the context of my field-work.

A common concern of all of the above sources/interviews is to position contemporary cultural revivalist projects as the latest episode in an on-going drama of the transformation of Egypt's culture agencies. Informants in the first group of interviews, for example, thus outlined the significance of Alexandrian revivalism, firstly, with reference to an historical context dominated by a colonially controlled antiquities service - defined by events such as the founding of the Egyptian Museum and the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb in 1922 - and, secondly, a more recent history which reveals the struggles, the successes, the contemporary agendas and future visions in terms of the

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1 International Council of Museums (ICOM) which is a UNESCO affiliated body.
dynamic and the objective of the nationalisation or ‘Egyptianisation’ of this domain. It was clear from these informants that this latter dynamic of nationalisation invests the Nubian Campaigns as a key part of its genealogy while of note too are informants’ articulation of contemporary commitments to the mobilisation and the internalisation of the UNESCO’s cultural rights legislation and its cosmopolitical and universalising brief as part of this process. With specific reference to the period of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s ‘meltdown’ the force of revivalism is characterised yet again as a time of aspiration while concerns are expressed too in terms of the anxieties collecting around Egypt’s return and reattachment with its Greco-Roman pasts.
SECTION ONE
RE-ATTACHMENTS WITH ANCIENT PASTS

Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA)

The offices, institutions and sites which my visits to these Caireen informants map across range from the more solemn bureaucratic spaces of the SCA Cairo Head-Quarters in Cairo’s Abbasiya district, the Egyptian Museum in central Cairo’s Tahrir Square, the nearby University of Cairo and the monumental, iconic heritage of the Pyramids in Giza. Of this group of interviews I want to begin by focusing upon three key players: Gaballa, Hawass and Nourredin all of whom have a significant link in that they have occupied the position of Secretary General of SCA. Nourredin was Secretary General (1993-1996) and at the time our meeting Head of the Egyptology department at Cairo University and regional Arab chairman for ICOM; Hawass, who at the time of interview was the Director of the Pyramids and at the time of writing is Secretary General of SCA (2001-) and lastly Gaballa who at the time of meeting was SCA Secretary General (1996-1999) and is now retired.

My meeting with Professor Gaballa Gaballa the (then) Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (1996-1999) took place at the imposing SCA offices where the noise of the traffic filling the surrounding streets out-did that of Alexandria’s Horreya Street. The SCA building has its own grand bureaucratic feel although its busy interior spaces possess none of the new technologies of the UNESCO and GOAL Head-Quarters. The exterior of the building does, however, boast the organisation’s logo - a Pharaonic cartouche\(^2\). This logo, in turn, provides an indicator of SCA’s own identity and genealogy: it not only stands in testimony to Egypt’s struggle (heightened in the period 1922 and brought to fruition in 1952) to repossess and ‘nationalise’ its antiquities services but emphasises too the central place of the Pharaonic past within this act of ‘Egyptianisation’.

\(^2\) (This can be found on the SCA website http://www.sca.gov.eg along with other background information).
Gaballa in his impressive suite of offices was keen to illustrate SCA's own integral role in the revivallist dynamic while also stressing what he termed (echoing Fattah and other Alexandrian informants as he did so) as the 'distinct traditions' which also brought a certain level of local autonomy to Alexandrian revivalism (Gaballa: 9/99). Here he stated how:

"Contemporary attempts to bring about Alexandria’s rebirth represent a dramatic change in Alexandria’s fortunes. Alex [sic] has had a very rough deal in terms of its cultural development. The situation is that Egypt as a whole has more antiquities than it can already take care of and the history of the antiquities service has focused upon the Pharaonic past and has been in the hands of Egyptologists. The history of Alexandria, as you know, is that of an ancient Greek past, which until recently has had very few monumental remains to speak of. You get a situation still today where Mediterranean cruisers will land at Alex and have buses waiting for them to take tourists to Cairo and back. They go to straight to Cairo and not to Alex. Traditionally foreign tourist interest in Egypt, like that of nineteenth-century archaeological and Egyptological interest in Egypt, means the Pharaonic past - the Pyramids and the Sphinx etc...'.

- From Colonial to Egyptian Hands

Gaballa subsequently pursued this dynamic of Alexandria’s distinct historical traditions and themes of integration and separation by placing these within the wider sweeps of the ‘nationalisation’ of Egypt’s culture services. Again echoing a number of themes pursued by Fattah (in Chapter Five), Gaballa argues, ‘The French established the antiquities services in Egypt. It must be stressed, however, that many very talented Egyptians, were involved in its development even though it was controlled by European hands until 1950s. When the cultural heritage was in the hands of the colonials Egypt’s main Museums were established: most prominently, the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir Square here in Cairo. Alexandria’s Greco-Roman Museum and its Archaeological Society, although also set up by the city’s foreign communities, has a very different or separate history and tradition. Egyptologists like Mariette, Maspera, Petrie and Carter are very
well known and, of course, archaeological work at the Pyramids and the discoveries in Upper Egypt of Tutankhamen’s tomb and treasures were the centre of world attention. Alexandria’s Greek past and its still submerged heritage were not part of this wider story. Egyptology dominated. The political situation also meant that we had to wait until after 1952 to really take control of our own culture, our heritage and museums. After a number of changes of name and ministries we changed our name to the Supreme Council of Antiquities [SCA] in 1994 and were placed under the Ministry of Culture. That was just at the same time as we established the Underwater Archaeology Department in Alexandria and just as the Bibliotheca project was taking root in the city’.

Hawass, speaking to me at his office at the Giza plateau and with the backdrop of the real of the aforementioned iconic landscape of the Pyramids and Sphinx, pursued these dynamics further and did this, once again, by placing his narrative within the wider sweeps of the ‘nationalisation’ of Egypt’s culture services (Hawass: 9/99). His specific focal point was that of that other iconic landscape - Tutankhamen’s tomb in Luxor - and Howard Carter’s 1922 excavations, ‘The 1920s was a time at which the Egyptian’s had political aspirations and visions for self-government and Carter’s actions were seen by many nationalists to be an act of colonial imperialism. In many senses Carter’s excavations became a test case in terms of Egyptian sovereignty over the finds. This really was the beginnings of the force of nationalisation eventually fully achieved in the 1950s’. Differentiating between this period and the contemporary context Hawass added, ‘We have come along way since this time. Our generation can take pride in being the first of the Egyptian Egyptologists and Egyptian nationals who can take full control over the cultural heritage. Now we are able to look forward to new confidence in the work of our cultural heritage agencies. It has been a very, very important part of Egypt’s development as an independent country and part of our own maturity and self-respect as a new nation. Alexandria has become almost by accident the next stage in this process’.
- Egyptianisation of the Antiquities Services

In his interview Gaballa also emphasised this ‘accidental’ aspect and also the anxieties which come with this, ‘Alexandria has never been able to compete [with the other cultural sites and heritage elsewhere in Egypt], though we hope it will. It will, therefore, be a difficult time in terms of the city’s cultural development’. Turning to SCA’s own role in this context, he avoided the specific controversies which as Chapter Five illustrates marked the ‘birth’ of Alexandria’s archaeological revivalism, to argue, ‘We are, of course supportive of this change, and the Supreme Council as you know has developed the underwater archaeology department in Alexandria in direct response to the very significant finds made at Qait Bey and elsewhere in the Eastern harbour and along the coast’. He also added that from the ‘national perspective’ the Alexandrina too took on an as yet ‘separate’ position from SCA thus emphasising, ‘The Bibliotheca is officially part of the Ministry of Education in Cairo and is managed in Alexandria by Zahran at the GOAL offices. So this is really separate although we imagine SCA’s increased integration with the scheme’. This motif of the Alexandria as yet to undergo full ‘integration’ at national/local level remained a significant – and at times problematic – feature of the period of ‘meltdown.’ What was, however, clear was that it was the Caireen bureaucrats at high ministerial level who participated in the Bibliotheca’s committee networks who at this stage ‘held’ the project. Gaballa did, however, reference the SARCOM Meeting as ‘a major break-through’ adding, ‘the SCA was one of its main sponsors. This is the kind of direction we need to maintain’

- Categorising Culture

Gaballa’s and Hawass’ interviews have points of connection too in terms of their concern to open-up and reassess what have been seen as the more narrow features of the post-1950s use of the Egyptian past as a political resource. Gaballa, for example, argued that, ‘It is always dangerous to categorise. I would not categorise what happened post-1950s in terms of affiliations to heritage in black and white. Political slogans - and also intellectual debates - can hide people’s real identities and while they can be used in political contexts
and seminars there is much contradiction and complexity.' Here Gaballa pitched both the 'politicians' and 'intellectuals' use of the past within a separate domain to that of the work of the SCA, adding, 'What we do at SCA is scientific study and the preservation of the physical heritage itself. Politics is a matter for the politicians in their domain and also for people at intellectual level argue about'. Gaballa did feel impassioned enough, however, to 'set the record straight' on some aspects of the political and intellectual use of the Egyptian past, 'People, for example, persist in thinking that Nasser as totally anti-Pharaonic. However, I don’t think Nasser, for example, found a conflict with being an Arab and being an Egyptian. If you read his *Philosophy of the Revolution*, you can see that he saw national identity in terms of a layering of Egyptian, Arab and African identities – three circles – there are few studies of this context and we need more research into its complexity before we can make such bold statements'.

Gaballa did outline how certain clashes occurred in the political realm between the Pharaonism and the 'turn to Islam and Arabism.' He stated, 'The leaders of Pan-Arabism, particularly the Syrians, had a difficulty in terms of Egypt’s Pharaonic past, especially as the Pharaohs are condemned in the Koran' here he reiterated, 'But this is a matter for the politicians in their domain. What we do is scientific'. With implications for my discussion of Diop’s work and his particular project of a ‘Return to Egypt’ which appears in Chapter Two, Gaballa states, ‘People, at intellectual level argue, for example, about Diop’s ideas and try to argue that we are part of sub-Saharan culture – UNESCO took this very seriously and held a meeting in Cairo in the 1970s’. He asserted, however, that, ‘This kind of debate never touches the grass roots: ordinary people do not bother who the Pharaohs were and I bet if you asked 95% of Egyptian’s working in the culture services they will say they never have heard of Diop³. Here Gaballa reiterated how the monumental landscape itself testifies to these contradictions, he emphasised how, ‘Nasser was buried in a mosque-shaped mausoleum and Sadat in a pyramid-shaped one! It shows how politics takes on an aspect of make-believe’. He stated how, ‘These politicians and intellectuals fail to take on how people live their everyday lives and what people feel in

³ Martin Bernal’s *Black Athena* (1987) was, however, translated into Arabic around this time and as Bernal states, received ‘an interested though ultimately mixed reception in Egypt’ (Bernal 9/01).
their hearts about their heritage’. Echoing the sentiments of the UNESCO-Paris informant Ramzi (see Appendix Three), Gaballa argued, ‘The Egyptian character is more complex than you think and is a mixture of traditions and influences. It is what people feel in their hearts and their everyday life, their everyday rituals and their identities. In this sense heritage resists intellectual categorisation and political categorisation. As I say Alexandria has had a tough time in its political categorisation post-1950s and we hope revivalism will be a means to bring a scholarly, scientific look at the city’s heritage.’

Interestingly, Hawass’ interview focused on more contemporary aspects of ‘make-believe’ – or as he has it ‘myth-making’ – and the role of the Egyptian cultural services to counter-act what he defined as its ‘negative effects’. Hawass stated how, ‘Much of my job is about dispelling myths about the Egyptian past, from different extreme opinions’. Hawass gave examples of these extremist views in terms of, ‘All sorts of claims. Some people say or write that the Pyramids for example were built by aliens! Obviously we cannot take these seriously but some people try to use the heritage for political reasons by arguing that the Pyramids were built by the Hebrews and therefore belong to the Israel’s heritage. Other groups claim that Egypt’s Pharaonic past is Pagan in the eyes of Islam. Of course, these are political claims by people who really do not care about heritage but about power. We, of course, pursue the scientific line and show that heritage cannot be taken over by this line of thought which is motivated by self-interest and politics. It is important that we make a stand against this and concentrate upon the scientific worth’. Acknowledging Alexandria’s own propensity for myth-making Hawass insisted, ‘It is crucial that Alexandrian revivalism also concerns itself with prioritising scientific worth over politics and myth-making’. Both he and Gaballa were keen to stress that the dynamic of ‘nationalisation’ has itself transformed to be resonant to changing situations, as the latter states, ‘We have to make sure that the organisation remains open-minded and not narrow-minded. We are not an island and we must keep a universal aspect to what we do’.
SECTION TWO

‘MIXTURE OF WORTH’

These motifs of ‘myth-making’ and the ‘scientific worth’ of Egypt’s heritage were issues taken up further by Nourredin, a former Secretary General (1993-1996) of SCA and currently the Head of the Egyptology Department at Cairo University and regional Arab chairman for ICOM. The specific perspectives Nourredin gave to this context were significant in terms of his alignment of the above dynamics more directly to the relationships to both UNESCO and ICOM’s own discourses. My meeting with Nourredin took place at Cairo University whose own institutional history occupies an important place within the wider history of the ‘nationalisation’ of culture, Egyptology and of educational institutions (Nourredin 9/99). Nourredin, began his interview, by similarly stressing the complexity of the ‘Egyptian character’: his initial comments again contained echoes of Ramzi’s references to the tendency of ‘cutting up’ Egyptian history into different periods, he thus stated how, ‘People often separate out different aspects of the Egyptian identity and make parallels between these and Egypt’s different pasts’. Nourredin, however, was keen to express some sympathy in terms of the political and intellectual turn to the Egyptian past, his particular argument here was that ‘these appeals were part of the necessary acts of reconciliation in terms of reinstating different parts of the Egyptian character.’ This theme of ‘reconciliation’ proved one of the dominant dynamics of his understanding of the not only the political and intellectual usage but also the operational interventions of the museum and heritage culture.

Here he stated how, ‘Although each part of the Egyptian identity has its positive impacts and its negative effects, the act of the reclamation of aspects of identity which were lost or suppressed under colonialism is a necessary part of regaining self-pride as a people’. He continued, ‘The expression of the Arab, and particularly the Islamic aspects, of the Egyptian identity has been very powerful for the Egyptian people and for the reconciliation of the different facets of the Egyptian character’. Here he added, ‘Nasser obviously pressed this line hard in the political arena and this was in the context of striving for Egypt’s independence. But this was just one aspect of our character. Nasser
himself showed he was capable of bringing in other aspects, for example, while at the same time as he was creating an identity for himself as the new Saladin he also asked the international community's help to salvage the Nubian monuments. So in this sense the idea of Egypt as a universal heritage was pursued too'. Pressing his point home, Nourredin argued, 'Nations often concentrate one particular aspect of their personality for political reasons. If you look at the history of any great European culture and country you will find the same'.

Echoing some of Gaballa's earlier comments, he attached this theme of the 'reconciliation' of both the Egyptian personality and heritage with cultural continuities maintained via what he regarded as a more authentic cosmopolitics transmitted by 'everyday Egyptian customs and traditions'. These, in turn, drew out aspects of culture which correspond to UNESCO's category of intangible heritage: 'These political identities now have to be reconciled to aspects of our culture we have inherited from ancient Egypt and elsewhere. From an anthropological view there is a big link through a variety of traditions and through language with, for example, the Coptic past. The names of our towns and villages and the survivals of specific rituals and customs can be traced back to the ancient past, from which we have inherited so much, and give continuity to. It is important that in museums and through our heritage and archaeological sites we can show that Egyptians can still be good Muslims while insisting too that we are the grandsons of our Egyptian grandfathers in all their variety. We can recognize the great cultures of Egypt and Islam while recognizing too that we have a mixture of worth'.

However, within Nourredin's outlining of this 'mixture of worth' there is still the sense of anxiety and ambivalence about the Greco-Roman past, here he stated how, 'Although you do get survivals - monumental survivals and I am sure in anthropological terms too - of the Ptolemaic and Roman period in Luxor and Upper Egypt, the concentration historically has been upon the Pharaonic pasts and this is what attracts the international visitor. There is no doubt that within Egypt's history the Greco-Roman has made great impacts upon wider Egyptian culture but the lack of material or monumental testimony in Alexandria itself means that it gets left out'. Yet again reiterating the sentiments of
Gaballa and Hawass he argued, ‘This is why the attempts to re-discover Alexandria’s lost heritage are very important to reconcile this part of our heritage’.

- ‘New Truth’ and the Museological Imagination

Nourredin moved on to discuss the operational dynamics of acts of cultural reconciliation in the wider Egyptian context and used these as a means to give depth to Alexandria’s contemporary acts of return. In so doing, he argued for the recuperation of aspects of the ‘old’ museological and heritage template as a potential means to represent, in mediated form, Egypt’s heritage as a ‘mixture of worth’. This dynamic of mediation, as Nourredin made clear was, once again, that of a ‘scientific perspective’ which he argued was necessary in order to present an ‘objective point of view’. He argued further, ‘There are so many sources we rely on when creating history and we rely heavily on what people have left us and what survives in terms of the material we have in our hands. Any material and any document can bring a new truth to reality and this is what we should be interested in, not in terms of self-interest, but in the peaceful development of humanity. This material includes both heritage and archaeological sites and also museums. Museums, in particular, can help by telling the story of tolerance through objects’.

Here Nourredin stated, ‘In Egypt’s museums and also in terms of Egypt’s heritage sites we approach the past as Egyptologists and archaeologists and examine the evidence we have in our hands in a scientific way. We have full respect for both the Old Testament and also to the Koran but these cannot be used as our main evidence – it might help us – but when people try and make an absolute connection between events in these texts and archaeology there is a tendency to bring together histories which are really years apart’. Echoing Hawass’ sentiments he stated how, ‘In general any respected Egyptologist is not really interested in whether Moses is Akhenaton or whether Jesus and Tutankhamen were the same person! But it is important to have evidence and a scientific means to bring the past to people and to give it as much historical reality as we can and not just leave it to the imagination. We usually say that ‘Those who do not have a past to do have a future’. We have to use our skills to do this through cultural heritage’. Importantly too Nourredin
Museums in Egypt reproduce this kind of scientific approach. It helps us understand the progress of civilisation and to place different civilisations, East and West, within this. For us it allows a means to position Egypt’s own history and its ancient pasts in this wider story. It shows how no culture is separate but how we all contribute towards the development of humanity.

- New ‘Orientalisation’ of Museums

It was, however, having outlined these strategies for the mediation and reconciliation of humanity within museum and heritage spaces that Nourredin began to draw out the more exclusive qualities of the ‘old’ museum and heritage paradigms. Here he stated how, ‘The original museum-builders internationally were of course Europeans and this is true of what happened in Egypt with the French controlling our heritage services’. He continued, ‘The Western tradition was, of course, to collect – or in many cases loot from foreign territories - and to keep this treasure in buildings they called museums’. Highlighting the ‘Greek’ aspect of the West’s museum project he stated how, ‘In this tradition the façade of the museum was an indication of what is inside. Therefore, many museums looked like European palaces or Greek temples, - this is true of the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria, - and this illustrated in visual terms that museums are a place for keeping antiquities. The Arabic word for ‘museum’ translates as ‘the place of antiquities or treasured objects’ gives a sense of this too’. Placing a different perspective - and in so doing an ironic twist - on the museological genealogy, he argued, ‘Egypt and other states within the Arab region are, of course, the territories of ancient civilisations and in this sense are museums in themselves’. He also stressed the negative features of museums built by European colonials in foreign territories, ‘The museums which the West built in the non-West were built without the concern or care to understand the culture of the peoples within the area surrounding the museum and really were more concerned with colonial fantasies of the mind’.

Nourredin then focused upon the repossession of these spaces and what he referred to as the force of ‘orientalisation,’ a term he used to express (quite differently from Said 1978)
a more positive sense of agency within the Arab world, thus he stated how, 'Since the decline of colonial influences in the Arab region there had been a certain 'orientalisation' of museums' adding 'people value museums as a sign of a highly civilised culture and are committed to show this is true of Arab countries as much as in the West'. He did, however, stress some of the differences between contexts, 'Museums in the Arab region have another flavour, taste and understanding to them. What marks them out is the differences in terms of what subjects you can interpret and what kind of styles and objects you can have'. Here he outlined certain controversies in terms of what he termed as 'those heavily Islamised cultures in the Arab region' here he stated, 'Some within the Arab world see a contradiction between, for example, displaying artist's images especially those which depict humans and gods and the sentiments expressed in the Koran on this subject'. He stressed too, 'Even though these countries have great wealth from the oil companies within their territories, the decision makers do not have thoughts of museums in their minds and do not prioritise museums'.

Nourredin was keen to differentiate Egypt's position here, 'But this is not true of Egypt where things are more open and more and more decision-makers minds, including that of Mubarak, turn towards museum-building. His support of the Bibliotheca illustrates this'. Nourredin emphasised, in turn, how the Bibliotheca and also the planned underwater museum, were new departures in terms of pushing forward Egypt's museological imagination, 'In Egypt we do not tend to interpret our modern history and to follow all the modern styles and subjects that Western museums do. With the Bibliotheca Alexandrina it may be possible to try new styles. The architecture, for example, is of a modern style which allows us to explore new ideas between past and present'. The involvement of the Arab world in the project was also regarded by Nourredin as a positive sign of a possible future in which culture and museums would increasingly be seen within this region as a priority and 'embraced as part of both education and national pride'.

Nourredin turned to address one issue which is very resonant to the contemporary revivalist context: that of the on-going exclusivity in terms of who visits museums. He
stated how, 'Only the highly educated people in the Arab region and also in Egypt visit heritage sites and museums. The percentage is very low between 5%-15% of the population in Egypt visit. This is different from one Arab country to the next. It has never been in the mind of the decision-makers in charge of museums in Egypt to change this. This situation is due to many factors, particularly that of education. This makes museums and heritage visiting very different here than in the West where there is more education'. Here Nourredin stressed, 'In Egypt more than 50% of the population is illiterate. ‘Third world’ nations obviously have a difficult time in terms of access to public culture and public institutions and education is a key factor in trying to bring about change. What we are doing at the moment is to try and encourage schools and the students to visit Egypt’s museums'. Here he added, ‘To most people it is not academic or cultural visits which they associate heritage with, but providing jobs and tourism. This might be as hotel staff, a falafel seller or working as a labourer on an archaeological site.’ Yet again these are issues emergent in the Alexandrian context too.

SECTION THREE

RECONCILING HISTORY

Just as Nourredin, argued that since the 1950s the ‘old’ museological and heritage paradigm offered a means to both repossess the museum and heritage culture for the national story while at the same time allowing them to recuperate a certain ‘universalism’ and ‘scientific objectivity,’ he argued too, that it in attempting to address Egypt’s new concerns within the domain of heritage and museum, it was Egypt’s internalisation of the UNESCO discourses that offered a new dynamic. Significantly, this included what Nourredin termed as the force of ‘access and popularisation’. Egypt’s relationship to UNESCO (and also ICOM) was discussed in depth by Nourredin and also by Mahdi, who is a consultant who works closely with UNESCO’s Cairo Fieldwork Offices and is involved in Alexandria’s archaeological revivalism. Both of these informants were keen to stress the positives of Egypt’s relationship with UNESCO/ ICOM. Nourredin, for example, argued that, ‘Both UNESCO and ICOM represent very important mechanisms
which offer a means for Egypt to see itself in the global context and a very important mechanism for us to think about our future’. Similarly Mahdi, argued with a passion that, ‘There are no negatives with UNESCO. In securing UNESCO’s support for any given project this indirectly says that approval has been given by the international community. It is also saying it is something worthy of attention on that level’. Echoing the sentiments of UNESCO- Paris informants, Madhi stated how, ‘In this sense UNESCO maintains a balance between its recognition and respect of nation-state sovereignty while also offering a means to carve a way through internal politics and decision-making processes which are very, very slow in Egypt’.

Madhi argued with greater depth, ‘Without UNESCO many projects, including that of the Bibliotheca Alexandria could have died in a corridor in one of Cairo’s highly bureaucratised ministries. The international link is very, very important. Egypt experiences severe difficulties with the resources available for heritage projects. Within the national decision-making processes projects have to be justified financially, for example, due to the huge resources needed for the Alexandrina project, people of course asked “Why should money be spent on something that doesn’t exist now, why not spend it on the avenue of sphinxes in Luxor which need conservation?” There is so much heritage to take care of in Egypt’. Mahdi emphasised, ‘With a UNESCO project, however, the different levels on which it operates gives the opportunity for the politics to be handled at the diplomatic level. The government, as with the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, can exploit the project in terms of displaying a good image internationally and although there are always frustrations in terms of dealing with governments and bureaucracies, in broad terms, it is a happy relationship. The government therefore receives its glory and is interested ‘officially speaking’ but the spirit of the project is usually located elsewhere. As with the example of the Bibliotheca, which began as a project from within Alexandria University, its spirit is in Alexandria. It is, however, possible for projects to be shared by a number of different interest groups’.

When asking Mahdi about the potential negatives and/or anti-UNESCO sentiments within the Egyptian context, he responded, ‘I have never experienced any great
antagonisms. These are usually ironed out at the diplomatic level. UNESCO’s association with the wider UN culture obviously has its tensions in the current political climate and also the UN’s associations with the US. The fact that Boutrous Ghali is Egyptian has helped Egyptians, well, at least the politicians and diplomats, feel part of the UN. We don’t have a conflict with the UN at that level’. Mahdi did, however, discuss UNESCO’s ‘focus upon big schemes and projects’ which can operate at the ‘exclusion of smaller museums and cultural projects within more local contexts’ but tempered this by stating how, ‘the NGOs and workshop and seminar series that are networked around these big projects are able to highlight local concerns’. Mahdi continued, ‘UNESCO in this way is able to give crucial moral support to projects and to local contexts. With the NGO networks too, Egyptian heritage employees and campaigners can find support in their international counterparts. Therefore, enthusiasts from outside create interests inside. Obviously these collaborations bring with them too the incentive for us to strengthen local voices within civil society and public culture.’

As both Mahdi and Nourredin stress, amongst the opportunities available here, is that of giving recognition to alternative expressions of cultural continuity. Mahdi stated how, ‘In my work with local communities in seminar and workshop situations I have had cases, for example, recently in Luxor, where people have used these occasions to say to both UNESCO and government representatives – “We are more aware of our heritage than you are” and to see this as a forum to say “We can define their own criteria for heritage”’. Mahdi also emphasised how UNESCO’s new designation of ‘intangible heritage’ offered ‘more scope to explore alternative expressions of heritage’ and added, ‘We are waiting to see how the Alexandrina project will be developed to embrace this’.

- International Language

It is within these discussions of Egypt’s internalisation of UNESCO and ICOM discourses that both Mahdi and Nourredin discussed what the former dubbed as the ‘international language’ which these organisations make available for in order to communicate and mediate concerns between local, and international contexts. Mahdi, for
example, stated how, ‘Egypt like most places is very conscious of its identity and worries when constructing anything – does this look British? Is this Western? The worry has been here for a century and connects back to the concern: are we Pharaonic, African, Arab, Mediterranean etc…? This is where UNESCO, like ICOM, offer an internationally recognised language for describing situations of cultural identity and the mechanisms to brings these into debate and dialogue.’ Here Mahdi with more depth emphasised the importance of the UN/UNESCO’s cosmopolitical, redemptive dynamics and ‘sacred duties’, ‘The idea, - however, idealised it might be - , that those participating in UNESCO projects are participating too in peace-keeping and maintaining cultural rights is very important. Egypt has suffered on-going conflicts from the colonial period and later with Israel. Morally and ethically to contribute towards a better future for both the nation and humanity as a whole is a very powerful incentive’.

This particular expression on peace-networks as part of contemporary redemptive urges was taken up by Nourredin, ‘Within ICOM our concern is to demonstrate how museums can be used internationally to allow a better understanding of difference and to allow peace to come to the world’. Honing in on an example of this objective he stated how, ‘I just attended a conference in Naples, Italy called ‘Dialogue Between the Ancient Countries’, discussions here encouraged us to talk about conflict and dialogue between four ancient cultures Egypt, Persia, Greece and Rome. We also discussed how this related to the modern contemporary context and need to bring museums to the forefront of attempts to create dialogue and tolerance internationally. It is a very important part of this process to put into place Museum Societies and Friends of Museums organisations to support this. Currently in Egypt we are planning to install International Friends Groups via ICOM and UNESCO’. Nourredin reaffirmed the comments of Zahran, Holmquist and others by underlining how important international Friends networks are to the Bibliotheca’s support structures. Crucially too, his commentary returned to the language of ‘reconciliation’ and this time his comments brought a certain therapeutic, psychoanalytic quality to events. This was a feature which both he and also Mahdi believed would increasingly be developed within Alexandrian revivalism.
- Repatriation as Forgetting

This motif began when Nourredin outlined a broad discussion of what he described as the role of museums and more particularly the role of objects in terms of ‘their use in new forms of exchange and movement between cultures’. Within this trajectory Nourredin brought a certain understanding of the role of museums and objects within the dynamic of memory-work and in the narrativisation of both historical and contemporary acts of violence, trauma and inequality between, in particular, ‘First’ and ‘Third’ world nations. Interestingly he also illustrated how in a postcolonial era a shift needs to be made towards new conceptualisations of exchange, ‘If we are looking to a globalised future we must be able to look at these issues of movement and exchange and use these to bring peace to each other. Objects and monuments as pieces of the past can be part of this. They bring sympathetic minds together. This is very important morally and psychologically’.

He drew upon his own interventions as the Secretary General of SCA as an initial means to frame his comments, ‘ICOM and UNESCO encourage the use of cultural centres like museums and also the objects held there as part of acts of reconciliation. I began this kind of gesture when I first came to the SCA. One of the first things I did when I came to office was to rebuild the memorial dedicated to Mariette at the Egyptian Museum [in Cairo] which had been demolished. I asked the French ambassadors to attend the rebuilding as this was a means for us to show our appreciation of his life and work. This showed too that the Egyptians appreciated Mariette’s attempts to have the objects which had been taken out of Egypt by Europeans repatriated. Not only is he buried in the Cairo Museum but a street is also named after him.’ Here he emphasised, ‘If we want people to forget this colonial history and its negative impact these acts of reconciliation are very important. We also must go further too and in order that people can appreciate historical and on-going cultural contacts without reliving the colonial period in their minds’.

Nourredin then turned with more depth to discuss wider UNESCO/ ICOM Conventions concerning repatriation and the illicit import of objects, ‘This legislation is very important in contexts such as Egypt. The Convention of the return of objects and also
efforts to repatriate human remains should be seen as part of these wider acts of reconciliation and as a matter of an apology and a matter of respect to nations who have suffered in this way.' He added here how, 'I think people in Europe are cultured enough to admit to their mistakes. We need to stress new relationships between nations and to shift discussions to talk about dignity and respect as part of global futures'. Here Nourredin had to admit that, 'There is a big difference between what we are hoping and what has happened since Egypt ratified the UNESCO 1970-1972 Conventions. We can now get back objects which are registered in our registration books but what occurred before 1970-1972 we do not have the right to request, even if these are registered, unless, of course, you can negotiate at the level of government'. As an integral part of this context Nourredin stressed how, 'Egypt also must learn not to accept objects that have been smuggled from other countries. This is something that Europe has practiced for a long time now but is new to other places. We should refuse point blank not to buy objects that are un-provenanced or illegally removed'. Here he added 'We have to fight the illicit trade of cultural objects at ICOM we are giving this considerable time'.

Returning to discuss the UNESCO requirement for governments to head requests for the return of objects Nourredin states, 'I hope that the pressure will come from the people themselves both in Egypt and internationally and that we do not have to wait for governments. I am hoping that we can join together and people within the Arab region and elsewhere can pressurise their governments to do this'. Once again, he tempered his comments here by stating, 'But still power is power and once again in Europe they have the power to keep the objects they already hold. I know that people who are in Europe and who have a conscience and people in the [United] States who are civilised and in other parts of the world are making their own steps forward towards acts of reconciliation. We have the nice terminology and now we must make sure that this works in action. We are sure that all the Egyptians, all the Tunisians, all the Lebanese, all the Syrians and Iraqi’s etc… of course want to get back some of their objects. The Jews, for example, are trying to collect their objects from museums worldwide because of the crimes committed against them in this way. For those cultures who have had their
museums built by the colonials in the era of materialism we hope that popular pressure will play a role in return’.

Here too Nourredin was keen to stress that his was not an extremist line, but ‘an appeal for dialogue’, adding, ‘If we are looking for bringing cultures together (and I am talking as both an Egyptian as well as a politician) and bring peace to people in new globalised relationships we have to look at the people and their feelings towards certain objects in both Europe and outside’. He emphasised, ‘In reality we cannot bring back all the objects and this is completely different. There are, for example, sixteen obelisks in Rome how do we get them back? Already they are considered as ambassadors of culture and serve a purpose as such, but to respect the feelings of the country from which the objects were taken, one or two items could be returned. Objects can be kept in such contexts as an indication of the cultural link but from the other end some objects need to given back’.

A specific emphasis was placed by Nourredin on the issue of human remains, here he insisted, ‘This is an even more morally sensitive debate but according to any understanding of respect for human beings within Christianity, Judaism, or Islam people want their relatives, their grandfathers and their ancestors to be buried in peace and in their place of origin. It is disrespectful to see ancestor’s bodies displayed in museums. This has happened of course with hundreds of Egyptian mummies’. Here he referenced what he saw as the positive steps taken by President Sadat in his call for the repatriation of Egypt’s mummies and their redisplay them within Cairo Museum in a ‘respectful manner.’ However, Nourredin, also drew out too the contradictory approach of governments towards these issues when engaging at the diplomatic level, ‘People in Egypt were very disappointed when the mummy of Rameses II went to Paris and we know that Sadat did this for political reasons. He needed France’s help for political reasons. It was used as a diplomatic gesture to encourage the then French president to take Egypt’s side in the conflict in Palestine and the Middle East. But I am sure many people were disappointed that one of their ancestors is in Paris and disappointed to know that they are also in the British Museum, the Munich Museum and the Leiden Museum etcetera. Many people are increasingly aware of the controversy over the Rosetta Stone
and the head of Nefertiti. These things have become highly politicised’. In discussing the particular dynamics of the campaign concerning the Rosetta Stone Nourredin continued, ‘I was asked by the BBC for my opinion, I said that the Stone should be returned in stages, for three months at first as a loan, to make people more relaxed. Then psychologically people can start to appreciate this. I also said that the British have to do something about building a centre of restoration and conservation in Rosseta itself as a major part of this exchange. Of course we can only hope that we find support within Britain too for this act of reconciliation.’

-Fault-line Luxor

These interviews conducted in Cairo, like those in UNESCO’s Paris Head Quarters, illustrated, yet again, that the significant fault-line in terms of discussions of heritage revivalism and associated acts of reconciliation was that of the Luxor tragedy. In Egypt, perhaps unsurprisingly, this was a particularly sensitive subject to broach and was met by replies which stressed the shock and trauma it had caused within the country. As Gaballa stressed, ‘Of course we are very sorry for what happened. We are sorry because the tourists were guests in our country. It is a political conflict and it can happen all over the world like New York or London. But we are determined to put these things right within our own territories’. Again he stressed, ‘This is Un-Egyptian behaviour and came from a minority of politically motivated groups organised from outside Egypt who we condemn.’ These were sentiments echoed by Nourredin and Hawass too. Significantly, however, Mahdi offered deeper analysis in terms of Egypt’s reactions, here he stated how, ‘Part of people’s silence or reluctance to talk about this is because of the shock and to some extent a sense of shame. Many nations face this when terrorism takes place in their territories and effects foreigners.’ He did, however, offer a different perspective on these events by illustrating how UNESCO’s initiatives in Luxor after the attacks offered a mechanism for local people to talk about what he described as ‘this tragic episode’.

Here Mahdi explained how, ‘We have had a number of workshops and seminars in Luxor which were aimed at involving local people in discussions on cultural heritage, museums
and conservation. This is good that locals have a say not only SCA representatives. We have also had seminars which revolve around certain issues within international tourism and have had a very good response. We bring together those involved in cultural heritage: local councils, NGOs and local business men and women, from hoteliers, to those who sell tourist souvenirs in the bazaars. We draw as wide and as diverse a group as we can. The Luxor area is very specific in that its economy and its own cultural life is solely based around tourism this has been especially true since Egypt in general has experience a decline in terms of traditional farming. This is different to Giza and the Pyramids area where there are other things in the economy and not everyone is led by tourism. In Luxor, however, everyone is involved it is a small village and tourism is a total culture’.

He continued, ‘After the Luxor tragedy we had a series of workshops in which many of the people taking part were actually on the spot [at Hatshepsut’s Temple] when the massacre took place. Most people were still very shocked by events and all were asking “Why did this happen?”’ Crucially, Mahdi stressed how, at the workshops, ‘Those who attended rejected the idea that this happened because locals did not accept the idea that tourists had different cultures and different values. Locals said that they don’t expect them [the tourists] to comply with local values and local codes’. Here he stated, ‘It was clear that this was not some ‘clash of cultures’ which we all like to discuss in international seminars! I never came across one individual who said that foreign tourists should cover themselves up and stop drinking alcohol etcetera. In fact they are very proud of the fact that they and their ancestors have participated in a century of tourism in Luxor’. Importantly Mahdi stressed how, ‘The people of Luxor used these workshops to place the major blame upon the government. The comments people made argued that there was bad planning in terms of mass tourism and that the tourism that had boomed quickly in recent decades, - although encouraged by the government, - was not met by the government’s corresponding development of any proper infrastructures. The people criticised the government for expecting money from tourism, especially during the 1980s tourist boom, but did not respond well, in particular, in the case of practical infrastructures. The locals from Luxor also argued that the money from tourism should have been reinvested in the management and security of cultural sites. They insisted that
the management of mass tourism and of local industries should be addressed. This is something Mubarak has promised since’.

Importantly too, Mahdi reiterated how, ‘The local people in Luxor were insistent that this was not ‘clash of cultures’ in terms of highly politicised locals or religious fanatics from the Luxor area or underground organisations. They said that criminals were orchestrating these events from outside, or if amongst them, they stated that it was not led by people attracted by the logic of destruction but that so much poverty meant that young people would get involved in such organizations for small payments.’ Mahdi emphasised too how, ‘Since this event people’s livelihoods have been hit very hard’.

- Excluded Heritages

It was also at this point that Mahdi drew into focus the specific concerns and correspondences between the Luxor tragedy and Alexandrian revivalism, significantly too, as he did so he also fully centred the ‘cosmopolitan card’ in his discussions, ‘I would argue that there are certain similarities between the exclusion of the Greco-Roman past from Egyptian national identities since the 1950s and the way in which in the contemporary context the popular Islamic heritage is currently excluded, or at least is not yet to be fully acknowledged, as part of cultural dialogue. Drawing out these connections Mahdi turned, firstly, to acknowledge the positives of Alexandrian revivalism, ‘It [the Bibliotheca Alexandrina] shows that Egypt is experiencing a time of increased prosperity and peace and that the government is becoming more confident and more pragmatic about the projects it creates. It is a sign too that the government sees international collaboration as a means to welcome multiculturalism back to Egypt ... [a feature] which was eliminated by Nasser and not encouraged by Sadat. Before it [multiculturalism] threatened Egypt’s sovereignty: now we have the self confidence to welcome it back’.

The ‘old’ museological motif of reaching back into the distant past for a ‘useful’ history was resonant here. Mahdi further adds that: ‘It shows Egypt coming to peace with all parts of history and trying to associate ourselves with the modern world - and a
democratic world at that. We have had to fish something out the past to do this’. Picking up on the motif of reconciliation he adds, ‘It is also a political statement on who destroyed the ancient library. Many people accuse us -well the Arabs [of having caused this destruction]. By rebuilding, we distance ourselves from this negative idea and show what Egypt is capable of doing’.

He argued that ‘The important thing would be to explore how Alexandrian revivalism might take this multiculturalism forward. Here, of course Alexandria’s own cosmopolitan tradition offers a mechanism for inclusion. The institution promises to make new links between Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and Western worlds. There is the potential to draw in both the Ottoman past (which also suffers exclusion) and that of popular Islam. The Islamic past is officially recognised and preserved in sites such as that of Islamic Cairo’. Here he stressed, ‘Popular Islam is currently the big excluded heritage but of course is the most prevalent in terms of Egypt’s everyday culture A more popular interest in this heritage would come from a greater inclusion of both tangible and intangible heritage.’ Here Mahdi stressed, ‘The difficulty, however, is that the authorities fear the connection with political Islam which is one of players in the political scene but banned from creating an officially recognised political party and from circulating its own newspapers. This must be part of Egypt’s project towards full democracy and true free elections. If Islam is offered a cultural voice in order to lift suppression Egypt will be more able and more balanced to talk about multiculturalism and national identity’. Here he added ‘This is the culture most tourists don’t know about and which, potentially at least, the most clashes are over. Just like the Greco-Roman aspect – it will take time and we will get used to it and accept its non-political heritage. These changes need to happen so that all aspects of Egypt’s heritage are recognised, and more particularly this needs to happen so that the attachments to Islamic heritage, culture and religion, for example, are not pushed aside and turned into terrorism’.
- Cosmopolitical Heritages

It was once again with respect to the ‘cosmopolitan card’ that other informants within this group saw some positive way forward, but in common with Mahdi, there was some anxiety over the popular response and acceptance of the return of Greco-Roman culture and the strategies of support needed to take forward this process. Mahdi reiterated, ‘The most valuable of UNESCO’s international languages we can appeal to in this context is that of ‘multiculturalism’ and, of course, Alexandria’s own cosmopolitan, multicultural past is a great example of this. This helps incredibly’. He continued, ‘UNESCO’s stress on multiculturalism easily translates into a number of Arabic words, in fact, there are possibly more words in Arabic than in English! These help us introduce new issues into Egypt’s internal bureaucratic domains which can be understood by the various ministries, for example, the SCA, in a non-threatening way while also allowing people like me to encourage discussions of national identity to be shared with other players, such as culture and development organisations especially NGOs at regional, national and international level.’

Nourredin similarly, discussed these dynamics of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism within both UNESCO/ICOM discourses and also (with echoes of Zahra in Chapter Seven) with reference to more personal and perhaps nostalgic memories of an Egyptian childhood: ‘I am from a village where communities of Jews, Christians and Muslims used to live together. I remember that my father used to sit in his galabiyya with a Jew on one side and a Christian on the other. They would gather at our house and my father would joke that, ‘Religion is for the gods, but between each other we are all humans and it is our right to be Jew, Muslim or Christian without conflict’. Nourredin added, ‘I think that the Egyptians need to be encouraged in terms of exploring their own traditions of tolerance, respect and diversity and to seize on projects like that of the Bibliotheca to regain pride in these’.
Mahdi and Nourredin therefore stressed that it was the operational level which holds both more problems but also more potential in terms of these dynamics of reconciliation. These dynamics were also drawn to Nourredin’s attention when a controversy erupted over the erection of a statue of Alexander the Great in Alexandria. The statue which is part of the revivalist dynamic (see Awad 9/99 in Chapter Seven) was described as a ‘gift and gesture of goodwill’ organised by the Greek Friends of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and donated by Greeks of Alexandrian origin. He detailed: ‘I was on Egyptian TV for one hour last week talking about this matter. People were expressing their outrage, they kept saying, ‘The Greeks are trying to bring a statue of the Alexander the Great and our people [contemporary Alexandrians] are against the idea. Somebody said that because Alexander was represented riding on a horse that this was a sign of aggression! They said that the statue represented the return of a symbol of occupation! Of course I argued against this opinion. I said that the statue should not be seen as a symbol of aggression. As for Alexander being depicted on a horse I said what do you expect? He was a commander, a genius, a military man!’

He Continued, ‘I tried to explain that this should be seen as a symbol of reconciliation. I argued that within the forward movement of Egypt towards a peaceful global culture Alexander the Great should not remind the Egyptians of the some Greek occupation of Alexandria in the ancient period. I told them quite simply, “If you don’t like the statue of Alexander the Great you should change the name of your city! Because every time you mention the city it is associated with Alexander the Great and I do respect the gentleman. Alexander the Great was cultured and whatever his reasons for coming to Egypt he did respect Egyptian culture. He himself should be respected as a great commander in Egypt. He showed himself respectful when he went to Siwa Oasis”. He finally commented, ‘These negative attitudes need to be changed’.

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4 This episode has been picked up in the press as Schneider writing in the *Washington Post* (2001: 23): he reports, ‘The dwindling Greek Community of about 800 donated a statue of Alexander the Great, the
Not only did Nourredin’s encounter repeat the same fears and anxieties picked up by Abid in his pre-project visits to Alexandria in which the Alexandrina as cast by local informants as a threatening ‘imported’, ‘Greek’ object, but illustrated with greater depth too, how revivalism was associated by many with provocative reminders of occupation and as such was felt to be a potentially colonising object. Moreover, Mahdi too, stated how, he had encountered similar sentiments emerging from workshops and seminars in Alexandria organised to support the underwater archaeological revivalism. He explained, ‘In discussions with locals we found that some people had difficulties with the kinds of heritages currently surfacing in Alexandria. The figure of Cleopatra was, for example, was seen by some as a problem’. He added how, ‘The search for identity within Middle Eastern countries is centred upon moral values which inhabit contemporary minds. It was clear that Cleopatra was seen as a Greek or Western icon and not Egyptian. They also saw her image as that of a whore who slept with everyone. These moral values obviously don’t match contemporary values.’

Madhi expressed the need to both, ‘open up people’s thinking on these very restricted views of historical figures and of Western culture,’ he did reiterate how, ‘these contemporary values do need a voice and do need to be respected. This is the only way people will indeed open up’. Emphasising this point further, Mahdi related the shift in contemporary values to our more immediate surroundings in Groppi’s Café in downtown Cairo (which was easier to meet up in than at UNESCO’s Cairo fieldwork office) which as the *Rough Guide* states was established as a ‘luxurious catering establishment founded by an Alexandrian Swiss family’ and was ‘the centre of cosmopolitan life in the 1920s and 1930s’ and subsequently it was transformed in 1952 when ‘the rotunda was burned and the dancing stopped... and the whole place was sold to a tea-totalling Arab in 1983’ (Youssef and Rodenbeck 1993: 174). Mahdi stated, ‘Things have changed very much in Egypt since the 1950s not only the museums, heritage but and the moral values too.

gesture provoked a battle. Egyptian nationalists, who regarded the statute as a glorification of outsiders and conservative Muslims, who had no interest in promoting the city’s pre-Islamic success, were matched against those who felt the spirit of the town’s namesake should be kept alive’ (Schneider *Washington Post* (2001:23). Sentiments expressed here have obvious correspondences with the reactions made to UNESCO’s Abid during his initial (pre-project) visits to Alexandrina. See also Awad in Appendix Seven.
These shifts must be engaged with in order for Egyptians and Alexandrians to be included properly in revivalism.

Mahdi ended his interview with comments, which summed up the central concerns of the Caireen informants when he stated, ‘There are still many ‘ifs’ and ‘buts’ surrounding contemporary Alexandrian revivalism and its future success. Alexandria has never led the way in terms of Egypt’s attempts to define its own identity, and in fact the city’s own past it regarded as somehow alien or foreign, even to the contemporary Alexandrians themselves. Abaddi at the University and Mubarak at the diplomatic level have shown their commitment and support. We are hoping that the interest in the Bibliotheca, the underwater Museum and underwater archaeology will also contribute to opening up this context to cultural dialogue, not simply at these high levels, but so that ordinary people can address on their fears and anxieties over the project and also their aspirations for the city. Only then can Alexandria authentically open itself up to the international community. It is in Alexandria where these things are currently being fought over’.
SECTION FOUR

EGYPTIAN MUSEUM CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS AND ‘MUSEOLOGY IN THE 21ST CENTURY’

As stated in my conclusions, my final fieldwork phase was timed to coincide with two events: the Centenary of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo and its accompanying international conference “Museology in the 21st Century” and the second, “Cultures and the Enemy Image” held at the Bibliotheca which was one of the institution’s first major conferences. While I focus on the latter in my main text, here I give a summary of the former Celebrations and accompanying conference and present this as the culmination of my critique of the contemporary ‘Egyptianising’ dynamic.

- National Centenary Commemorations

‘The inauguration of the Egyptian Museum was a great event not only on the local level but also on the international one. ... One hundred years later, I found it my duty as an Egyptian and the Director of this great Museum, to revive the memory of that special event by celebrating it internationally, insisting on its scientific and artistic activities.’

(Mamdouh Eldamaty, Director-General Egyptian Museum in Centenary Programme, SCA 2002a: 4)

The Centenary events were centre-staged at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, the same location at which an anxious and reflective Malraux made his museological musings ‘on the ruins’ of the Second World War. By way of contrast, these contemporary Centenary celebrations marked a significant moment in the expression of more positive reflections on one-hundred years of the Egyptian cultural services and crucially too in the articulation of ‘possible futures’. This particular act of memory-work thus proved an effective resource in terms of a self-confident Cultural Services engaging in ‘excavations’ of its own genealogy and breaking with the oppressive (colonial) legacies through the
performance of museological acts of memorialisation and entente. A number of statements were also made concerning Egypt’s on-going pursuit of sovereignty over the country’s museums and heritage. This also saw the Centenary events emerge as a fulcrum in terms of prompting new reflections and inscriptions regarding future relationships between Egypt and wider global museum culture. It is, therefore, this future-orientated nature of the event which predominates.

The sense of the Centenary Celebrations as a drama of memory-work was perhaps best expressed in a ceremony held in the museum gardens and presided over by Suzanne Mubarak, which was dedicated explicitly to the ‘memorialisation of roots’ and which opened to an ‘honouring of persons who participated in significant works in the Egyptian Museum’ (SCA 2002a: 4). This ceremony began with the commemoration of figures such as Mariette and Maspero – representing the ‘French roots of the Egyptian Antiquities Services and the Museum’ – before giving recognition to the ‘Pioneers of Egyptian participation and appreciation of archaeology’, here were included such persons as Sheikh Rifaa al-Tahtawi and Ahmed Pasha Kamel. The celebrations culminated in more modern directors, senior staff and what are described as the museum’s ‘silent workers’ being remembered. In a further homage to the past the Egyptian Museum was ‘painted the same color as on the day of its establishment in 1902’ (SCA 2002a: 3).

The Celebrations also saw the launch of two accompanying exhibitions both of which engaged in both self-reflectivity and desire to ‘excavate’ the Museum and Antiquities Service’s own pasts. The first exhibition located within the Museum was that of the “Rare Archives of the Egyptian Museum,” which comprised of a display of photos, documents and memorabilia, ‘that depict the progress of the museum from its conception until the present’ (SCA 2002a: 5). The second exhibit entitled “Hidden Treasures” in a larger exhibition format comprised of over 250 artefacts which were shown for the first time in public. Over 115 objects were taken from the storerooms and basements of the Egyptian Museum itself, with others coming from museum storerooms and basements in Upper and Lower Egypt. Included here too were not only ‘newly-discovered artefacts kept in site-storerooms’ but, crucially ‘objects brought to light from underwater
excavations at Alexandria’ were integral to this display of Egyptian treasures (SCA 2002a: 5).

This real and metaphorical unearthing of objects and histories brought together not only the desire to commemorate or strike an entente with ‘old’ (colonial) museological relationships but culminated in the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) making a statement of intent for the future by adding to the exhibition ‘Egyptian artefacts seized abroad and brought back to their original home’ (SCA 2002a: 5). This latter dynamic allowed the conference organiser’s SCA to use the Centenary celebrations to draw attention to the Culture Department’s new Stolen Antiquities Department. Thus the aspirational and the operational were pitched together while gathering great political and metaphorical potency. It was with this note of repossession that Dr Zahi Hawass, the current Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, led the Opening speech of the Centenary Conference “Museology in 21st Century” which underpinned the celebrations.

- New Museological Encounters

The conference itself is perhaps best understood as a resource for the Egyptian hosts to outline a series of new museological projects and policy statements. It was also, as the official commentary has it, ‘an opportunity for the world’s museum directors to come together to celebrate the achievements of the Egyptian Museum’ (SCA 2002a: 6). Once again, what was noticeable listening to conference papers was that a conscious and symbolic shift was made by participants (both the hosts and the international gathering of guests) away from former colonial relationship to what were couched as new global ‘partnerships.’

To pick up on these dynamics, Vivian Davies, representing the British Museum, for example, gave a paper to this conference which exemplified the European and North American participants position in terms of their use of the Centenary as a resource to symbolically reiterate and dramatise their relationships with the Egyptian cultural
agencies, its museological heritage - both within Egypt and as housed in ‘Western’ museum collections – and in more broad terms engage in the articulating new and more inclusive characterisations of the discipline of Egyptology. Davies thus began his address by, firstly, wishing the Egyptian Museum a ‘successful rebirth’ before outlining how the British Museum’s contemporary Redisplays were committed to the recuperation of a more popularised and socially-aware interpretation of Egyptian culture. Other speakers followed suit (Davies in SCA 2002a: 6).

A number of shared ‘new’ museological buzzwords allowed participants to address each other while holding shared languages and agendas in common. This museological ‘global-speak’ was used to outline a museum culture for the new millennium. Participants thus argued for a move away from the ‘didactic-temple’ models of the museum and by putting a number of buzzwords in circulation argued for a move towards a ‘new’ museological reframing as a ‘contact-zone,’ as a space of ‘museological encounter’ and as an ‘experience economy’ and a ‘consumption site’ (Naguib in SCA 2002a: 6). The museum was characterised further as a space for ‘multi-vocalism’, a site for ‘story-telling’ and ‘life history’ and where objects were part of a people-centred, popularist domain which dealt in ‘edutainment’ (Saddik in SCA 2002a: 7).

The desire to give substance to the vision of the future of Egyptian museums was taken further when the Egyptian hosts used the Centenary Celebrations not only to show-case the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project but to officially inaugurate the Grand Egyptian Museum project and to announce details of the related re-design of the Egyptian Museum. Together these projects signal a time of monumental transformation and metamorphosis of Egypt’s museological and heritage landscape. The Grand Museum project has many echoes of Bibliotheca Alexandrina and as such one can sense the strains of a certain homogenisation and globalised formatting. The Grand Museum is to be located at the Giza Pyramid plateau, and crucially, at its core will be the collections of Tutankhamen and a complex of ‘world class museums’ (including an ‘electronic museum’) ‘capable of demonstrating the development of Egyptian Civilization’ (see SCA website http://www.sca.gov.eg for further details). As a centre for ‘Edutainment’ costing
$840 million and generating a projected 5800 new jobs the SCA is once again working in partnership with UNESCO and in a repetition of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s own phased development plan has begun organising an architectural competition in order to select a designer for the proposed building and is actively making appeals for financial donations/ sponsorship, this time from the international business community.

The sense of future created by the Centenary celebrations was therefore largely defined in terms of a re-engagement with a global partnership that was sensitive to current ethical and moral agendas of contemporary cultural revivalism as a lynch-pin of nation-state sovereignty and the acceptance that the commodification of culture (for example, in the promotion of new museum projects and cultural tourism) was not necessarily antithetical, but rather inextricably linked, to the dynamics of international cultural patronage. Recognition was also given to the fact that none of these North-South cosmopolitics should disturb the essential memory-work that lay at the heart of cultural revivalism and the Centenary celebrations but rather affirm the potency of these particular sacred dramas. Moreover, whatever the dislocations of the present, it was clear that an essential continuity is exerted in both the symbolic and more literal engagements with the foundations of the Cairo Museum. This dynamic is perhaps best conveyed in relation to literal excavations undertaken by the SCA in the Cairo Museum’s grounds and gardens – and more specifically the area around the Museum’s library - at the time of the Centenary the aim of which was to recover objects which at different time in the Museum’s history had been placed there, rather than in the basement and stores, for safekeeping.

Symbolic acts of revealing lost, forgotten and buried objects and reuniting fragments and thus returning these pieces to wholeness, emerged as a further motif throughout these celebrations. For example, gestures were made by Boston Museum and the British Museum to engage in ‘partnerships’ to unite pieces from these respective museums collection to give a completeness to objects belonging to the Egyptian Museum (Freed and Davies in SCA 2002a:5). Significantly part of these acts of rediscovery and unification a statue of a Pharaonic deity whose torso was found in the Cairo Museum garden and whose head was held in the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria was part of
these gestures. Thus while the central focus of the Centenary celebrations and the museological conference was that of Egyptology the unification of the statue, like the show-casing of the Bibliotheca Alexandria at this event and the inclusion of the new underwater archaeological finds in the “Hidden Treasures” exhibition meant that the Alexandrian heritage and its Greco-Roman past did gain a symbolic presence.
SECTION FIVE

‘MUSEOLOGY IN THE 21ST CENTURY’ - PROGRAMME

The Egyptian Museum Centennial Anniversary (1902-2002)

Museology in the 21st Century Conference (December 9-11, 2002)

Conference Objectives

To provide a forum for leaders in the field of museology and those in charge of the collections of Egyptian Antiquities.

• To exchange points of views on recent museology theories, studies and techniques.
• Promote the culture importance of museums aimed at increasing the archeological public awareness giving the chance for international museum professionals and their Egyptian colleagues to interact.

Conference Sessions & Programe

The conference sessions will be devoted to discussions led by invited Professionals in museum studies on the following themes:

• Scientific management of the collections and their exhibitions.
• Museums and the public.
• Touring exhibitions in the era of globalization.
• The pragmatics of museum administration.
• The museum as a business from the financial aspects.

Succeeding the conference a one week museum tour will be accessible to all participants. This will enable them to tour all Egypt's provincial museums (Kom Aushim - Beni Suef - Minya- Luxor - Aswan - Kharga - Bahariya - the Greco Roman Museum - Coptic Museum in Cairo).

Conference Programe

• All conference sessions will be held in a tent set in the museum garden.
• Tea breaks are free.
* MONDAY 9th DECEMBER. 2002*

**Morning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09.30 a.m. -11.30 a.m.</td>
<td>Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.00 a.m. -13.00 p.m.</td>
<td>Opening Session, (welcome word by Dr. Zahi Hawass, Secretary General of the SCA and Dr. Mamdouh El Damati, General Manager of Egyptian Museum.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.00 p.m. -14.30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
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**Afternoon**

Conference Session chaired by Fayza Haikal (each paper 25 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
<th>Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14.30 p.m. -15.00 p.m.</td>
<td>Aly Radwan</td>
<td>&quot;Narmer, The Father of the Egyptian Civilization&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.00 p.m. -15.30 p.m.</td>
<td>Regine Schulz</td>
<td>&quot;Images of the divine : Ancient Egyptian bronzes in the.. Walters Art museum&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.30 p.m. -16.00 p.m.</td>
<td>Christiane Ziegler</td>
<td>&quot;From the Nile to the Great Canal &quot;The Pharaohs in Venice&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.00 pm. -16.30 p.m.</td>
<td>Tea break</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.30 p.m. -17.00p.m.</td>
<td>Moharned Saleh</td>
<td>&quot;New installations in the Egyptian museum, 1992 - 1998.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.00 p.m. -17.30p.m.</td>
<td>Noura Ebeid</td>
<td>&quot;The Campaign for financing capital requirements for the grand Egyptian museum&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.30 p.m. -18.00 p.m.</td>
<td>Regine Schulz</td>
<td>&quot;CIPEG and ICOM&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.00 pm. - 18.30 p.m.</td>
<td>Half hour discussions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.30 p.m. -21.30 p.m.</td>
<td>Cocktial reception set in a tent in the museum garden for all conference participants by invitation (needed for attendance) hosted by Dr. Zahi Hawass, Secretary General of SCA and Dr. Mamdouh El Damati, General Manager of Egyptian museum.</td>
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</table>
Members of the press will be attending for event Coverage.

**TUESDAY. 10th DECEMBER. 2002**

**Morning**

Conference Session chaired by Vivian Davies (each paper 25 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Presentation Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09.30 a.m. - 10.00 a.m.</td>
<td>Saphinaz Amal Naguib, from Temple to information center</td>
<td>&quot;New perspectives on the role of museums in the 21st century&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.00 a.m. - 10.30 a.m.</td>
<td>Wafaa El Saddik</td>
<td>&quot;Some Educational remarks on museum education&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30 am. - 11.00 am.</td>
<td>Wilfried Seipel</td>
<td>&quot;Museums - Fundamentals of understanding&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.</td>
<td>Tea break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.30 a.m. - 12.00 p.m.</td>
<td>Mamdouh El Damaty</td>
<td>&quot;Gallery for the Blind in the Egyptian museum&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.00 p.m. - 12.30 p.m.</td>
<td>Arne Eggebrecht</td>
<td>&quot;The Hildesheim effect - Experience of 26 years of museums co-operation between Egypt and Germany&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.30 pm. - 13.00 pm.</td>
<td>Half hour discussions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.00 p.m. - 14.30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
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**Afternoon:**

Conference Session chaired by Chr. Ziegler (each paper 25 minutes).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Presentation Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14.30 p.m. - 15.00 p.m.</td>
<td>Dorothea Arnold</td>
<td>&quot;Egyptian museum, Cairo -Metropolitan museum, New York:100 years of Partnership&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.00 pm. - 15.30 pm.</td>
<td>Vivian Davies</td>
<td>&quot;Ancient Egypt in the British museum&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.30 pm. - 16.00 pm.</td>
<td>A.-M. Donadoni</td>
<td>&quot;Le Musee Egyptien de Turin Histoire et projets&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.00 p.m. - 16.30 p.m.</td>
<td>Tea break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.30 p.m. - 17.00 p.m.</td>
<td>Rita Freed</td>
<td>&quot;Egypt in Boston : Past, Present, and Future&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 17.00 p.m. - 17.30 p.m.

**Ossama Abdel Wareth**: "The Nubian museum and society"

### 17.30 p.m. - 18.00 p.m.

Half hour discussions

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**End of all conference sessions**

*WEDNESDAY, 11th DECEMBER, 2002*

**FREE**

A full day visit to Alexandria can be arranged at an extra cost of L.E. 100. during which you will be able to visit the new Alexandria Library and the museums in the same compound. Minimum number of participants is 30 persons, booking has to be made one day earlier at the information desk in the museum where all trip details will be available.

*THURSDAY 12th DECEMBER*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17.00-18.00 p.m.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Commencement of celebration events with a word by and Dr. Zahi Hawass, Secretary General SCA and Dr. Mamdouh El Damati, General manager of Egyptian museum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Commemoration and honorary of persons who participated in significant works in the Egyptian museum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Projection of National Geographic documentary film on the Egyptian museum. (30 minutes,)</td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>18.00-20.00 p.m.</th>
<th>Dr. Zahi Hawass inauguration of the following:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Exhibition of photographs and historical archives and documentations of the Egyptian museum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Demonstration of the new museum digital guide.</td>
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(SCA 2002b: 4-8)
Appendix Six

Archaeological Revivalism and the SARCOM Workshop 1997
APPENDIX SIX

ARCHAEOLOGICAL REVIVALISM
AND THE SARCOM WORKSHOP 1997

INTRODUCTION

This appendix contains more detailed information on the dynamics of archeological revivalism and gives a specific emphasis to the SARCOM Workshop 1997. I begin by giving a summary of the historical background and recent history of archaeological revivalism. I then turn to the SARCOM event and provide printed information which comprises of:

- Extracts from the Workshop Report: this contains a copy of the Declaration of Alexandria and SARCOM Recommendations; the Workshop programme with a list of participants, sponsors and main themes discussed.

- I also feature interviews conducted with two informants Professors El Banna and Youssef Halim from Alexandria University’s Department of Oceanography both of whom were heavily involved in agitating for the Workshop and are able to give their own specific ‘local’, Alexandrian responses to the event.

- Finally, one of the emergent issues of the SARCOM Workshop is that of the potential to reinvent Alexandria as a site of international tourism. In the concluding section of this appendix I include an interview undertaken with Dr Heba Aziz a researcher, lecturer and consultant in the field of tourism. Aziz, who was working at Alexandria University’s Faculty of Tourism at the time of interview, was able to provide a more contextualised and critical purchase on these dynamics.
PART ONE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL REVIVALISM - HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND KEY EVENTS/ PHASES

- Excavations on Land

[The following is largely taken from Empereur 1998]

- The visit of Heinrich Schliemann and other foreigners to Alexandria in the late-nineteenth-century initiate attempts to uncover the city’s archaeology. Empereur in his analysis of this period quotes from a statement made by the British archaeologist D.G. Hoggart on the failure on his expedition to Alexandria in 1890s: “There is nothing to hope for in Alexandria; you classical archaeologists, who have found so much in Greece or in Asia Minor, forget this city” (Hoggart in Empereur 1998:15). Empereur refers to this as the ‘defeat of archaeology at Alexandria’ and sees this as part of the shift towards a different and more ‘modest’ expression of archaeological activity which ‘was directed by local archaeologists with limited means and by civil servants directly answerable to the hierarchic local administration’ (Empereur 1998:14-15).

- The founding of the Greco-Roman Museum in 1892 is argued to be a ‘turning point’ (Empereur 1998: 25). The successive directors of the institution pursued more sustained excavations and topographical investigations: the first three directors (all Italian) are noted for the significant contributions; Giuseppi Botti (1892-1904), Evaristo Breccia (1904-32) and Achille Adriani (1932-40 and 1948-52) (see Empereur 1998: 27). The Museum’s collections were therefore built up from excavations undertaken in the city’s outlining areas of el-Shuqafa, Chatby, Anfushi, Hadra and Mostafa Kamal. The centre of Alexandria which was densely populated was left virtually untouched (Empereur 1998: 27).

- Into the 1960s new discoveries came at the time when Independence brought with it a succession of Egyptian directors. Notable here are Henry Riad’s discovery of new tombs in the western necropolis (Empereur 1998: 27). Sadat’s Open Door policy in the 1970s
saw the tentative return of foreign archaeological expeditions, however, the rapid growth of Alexandria and the building work carried out by property developers brought new problems. As Empereur states, 'The Egyptian Archaeological Service tries to hold up its ground on many fronts, but the bulldozers make more rapid progress than the archaeologist (Empereur 1998: 25).

- The work on the foundations of the Bibliotheca in 1993 (see Chapter Five) and ongoing work by the Polish mission at the Kom El Dikka site are cited as a further breakthroughs in land excavations. The emergency excavations undertaken by the Centre for Alexandrian Studies (CEA) in sites within the city centre can also be added to the list (see http://www.greece.org/alexandria/cea)

- Underwater Excavations

[The information below on the specific development of underwater archaeology is taken from UNESCO 1997; La Riche 1998; Foreman 1999].

- 1910: Discoveries made by the French engineer Gaston Jondet during the enlargement of Alexandria’s western port of ancient harbour structures. His maps and surveys provide key sources for later excavations.

- 1933: An aircraft pilot spotted ancient structures beneath the sea at Abu Qir. Prince Omar Tousson recruits a diver to survey the area. This yielded some important finds including a marble head of Alexander the Great (currently on display at the Greco-Roman Museum); a temple structure and a jetty. These were in the general areas of what have since been identified as the ancient towns of Menouthis and Herakleion.

- 1960s: Major finds and surveys made by Kamal Abou El-Saadat in the Eastern Harbour and at Abu Qir. Of note here is the lifting of ‘Isis Pharia’ at Qait Bey in 1962: the statute is now in the garden of the Maritime Museum in Alexandria. In the 1960s-1980s Saadat
continued his considerable work which mapped the areas which Empereur and Goddio and other teams were to subsequently to undertake their surveys and excavations.

- 1965: El Saadat located the sunken ships of the French fleet of the Battle of the Nile off Abu Qir. He subsequently collaborated with Jacques Dumas and the French and Egyptian navy at the site. The identification was made of L'Orient the flagship of Napoleon's fleet and in successive campaigns in 1983 and 1984 three other ships were identified: Le Guerrier, L'Artemise and La Serieuse and in 1986 that of La Patriot.

- 1967-8: Saadat agitates for UNESCO involvement at the Qait Bey site. The British archaeologist-diver Honor Frost subsequently leads a UNESCO mission with Saadat. The main outcomes of the mission are new sketches and plans of the ruins of this site.

- 1993 – to date: Work undertaken at Qait Bey by the Centre for Alexandrian Studies (CEA) directed by Jean-Yves Empereur in co-operation with DUA/SCA. Prompted by the construction of a break-water which was damaging the site the discovery was made of over 2,000 objects: columns, statutes and sphinxes. Pharaonic objects have been identifies and also large blocs believed to be from Pharos (see http://www.greece.org/alexandria/cea)

- 1994 – to date: Work undertaken by European Institute of Marine Archaeology (IEASM) directed by Franck Goddio in co-operation with DUA/SCA in the Eastern Harbour. Discoveries include survey and excavations of Antirhodus Island, the ancient sea floor and Cape Lochias (see also http://www.underwaterdiscovery.org).

- 1996- to date: Work undertaken also by European Institute of Marine Archaeology (IEASM) directed by Franck Goddio in co-operation with DUA/SCA at Abu Qir. This consists of a geophysical survey conducted in 1996-7 of the (above mentioned) sunken fleet and a full-scale excavation of L'Orient in 1998. Excavations also include artefacts illustrating the life on board ship and personal effects of soldiers, sailors and officers.
Over 230 coins have been discovered. A bronze canon was also recovered from La Serieuse (again see also http://www.underwaterdiscovery.org).

- 1997- to date: Work of Hellenic Institute for the Preservation of Nautical Tradition (the ‘Greek’ mission) directed by Harry Tzalas in co-operation with DUA/SCA along the Eastern coast of Alexandria from Chatby to Ibrahimia which corresponds to Alexandria’s ancient Bruchion quarter. A series of finds have been made which are identified as anchors (see also http://www.helleniccentre.org).

- 1997 – to date: Work of the University of Turin/ Pisa (the ‘Italian’ mission) directed by Paolo Gallo in co-operation with DUA/ SCA at Nelson’s Island near to Abu Qir. Identifications have been made of what is believed to be a pre-Alexandrian Pharaonic structure (see http://hal9000.cisi.unito.it.Gallo.Paolo).

1999- to date: The first all-Egyptian excavations off the coast of Ma’amoura. A first survey revealed sites of amphorae, wood and docks.

[See also the general map of main sites: fig. 24.]
Key to Map

- Qait Bey/Pharos – CEA excavations
- Eastern harbour – sunken royal quarters – IEASM excavations
- Bibliotheca Alexandrina site, next to Alexandria University and GOAL offices
- Chatby Beaches
- Ibrahhimiya Beaches – ‘Greek’ Mission excavations
- Ma’amoura – DUA excavations
- Abu Qir Bay – Napoleon’s Fleet - IEASM excavations
- Nelson’s Island – ‘Italian’ Mission

Fig. 24. Map of Alexandria, from Qait Bey to Abu Qir, (source: based on Richardson 2001: 480-481)
International Workshop

on

"Submarine Archaeology and Coastal Management in the Mediterranean: Alexandria Case Study"

7-11 April 1997

Alexandria, Egypt

UNESCO 1997

Draft Final Report
1. **Introduction:**

The city of Alexandria, founded by Alexander the Great in the year 332 BC, immediately became, and for a long time after that date, the cultural and economic capital of the ancient world. The subsequent history of this city has left a variety of archaeological remains, many of which are submerged under the sea.

Recent archaeological discoveries in and around the sites of the ancient harbour of Alexandria have understandably revived the interest in the study of its submerged heritage. On the other hand, the rapid urban and coastal development of modern Alexandria raises many important questions related to Coastal Management, and underlines the need for a comprehensive plan to ensure the harmonious development of human activities, while protecting the invaluable but submerged history of the city of Alexandria. Such a plan should include a long-term strategy and management programme, to integrate the conflicting interests and usages of the coastal region.

The Alexandria Lighthouse, built during the region of Ptolemy II (3rd C. BC) was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It was damaged and then destroyed by a series of earthquakes between the Ninth and Fourteenth Centuries. Its remains lie underwater offshore near-the mouth of Alexandria’s Eastern Harbour. The Qayet Bey Citadel, built by the Mameluk Sultan Ashraf Qayet Bey, towards the end of the fifteenth century, stands upon the site of the former lighthouse.

The area of the Qayet Bey/Pharos site is gradually eroding, and it appears that there is a long-term geological phenomena that poses as a serious threat to the stability of the Citadel. In 1994 several concrete blocks were placed about 30m off shore from the most eroded section of the citadel site, creating a submerged breakwater on top of antiquities along margins of the submerged Alexandria Lighthouse site. This caused a great campaign in the national and international press, which ended by holding further dumping of new blocks awaiting an integrated solution to protect the site, as well as the commencement of a detailed archaeological investigation of the site.

For this reason, UNESCO, the University of Alexandria, and the Supreme Council of Antiquities, Egypt, have decided to organize this interdisciplinary Workshop, to review and investigate the exploitation and protection of the underwater remains of the ancient harbors, and other submerged archaeological sites; with respect to urban development and coastal management. The ultimate goal of this workshop has led to the development of an Action Plan to identify integrated solutions to the problems of Qayet Bey/Pharos site and coastline instability and erosion, threatening cultural heritage sites along and near Alexandria’s shore waters.
The United Nations World Decade for Cultural Development, launched in 1988 and approaching its end this year, has promoted the enhancement of the cultural components of development. It aimed at increasing the understanding of the relationship between culture and development, as well as encouraging greater integration of the cultural dimension into development policies and projects. Within the framework of this 'Decade' several international and regional interdisciplinary activities and projects have been initiated and completed. The three projects which were implemented in the Arab region, “Culture, Tourism and Development”, “Population, Culture and Development” and “Environment and Culture”, are good examples. The present workshop was an excellent application of these projects.

The UNESCO World Heritage Center was established in 1992, to promote the implementation of the Convention for the Protection of the World Culture and Natural Heritage and to assist the State Parties in the formulation of strategies to strengthen capacities for preventing and managing natural or man-made impacts. Furthermore, particular attention is being paid by the Cultural Heritage Division of UNESCO Culture Sector to the establishment of a possible new convention for the protection of the underwater cultural heritage and the use of new technologies for its safeguarding.

In early 1996, UNESCO launched an initiative titled “Environment and Development in Coastal Regions and in Small Islands (CSI)”. The overall aim of this programme was to assist Member States towards the achievement of environmentally-sound, socially-equitable and culturally-appropriate development of the complex human and ecological environments occurring in coastal regions. To this end, the CSI programme serves as a platform for interdisciplinary cooperation among Natural Sciences, Social and Human Sciences, and the Sectors of Culture, Education and Communication. It is primarily implemented through the development of pilot projects which address environment and development issues in an integrated manner. Among CSI's key themes are: the social impacts of coastal erosion - a problem which was at the focus of the present workshop - the maintenance of coastal communities and of the biological diversity upon which they depend, and the integrated management of freshwater in small islands and in coastal cities.

2. Date: 7-11 April 1997
3. Venue: Alexandria, Egypt
4. Objectives:
   a) Exchange of experience with international community concerning modern searching technologies in submarine archaeological detection and survey.
b) Assessment of previous studies and progress made in surveying the sunken harbors and the submerged archaeological sites of Alexandria, as well as the surrounding areas.

c) Evaluation of past and present morphodynamical changes of the coastal shore-line of Alexandria, including changes in sea level rise and land subsidence, as well as predictions for the next century.

d) Analysis of the stresses to the coastal environment to the submerged archaeological remains caused by the intensive urban development and the land based activities - including pollution, erosion and sediment accretion.

e) Recommendation of a future global strategy for the area of the Qayet Bey/Pharos site integrating the sustainable development of coastal areas with the protection and study of the submerged archaeological sites.

5. Participants: More than two hundred and fifty attended the opening session and nearly one hundred experts and participants actively participated in the workshop. Forty of them came from France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Greece, England and the USA. List of participants is attached as annex (3)

6. a) Workshop organizers:
- Alexandria University
- Supreme Council for Antiquities
- UNESCO

b) Workshop Sponsors:
- Oceanography Department, Alexandria University
- Archaeology Department, Alexandria University
- Institut Francais d’Archaeologie Orientale “IFAO”
- Centre d’Etude Alexandrines “CEA” CNRS (France)
- Institut European d’Archaeologie Sous-Marine “IEASM” (France)
- Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
- Marine Policy Centre (USA)
- Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
- Italian Embassy, Cairo
- Alexandria Businessmen Association
- Association Archeologique d’Alexandrie
- Consulat General de France, Alexandria
- Ministry of Tourism
7. Major Themes Discussed:
   a) Historical Background:
      i) Role of ancient Alexandria in the Mediterranean culture and civilization
      ii) Role of ancient Alexandria in international trade and other economical activities
   b) Submarine Archaeology:
      i) Reassessment of pioneering efforts in surveying and studying archaeological sites and remains in Alexandria near-shore waters
      ii) Recent developments in submarine archaeology in Alexandria
      iii) Submarine archaeological sites in the Mediterranean basin
   c) Methods and Techniques in Submarine Archaeology:
      i) Exploration, survey and mapping
      ii) Salvation, treatment and preservation
   d) Morphodynamic Processes:
      i) Relative sea-level changes in the Mediterranean as revealed by submerged archaeological and other evidence
      ii) Changes of the coast line of Alexandria including sea level changes, erosion and sediment transport
      iii) Hydrodynamic processes and coastal engineering
      iv) Future changes and the implications of climatic changes
   e) Impacts of Modern Developments and Land-Based Activities:
      i) Urbanization and eco-tourism
      ii) Pollution and changes in water quality
      iii) Prevention, mitigation and protection measures
   f) Legislation and Conventions:
      i) National legislation and international agreements and conventions concerning the protection of the coastal marine environment and of cultural heritage including archaeological sites
   g) Strategies and Policies for:
      i) Plans for future exploration and study of submarine sites
      ii) Protective measures and alternatives: for Qayet Bey/Pharos site
      iii) Training and capacity building
      iv) Socio-Economic aspects and sustainable development of the coastal zone
      v) Public awareness

8. Workshop Procedure:

   The workshop was inaugurated by:
   • Dr. Adnan Shihab-Eldin, Director, UNESCO Cairo Office
   • Dr. Aly Hassan, Secretary General, Supreme Council for Antiquities, Egypt
   • Dr. Essam Salem, President, University of Alexandria, Alexandria, Egypt
   • Councilor El-Sayed El-Gawsaky, Governor of Alexandria Governorate, Alexandria, Egypt
It was proceeded over five days into two mains phases:
The first phase focused on presentations and exchange of experiences on Workshop Themes with field visits to concerned sites.
The second phase was completely devoted to expert work groups on two specific issues:
a) Coastline instability in the Qayet Bey/Pharos Site and the development of a pilot project for resolving immediate problems.
b) Development of longer-term strategy for the integrated management of Coastal Heritage (Natural & Cultural).
Each group has concluded with concrete set of alternatives and recommendations, which were amalgamated together in the final form of recommendations presented in chapter (10). Workshop program is attached as annex (1).

9. Summary of Presentations:
The summary of the presentations are included as annex (2).

10. The Declaration of Alexandria:
10 April 1997, Alexandria, Egypt

The significance of Alexandria in history has made the threat on its land and marine archaeological sites a matter of urgent concern to Egypt and the world. The recommendations below dealing with the erosion under the Qayet bey fortress and long term preservation and management of the cultural assets of Alexandria have been made by the scientific community attending the International Workshop on "Submarine Archaeology and Coastal Management". With the cooperation of the world community, we believe that Egypt will be able to succeed in the above goals; and preserve the cultural heritage of the City of Alexandria as part of the heritage of us all.

11. Recommendations:

To the National Authorities including:
Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA)
Ministry of Culture (Supreme Council of Antiquities)
Ministry of Public Works and Water Resources (Coastal Research Institute) and (Coastal Protection Authority)
Ministry of Tourism
Ministry of Education
Ministry of Transport
Ministry of Defense
Governorate of Alexandria
Recognizing the necessity of a strategic framework for future management of underwater and onshore cultural heritage and the need for urgent action to protect and preserve the Qayet Bey/Pharos area.

The workshop recommends for:

I- Qayet Bey/Pharos area Pilot Project:

1. An assessment be made of the present condition of the Qayet Bey Citadel and the threat of erosion to this Citadel. For this assessment, a request to UNESCO be considered, to solicit its assistance in identifying and dispatching competent international experts in engineering and coastal processes. The nature of such an intervention should take into consideration the need to protect and preserve the integrity of both the submerged Lighthouse site and the Citadel.

2. Concurrently, a targeted program to collect key environmental data be implemented immediately in order to rapidly identify (4-6 months time) temporary remedial actions. These temporary actions are to stabilize the erosion threatening the Citadel without compromising the integrity of the underwater archaeological site until such time as a lasting solution can be found.

3. No remedial action, including the further placing of cement blocks, should take place until completion of the assessment of the situation of the Citadel and the proposal of temporary solutions after collection, analysis and interpretation of key environmental data, nor without consultation of all appropriate agencies and experts.

4. In addition, the competent archaeological experts be requested to complete to the extent possible, the surveying and mapping of the underwater archaeological site of the Lighthouse.

5. The aforementioned data collection program be extended and if necessary expanded in order to provide the environmental information required to identify and implement a long-term and lasting solution which to the greatest extent possible maintains the integrity of both cultural heritage sites.

6. An ad hoc Task Force, possibly coordinated by UNESCO, be established whose membership should include the relevant decision-making bodies such as The Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency, The Supreme Council of Antiquities, The Coastal Protection Authority, Ministry of Transport (marine transport), The Coastal Research Institute, The University of Alexandria and The Governorate of Alexandria and other relevant bodies, along with experts in submarine archaeology and coastal processes. This cross-sectoral Task Force will be responsible for setting an overall strategy for implementing and monitoring this pilot project.
II-Long term management plan:

1. A strategic framework be drafted for the conservation and integrated management of the coastal heritage (cultural and natural) to be incorporated into the coastal management plan of the EEAA.

2. The placement of concrete blocks inside or outside the Eastern Harbour, and any increased use or activity in the Eastern Harbour and Qayet Bey be stopped until the proposed survey recommended in para. 3 has been completed, and urgent action be taken to stop the discharge of sewage into the Eastern Harbour.

3. To survey the archaeological sites and the geomorphological and hydrodynamic processes environmental conditions and state of pollution of the coast of Greater Alexandria; and that experts and agencies transmit to the Department of Underwater Archaeology of the SCA all information on the coastal heritage (cultural and natural) of Alexandria.

4. On the basis of the survey, to set the priorities for the critical problems faced and to direct the continuing monitoring of the area.

5. The existing laws be studied to ensure that the special problems of the underwater archaeological sites of Alexandria are appropriately dealt with and in particular:
   a) The SCA be included as one of the responsible agencies concerned with the protection of the water environment (Law No. 4 on the Environment, Art. 1.38);
   b) The possibility of establishing a special legal status for the underwater archaeological sites of Alexandria be studied as well as the possibility of inscription on the World Heritage List.

6. The potential economic value of the archaeological sites of Alexandria for tourists and visitors be studied, e.g. by way of museums, archaeological parks (on-land or underwater).

7. A small group be established to follow up the recommendations of this workshop, to prepare project proposals and investigate funding possibilities.

12. Addendum:

The workshop further recognized the importance of the following issues:

- The University of Alexandria should consider developing specialized courses for graduate and under-graduate students on submarine archaeology and related disciplines; it should also consider open education for the public at large.

- The need to promote awareness of public at large including youth through media coverage and dissemination of information, on the value and the significance of the coastal (natural and cultural) heritage of humanity.

- Participants attending this workshop expressed the wish, to convene an
international conference on Underwater Archaeology and Coastal Management in 1999.

- The participants wish to express their thanks to national organizations and to UNESCO and other international organizations for sponsoring and financing the workshop.

- The participants also wish to express their appreciation to the Egyptian Navy and to the international community for their cooperation which led to the remarkable archaeological discoveries at Qayet Bey and the Eastern Harbour.
Annex 1

Workshop Programme
Workshop Programme

- Sunday 6th April 1997
  18.00 - 22.00 Pre-registration (At Ramada Renaissance Hotel)

- Monday 7th April 1997
  08.00 - 09.30 Registration

Opening Session
  09.30 - 11.00 Opening Addresses
  11.00 - 11.30 Reception

Session I: Background
  Chairperson: Prof. Mostafa Hassan
  11.30 - 11.50 Ancient Alexandria and the Mediterranean World (L. Yehia, Egypt)
  11.50 - 12.10 The Greatest Emporium in the Inhabited World (M. El-Abbadi, Egypt)
  12.10 - 12.20 Discussion
  12.20 - 12.40 Alexandria Urbanization Plan and Ecotourism (M. Zahran, Egypt)
  12.40 - 13.00 Coastal Resources: The Need for a Management System (E. Y. El-Bastawisy, Egypt)
  13.00 - 13.15 Discussion

13.15 - 14.30 Lunch Break at University Staff Restaurant

Session II:
  Chairperson: Prof. A. Bernard
  14.30 - 14.50 Valorization of Submerged Monuments and Development Needs (N. Grimal, France)
  14.50 - 15.10 Early Discoveries of Submarine Archaeological Sites in Alexandria (S.A. Morcos, USA)
  15.10 - 15.30 Recuperating an Alexandrian Pioneer in Submarine Archaeology, K. Aboul Saadat
            (H. Halim, Egypt)
  15.30 - 16.00 Discussion
  16.00 - 16.30 Coffee Break

Session III:
  Chairperson: Prof. N. Grimal
  16.30 - 16.50 Ports of Alexandria as Shown on Plans and Maps from 15th C. to the time of Mohamed Aly
            (Tzalas, Greece)
  16.50 - 17.10 Nelson Island Project: A Research between Archaeology and Geology (P. Gallo, Italy)
  17.10 - 17.30 The Coastal Sites of Central Lazio: A Problem of Preservation (A. Zarattini, Italy)
  17.30 - 18.00 Discussion

18.30 Inauguration of the Italian Exhibition on “La Marmotta” Case Study (M. Mineo, Italy)

20.00 - 23.00 Dinner Offered by Prof. E. Salem, President, University of Alexandria
              Prof. A. Shihab-Eldin, Director, UNESCO Cairo Office
• Tuesday 8th April 1997

Session IV:
Chairperson: Prof. F. Abou Aianah
09.00 - 09.20 Developing “Wise Practice” in Coastal Management: A Cross Sectoral Approach (D. Nakashima, UNESCO)
09.20 - 09.40 Remote Sensing Applications to Underwater Archaeological Exploration Along the Coast of Alexandria (F. El-Baz, USA)
09.40 - 10.00 Discussion
10.00 - 10.20 Coastal Processes and Proposed Works Along Alexandria Coastline (A. Fanous and O. Friehy, Egypt)
10.20 - 10.40 Communication by S. Nakhla (Egypt)
10.40 - 11.00 Discussion
11.00 - 11.20 Coffee Break

Session V:
Current Efforts (CNRS - IFAO - CEA)
Chairperson: Prof. M. Mahgoub
11.20 - 11.40 From Byblos to Pharos: Some Archaeological Considerations (H. Frost, UK)
11.40 - 12.00 Recent Excavation of Submerged Archaeological Sites of Qayet Bey Region (J. Y. Empereur, France)
12.00 - 12.20 Discussion
12.20 - 12.40 Salvation, Treatment and Preservation of Submerged Archaeological Remains (M. Wuttmann, France)
12.40 - 13.00 Protection of the Pharos Excavation in Alexandria: Some Preliminary Results on Wave Agitation and Sedimentological Problems (D. Aelbrecht and E. Peltier, France)
13.00 - 13.15 Lunch Break

Session VI:
Current Efforts (IEASM)
Chairperson: Prof. M. El Abbadi
14.30 - 14.50 Recent Discoveries of Submarine Archaeological Sites in Alexandria (F. Goddio, France)
14.50 - 15.10 Communication by F. El-Fakharany (Egypt)
15.10 - 15.30 Northern Coast and Submerged Cities (A. Abdel-Fatah and I. A. Darwish; SCA, Egypt)
15.30 - 16.00 Discussion
16.00 - 16.30 Coffee Break

Session VII:
Current Efforts (INA)
Chairperson: Prof. F. El-Baz
16.30 - 16.50 Sub-Bottom Profiling of the Alexandria Harbours (N. Tongring, USA)
16.50 - 17.10 Communication by Ivan Negueruela (Spain)
17.10 - 17.30 Some Remarks on Harbours of Sabratha (Libya): Case Study (N. Bonacaza, Italy)
17.30 - 18.00 Discussion
19.00 - 21.00 Reception Offered by Mr. J. P. Castella, Consul General de France in Alexandria
Wednesday 9th April 1997

Session VIII:

Chairperson: Prof. Y. Halim

09.00 - 09.20 National Legislation and Submarine Archaeological Sites (M. El-Gindy, Egypt)

09.20 - 09.40 Conventions and Legislations related to Submarine Archaeological Sites in the Mediterranean (V. Negri, France)

09.40 - 10.00 Legal Principles for the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage (L. Prott, UNESCO)

10.00 - 10.20 Discussion

10.20 - 10.40 Human Impacts on Alexandria Coastal Environment (Y. Halim and F. Abou Shouk, Egypt)

10.40 - 11.00 Discussion

Announcement of the Working Groups

Field Trip:

11.15 - 13.15 Guided field trip to the Archaeological Sites in Alexandria
(Qayet Bey Fort, Eastern Harbour, Greco-Roman Theater and Maritime Museum)

13.15 - 14.30 Lunch Break (Yacht Club)

Working Groups Meetings

Working Group I: Coastline Instability in the Qayet Bey and Eastern Harbour Archaeological Areas: What Steps Towards an Integrated Solution?


Session IX:

Chairperson: Prof. A.A. El Toukhy

14.30 - 14.50 Variability of Coastal Currents and Hydrography in the Coastal Zone of Alexandria (A.A. H. El-Gindy, Egypt)

14.50 - 15.10 Helici: Part of Sunken Greek City (H. El-Sheikh, Egypt)

15.10 - 15.30 Environmental Issues Associated with Submarine Archaeology in Alexandria Coast (O. T. Aboul-Dahab, Egypt)

15.30 - 16.00 Discussion

16.00 - 16.30 Coffee Break

Session X:

Chairperson: Prof. A. Said

16.30 - 16.50 Preservation of Wood Artifact from Underwater Archaeological Sites; the Neolithic Wooden Canoe from the Bracciano Lake (M. S. Fugazzola, Italy, presented by M. Meneo, Italy)

16.50 - 17.10 The Ancient Warrior Harbour of Thasos, In Northern Greece (A. Simossi, Greece)

17.10 - 17.30 Conservation of Mixed Archaeological Materials, Saadana Island Shipwreck (E. Khalil, INA - Egypt and H. Wellman, USA)

17.30 - 18.00 Discussion
**Thursday 10th April 1997**

**Session XI:**
Chairperson: *Prof. S. H. Sharaf El-Din*

- **09.00 - 09.20** Implications of Climatic Changes and Sea Level Variations on Alexandria, Egypt (*O. Friehy and A. Fanous, Egypt*)
- **09.20 - 09.40** Data Management in Underwater Archaeology (*E. Sommella, Italy*)
- **09.40 - 10.00** Discussion
- **10.00 - 10.20** Modern Development and Ancient Maritime Sites in the Tyrrhenian Sea (*E. Felici, Italy*)
- **10.20 - 10.40** In the Same Boat and Learning the Ropes: An Alexandria/Boston Comparison (*V. Mastone, USA*)
- **10.40 - 11.00** Discussion
- **11.00 - 11.30** Coffee Break

**Session XII:**
Chairperson: *Prof. D. Nakashima*

- **11.30 - 13.30** Working Groups Reports and Panel Discussion
- **13.30 - 15.00** Lunch Break

**Session XIII:**
Chairperson: *Prof. S.A. Morcos*

- **15.00 - 16.00** Adoption of Recommendations
- **16.00 - 16.30** Coffee Break

**Closing Session:**
Chairperson: *Prof. Essam A. Salem*

- **16.30 - 18.00** Closing Addresses
  - Recommendations
  - Alexandria Declaration
- **22.00 - 23.00** Alexandrian Folkloric evening

**Friday 11th April 1997**

- **08.00 - 15.00** Field Trip to the Archaeological Sites Around Alexandria City; *Marea, Marina and Nelson Island*
- **15.00** Lunch offered by the Ministry of Tourism at Salamlek Hotel, Monatazah Palace
SECTION THREE

VOICES OF ‘SARCOM’ WORKSHOP

Fieldwork informants (at UNESCO Paris Head-Quarters, the UNESCO field-office in Cairo and 'local' Alexandrian actors including the ‘critical Chorus’) responses to the SARCOM Workshop 1997 were generally positive and give strength to the sense of the Workshop occupying a pivotal role within the revivalist operational context. In the following I feature extracts from interviews held with Professors El Banna and Youssef Halim from Alexandria University’s Department of Oceanography both of whom were involved in agitating for the Workshop. These interviews offer specific critical insights into the Workshop in terms of providing a more detailed understanding of the reception of UNESCO supported workshops and pilot projects within the local context and also the benefits and the new controversies which emerged.

The Oceanography department is itself located next to Qait Bey and as such not only exists in close proximity to the key site around which the Workshop is focused but as Halim made clear UNESCO has had a ‘long history of interest in the site’ which began with ‘their involvement in the archaeological survey made by Saadat and Frost’ (Halim: 9/99). It was clear from both Halim and El-Banna that writ large UNESCO was regarded, as the latter subsequently put it, as a ‘very useful ally’ (El-Banna: 9/99). El-Banna also gave a very enthusiastic rehearsal of the SARCOM event, by emphasising the ‘wide co-operation’ that the Workshop created and which, he argued, ‘was a triumph!’ Both he and Halim asserted how it was this ‘integrated approach to heritage management’ (which is oft-repeated in SARCOM literature) that was most valued and was able to bring into play new mediations of local and international actors which provided a more equal basis for discussion. As such El-Banna further asserted his ‘belief’ that, ‘The advantage of UNESCO is that it stops individualism and dominance by one group and unnecessary competition’ and that ‘working together with UNESCO on such a programme was a real success’. Halim similarly argued that SARCOM’s success was that it sought to address,
'the universal problem – how do you bring people together when they have contradictory interests?'

The most immediate and symbolic act of reconciliation which the Workshop brought about was with the more contested aspects of the recent history of the site and what the SARCOM literature refers to as the 1993 'public outcry'. As Halim states, 'the negative controversy which earlier took place at the site was supplanted by the more positive concerns and actions of a wide variety of professionals'. As made clear in SARCOM literature too this was achieved by interventions made at the Workshop which were able to recast the site as a 'classic' heritage dilemma: i.e. that of erosion versus conservation. This was an effective way in which revivalism’s various players came together to more explicitly detail the inscription of their operations and collaborations at 'ground level': this offered scope for both the organisers and 'experts' to make their own mark (territorially) on the landscape. As El-Banna comments, 'Qait Bey was focused upon as the case-study and as a model for application in other places' and as such SARCOM brought into play a new cosmopolitics in which the key objective was the, 'exchange of experience with international community' (see SARCOM literature enclosed).

- Scientific Approaches

The emphasis upon a shared 'scientific' approach was regarded by Halim and El-Banna as being of major importance. The latter, for example, stated how, 'To see ourselves as part of a wider 'scientific community' is very, very important to us' here he reiterated, 'Science is capable of uniting both local and universal concerns.' El-Banna, further commented how, 'Under this umbrella we argued for consideration of socio-economic aspects of the sites'. Halim likewise stressed how, 'The appeal to science allowed us to bring the concerns of environmentalists together with those of archaeologists and others and to understand these in relation to a range of very important issues raised when networking across experts within and outside Egypt,' here he reiterated how, 'This possibility of getting participants to understand concerns from each others position is of

1 see also http://www.unesco/csi/act/alex/alex1.htm).
major importance' and as the *SARCOM Proceedings* show offer a broad range of crossings-over between international contexts in terms of comparative case-studies (UNESCO 1997).

El-Banna also pursued this dynamic of net-working by enthusiastically commenting how, 'it is excellent for us to speak with international experts about Alexandria's concerns, and to swap information, it gives everyone a sense that you are not working alone and it provided very good support for us.' He also saw it emerge as a counter-point to what he dubbed as the 'magpie behaviour' within Egypt and explained further how, 'People from different establishments in Egypt and Alexandria itself are now being asked to work together for the first time who perhaps worked in neighbouring offices or departments but who had never even met before!' He subsequently highlighted the sense of agency and empowerment this brought in terms of underlining the role of Alexandria and Alexandrian experts in global context, 'We gained a sense of how our work will help other parts of Egypt and the importance of our work as a model for other countries too. We also benefited from workshop sessions which featured case-studies from African, Asia and other places which were experiencing similar problems. We were all able to benefit immensely'.

The specific use of the format and philosophy of the 'workshop' and its insistence on 'problem-solving' was similarly valued by El Banna and Halim. The later, for example stated, 'This insistence on defining 'outcomes', 'recommendations' and making trial 'pilot-projects' is a new way of working which has proved very important indeed. For the first time we were able to clarify immediate action and more long-term strategies and policies'. El-Banna also referred to the resultant 'collective action' as highly valued, 'In my opinion this is more important than individual work. It changed people's mentality in terms of working together/ trusting each other and achieving the same goals'. El-Banna also emphasised how this encouraged, 'The spread of change' within Egypt and Alexandria'.

235
In more grounded terms the SARCOM Workshop's potency was outlined by both informants as that of its effectiveness as the point of origin for a series of pilot-projects and for inscription within UNESCO programmes. The 'Declaration of Alexandria' - the operational equivalent of the 'Aswan Declaration' - drew together the central aspects of strategisation (see SARCOM material attached). It was in the Declaration that the Qait-Bey/Pharos site was centred as the over-arching pilot-project. Here 'Recommendations' - which were greeted by both informants with great enthusiasm - were also put in place for a 'cross-sectoral Task Force' to be 'responsible for setting an overall strategy for implementing and monitoring the pilot project'. This in turn led to three crucial reframings of revivalism. The first came with the site's official inscription as part the framework of UNESCO's 'Coastal Zones and Small Islands' programmes which, as Halim argues 'has at its heart issues of the management and protection of both the citadel site and Alexandria's submerged archaeological sites'. The second major breakthrough came with 'Recommendations' to inscript the pilot-project within a wider framework for the development of 'museums' and archaeological parks' either 'on-land or underwater' and which created what El-Banna described as 'a whole host of new ways of thinking about this site, Not only from the point of view of environmentalists and archaeologists but also visitors'.

A final major intervention came with the 'Recommendation' to study the 'possibility of inscription on the World Heritage List' (again see SARCOM material attached). These latter potential reframings have proved crucial in offering a wider vision of revivalism which centres both archaeological sites and greater museumification and heritification. Both El-Banna and Halim also argue this vision offered a means to address other issues at stake in the contemporary context from concerns over pollution to that of tourism. Of the former El-Banna stated how, 'Together with the archaeologists we made it clear that through the pilot-project mechanism we wanted to raise the issue of the treatment of sewage as part of the equation'. He stated, 'The archaeologist from Empereur's team
have always been active in trying to communicate the sewage problems to the press. Not only does sewage create problems in terms of visibility for the divers searching for archaeology but of course has major, on-going health concerns not only for the archaeologists but for the city’s inhabitants. Here we had a good outcome in terms of putting a strategy in place which has been recognised by the authorities which stipulates that by 2010 all sewage in Alexandria will receive secondary treatment.

While as previously stated plans for an underwater museum were greeted positively, they did, however, throw up some new controversies. El-Banna, for example, explained how, ‘An early proposal stated that the fishermen should be removed outside the harbour in order to have the whole site as a museum. In my opinion the fishermen are an integral part of the site and this proposal is wrong’. Halim similarly argued, ‘It is proper that we should keep in mind popular sentiments to the site and give our commitment to support the community living and working in this area and adapt the site to take in the needs of these people’. As a result an ethnographic ‘pilot’ project was undertaken in this area by an academic from Alexandria University2 which succeeded in convincing UNESCO and others that, as El-Banna put it, ‘the fishermen and their livelihoods represent an integral part of the site’ and part of its ‘living tradition’. While the fishermen were able to stand their ground the aspiration de-militarise area the harbour area is still an on-going agenda which both men, like many other Alexandrian actors, seek to pursue.

- Legacies and Possible Futures

As El-Banna stated, writ large, SARCOM’s legacy was to ‘bring a larger idea of revivalism in our imagination – we can now imagine that the area – starting with Pharos Island will be an open-air museum with specific parts of this museum to be created on land and underwater’. Crucially too it is a vision which draws the Bibliotheca back into the wider picture. El-Banna continues, ‘All the elements of revivalism exist in this vision. We will have the Bibliotheca completing the picture’. With this vision too came what El-

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2 This report was written by Mayssah El Nayal, Professor of Psychology at Alexandria University and is entitled Socio-economic problems and attitudes towards the underwater museum project among a sample of people living in the area of the Qait Bey Citadel (undated: unpublished).
Banna described as a 'new self-confidence,' he thus detailed, 'before the workshop people were not interested in the whole of revivalism – just in small aspects. Nor was it a priority for the decision-makers. But after the success of the workshop everyone is interested especially the decision makers whom the Recommendations are addressed to.' The reference here is to the 'National Authorities' addressed in SARCOM's Recommendations, and which include amongst others, the Supreme Council of Antiquities, the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency and the Ministry of Tourism and the Governorate of Alexandria.

The series of committees which supported the central pilot-project at Qait Bey also bolstered this sense of agency. El Banna, commented, 'We now have committees in place to scrutinise potential tourist projects around the harbour. Investors – both Egyptian and foreigners - have to submit their ideas and projects to us. We can also invite new projects too. This means that it is now impossible to build or develop one project without thinking of the other issues and other groups'. He reiterated 'This is what gives us a confidence to decide and also to control the future of revivalism'. Both El-Banna and Halim expressed further aspirations and also anxieties regarding the issue of the sustainability of projects. In terms of aspirations both men, for example, commended SARCOM's 'Recommendations' that the University of Alexandria should consider developing specialised courses for graduates and under-graduate students on submarine archaeology and related disciplines and that it should also consider open education for the public at large. Moreover, the later was regarded as a positive link with, 'the need to promote awareness of the public at large including youth, through media coverage and dissemination of information, on the value and the significance of the coastal (natural and cultural) heritage of humanity'. While aspirations at UNESCO field-office and Paris-UNESCO placed a great emphasis on the introduction of further NGO networks and committee systems in order to straddle the bridge between the relationship of cultural revivalism to the co-existent force of urban revivalism this did bring new concerns and anxieties.
Halim, for example, outlined his concern for the, 'The need to twin revivalism with development' while subsequently articulating his 'fear' that 'this will place heritage and archaeological projects in the domain of private business'. His anxieties here concerned the dilemma that, 'The decision makers do not have a high cultural conscience so they jump at any new idea without much thought' and that 'urban revivalism could collapse at anytime if profit is prioritised over people'. El-Banna echoed these remarks by adding how, 'cultural development and the needs of the local people should be prioritised over profit and we need to keep involved and keep vocal in order for this to be the future of this city'. It was in this coming together of the 'three tributaries' of revivalism that yet again utopian visions and distopic anxieties surfaced. This saw El-Banna similarly argue for a more humanised/ people-centred approach to revivalism by arguing, 'it is the memory of humanity we are dealing with. Heritage and history has been used violently in the past and for profit but it can be used to champion peace and harmony too. This makes your interests and concerns widen and to understand that this is not mine exclusively for the future'. He thus finally asserted, 'It is a dream – perhaps achievable, perhaps utopian – to extend this vision of revivalism along the coastal strip from Qait Bey, across the royal quarter and up to the Bibliotheca and to unite expert and popular interest in this vision too'.
SECTION FOUR

ALEXANDRIA AS TOURIST SPACE

One of the emergent issues which arose from the SARCOM Workshop 1997 and which more broadly marks the contemporary revivalist context is that of the potential to harness the spirit of change and transformation currently effecting Alexandria and to use this to reinvent the city as a site of international tourism. Writ large it was clear from interviews held with informants at the Alexandria branch of the Egyptian Tourist Authority (ETA) that this was still very much an aspirational aspect of revivalism and as such was envisaged to need more long term strategizing (Salwa: 1/97; 8/99). What was also clear, however, is that the main cultural revivalist projects – i.e. the Bibliotheca and the proposed museum at Qait Bey – did provide a focal point around which ideas concerning the future viability of international tourism could be discussed. Similarly the SARCOM pilot projects were regarded by archaeologists/ environmentalists as key mechanisms by which to explore these possibilities further.

In order to gain a more contextualised purchase on these dynamics in the following I feature extracts from an interview made with Dr Heba Aziz a researcher, lecturer and consultant in the field of tourism. At the time of interview Aziz was working at Alexandria University’s Faculty of Tourism (Aziz: 8/00). Significantly too Aziz, who did her MA and PhD research in the UK, was a key organiser of the Med Campus project which I discuss in Appendix Two and as such her work is embedded in the anthropological approaches to tourism previously mentioned (see Aziz 2001). As a consequence she was thus able to give a critical review of Alexandria’s place in the domestic and international tourist imagination and also relate this to certain ideas and trends which are current in academic/ operational discussions of tourism.

- Domestic Tourism

Both Aziz and the informants interviewed at ETA were keen to press the point that Alexandria is predominantly a site of domestic tourism with the city’s second largest
visitor group coming from the Gulf States and from other Arab countries in the Middle East\(^3\). As Aziz put it, 'the city is very much regarded as a sun, sea and sand destination. Cairens and Upper Egyptians who visit Alexandria and other Arab visitors see Alexandria as a city by the coast with long beaches and that is why they go there. It is regarded by some Middle Eastern visitors to be a little freer, for example, in terms of entertainments but this really means that the city is regarded as a good place to eat sea food or sit in the cool Mediterranean breezes. From this perspective Alexandria is totally unconnected to Western ideas of Alexandria as literary city and as a cosmopolitan city. This really does not feature'.

Aziz explained that while the public and private the beaches which stretch from the Bibliotheca site (i.e. the Chaby beaches where I held interviews with local Alexandrians (see Appendix Two)) along Alexandria’s Corniche through to Abu Qir are used by domestic and Middle Eastern visitors and tourists in recent years a certain metamorphosis has occurred in terms of the development of new tourist complexes on the Northern and Western coasts of the city. She commented, ‘Big developments have occurred in these places. These are not to do with cosmopolitanism or history and heritage but again they are beach resorts. The Western coast in particular is a very elite space. The resorts there have been built for elites form Cairo and rich Alexandrians who have a second holiday home located there. These places are completely inaccessible to the Western tourist and to the international community and inaccessible to the ordinary middle class people. They simply become enclaves of rich Egyptians who just go there for one month. Rather than tourism as a form of interaction between different people this really is tourism as enclave and division’.

\(^3\) The official statistics given by ETA were that 65% of Alexandria’s visitors were domestic tourists; 30% Middle Eastern and only 5% ‘foreign’ visitors i.e. predominantly European/ North American. In terms of the second category ETA staff stated that significant numbers of visitors came from Kuwait, the Gulf, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Lebanon. These groups of tourists were argued to visit Alexandria for the same reason as Egyptians and thus saw Alexandria predominantly as a sea-side destination. In terms of European/ North American visitors it was also stressed that this group typically visit Alexandria for a day trip either on their way to or from Cairo. The standard tourist itinerary was that of: the Greco-Roman Museum, the Catacombs, the Roman amphitheatre, the Qait Bey citadel and the Jewellery Museum. Visits to the cemeteries at El Alamein and to Rachid/ Rosetta were undertaken by the more ambition. Interestingly Qait Bey was emphasised to be a site of crossings-over in the sense that the above tourists frequented this particular venue (Salwa: 8/99).
Aziz who was obviously critical of these particular forms of tourist spaces did draw out a potential positive at play here, ‘The wonderful thing about the development of the Western coast is that Alexandria itself has been repossessed by the middle and working classes of Cairo and upper Egypt who could not afford to go to the private, exclusive beaches on the Western coast and where elite Caireens already have established this enclave. So you get peasant farmers and labourers frequenting Alexandria with their families. This has had the effect of restructuring the demography of the city during the summer’. Here she added, ‘What remains of Alexandria’s ancient past and its Greco-Roman Museum are not really the centre of tourist attention. The café at Qait Bey and the fish restaurants at Abu Qir are more of an attraction’. Here she emphasised, ‘I am not really sure if you would really define Islamic monuments as “heritage” in the same way as the West would do in the sense that Islamic culture is very much a lived culture and therefore contemporary and alive. This is obviously true at the time of Ramadan where the past/present, heritage, religion, celebration and leisure time all merge. Alexandria’s main mosque and its surrounding complex is inundated with visitors as is Khan El Khalili in Cairo’.

- International Tourism

Aziz changed the focus to address the subject of Alexandria’s relationship to international tourism. Here she reflected, ‘The average tourist will have read The Alexandria Quartet 1986 [1960] and will most probably regard Alexandria as a romantic literary city and have a picture in their minds of its modern cosmopolitan period i.e. they have a picture of Alexandria as a cosmopolitan Mediterranean city populated by Greek, Jewish, Italian communities etc. Most people who come here are ‘travellers’ rather than mainstream tourists in the sense that they are back-packers and are straying off the usual tourist routes or visiting Alex after having visited Cairo, Luxor or Siwa’. Once again communicating the sense of ‘disturbance’ that a literal visit to the city brings with Aziz argues, ‘The city itself of course doesn’t match this kind of image. It is also true that most people I interviewed while researching my MA thesis on the ‘Image of Egypt’ really didn’t like
Alexandria. When you get here now everything is faded and until the recent discoveries there was little to see’.

Aziz did not see this, however, as a sign that international tourism in Alexandria was doomed to failure but instead stated, ‘I think that what is interesting is that Western visitors to Alexandria are really engaging in tourism in both an abstract sense – i.e. as a literary city – and also hoping to consume Alexandria in terms of a social sense of place. This doesn’t particularly rely on having icons like the pyramids or the Eiffel Tower but on locating spaces and places where they can discover something about the subject of cosmopolitanism, of social integration and of the histories of minorities within Alexandria’. It was here that Aziz highlighted what she saw to be the ‘failure of Alexandria’s official institutions and agencies to seize upon this potential’, adding, ‘It is good that new heritage is emerging and that the Bibliotheca will soon be an international focal point but there is still a need for the Alexandrian authorities to understand that what is in many foreign visitors’ heads is something quite social – it is about the culture of cosmopolitanism, the cafes and the restaurants, walking down the Corniche or going in the Brazilian Coffee Bar – it is not foremost the search for ‘objects’ - but more about an engagement with culture’. She detailed further, ‘It is amazing how much the city has missed out on this if you think of how many people go to Cairo but never visit Alexandria which is only two hours away and they would travel two hours within Cairo to go to some of the sites there. Alexandria is quite an interesting city and it could respond to the imaginative tourist if the authorities took this on’.

- Tourism as Neo-Colonialism

Although Aziz was optimistic about the possibility of ‘tourism being used in the text book sense as an experience in inter-cultural contact’ she also drew out the more oppressive features of this discourse with regard to ‘the other text book sense of tourism as a neo-colonial force’. She stated, ‘If you look at the wider picture in Egypt you can see how the latter thesis has its purchase here too. The whole image of Egypt as the treasure box of the Pharaohs is very much a Western colonial idea. It is linked to Napoleon’s
mission, Howard Carter and the British colonisation of Egypt. In this sense you could say it is an image imposed from outside which keeps getting more entrenched as more and more people get fascinated by mummies and by Tutankhamen etc'. Here Aziz drew out some of the consequences of these dynamics, 'In many senses this is both a blessing and a burden to Egypt. Thinking about it more positively elite Egyptian’s ‘buy-in' to this kind of history but it becomes a very exclusive focus when the international interest is in one particular aspect of Egypt’s ancient past. This is why Alexandria gets missed out – why would Europeans come here to see a Greek landscape when they could go to Greece or alternatively see the Pharaonic past'.

It was as Aziz began to outline ‘the economic concerns of the tourist context' that the more oppressive tropes emerged, ‘There has been a big drive since the Sadat era to make tourism one of Egypt’s biggest sources of income. This has brought tremendous conflicts with it. Tourism is of course a service industry and in that sense it brings with it all the problems that text books on tourism in ‘Third’ world countries raise when authors’ argue: - why would a nation want to build its future on a nation of waiters.’ It was here that Aziz argued, ‘There are polarisations between international tourists and locals. This re-creates the idea of the ‘Haves’ and ‘Have Not’ society. In Luxor for example, locals see these luxurious Nile cruisers go by when many of them endure extremes of poverty throughout their lives. The tourists, however, visit Luxor and other Nile villages and for the most part are happy to take photographs of what they see as ‘timeless tradition’.

She continued, ‘Tourism in this sense is also associated with the import of capitalism. This is symbolised in the leisure time of Western society which is enabled by capitalism. Tourists also seem to be the embodiment of hedonism, and while we know that people behave differently while on holiday, it gives greater force to tourism in the polarised sense of the ‘Haves’ and the ‘Have Nots’ simply gazing at each other. This also leads to differences being exaggerated which just perpetuates stereotypes. There are many contradictions here too, for example, with the rapid development of resorts like Sharm el Sheikh and Dahab and other sites in the Sinai and Red Sea many local people find
themselves having to understand new behaviours. There are also tourist workers who do not like serving alcohol to foreigners and this becomes a particular strain’.

-Understanding Tourist Conflicts

Aziz subsequently refocused her comments upon a more complex context in terms of the more embedded conflicts being fought over tourism in Egypt, here she states, ‘I think that what is completely underestimated is the amount of violence directed to the tourism industry – which is very much a means to indirectly attack the government - rather than the tourists as individuals. This is at times, of course, very difficult to differentiate and events such as that which took place in Luxor are so extreme that these factors were lost in the total violence. There is a horrible contradiction here too that people turn to violence as a tool of social justice. This shows the utter desperation of the situation. My self and other critics of tourism have, however, sought to show that conflicts occur in terms of the rejection of the concept of tourism and that they are a sign that the negative effects of tourism on Egyptians has gone unnoticed and unexamined by the government and that conflict is regarded as the only avenue of protest.4 In this sense the problems of tourism are not taken on by the policy makers – they merely engage in clamp-downs on ‘terrorists’ following violent events without addressing the core problems which just become worse. Also these debates on the polarisation and clashes between cultures just become academic debates that no-one listens to unless you can mobilise NGO networks and other mechanisms to really engage with the local context’.

It was here that with particular resonance for this thesis Aziz argued that the only convincing way forward was that of aligning tourist development with more sustained ethnographic research work, she asserted, ‘No country so far has been able to take on and embrace tourism successfully and without problems whether in poor ‘Third’ world countries or in rich wealthy countries. Ethnographic research offers real insights to be made which then can be acted on to improve tourism development and cultural

4 See, for example, Aziz 1995.
interaction. If ten or fifteen years ago research had been done in Luxor potential conflicts could have been highlighted – and I mean conflicts between locals and the government rather than locals and tourists – this may have prevented many deaths’. With more detail she added, ‘Ethnographic research can highlight factors such as social problems – unemployment, for example, - and also poor education (over 50% of the Egyptian population is illiterate). In a political context where you cannot form an opposition party or go to the media and the press to express your problems it is important that ethnographic research is also able to give some mechanism which allows people to express such concerns and feel they are being listened to and that action and remedies will be forthcoming. Again NGO networks can be used in terms of positive collaborations’.

Here Aziz reiterated, ‘Ethnography does provide an invaluable source of information and above all demonstrates that tourism is a social movement which demands to be understood in all its complexity’.

- Tourist Returns to Alexandria

Aziz returned her focus to Alexandria in order to bring these points ‘back home’ and to relate this notion of tourism as a ‘social movement’ back to the force of cultural-urban revivalism currently taking hold on the city. She stated, ‘Alexandria since the 1950s has been quite domestically orientated. The regeneration and cleaning the streets is very welcome but it doesn’t have any philosophy behind it and it is not targeted i.e. painting all the houses along the Corniche the same colour because it looks better is not an implementation of philosophy/ ideology but it is aesthetic’. Aziz continued, ‘Whatever we think of tourism with all its ‘commoditisation of culture’ these efforts to regenerate the city have all missed out on what the city is really known for and in these terms revivalism needs to be re-conceptualised by the authorities to take into an account a contemporary globalised conception of the city. If tourism and Alexandria’s future were managed in this way one would be able to accommodate for the Western tourists who see Alexandria as a place of literature and cosmopolitan Mediterranean culture. They could
also clean up the harbour and the beaches for the domestic tourists and at the same time address the sewage problem'.

Aziz returned to the possibilities of attracting both Western and domestic tourist

'Hopefully with the Library things will take a new dimension if it is thought about properly. They could build on the idea of tourism as a social movement. Exhibitions and events built on the idea of social history would be an important advancement for both elite Alexandrians and foreigners. The model of Alexandrian tourism could be like that of Amsterdam where the life of the city is its own exhibit. Alexandria could fit into this model a re-thinking of the spaces of cosmopolitanism from Durrell’s house, to Sayed Darwish’s house [see Appendix Two] and also craft areas like Kom el Dikka which has its cafes which locals (especially on the Friday holidays and Ramadan) frequent as do the few tourists who know how to find it’. Here she added, ‘This would be a workable vision of a tourist future in Alexandria not simply the return or revival of the ancient past but a more representative re-conceptualisation of the city from various viewpoints and as a living social world.’
Appendix Seven

The Role of NGOs in Urban Regeneration and the ‘Cities for Peace’ Report
APPENDIX SEVEN

THE ROLE OF NGO's IN URBAN REGENERATION AND THE ‘CITIES FOR PEACE’ REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this appendix is to feature material relating to Alexandria’s urban regeneration. The sources featured here include:

- Material relating to Adel Abu Zahra and the Friends of the Environment Association (FEA) and to Mohammed Awad and the Alexandria Preservation Trust (APT)\(^1\).

These sources provide both background detail and a contestatory perspective on what Awad refers to as the ‘Battle for Alexandria’ and the role of local Alexandrian NGOs in the revivalist context.

- I also feature the *Cities for Peace* report (1999), (see attached folder) authored by Professor Mostafa Senbel a member of both the Supreme Council for Culture (SCC) and the Governorate’s Architecture Committee, which outlines Alexandria’s candidature for this specific UNESCO’s programme. This report is an essential document of Alexandrian revivalism which provides more detail on both the official governmental position on urban revivalism while also illustrating underpinning attempts to reference ‘local’ regeneration to wider UNESCO frameworks.

Read together these texts not only draw out both the intimacies and contestatory nature of relationships of the official governorate and local NGOs purchase on revivalism but illustrate too the appeals made by both constituencies to Alexandria’s cosmopolitan heritage – in terms, for example, of its commercial and moral/ethical aspects - to substantiate their respective positions.

\(^1\) The Alexandria Preservation Trust (APT) is sometimes referred to as the Alexandria Preservation Association (APA).
SECTION ONE features:


Farag, F. 2002b. Profile of Adel Abu Zahra: There should be nothing voluntary about citizenship, but in the meantime... In *Al Ahram Weekly*, July 11-17, No. 594: 9
DEALING WITH ALEXANDRIA
ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

Dr. Adel Abu Zahra
Professor of Human Sciences
Alexandria - Egypt
DEALING WITH ALEXANDRIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

Dr. Adel Abu Zahra

Cosmopolitanism makes flourish in Alexandria:

Alexandria remained the economic, political and cultural capital of Egypt from the time it was founded by Alexander the Great in 332 BC until the Arab Conquest in 642 - that is for 974 years.

When the Arabs decided to move the capital to Fostat - later known as Cairo - Alexandria started to wane in importance. In 1805, Mohamed Ali became “Wali” (ruler) of Egypt and four years after the French campaign, he found Alexandria to be a small village, with a mere 6000 inhabitants living in dire conditions in the midst of the ruins of the ancient city. As part of his big project to build a modern country, Mohamed Ali recognized the importance of reviving Alexandria and focused a lot of his attention on it. His trend was pursued by the subsequent khedives, especially Khedive Ismail (ruled from 1863 – 1879).

During the 19th century, and with the help of European experts who were encouraged to work and settle in Alexandria, several projects were accomplished which influenced the development and flourishing of the city.

The Mahmoudieh canal, designed by Mr. Coste, a French engineer, was inaugurated in 1820. This brought about the revival of the merchant trade, transportation and urbanization. Furthermore, cotton agriculture was introduced in Egypt, leading to Alexandria’s becoming one of the most important centres for the exportation of cotton.

The development of the port of Alexandria and the establishment of the Alexandria maritime arsenal in 1830 by Mr. Cerisy, a French engineer, helped in the creation of an important Egyptian navy. As a result, Alexandria reassumed its past eminence as one of the most important ports in the Mediterranean.

Other important achievements were:

- 1854 Building of the Railway operating between Alexandria and Cairo, by Robert Stevenson, a British engineer. Its success encouraged the creation of another railway line between Alexandria and Suez in 1858.
- 1863 The “Strada Ferrata Tra Alessandria”, a few months later renamed “Ramleh Railway Line”, was laid down between Ramleh station and Bulkeley. At first it was pulled by horses, later it was converted to steam power and finally electrified toward the end of the 19th century. This resulted in an expansion of urbanization to the Ramleh district. As the population increased, new projects were realized.
- 1865 The Lebon and partners gas company for lighting was created. The company was later converted to electricity.
- 1865 The “Maslahet El Barid” or Postal service was founded.
- 1872 For the first time in an Islamic city, a statue was erected in a public square following a famous “Fatwa” (of approval) by the Imam Mohamed Abdou – the statue was that of Mohamed Ali. Later in the 20th century, permission was granted for a cemetery to be consecrated to the Free thinkers or “Libres penseurs” – a bold decision for the times.
- In 1875 the Mixed Tribunals were formed.
- Alexandria was one of the first cities to introduce a Sanitary system in 1878.
- In 1879 the Water company was established to supply the city with potable water. Also, a company was set up for the paving and cleaning of streets.
- 1890 A Municipal Council was appointed to plan for the development of the city and its cleanliness.
- 1895 The Graeco-Roman museum was built.
- By the end of the 19th century the city centre was booming with companies, banks, hotels, the Stock Exchange and coffee shops.
- Two of the most remarkable achievements in the first half of the 20th century were the construction of the Alexandria Corniche in 1934, and the opening of the Farouk 1st University in 1942.
- Alexandria flourished markedly during this period. It became a centre for international trade and its planning was revised to follow the European style. It witnessed an economical, social, cultural and urban upsurge.
- A number of newspapers in different languages were founded for the first time. (see appendix). The cinema, the theatre followed suit. A literary and artistic movement was formed. Public parks, beaches, modern hospitals, tens of schools
(see appendix), educational institutions, social and sporting clubs, banks, industrial and commercial companies, mosques, churches, synagogues were founded, as well as beautiful palaces and houses in different styles.

- 1926 saw the creation of the first Museum of Modern Art in the house of a wealthy Alexandrian, Baron Charles de Menasce.

- It was in this environment that Cavafi, Ungaretti, Maarinetti, Lawrence Durrell, Sayed Darwish, Mohamed Nagui, Mohamoud Said, Letsas, Adham and Seif Wanly, Zanieri, Brandini, Jules Balint, Hampar, Angelopoulos, Clea Badaro and many, many others lived and created.

- In 1929, the first association for the lovers of Fine Arts was established.

- In 1932, the Atelier for artists and writers was founded.

- Alexandria remained, until the mid-sixties, a beautiful and spotless city, its streets faithfully cleaned every day. The rich mixture of about twelve varied ethnic and cultural groups emanated an ambience of cosmopolitanism and tolerance which was most propitious to the flourishing of the city. In addition, skilful management by the Municipal Council whose members reflected the multi-cultural population helped toward this blossoming.

- This Alexandrian Council, albeit, with its feet well rooted in Egyptian soil, gazed intently over the Mediterranean to the European civilization.

**Europeans in Alexandria:**

Mohamed Ali firmly believed that the Europeans could play an important role in the realization of his project for the foundation of a modern Egypt.

In 1830, Alexandria’s population was 40,000, - 4000 of whom were foreigners, namely, Greeks, Italians, French, Austrian, Swiss, Spanish, German, Roumanian and Jews – working as government officials, in the army, in the arsenal, the navy, as engineers, land surveyors, physicians, some founded commercial and financial institutions.

In 1855, Charles Muller recorded on a map of Alexandria the presence of 13 foreign Consulates and a number of hotels, restaurants, cafes, churches, hospitals, all built by Europeans in Alexandria and generally located in the centre of town which was then the Mohamed Ali Square and Place des Consuls – today’s Manchieh. The most important European concerns were commerce and shipping.
During the reign of Khedive Ismail, Alexandria grew as did its exports and imports.
At that time it was a very modern city, its population having risen to 180,000 by 1878,
of which 42,884 were foreigners – this figure represented 61.6% of all foreigners in Egypt. Only 16,000 foreigners lived in Cairo at the time. The Greeks were the largest community in 1878 – 20,830, consisting of nearly half the foreigners in Alexandria, followed by the Italians 8,993, the French 8,417 and the British 2,191.

In 1897 the population rose to 315,699, the foreigners being 46,118, that is 14.5% of the total. The Greek remained the largest foreign community, followed by the Italian, British, French and Austrian in that order.

In 1917 the population increased to 456,539. Foreigners numbered 84,705, that is 19%.

In 1927 the total population was 596,876 and the foreigners were 99,606 i.e. 17%.

In 1947 Alexandria contained 949,446 inhabitants, 66,462 were foreigners, forming 7% of the total.

It would appear that this marked drop in the number of foreign residents was a direct result of an increase in Egyptian national fervour for independence, coupled with the evident weakness of the Egyptian monarchy; when the slogan “Egypt for the Egyptians” was becoming a commonplace. Egypt was moving toward radical changes and it follows that some foreigners felt it was no longer a suitable place for them.

The most important communities were the Greeks, Italians, British, French and Turks, also a lesser number from Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, Spain, Eastern Europe, Armenia, Palestine and the Syro-Lebanese.

All these communities had their own schools, churches, clubs and hospitals and their own celebrations, nonetheless, they were Alexandrian above and beyond all else.

After the 1956 crisis, many foreigners left, especially the British, French and Jews.

Following the decision to nationalize banks in 1958, new groups of foreigners, especially the more wealthy, decided to move on. The foreign presence in Alexandria fell dramatically, reaching the low of 44,223, i.e. 3% of the total Alexandrian population of 1,516,234.

In 1962, and after the socialist laws, more foreigners departed. As the foreigners were emigrating, Egyptians from the governorates of Lower and Upper Egypt were migrating to Alexandria in search of employment and better life conditions.
With the rapid influx to Alexandria of local migrants, there arose a pressing need to plan for housing and employment. The city limits spread to the east and Montazah was annexed to Alexandria. Maamora summer resort was built and Aboukir district was also joined to Alexandria, soon to become an industrial area. To the west, Agami was added to the urban boundaries of Alexandria and so was Amria – an industrial district.

The Dekheila port was built. Plans were in the making for a new town in Amria. Borg el Arab became part of the administrative borders of the Alexandria governorate.

With the Open-Door Policy of the mid-seventies, a certain economic revival took place due to the rise in the price of petrol and the departure of many Egyptians seeking jobs in the Arabian Gulf countries. Their currency transfers to Egypt proved an important source of revenue to the country. However, the rapid increase in population and urbanization resulted in the deterioration of the infrastructure and a degradation of both the natural and the historical urban environment.

Alexandria ranks as the second most important Egyptian city, the first seaport, the first summer resort and the second industrial center in Egypt since it accommodates around 36% of the Egyptian industry. The population, estimated at 4 million, is concentrated in the narrow coastal areas. Alexandria is bordered by the Mediterranean to the North. Lake Maryout to the South, Lack Edco and Abu Keer Bay to the East, and to the West, the vast Western Desert. Due to the favorable geographical location, moderate weather, and the existence of some significant historical sites and monuments that date back to the fourth Century BC, Alexandria has always been one of the most important tourism spots. And until the late sixties, it was a very distinguished city, as reflected in the European architectural features. Indeed, it was – at that time – one of the cleanest and most beautiful cities in the world.

But towards the mid-seventies, things changed. As a result of the great increase in population and the influx of people from other governorate, Alexandria began to suffer from pollution and urban degradation. The economic and social changes, that were concurrent with the weakening of administrative bodies and the spread of negligence and corruption, contributed to the degradation of its natural and urban environments.

To halt (all) this deterioration, the Friends of the Environment Association was established in Alexandria in 1990. Its overall goal has been to protect, restore and improve the natural and built environment in Alexandria Governorate.
To achieve this goal, the following strategies were adopted:

1. Building/creating a broad (or general) public movement within Alexandria governorate that supports environmental protection, by providing correct information regarding the environment, its components and resources, and the impacts of human activities.

2. Working as a pressure group with respect to policy makers and implementors, those who pollute the environment and those who violate laws, as well as those whose responsibility it is to monitor law enforcement.

Participatory education and training have been one of the most important approaches adopted by the Association to achieve its aims. And a key principle of its strategy throughout has been the preservation of ecosystems (or ecological systems).

**Education by participation**

From the outset, the Friends of the Environment Association recognized that its membership was limited in number and that it cannot achieve its goals unless it was able to influence public opinion and engender support for FEA's goals amongst Alexandrians. To do so, the Association has used the following methods:

- Raising awareness.
- Education.
- Training.
- Changing behaviour.
- Participation.
- Advocacy.

**Using the following means:**

- Lectures.
- Seminars.
- Brochures and publications.
- Video films.
- Workshops.
- Discussion sessions.
• Public hearings.
• Exhibits.
• Festivals.
• Competitions.
• Press campaigns.
• Peaceful marches/demonstrations.
• Negotiation.
• Filing lawsuits (or taking legal action).

* A variety of audiences has been targeted, and has included: *

• School pupils.
• University students.
• Teachers.
• Police officers.
• Journalists.
• Radio and Television employees.
• Workers.
• House wives.
• Lawyers.
• Members of NGOs.
• Government Employees.
• Industrialists.

Through its varied activities, the association was able to form Friends of the Environment clubs in schools and university colleges, in sports clubs and within some NGOs in Alexandria.

Nearly ten years after the founding of the association, environmental issues have now captured the public’s interest. Environmental problems have become some of the most commonly debated issues whether in private social or public gatherings. Examples are: sea and lake pollution, protection of biodiversity, global warming and ozone layer depletion, air pollution, problems related to sanitary drainage, industrial and agricultural
drainage, solid wastes and the growing scarcity of certain animal species, and the importance of green areas.

I shall now describe some of the more significant activities which were undertaken in the field of environmental education through participation.

Public hearings:

These hearings were one of the most important means which contributed to raising awareness amongst citizens. Audiences invited comprised of government officials, representatives of scientific research centres and faculties, ordinary citizens, illiterate fishermen, representatives of NGOs and industrial establishments. Dialogue between the various groups was animated and enriched by the presentation of all speakers' opinions and views, and all listened carefully to the different points of view.

One significant outcome of these hearings was the suspension of the governorate's plans to fill in and/or reclaim Lake Mariout, which lies within the boundaries of Alexandria Governorate. The discharge of sewage effluent into the Mediterranean Sea was also halted. Instead, the effluent will be redirected to discharge on desert land, to be reused for tree plantation.

Another outcome of such public hearing sessions was to force one factory, which annually discharged about 12 thousand kilogrammes of mercury into the Mex Bay on the Mediterranean Sea along Alexandria's coastline, polluting fish and negatively affecting the health of fish consumers, to change its production technology to a newer system which did not use mercury. Another public hearing session induced a cement factory located in a poor and densely populated district to use stack filters so as to prevent cement dust fallout. That fallout had for long years caused lung and various other chest ailments amongst local residents.

Peaceful Processions/Marches:

The Association has regularly organised a peaceful march on the 5th of June of each year (International Environment Day) to raise awareness amongst citizens regarding environmental problems, and existing legislation for environmental protection and their rights to a clean and safe environment. The march is preceded by a musical band, four riders on horseback, followed by children in distinctive costumes and well-designed slogans and holding flowers. The children are followed by the directors of the Association together with Consuls of foreign missions.
government officials. These, in turn, are followed in the procession by a large number of FEA members holding placards depicting major environmental protection laws. The yearly procession is covered by journalists, and radio and television, and it ends at a specific location where all participants plant trees. This is followed by the opening of an exhibition of children’s drawings about the environment.

**Negotiations and pressure:**

Through effective use of the media (newspapers, radio and television) and mobilising public opinion, the Association was able to persuade decision-makers in Alexandria Governorate to discuss certain major problems affecting the natural and built environments. One of the most successful achievement of the Association in this regard was the removal of private cabins along the seafront owned by a limited number of people. The cabins blocked the general public’s view of the sea, and obstructed passage of the sea breeze to surrounding areas. The Association also succeeded, through pressure on decision-makers, in influencing the closure of 12 sewage outfalls along the seacoast, located at points near beaches used by people in summer. Through media campaigns, the Association was also able to prevent the demolition planned of various palaces and villas that have significant architectural and historical value.

**Legal appeal:**

FEA is the first NGO in Egypt which appealed to court to stop decisions or actions harmful to the environment and, hence, human health and safety.

The first case taken to court by the Association began in 1991 when the Governor of Alexandria donated a street located in one of the most important squares in central Alexandria to the World Health Organisation for the construction of an extension to their regional headquarters, a building which the WHO has rented for a nominal fee since 1949.

**The association considered this action:**

1. Constituted a serious legal violation.
2. Would deprive citizens of a street designated for pedestrians and vehicles.
3. Would deprive citizens of their basic right to adequate open space.
4. Would deprive citizens from a view of the sea and sky, and from a passage for air currents.

5. Would alter the characteristics of an historical city square.

6. Would deprive citizens of their precious architectural and locational memories.

The Association therefore negotiated with the Governor to reconsider his decision, but he refused. The WHO Regional Director was also approached but the refused to turn down the ‘gift’, in spite of the fact that the association suggested seven different alternatives that could resolve the WHO’s need for a larger plot of land to expand its headquarters.

Throughout these negotiations, the Association clearly demonstrated its comprehension and support for the WHO’s needs and affirmed the important and vital role played by the WHO in Alexandria. When all attempts at negotiation failed, the FEA felt it had no choice but to mount pressure through the newspapers and mobilising public opinion, and finally, taking the case to court.

The Association dealt with this controversy in a carefully planned and distinctive manner. Members attended court sessions in large numbers wearing a clearly distinctive flower. This was quite new in court actions. Each week, members would place a wreath of flowers at the site of the excavated street. The issue of the Alexandrian street succeeded in arousing public interest, and became the subject of discussion in homes and coffeeshops, and in clubs and workplaces across the country.

Many lawyers volunteered their help to support the Association’s case in court. And each and every national and opposition newspaper gave some coverage to the story during the course of the trial, whether through short news updates or commentary or investigative articles.

After five long months, the court passed a breakthrough verdict annulling the Governor’s decree, and ruling that it was illegal. The verdict stated that the use of public funds/property designated for public benefit cannot be set by an administrative decree. The court also stated that it is not only a right of citizens but also their duty to defend/safeguard public funds/property and all that is designated for public benefit.

The second court case concerned an area of public land in Smouha district which, according to the urban planning policy of Alexandria Governorate, had been designated for use as a public garden. However, the Governor of Alexandria issued a decree to
cancel this designation and turn this particular area into a car park terminal. Local residents sent numerous complaints to the governor, asking him to rescind this decree. They stressed the crucial importance of safeguarding this green area, and the fact that a public terminus serving hundreds of cars and buses would cause air and noise pollution in this residential area. But the Governor refused and residents approached the FEA for help.

The Association then conducted a study of all the green areas available to Alexandrians. The study indicated that green space decreased from 1/3rd of a feddan per 1000 persons in 1958 to 1/5th of a feddan per 1000 persons in 1994; and that the city is, in fact, in vital need of more green areas and leisure spaces. The association sent the study to the Governor and informed him that the officially ratified Alexandria Urban Planning Policy places such a plan on a par with the promulgation of a law, and that it is not within the power of the governor to cancel this land use plan.

Such efforts at negotiation with the Governor failed and the FEA therefore began a campaign in the newspapers and filed a lawsuit. After nine months of court proceedings, the court ruled to annul the Governor’s decree on the grounds that this was illegal. The court verdict also affirmed the right of citizens to green spaces and referred in its verdict to the findings of the study prepared by FEA.

The third case taken to court by the FEA was in response to numerous complaints by Alexandrians affected by noise pollution caused by the city tramline. The tramline traverses residential areas in the city across its length of about 15 kilometres, starting from “Ramleh Station” and ending at “Victoria Station”. Noise levels reached 105 decibels, a level which affects the hearing of those residents living along the vicinity of the tramline, and causing tension, sleep deprivation and lack of concentration. The vibrations particularly caused by the tram also affect the stability of adjacent buildings.

The Association conducted two studies on this issue, namely a medical and an engineering study. The FEA learnt that the tram system was first established in 1862 and was initially horse-drawn. It later relied on steam-powered engines until the start of the 20th century, when the system was converted to electricity. Maintenance for the tramline and its rails had been neglected for long periods, and the noise levels increased. The medical study revealed that those Alexandrians suffering most from decreased hearing were residents living in zones adjacent to the tramline. That study also surveyed hearing deterioration in children.
Using the same approach as in previous situations, the FEA wrote to the Public Transport Authority and the Governorate, requesting that they should undertake all necessary repairs of the tramlines to protect the health and safety of the public. But the association received no response to its appeals. It therefore initiated a media campaign and contacted members of Parliament. When these actions failed to pressure the relevant authorities into taking appropriate action, the association took the case to court.

During the court hearings and before a verdict was reached, the government approved the allocation of L.E. 25 million for necessary repairs. Repair work on the tramlines took three years to complete, after which noise levels dropped from 105 to 55 decibels.

Court cases are still continuing of lawsuits which the FEA has filed on behalf of residents in certain poor districts exposed to pollution from nearby factories. The association has also filed lawsuits against housing construction companies who have violated the Environment Law 4 of 1994 by not conducting the Environment Impact Assessment study (prior to licensing and implementation) required for touristic or large housing projects.

Conclusion:

Education is not achieved only through teaching reading and writing. Rather it is effected through a variety of other means. Our Association has been able to use what is termed the ecological approach utilising nontraditional methods such as convening discussion sessions, symposiums, and public hearings; raising environmental awareness, and training in communication, negotiation, mobilising public opinion and action, organising media campaigns, exhibits, public processions, producing appropriate printed material, and filing court cases.

It has been successful in educating large numbers of people and eradicating their environmental and legal "literacy", increasing their self-confidence and enabling them to be more positive regarding issues of environmental protection and improvement. People have come to realise that they are part of a wider and complex ecological system, and that they should live in harmony with it. In this way the participatory approach the association has won/gained a large number of men and women, be they educated or without formal education, who are well-informed and support our cause with the same enthusiasm and commitment.
Adel Abu Zahra:
There should be nothing voluntary about citizenship, but in the meantime...
Citizen
Profile by Fatemah Farag

Concerned with conservation, environmental protection or civil rights? Then in all probability you will already have come across Adel Abu Zahra somewhere along the line. We first met in 1990, when he was spearheading a campaign against the governorate of Alexandria for having granted an international organisation exclusive access to a side street. It was a decision that was subsequently reversed. Since then we have met several times: when a construction company was planning to demolish the house in which Lawrence Durrell lived in Alexandria and Abu Zahra was battling for its preservation; when the governorate leased a public garden to a private investor, a decision also reversed by court order, when... But enough, you get the picture.

When the principles of citizenship and civic responsibility have been all but eradicated by decades of authoritarianism Adel Abu Zahra stands out. Tall, immaculate, determined, there is no hint of equivocation in his manner. And always there is a file of papers close at hand containing all the documents necessary to defend public rights.

He gives me directions to the new office of the Friends of the Environment Association, an NGO he established in 1990: "It is in Zizinia. Next to the Princess Aziza Fahmi palace. You know, the one they wanted to bring down a few years ago and we fought to keep it standing." Apt directions.

"I am a born reformer," he says. "I cannot see something askew and leave it. If I see someone throw a paper tissue in the street I am liable to run after them and begin a discussion on why they behave this way."

Such are the day to day concerns. But then there are the bigger battles, over the wholesale poisoning of Lake Maryout, against a succession of laws that further hamper freedom of association in Egypt.

"I was invited to speak to more than a hundred employees at the Ministry of Social Affairs on the new NGO law. After my speech one official got up and, shaking with
disbelief. 'What are you saying?' he asked me. 'Are you inciting us against the new law ?'
I told him yes, this is my opinion, this is who I am."

Professor of Behavioural Sciences at the Arab Academy for Science and Technology, Abu Zahra has taught a wide range of courses, broaching on aesthetics, psychology, the history of science, environmental education and critical and creative thinking. "I think of my teaching profession as an opportunity not just to transfer information but an opportunity to change the way these young people think," he says. "Unfortunately the education system has taught people complacency."

Confronting this complacency is one tactic in combating the malaise that has, Abu Zahra believes, afflicted Egyptian society since the 1967 defeat and which grew with the infitah and migration to Arab gulf countries in the early 1970s. "Notions of collective responsibility and of its associated values have all but disappeared. People came back [from the Gulf] not just with money but with a conservative culture that emphasised an appearance-obsessed understanding of religion. Our society has taken refuge in the womb of the past and lost faith in the future."

He remembers a time when it was not so, his own formative times. "I was a university student in the 1960s and a member of the Arab Socialist Union Youth Organisation. I was enthusiastic about the revolution, embracing this collective dream for a better future. I was unaware at the time of the mistakes. I was swept up by the movement... we went to villages to install water pipes and electric wires."

A sense of the collective was something that had always been impressed on Abu Zahra, even as a child. "My mother always emphasised the importance of sharing. When I would buy her something sweet she would never eat it until some one else came and then she would divide whatever I had got. She taught us that everything is more enjoyable when shared," he added.

Today, though, there is too little enjoyment. "George Orwell said that if you want to understand a society look at the language they use. In Egypt today street language is horrible slang. There is nothing sublime about today's music, it is just for entertainment. We tear down our architectural heritage to build ugly high rises. Up until the 1970s we had a clean red carpet that led from the entrance of our building to the elevator. But just come and look at the entrance of our building today." He shakes his head in both defiance and disbelief: "Consider -- this is a society which in the 1930s and 40s published books such as Why I am an atheist and in Alexandria had a cemetery for free thinkers."

Abu Zahra is first and foremost an Alexandrian. Not only does he fight fiercely for the preservation of the city's heritage, he evokes the cosmopolitan history of Alexandria constantly, finding in it a great source of inspiration.
"I am a liberal man and believe in the critical, the creative, mind. I am against the 'one idea'. I do not like the idea of binding myself within a single paradigm," he explains. It is an attitude that could explain why Abu Zahra's name has never been associated with any political party and why he has chosen civil society as the arena within which to fight for a greater sense of public responsibility, of public service.

"I am the kind of person who must play a role which is probably why I never threw in the towel and left the country although I have had more than one opportunity to do so. If I lived in another country I would be living in something, however beautiful, created by another people and it would not belong to me. And so I have focused my energy on how to get beyond the current decline. Eighty per cent of my time goes into volunteer work."

Such effort has been recognised locally -- he is a member of the Egyptian Supreme Council for Culture, the executive board of the Development Research Centre at the American University in Cairo, the committee of Culture and Media of the National Council for Women among others -- and internationally. Last year he was one of ten activists chosen to be awarded the United Nations' Volunteer prize in recognition of his efforts.

Born on 20 November 1948, Abu Zahra obtained his PhD in 1978 with a thesis focusing on discrimination against women. "I have always been concerned with gender issues and the fight against discrimination. I am concerned because women are half this society and without their development there can be no development. As long as we are preoccupied with covering hair what kind of development can there be?"

He is the confirmed bachelor, though matters of a personal nature tend to be brushed aside. "Is this a question," he asks. "Well yes. It has been good in some ways. If I had been responsible for a family maybe I would not have had the luxury of being so free. I would have had to think twice before raising the next case against the governor because I needed space for my children at school. At the same time now that I am older at times I feel I miss the partnership of a woman in my life."

It is a fleeting moment of intimacy. Abu Zahra is clearly not a man who relishes discussions of his personal life. Other passions, though, are a different matter, and are willingly shared. Classical music is one such.

"I hosted a programme on Alexandria television for nine years in an attempt to increase awareness among the general public of classical music. And then I got tired," he confides. His face lights up again, however, when he talks about the life-changing effects of reading Kazanzakas, Chekov and Bertrand Russell.

"I believe in comprehensive human development. Art and culture are not just an amusement, they are a way of changing society, a path towards development. People live to enjoy but here we live below the poverty line, we worry only about filling our
stomachs. The object of development, of freedom, is to permit a high quality of life. To open your window in the morning to clean air and the view of green trees."

He could have achieved this quality of life for himself, even in Egypt. But that is not what drives him -- he wants it for everyone. His idea of citizenship revolves around the notion of sharing benefits, of working towards improving the lot of the community, and not just the individual.

"There is a common logic, encapsulated in the proverb that one should close the door from which the wind blows [that one should avoid those things that cause trouble] with which I am at odds. I have entered battles to preserve old buildings, buildings that date back to the cosmopolitan history of Alexandria. But that cosmopolitanism was about humanism, an acceptance of the other. It was a society that could flourish only with tolerance."

"I was giving a talk at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, something we organise every two weeks, and I said something to the effect that not everything is written in the Holy Books. A man got up and was very angry. He told me everything -- science, technology, everything -- could be found in the Qur'an. He walked out of the lecture after insulting me. But I was not angry. People are not used to having their beliefs questioned and it shakes them to the core. But I have seen people who were that unwilling to discuss their beliefs come again and again and are now willing to talk. It is a beginning," he explains. And it is one of the reasons he is concerned with supporting the new library, the inauguration of which, after delays, is now scheduled for 16 October. In fact, he has established the Friends of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, an NGO that "will work towards protecting the intellectual integrity and freedom of the library".

The library is one of the many forums Abu Zahra has identified that can be used to advance the concept of citizenship. "I believe in advocacy. I also believe in the law, public hearings and public consultations. There are media campaigns too, there are many ways of advancing the public interest but the important thing always is that the battle never becomes personalised. I take legal action against the governor all the time, but I take this action against him as a public servant. I have nothing against the man himself."

No surprise, then, that the governor of Alexandria, Mohamed Abdel-Salam Mahjoub, held a grand celebration in Abu Zahra's honour after he received the UNV prize last year. "I was very touched that over 1,200 people attended, some of them coming from as far as Aswan and Minya," he says.

He is perfectly aware of the credibility that has accrued over his years of hard, steady work. "The mother of one of my students called me a while ago and told me that her son, who now works abroad, always tells her how I influenced him and how he still reads my work. A man on the street stopped me and shook my hand, congratulating me on the programme on classical music. Many people realise that I work for a cause and not for personal benefit and this gives me credibility."
"I want to open people's eyes to the future. I have no authority and any power I can exert comes because of my freedom and integrity. I know that I may not live to see the benefits of the seeds I sow, but I am a reader of history and I know that these seeds will give fruit some time down the line."

And he is confident he is not alone. "Before going to sleep at night, particularly after a tiresome day, I remember the men and women who have taken that extra step and made the extra effort. When I travel around Egypt and get tired I meet them at one event after another. I feel as if all I have to do is stretch my hand and I will find hundreds of others to hold on to. How can one not have hope?"
SECTION TWO features:


Halim, H. 2002d. Profile of Mohamed Awad: Campaigns, comics, cosmopolitanism, controversy: four Cs, and without Casper - In medias res. In Al Ahram Weekly, October 24-30, No. 609: 12
Appendix Seven

‘Cities for Peace’ Report
ALEXANDRIA

[EXTRACTS]

Candidature report
for
the "Cities For Peace" prize
1999
## Contents

- **Introduction**

- **Entry (1)
  Society – youth – security:**
  1/1 Sharing in activities (Governmental and private). 3
  1/2 Social development fund activities. 7
  1/3 Serious steps to establish social security. 10

- **Entry (2)
  Urban scopes:**
  2/1 Urban planning in a comprehensive frame work for Alexandria city. 13
  2/2 Architecture heritage restoration. 14
  2/3 Supporting the original city streets net. 17
  2/4 Appendix 23

- **Entry (3)
  From nature to nature:**
  3/1 Fruitful efforts for environmental care. 28
  3/2 The project of environmental improvement and society development in the Mahmoudya canal.
     (attached project report )
  3/3 Alexandria compost plant.
     (attached project report )

- **Entry (4)
  Culture in the city of civilization:**
  4/1 "Culture for all ". 35
  4/2 Museums and archeological sites. 39
  4/3 Touristic sites and entertainment. 43
  4/4 The new library of Alexandria.( Bibliotheca Alexandrina) 45
  4/5 Local and international cultures. 46
Preface

Alexandria is always in my mind a city of special nature, place and people. From the moment I was in charge, I felt the uniqueness of this city and the civil heritage of its people. This gave me hope and confidence in success in what President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak assigned to me; to achieve benefits for All, so that Alexandria would be from people to them.

We believe that the accomplishments achieved in this city are its own rights and are the result of the combination of the governmental finance and the civil sector participations in all fields, in addition to the local experiences and international co-operation.

In this respect, I would like to thank all those who shared in the preparation of this presentation file to appear on this level. I would also like to thank every one who participated in the achievement of the accomplishments themselves because without this, nomination would not have been possible.

Alexandria governor
Under the provision of Mr./ Mohamed Abd Al Salam Al Mahgoub, Alexandria Governor,
this study is based on the information supplied by different administrations and departments
of the governorate and authorities concerned.

Under the supervision of:
Dr./ Mostafa Senbel.
Member of the architecture committee
Supreme cultural Council

February 1999

Many thanks to:
Eng. E. RADWAN
Arc. A. SENBEL
Eng. A. TAWFIK
Eng. Y. RAGAB
Eng. H. ALI
Mr. M. SHAMS

And others...
# Contents

- **Introduction**

- **Entry (1)**
  **Society - youth - security:**
  1/1 Sharing in activities (Governmental and private).
  1/2 Social development fund activities.
  1/3 Serious steps to establish social security.

- **Entry (2)**
  **Urban scopes:**
  2/1 Urban planning in a comprehensive framework for Alexandria city.
  2/2 Architecture heritage restoration.
  2/3 Supporting the original city streets net.
  2/4 Appendix

- **Entry (3)**
  **From nature to nature:**
  3/1 Fruitful efforts for environmental care.
  3/2 The project of environmental improvement and society development in the Mahmoudya canal.
  3/3 Alexandria compost plant.

- **Entry (4)**
  **Culture in the city of civilization:**
  4/1 "Culture for all".
  4/2 Museums and archeological sites.
  4/3 Touristic sites and entertainment.
  4/4 The new library of Alexandria (Bibliotheca Alexandrina).
  4/5 Local and international cultures.

## Entry (1)
### Society - youth - security:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>Sharing in activities (Governmental and private.)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>Social development fund activities.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/3</td>
<td>Serious steps to establish social security.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Entry (2)
### Urban scopes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/1</td>
<td>Urban planning in a comprehensive framework for Alexandria city.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>Architecture heritage restoration.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>Supporting the original city streets net.</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Entry (3)
### From nature to nature:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/1</td>
<td>Fruitful efforts for environmental care.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2</td>
<td>The project of environmental improvement and society development in the Mahmoudya canal. (attached project report)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>Alexandria compost plant. (attached project report)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Entry (4)
### Culture in the city of civilization:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/1</td>
<td>&quot;Culture for all&quot;.</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/2</td>
<td>Museums and archeological sites.</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/3</td>
<td>Touristic sites and entertainment.</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>The new library of Alexandria (Bibliotheca Alexandrina)</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>Local and international cultures.</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

The unique site facing the Mediterranean sea and backed with the Nile valley, the eastern and western desert, gave Alexandria the opportunity of being always characterized between cities all over the world.

Consequent civilizations from east and west mixed on its land. Alexandria had good and bad seasons and surely got out of all its experience with high human values which reflected on its citizens despite their origin or religion.

Certainly, the Alexandrines with their civil heritage in all the cultural, social and economical fields, are the makers of these accomplishments that we are introducing and that permitted us to name Alexandria "A City For All Seasons"

Peace, in Alexandria and similarly in all the oriental civilizations, is the welcoming word between people. Its response is more and more peace ... We believe that the recent nation and governorate policy resulted in good reaction from the Alexandrine people; Most of the private organizations, together with what was available in the country budget, worked hard to regain some of the urban city features.

All these accomplishments and seniority in various fields gave us hope and certainty to reach with Alexandria the best position it deserves between world cities.
Entry (2)

Urban scopes
Urban scopes

2 / 1 Urban planning in a comprehensive framework for Alexandria city

Introduction:

The consciousness and the history of the city occurs in its buildings, streets, squares, and open areas. The more the planning succeeded to coordinate these factors together, the more satisfied and pleased are its citizens as well as its visitors, and the more it provides a fruitful wonderful work for the human being civilization raise.

The executive planning in Alexandria is directed, in the last period, towards a global performance - It started by streets and squares network, the efficiency of which was increased to facilitate the mechanical movement in the city; to link between residential areas, working places and entertainment places. Paving the roads, refreshing public squares and gathering places, removing additions that do not suite its nature and beauty and returning back historical and cultural symbols and features were the main targets of the urban planning; In addition to establishing new squares and areas, paying more attention to gardens, parks and historical, entertainment and different services surrounding open areas.

In this field, the governmental effort was coordinated with the private organizations and people participation to achieve this goal. Such efforts were shown obviously in the following:

• Restoring the 20th century buildings that distinguish Alexandria.
• Paying more attention to the urban furniture of Alexandria city such as trees, public seats, paths, fences, lighting systems, etc.
In fact, the original planning for the city helped in:

1. The fast achievement and facilitating results once the beautiful urban features of the city were rediscovered.
2. The removal of additions.
3. Opening new vision aspects.
4. Re-coordination of the mechanical movement, pedestrians, cars parking, and other main assets according to each site, commercial, cultural, entertainment and religious importance.

These beginnings revitalised social and cultural memories of Alexandria people in different sectors. It also increased the governmental administration employees confidence in achieving more service projects and guaranteeing positive social and economic reactions in the city.

The following papers will present general urban and planning projects that include national and civil participation. These projects were implemented in Alexandria lately with balanced coordination led by Alexandria governorate. They were based on the reality and ability of implementation, the help of the specialists efforts on all levels and listening to different opinions either from governmental administrations or international institutions or from experienced professionals on the local and international levels.

2 / 2 Architecture heritage restoration
(reconstruction inside the ancient cities – Alexandria)

The urban planning represents the constitution for any city especially those done in early periods of 20th century, in which land alignments, height determinations and population density in different parts of the city are taken into consideration and according to which the roads, public services, gardens and utilities have been established on the recent technology basis, then. The suggested areas and roads width in the city represent
important lighting and aeration measures to obtain healthy environment for citizens. Many building rules that indicate these bases have been issued. In addition, rules that organize abolishing work and construction, have been issued in order to reach better residential planning. Best residential planning is that of less density and better coping with the environment and gives special uniqueness to each of the city districts. That is what we see in different ancient cities all over the world. (Paris, London, Rome...) 

The urban extension of the city is the only way to decrease population density. During the late 19th century and 20th century and up till now, the satellite cities have appeared integrating organically with the original cities and on which we should preserve the original residential density and features in order to reach an important national aim which is sense of belonging and preserving the historical values.

Through these new satellite cities the real investment and real development have been established without affecting the architectural heritage of the original city, whether the features or the open spaces between buildings such as roads, public and private gardens and alignment recesses. Trees in a private garden are not less important than a distinctive architecture and historical building reflected in the whole traditional and national urban zone and its surroundings.

The construction rules included the necessity of the restoration and the maintenance on the building whether or not they include architecture heritage, in order to improve the national treasure in the most important development sectors in the country, construction, and to secure their users.

From a technical point of view there is no limited life time for a building as long as continuous maintenance work is taking place at the right time. The only reason left for abolishing total cities or districts is natural catastrophes and wars.

The human being showed care and managed to re-establish cities that have been totally destroyed in Europe during the first and second world war.

If there was deficiency in applying these rules in the past, this should change now. The protection of what is left from our architecture heritage in the city and other urban districts should be considered as a main strategic role in the re-construction policy.

In short, any building that abolishes and lies within a planned city should be provided a new license for construction on the condition that the same area and volume of the abolished building putting into consideration its harmony with the buildings features around it.

Abolishing buildings only to rebuild other buildings with a high density is contradictory to urban planning. It increases traffic pressure and takes the country to a population burst stage and takes away the city personality. There will be no way to regain it in the future urban planning.
A model

In the Alexandrine community around 400,000 persons, one third of the society in the city belong to the commercial sector by the services they offer and their family belonging. Forty percent of Egypt’s industry also take place in Alexandria.

Accordingly, we find that the commercial sector is one of the most important sectors in the city. This encouraged the city to formulate a co-operative protocol between Alexandria governorate and its chamber of commerce.

The main published target of this protocol is to enhance the commercial activities in the city through establishing marketing fairs which finance the implementation of the heritage architecture restoration plan and revitalisation the urban features of the city’s streets.

The non-published target of this protocol is to help creating the co-operating and optimistic spirit between the city and its community. As when the human being feels that donation is from and to him, he generally considers the whole community as his own property, so he will be motivated to protect and develop it.

Many meetings occurred between the Governorate and many of the community members to enhance their role in the donation symphony and to build the confidence relation needed for implementation of different projects in the city. This protocol offered an effective example of serious projects that resulted in successive community donations in Alexandria.

Some Of The Protocol Projects Are:

Developing a poor area in Alexandria that is very rich in its architecture heritage, restorating and revitalising the urban features of one of the most ancient commercial streets in Alexandria. Most of the street shop owners shared as much as they can in the works done.

There are a lot of other examples by which different social categories can participate in this collective work; either by money, efforts or ideas so “The city regains its soul.”.
2/3 Supporting the original city streets net

Within the framework of an ambitious and exclusive plan to return back Alexandria as it was before "The bride of the Mediterranean", the governorate paid attention to studying roads network after facing problems of the increase of vehicles with a constant street net. It started then to implement projects that aimed at achieving traffic flow in all streets of Alexandria, with a main policy of uprooting the problem without leaving branches.

The main aims of solving the transportation problems are to:

1. Increase the efficiency of the current traffic.
2. Establish new traffic axis.
3. Plan new squares and traffic nodes.
4. Develop the microbuses and public transport terminals.
5. Develop new ways around the city to facilitate high-load transport.

This is achieved by:

First: Increasing the efficiency of the current traffic axis and establishing new projects:

Alexandria depends on 2 main roads as internal traffic ways:
1. El-Cornish road.
2. El-Horrya road.

The increase of the number of vehicles with the availability of only 2 roads resulted in major traffic problems.

Accordingly, priority has been given to the projects whose main aim is to increase the efficiency of Alexandria main roads.

1. Widening Alexandria El-Cornish Road Project:

The first stage of this project started in November 1997 with a distance of 2.5 kilometer which represents the distance between El-Sarayah and the intersection of Khaled Ebn El-Waleed street with El-Cornish road. The work in this stage has been already completed by June 1998.
The second stage of this project started in October 1998 with a distance of three kilometers from the intersection of Khaled Ebn El-waleed street with El-Cornish street, to El Montaza palace. This phase is expected to be finished before 1999 summer, with cost of app. 20 million L.E. which also include establishment of 4 pedestrian tunnels.

The project stages will proceed successively till we reach El-Shatby area in Alexandria, by 2001 as a whole urban facade of the city.

2. Establishing new traffic paths projects:-

As previously mentioned, due to the increase in cars numbers and the attempt to improve the roads efficiency, it is necessary to establish new traffic paths to decrease pressure on Alexandria main axis. This occurs in the following projects:

a. widening Kabbari way:

This is implemented in the area between the new bus terminal in Moharam Bek bridge till Moharam Bek round square.

It includes widening and repaving the road to a width of 15 m. for each direction and this is to absorb the current traffic from the west of the city to outside it, and also the bus movement from Misk station to the new terminal.

b. Doubling “Gamila Bo Hereid “ way project:-

The main problem was that the above mentioned axis links between El-Siouf fire fighting forces and El-Awaied bridge with a distance of 3 kilometers. This way does not absorb traffic movement, especially after operating the circular road. This is due to that the cars coming from the desert road directed to Alexandria towards far east to Mamoura and Montaza districts, takes the circular road then Abis bridge to Gamila Bo Heried road.

Traffic suffocation resulted from the double direction of the above mentioned path and that all vehicles used this way.

Accordingly, the idea of establishing a new way has been chosen by traffic administration and agreed upon through the governorate devices. They decided the implementation of an alternative way inside El-Ghazl and El-nasig Company land with a distance of 3 kilometers to be an extension to the circular way and parallel to Gamila Bo Heried and by letting each one way to be able to absorb the increasing traffic movement. This path will have developing depth to urban area in which the new path will cross.
In addition, necessary reformation procedures in the traffic ways in Mostafa Kamel street will take place.

The total cost of this project is around 4 million L.E. and it is expected to finish on 1/5/1999.

c. Om Zeghew way development project:

A road of length 8 Kilometers passes through a residential area and an industrial area with length of about 3 kilometers. It is a main axis, parallel to El-Agamy way, linking between desert road and coastal way.

Its width in some sectors is about 20 meter divided by middle island and, in other sectors, its width does not exceed 8 meters. The aim of this project is to widen the road and establish public sanitary drainage for the residential area and a network for rain water drainage.

The purpose of widening and developing the road is to move the heavy weight transport to this path, and thus to decrease pressure on Agamy way.

d. Improving the intersection K 21:

There was a conflict in the traffic ways in that intersection for vehicles coming from the coastal way towards Alexandria, and those coming from the coastal way towards the sea arm and also for those coming from Alexandria towards the sea arm and coastal road.

The aim of this project is improving the area (beautification and traffic) and eliminating direction conflicts and collision points on the intersection and achieving harmonious traffic in the area by combining the traffic going towards Alexandria together with that coming from the sea arm, and combining those coming from the sea arm towards the coastal way together with those coming from Alexandria towards the coastal way.

e- The entry of the desert way:

A new way of 1200 m. connecting “Al KabARRY” road with the desert road without passing through “Moharam Bey’s” square in which they are establishing an upper bridge for cars. This way passes beyond the area of checking cars and before the intersection of “Moharam Bey’s” square and this decrease the pressure from “Moharam Bey’s” square where all services cars and lorries coming from “Al
Kabary Stop or west area and port towards the desert road passes through. This way started working during 1998.

f- Joining the circular way with the desert way:

Due to the non-existence of an artificial bond between the circular way with the desert road, this established a suffocating point in the operation of returning the cars coming from the circular way to the desert road. There was a conflict in the movement with that coming from “Moharam Bey’s” square towards the desert road for the narrowness of the road and its inability to take the returning operation of the cars and widening the upper and lower rib and preparing a cycling opening ready and secured for the process of returning cars to the desert road without affecting the move coming from Alexandria towards the desert road.

Second: improvement of actual squares (traffic and beautification):

Urban design and Squares are an urban value in the cities all over the world, being established by its history and the relation of its traffic axis and buildings. It is the major communication point between various axis producing a cultural center which is obviously affected by the growth of the axis leading to it, increasing population and ways of transportation in the city.

Therefore squares planning, traffic nodes designing and improving their beautification, leads to the flow of the traffic in the axis leading to those squares and other streets in the city:

1. Improving “Al Shouhadaa” square project [MISR station], (project attached).

This project, finished in 1998, is an obvious and excellent example of studied improvement works that all categories participated in it, each according to his role. It reacted to recreate a civilised façade to the city, which makes every citizen proud of it.

Work started in this project in December 97 and finished in May 98, with a total budget of 4000000 L.E., achieving the following results:

a- Increasing the green areas in the square with 65% from the previous area.
b- Increasing the road's width around the square from 13.5 m. before to 21 meters now [7 lanes] with an increase of 55%.

c- Increasing the length of bus stations from 110 meter before to 204 m. now with an increase of about 85%.

d- Increasing the area for microbuses stops from 6000 m2, before to 9680 m2 now after improvement with an increase of about 61%.

e- The release of suffocation and intersection of traffic which results from the occupation of cars to the areas in the square.

f- Decreasing environmental pollution and beautification of the visual aspects for those who visit the square.

g- Facilitating traffic flow between west and mid-town.

2- Improving "Al Mansheya" square project [ex-place des consuls]:
  (project attached)

In an area with distinctive historical heritage and in the middle of historical events which participated in creating the history of a nation, stands "Al Mansheya" square witnessing the depth of the improving operations.

The project started 1/11/1998 putting the following aims in front of us:

a- Preserving the historical and urban heritage of the square.

b- General re-coordination of the sidewalks and green areas.

c- Establishing traffic flow by removing traffic current hinders.

d- Canceling tramway traffic inside the square and establishing its terminal in the Saint Catherine's square.

e- Studying the stops of the public transport [Buses ...] within the square to agree with population needs.

It is expected to finish working in the project by 15/5/1999.
Third: The transportation and development of microbuses and public transport terminals:

The microbuses and public transport are one of the problems from which the city suffered. This is because of the large numbers which the people need for their transport. That is why we needed to arrange public transport terminals to eliminate the random stops.

1- "Al Kabbari stop: (project attached)

The new terminal in Moharam Bek - Al Kabbary, finished in 1998, is about 27 feddans. All the rural microbuses terminals and west country stops with a total number of about 5000 vehicle which works in about 25 governorates outside the city were transferred to it. Work started in January 1998 and ended in March 1998.

2- "Al Awayed terminal":

Eliminating the random stop down "Al awayed" bridge, developing the area, isolating the random main car movement under the bridge and changing it to an under control area are the main aims of this project. Therefore, a new stop has been established for "Al Awayed" area widening "Al Mahmoudia" road in this area, and it is expected to finish these works in July 1999.
Appendix:

1- Restoration of the architectural heritage:

A tangible example to restore the chamber of commerce in Alexandria celebrating its diamond jubilee. Landscaping the front garden with a unique piece of sculpture expressing Alexandria civilization. An initiative from Alexandria’s merchants at the beginning of the comprehending plan to develop Alexandria and restore its heritage.

2- Activating the historical and cultural memory.

A random car stop - changed to an pedestrian place facing the Roman amphitheatre - unique proportions for urban furniture - preserving trees - Fer forge fences - accurate granite fences and paving with, in the centre, a statue for Khedive Ismael which was taken before to be stored 4 decades ago.

The project increased the efficiency of this important site in the mid-town - regaining one of the symbols of the history of Alexandria and Egypt - a reconciliation with the history towards a bright future. (attached a project report)

5-8 Restoration of the ancient architectural heritage:

Alexandria stadium - a great work from the beginings of the twentieth century - restoration of the master sheds, the main steps and reception salon - renewing the playgrounds and lighting with the latest technology - regaining an urban and architectural high value - sport between youth to compete locally and internationally - belonging to thenation and ancient places.

9-12 Developing urban furniture:

Suez canal way - The entry of the vehicles traffic to the mid-town from the desert road - adding trees and green areas - special lighting - seats and pavement with suitable urban scales.
13-17 Restoration of architectural heritage

Residential and public buildings on the eastern harbor and "Ras Al Teen"-a unique style from the first half of the twentieth century Looking towards the Mediterranean see and Alexandria Cornish. They were being restored by self-efforts of the chamber of commerce as a leading project for regaining the urban features of the city - the repavement of the Cornish sidewalks, adding palm trees.

18-26 Restoration of architectural heritage:

The success of the leading project encouraged its continuation in the squares and streets of the mid-town - acquired experience means more confidence-coordination of national projects and personal efforts and contributions-a lot of residential and public buildings are under restoration to finish it before summer 1999.

27-30 Raising the urban efficiency:

Saad Zaghloul's square is the most distinguished Alexandria squares looking towards the Mediterranean. It has a statue of a national leader in its center and has been developed by removing public buses stations which cut the visual relation between the sea and the distinctive buildings around it — adding more trees, sidewalks, seats, distinctive lighting, fountains and cars parking.

31-35 Raising the urban efficiency:

"Safeya Zaghloul's" street - The most important commercial street in the mid-town of Alexandria - the infra-structure improvement - changing lighting - using the same materials for all pavement - self-financing from the shops and buildings owners.

A leading example which was generalized in the commercial streets of the mid-town.

36-37 Contemporary features:

Mural art work on the fences of the important sites - an example for the revitalisation of the role of visual arts in the renewal of the features of open spaces in Alexandria-human scales which gathers a historical and cultural stock and sharing community sectors- these works are self-efforts of private and civil organizations
38-39 Increasing the roads and squares efficiency:

"Misr station" square—an important communication point because of the railway station with the ancient building—traffics axis for all parts of the city—car parking—Unknown soldier memorial—with the efforts of the governorate administrations, a gigantic governmental project was implemented in no time—pictures shows what it was before and after. (attached a project report)

40-42 Increasing the roads and squares efficiency:

El Manshya square—the commercial city heart—the ancient city (Turkey) limits—a group of buildings from the end of 19th century and beginning of 20th century (under restoration)—Mohamed Ali pasha statue—unknown soldier memorial—return back its value—canceling the tram movement and the buses terminals—this huge governmental project, still under construction, and will be inaugurated in July 1999. (attached a project report)

43-45 City exits and their linking with regional ways:

Moharam Bey round bridge—the project of solving the intersection of the city exits to the desert way and to the city east and west—a gigantic construction with special structural and aestetical design is under construction, and will be inaugurated in July 1999. (attached a project report).

46-53 Increasing efficiency of the maritime facade of Alexandria

Widening Alexandria Cornish road, phase 1 and 2, is the first project to improve the maritime facade of Alexandria since the establishment of the Cornish road in the 1930s with length of 20 Kilometers.

The 1st stage took a length of 2.5 Kilometer—the second stage, of length 2.5 kilometer, will finish in July 1999.

A huge governmental project to widen the vehicles way and open the perpendicular axis to the city depth—removing random buildings that hide the sea—Developing the sidewalks for the pedestrians—sheds—pedestrian tunnels.
The results of the 1st stage which reflected in good reaction from Alexandrines and visitors, led to a real success.
The rest of 5 stages will finish during the years 2000/2001.
(attached a project report).
54 - 57 Deeper aims for urban development of Alexandria:

Random and unplanned areas. Governmental and civil efforts are cooperating to remove such areas or to improve its efficiency in a suitable way and to open streets and accesses with the original network and to open spaces.

An organized plan includes abolishing and renewing through governmental projects for economic housing, putting into consideration the social and human being concept.

The reflection of the economic reform of Egypt enhanced the success of the plan which is reflected on these areas with governmental support. It raises the standard of living and guarantees the self-development toward a bright future.
Appendix Eight

‘Definition’ of Terms/ Concepts
APPENDIX EIGHT
‘DEFINITION’ OF TERMS/ CONCEPTS

‘I urge everyone to join with me and not to leave the field of values, definitions and cultures uncontested’

(Said 2001: 345)

INTRODUCTION

In this appendix my objective is to clarify the conceptual orientation of selected of the key terms/concepts used in this thesis. In solidarity with Said (above), I see the process of defining terms necessary but in itself problematic, and therefore, in keeping with the rest of my thesis I pursue my intellectual commitment to both challenging generalising and reductionist statements and tendencies and to highlighting the dynamics of contestation, translation and hybridisation at play in all acts of categorisation. In what follows I outline the subtle, complex ways in which my key terms and recurring concepts/motifs are used in my thesis text and give my own statements of definition/commitment regarding these debates/discourses.

SECTION ONE: MUSEUM AND HERITAGE STUDIES

As clearly expressed in my introduction, this thesis is to be understood primarily as a critical dialogue with museums and heritage studies as explored via the theoretical/ethnographic study of a specific project of cultural revivalism, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. My engagement with the conceptual shifts in both museological and critical heritage fields is outlined in detail in Chapters One and Two and is returned to in my conclusions. Chapters Three to Seven are concerned with developing an ethnographic approach to museology/heritage studies by means of grounding my research in contemporary Alexandrian revivalism. In what follows I draw together these points in order to both reiterate and take forward my statements with regard to my thesis’ relationship with museum and heritage studies. More specifically I underline statements made in my thesis conclusions.
In terms of recent shifts in museology I show how during the final decades of the twentieth century a metamorphosis, perhaps analogous to the dramatic scale of change affecting contemporary Alexandria, has brought significant ruptures to the traditional landscape of museology. I acknowledge the existing museological literature in the field and more specifically the critical interventions which have been characterised as a 'new' museology. I highlight, for example, the interventions of the what might be described as the 'Leicester School of Museology' and the contributions of authors such as Pearce (1992, 1995) and Hooper-Greenhill (1992, 2001) which have provided the basis for the further production of critiques of museums exhibitions and displays, of collecting and collections and research into museum audiences/ non-visitor responses towards museums (see MacDonald and Fyfe 1996 for a critical survey). Such interventions have also been foundational in terms of establishing museum studies as a credible, flourishing discipline within the academy.

I subsequently particularise my interest in terms of situating my research within a genre of 'new' histories which have appeared on the scene, many of which pursue Foucaultian methodologies, and as such are engaged in challenging traditional ('old') museological genealogies (for example, Hooper-Greenhill 1992; Bennett 1995; Crimp 1997). This spirit of research has thus seen a move away from an 'old' characterisations of the museum as an elite temple of culture, - and from 'linear' histories of origin, tradition, continuity, universality and progress, - towards a stress on alternative genealogies of discontinuity, rupture and change. Vergo's *The New Museology* (1989), - a text synonymous with initiating the intellectual movement towards 'new', critical museologies -, is one further volume I pick up on, which in a more explicit rejection of traditional museum historiography calls for a break with the model of ancient 'origins' as exemplified in the ancient Alexandria Mouseion (Vergo 1989:1-2).

I highlight how a number of these 'new' histories articulate a commitment to making strategic, critical returns to what have been dubbed 'original institutions' (Crimp 1997:
18) within the ‘old’ or traditional museological trajectory (Renaissance institutions/ Wunderkammer etc) (see Hooper-Greenhill(1992) and Crimp (1997)). I make it clear that no similar critical return has been made to the Alexandrina paradigm. Moreover, while I take as a useful starting point Crimp’s recommendation that museological acts of return to ‘originary institutions’ need to be undertaken not just ‘to uncover their [museums] true histories but to observe how they have been pressed into the service of contemporary museological historicism’ (Crimp 1997: 18) my own project of going beyond the ‘old’/ ‘new’ museological looks to further critical perspectives located ‘outside’ mainstream museum studies.

In is here that I re-state my commitment to an investigation of museology/ the Alexandrina paradigm which is open to other readings, my use of Said’s practice of ‘contrapuntal readings’ (1993) and Halliday on the ‘Myth of Confrontation’ (1996), for example, are part of statements regarding the need to bring to mainstream Museum Studies alternative theorisations, in this case, strategies capable of addressing the Eurocentricity of the ‘old’ discourse (cf. Bazin 1967). I argue that this specific line of critique is all the more crucial as these ‘old’, orthodox frames are currently being recuperated as the chief resource for contemporary revivalism. I subsequently engage in a series of strategies and discursive readings which map across more ontological and epistemological domains. For example, my inclusion of Maleuvre’s (1999) offers a means to explore in more detail the metaphysical, psychological dramas which are integral to understanding the museum/ archive/ Alexandrina paradigm in an intellectually meaningful way. This also allows me to draw upon philosophical engagements with these domains in a line from, for example, Nietzsche (1956), Adorno (1981), Benjamin (1968), Freud (1986a), Derrida (1996) and to pursue these at the level of the therapeutics of memory-work and Alexandrian poetics (see Chapter One).

**- Postcolonial Heritages**

The further pursuit of these dynamics - and integral to this, my project of going beyond the ‘old’/ ‘new’ museological perspectives - is accessed in my subsequent shift of emphasis from Eurocentric texts to postcolonial contexts. Here I take the critical
reflections of the French ‘museologist-intellectual’ Malraux (1967) as my point of departure from which to survey the key shifts operating across postcolonial worlds/discourse and to understand how in the post-war period in particular various attempts have been made to variously reject, destabilise and/or incorporate ‘Western’ discourses within category of the ‘non-West’ to create various hybrid or cosmopolitan discourses. I argue that a critical rehearsal of this context is necessary to understand the complex dynamics of the Bibliotheca’s homecoming.

I ‘work through’ a number of relevant discourses and debates within this domain: from Afrocentrism’s and deconstruction’s interest in the staging of ‘Egypt’ as part of alternative ‘return to origins’; to discussions of the interconnection between psychic and material worlds in strategies of postcolonial empowerment (and also neo-colonial ventures) in the work of, amongst others, Freud (1985), Said (2003), Spivak (1993), Pemiola (1995), Saadawi (1997). Here I take care to outline my research project’s relationship to what Hooper-Greenhill has characterised as the ‘post-museum’ (Hooper-Greenhill 2001: 152-162). I point out that the contemporary Alexandria project offers an ethnographic account of such dynamics. In addition, I take forward Maleuvre’s observation that museologies both ‘old’ and ‘new’ rather than radical opposites both continue to demand the ‘mimetic absorption of the individual into an ideal image of a group, the prototype, the ancestor, the father’ and thus ‘compliance with an ego-ideal’ (Maleuvre 1999: 109-110). I similarly highlight that Grand Narratives of origins and the demands for ‘authenticity’ are currently re-emerging as significant motifs within the contemporary context.

These points of apparent ‘contradiction’ then refer to the presence (return, revival or continuity) of key old museological tenets in new museological characterisations. Many of the old museological concepts which traditional histories ‘traced back’ (projected back) to the Alexandrian paradigm have been revived in new museological demands and discourses, in particular, these have been understood as a strategy for empowerment. Certain museum commentators have expressed what might be called ‘contradictory museologies’ in terms of the museum’s contemporary theoretical (MacDonald and Fyfe
1996), indigenous (Simpson 1996), and non-western (Kaplan 1994, Proslr 1995) contexts, in its Western (Hooper-Greenhill 1992 and Bennett 1995) and colonial (Coombes 1994) historical formation. Furthermore, they have been articulated with reference to contemporary conflicts including ethnic strife, cultural racisms, nationalisms and xenophobia (Huyssen 1995: 34-35).

It is here too that I fully engage with key debates within the rapidly developing discipline of cultural heritage studies. I critically rehearse how the Alexandria paradigm has been canonised historically by the ‘West’ as an example of an ‘originary’ act of iconoclasm and as such is positioned as the ‘ancestor-institution’ upon which the ‘old’, traditional heritage paradigms of loss and preservation are founded (Lowenthal 1985). Taking forward debates on loss, redemption and memory-work I show that the contemporary context is marked not only by the re-emergence of ‘old’ museological/ heritage characterisations but by an accompanying new “politics of return” which has resulted in heritage discourse re-emerging as a powerful metaphor by which to express historical – and on-going - grievance and injustice. These agendas have become increasingly bound up in accompanying demands for the restitution of cultural objects and human remains and also for the reinstatement of human dignity, justice and respect (Rowlands 2002).

In the post-war period this complex and often contestatory context has also witnessed brokershlp of these renewed odysseys and quests taken up by globalising agencies: notably by contemporary revivalism’s international broker UNESCO. My concern here is with pursuing new shifts which move away from an understanding of heritage as an object/ thing to heritage as humanity while also aligning these with the aforementioned new politics of ‘return’, ‘redistribution’, ‘respect’ and ‘justice’ (Rowlands 2002). In this latter sense the Alexandrina’s homecoming can be seen as part of wider acts of repossession in which the dream to both define and to colonise or re-possess one’s lost object endures, as does an increased faith in, and calls for, culture as cure.

- Ethnographic Model
It is at this point I reiterate my claim that contemporary mainstream museum and heritage studies have lacked up to the present a sufficiently grounded approach that does more than talk to museum audiences about their response to exhibitions, heritage sites and displays (cf. Hooper-Greenhill 2001; Handler and Gable 1997; Hetherington 1999). I, therefore, take the task of my thesis as that of shifting attention to a much wider operational reality in which heritage revival programmes are conducted and thus pursue this objective in Chapters Three to Seven. My methods and more particularly my use of Actor Network Theory is fully discussed in Appendix Two. My thesis conclusions are crucially important, therefore, in arguing that my critical return to museology's/heritage studies' origins thus allows me to engage in a fundamental rethinking of the core, foundational values as they map across mythic-historical, literary-metaphysical realms and onto the operational 'real.'

-Beyond Old/New Museologies

Here I want to state that my whole thesis operates on an intellectual understanding and concern with the complex, contestatory and creative relationships between grand-narrative conceptualisations (i.e. espistemological/ontological debates) and metaphors (i.e. the odyssey/homecoming) at play in modern and contemporary intellectual discourses and to explore their implications for museum/heritage studies and for contemporary revivalism. My concern is not only with their 'imaginary' production and their manifestation as 'realities' 'on the ground' but the resistances and hybridisations which narrate their movement of these dynamics 'across worlds' and which, in turn, like

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1 These above cited authors have made such calls: Hooper-Greenhill (2001) in her pursuit the post-museum; Handler and Gable by engaging in a discreet ethnographic study of Colonial Williamsburg (1997) and Hetherington (1999) in terms of both his investigations of museum historiography and his advocacy of Actor Network Theory. Added to the list of those engaging with the 'real' could also be those museum workers/critiques engaging in ethnographic museology and out-reach work. Simpson's text, for example, Making Representations: Museums in the Post-Colonial Era (1994) engages in a specific search for indigenous 'museum-like' models. The identification of traditional 'keeping places' has provided an alternative example of 'originary' sacred spaces no-longer based upon the notion of a superior 'Western' genealogy or 'Greek' heritage. Here Simpson more specifically investigates a contemporary, modern engagement between indigenous 'museum-like' models and 'Western' museum models, which she demonstrates, has created a more subtle and more complex dynamic of change which has the potential to transform both models into new hybridised formations (Simpson 1994: 107-135). My point is, however, that there is no mechanism for on-going and fundamental re-conceptualisations of museology and heritage studies across epistemological and field-work contexts which is capable of consolidating and accommodating such interventions and as such ground-breaking research is often seen in terms of discrete projects without feeding back to the mainstream. I return to this point later.
revivalism's recasting of the Alexandrina paradigm, have the ability to offer both points of critique and to engage in more a fundamental re-conceptualisation of museum/heritage studies itself.

To reiterate once more, my point is that the museum and heritage culture like Narcissus looking into his pool (as a 'world in itself') is at risk of failing to engage in alternative conceptualisations of itself within a wider global context. In this sense the museum/heritage culture remains largely 'blind' to its own interventions (i.e. the ground-breaking research cited earlier) and to alternative theorisations located 'outside' these disciplines. This failure I see as due to the lack of a framework or mechanism which operates across epistemological/ontological worlds while also engaging with more grounded research. My particular contribution offers a starting point for such a frame-work and vision of museum/heritage studies which is capable of consolidating and accommodating such interventions as part of a wider whole rather than bounding and polarising discourses/disciplines in terms of: 'old'/'new' museologies, theory and practice and pitching research contributions in terms of discrete projects without feeding back to the mainstream.

Moreover, this leads me to address what I argue is the need for a re-conceptualisation of museology/heritage theory and practice based upon alternative sets of values, critical approaches, theorisations and lived experiences which are currently located 'outside' mainstream museology and heritage studies and, as such, remain largely unrecognised. I argue that these framings which currently characterise the contemporary global domain of cultural revivalism need to be centred as the basis for museology/heritage studies' articulation of its own 'possible futures'(cf. Venn 2002: 65). From this I argue the need for the centring of these 'values/experiences' in a re-worked intellectual-operational 'cosmopolitics' and as part of attempts to create a more relevant, responsible and responsive North-South museological/heritage dialogue. Not only does this mean consolidating and centering psychoanalysis, postcolonial and memory studies, for example, as resonant foundations for contemporary museum/heritage culture but equally that recognition and the same status be given to trauma, conflict, and refugee studies and

Supplementary Bibliography

SECTION TWO - COSMOPOLITANISM

Once again, as is obvious from any reading of my text, ‘cosmopolitanism’ is highlighted as a central, recurrent motif and is explored in a variety of subtle and complex ways throughout my thesis. As stated introduction, ‘cosmopolitanism’ has been reinvested as the key motif mediating the contemporary ‘return to Alexandria’ (MacLeod 2002: xi) and as such is profiled as the over-arching resource from which to likewise engage in the contemporary ‘imagination of possible futures’ (Venn 2002: 65). My critical, conceptual engagement with ‘cosmopolitism’ takes these dynamics forward with the assertion that there are sympathies and resonances between the destabilisations of the Alexandria project that the force of contemporary revivalism has put into play, and new critical returns and recuperations of ‘cosmopolitanism’ currently being made within the academy (cf. Cheah and Robbins 1998: Meijer 1999; Featherstone 2002).

- Ancestor Cosmopolitanism
My critical investigation of these ‘cosmopolitanisms’ rehearses the key shifts in these academic debates by taking as my point of departure the idealised, imaginary cosmopolitanism synonymous with ‘Myth of Alexandria’. Here I am able to chart within the ‘Westernising’ genealogical trope the search for what might be termed as an ‘ancestor
cosmopolitanism’. ‘Traditional’ accounts of the origins of cosmopolitanism map thus out both its Greek etymological roots and the ancient ‘abstract’ sources of cosmopolitanism. These typically rehearse attempts to define a ‘world citizenship’ (kosmo-polites is a composite of the Greek for ‘world’ and ‘citizen’) by focusing in on the ‘initial elaborations’ of philosophical schools such as those of the Cynics and Stoics (Anderson 1998:268; see also Yerasimos 1999:34-39). However, it is argued that, ‘...through Alexander the Great’s program of cultural fusion and his far-reaching world conquests’ philosophical cosmopolitanism was ‘translated’ into operational culture (Anderson 1998:267–68). This shift is couched in terms of epic acts of ‘separation’ and ‘detachment’ as the ‘West as History’ moved out from the confines of the polis to push forward and map out the parameters of the rapidly expanding ‘known world’ and, in so doing, confronted new ‘universal’, cosmopolitan spheres of dwelling, knowledge and cultural contact (Ferguson 1973:25-26).

Most crucially, these authors position the city of Alexandria and its archive as the summit of Alexander’s dreams and as the symbolic ‘home’ or ‘birthplace’ of cosmopolitanism proper. Moreover, the ‘intrinsically cosmopolitan’ character of the dynamic of Hellenism, it is argued, saw its greatest expression in Alexandrian culture (Ferguson 1973:25-26; Zubaida 1999:20). The city and archive as both a ‘world in microcosm’ and as a ‘dynamic fusion of cultures’ is celebrated further as the ‘meeting point’ which brought together intellectuals of ‘all cultures and all creeds’ and which nurtured a ‘communal solidarity...’ (Zubaida 1999:20) based upon the ‘ideal of [cosmopolitan] detachment’ (Robbins 1998:3). This latter ‘ideal’, the central core of cosmopolitanism, is hailed as the key to defining ‘world citizenship’ (Robbins 1998:2-3).

The logic here asserts that only once ‘outside’ or ‘separated’ from one’s usual ‘boundaries’ can ‘multiple (re-) attachments’ be made with diverse cultural contexts and viewpoints (Robbins 1998:3). The creative channeling of the newly mediated cosmopolitan perspective into ‘cultures and fields of intellectual endeavor’ not only aspired to relocate diverse communities upon ‘neutral common ground’ (Zubaida...
1999:20) but developed an oppositional politics (one that Abaddi and many others argue is still resonant) which pitches the cosmopolitan viewpoint as a challenge to all ‘exclusive orthodoxy’ and ‘restricted perspectives’ (Anderson 1998:267; Zubaida 1999:20).

In the ancient world, this was argued to combat a number of exclusive phenomena including the restrictiveness of the ‘polis’, of ‘ritual’, of ‘law’ and increasingly of the ‘monotheistic religions’ (Anderson 1998:267; Zubaida 1999:20). It is further argued that the Alexandrina’s central role as a site of translation and transmission was not only bound up in its legendary attempts to accumulate ‘universal’, encyclopedic knowledge (best expressed in attempts to create a library of ‘all known texts’) but on a more metaphysical level too, in attempts to make sensible dramas of separation and creative re-attachment.

- Renaissance/ Enlightenment Cosmopolitanism

It is, however, in that final drama of separation, the destruction of the ancient institution, that life is given not only to seductive desires to revive the institution but also to projects to retrieve and re-work the dynamic of cosmopolitanism. Thus within dominant Western genealogies, cosmopolitanism too re-emerges, ‘by way of the espirit cosmopolite of Renaissance humanism’ to become bound up in ‘later cosmopolitanisms’ which further essentialise its qualities in terms of the ‘liberal’ enlightenment values (Cheah 1998a:22-23). The latter subsequently came to dominate the paradigm and rendered it synonymous with the Kantian project to attain, ‘a universal cosmopolitan existence’ based upon ‘a perfect civil union of mankind’ (Cheah 1998a:22-23). This intervention effectively redeemed the ‘ideal of detachment’ as a moral-ethical resource, which its apologists understand as affording positive, intimate links to the development of a ‘cosmopolitan’ rights culture. (Interestingly, revivalism’s key culture broker UNESCO is bound up in this culture, as detailed later.) Its critics, however, would argue that this cosmopolitan dynamic is also complicit in an exploitative culture of commodification and of colonialisms old and new (see Spivak 1998).

- Reclaiming the Cosmopolitical

From my critical rehearsal of recent and renewed interest in cosmopolitanism I argue that contemporary revivalism, therefore, exacts a challenge to the academic purchase on the
old Alexandrina paradigm. First, Egypt’s return or reattachment to the Alexandrina is coming at a time when the ‘Western’ academy is strategically detaching itself from the Alexandria paradigm by making explicit its rejection of the discourse of ancient origins and of its elitist, colonial, universalizing cosmopolitics (Cheah and Robbins 1998). Ironically, even as postmodernity’s never-ending return has squeezed the city and archive of all metaphor, elsewhere in the academy, new critical returns and new intimacies are being articulated in terms of postcolonial theory’s relationship with the cosmopolitical dynamic. As Cheah states, “...postcolonial cultural studies grew out of a critique of cosmopolitan culture but is currently reclaiming the term cosmopolitical” (Cheah 1998b:291).

Here I reiterate the sympathies, resonancies and correspondences between postcolonial theory’s reinvestment in cosmopolitanism and the contemporary process of reinvestment of the Alexandrina/cosmopolitan paradigms. I demonstrate that both postcolonial theorists and the authors of contemporary revivalism argue that any new return to the discourse of cosmopolitanism/Alexandrina paradigm should be made only at a critical pitch (Cheah and Robbins 1998; Meijer 1999; see also Abaddi Chapter Three and Awad, Abu Zahra and Tzalas Chapter Seven). Also, by using theoretical insights in order to recast the contemporary scene of revivalism as a ‘cosmopolitical contact zone’ (cf. Clifford 1998:369), this affords my thesis research a critical depth in terms of understanding both historical and contemporary subtleties of exchange and encounter and the apparent contradictions at stake in acts of retrievalism.

In my text, for example, I show how an idealised, celebratory expression of Alexandrian cosmopolitanism is recovered and idealised further in the speeches given at the Aswan Meeting 1990 while also pitching this against more historically circumscribed cosmopolitanism of late nineteenth and twentieth century cosmopolitanism as represented in the Awad Collection. A specific interest is also placed upon how intellectuals such as Awad, Abu Zahra, Abaddi and Serageldin (the latter as Director of the Bibliotheca) redeploy these various cosmopolitical dynamics to make a case for, amongst other agendas, the defense of human rights, democracy and as a challenge to the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ myth/thesis.
SECTION THREE – CLASH OF CIVILISATIONS: WEST/ NON-WEST

This motif of the ‘Clash of Civilizations’ (cf. Huntington 1996) is a further key term which recurs throughout my thesis. My own statements on the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ myth/thesis like that of my intellectual and moral-ethical commitment to and defense of cosmopolitanism are clearly articulated within my thesis and are an alignment to Said’s rejection of generalising, totalising, Grand Narrative statements/discourses which reduce the variety, hybridity and humanity of ancient and modern contexts to polarised and hermetically sealed worlds by essentialising difference and privileging a ‘Them’ versus ‘Us’ irreconcilability to civilisational struggle. As Said states, ‘[T]he truly weakest part of the clash of civilizations thesis is the rigid separation assumed among civilizations, despite the overwhelming evidence that today’s world of mixtures, of migrations, of crossings-over’ (Said 2001:587).

I make my position clearer still in the light of my discussion of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s inaugural conference ‘Cultures and the Enemy Image’ (December 2003 see my thesis conclusions) which not only saw delegates from North and South re-iterate their intellectual and moral-ethical commitment to challenging the anti-intellectual, antagonistic and inhumane aspects of the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ myth/thesis but also by outlining that, how, post-Sept 11th, this very discourse has entrenched itself firmly within global political rhetoric and as such has been (and continues to be) used as a resource by the ‘West’ (pursued principally by Bush/ Bl Blair) to justify an on-going ‘war on terror’ and by a minority of others, such as Bin Laden, to issue a concomitant ‘war on the West/ Infidels’.

In such a context I would like to reiterate my thesis commitment to mobilising both my more theoretical chapters and the contemporary revival of the Bibliotheca as a means to address these dynamics from alternative perspectives. Here I would like to return to underline how entangled the concepts of ‘Clash of Civilisations’ and ‘cosmopolitanism’
are as they emerge in my thesis and thus I argue they exist in an uneasy intimacy rather than in absolute and polarised positions. This brings me back to my objective of using the contemporary ‘return to Alexandria’ as means of investigating what is at stake not only in the liberating features, - but also the more ambivalent, oppressive, distopic underside, - of the Alexandrina’s genealogy. In terms of the former dynamic, for example, in ethnographic chapters I illustrate how archaeologists in giving ‘authenticity’ of substance to ancient cosmopolitanism in the form of retrieved objects relating to Alexandria’s ancient past have made their ‘scientific’ contribution to dispelling the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ myth/ thesis. Similarly, but differently, my interviews with informants such as Soueif, Lively and Wood demonstrate how beyond the Alexandrina’s walls critics from North and South have engaged in the further destabilision of the more reductive, oppressive traits of Alexandria’s legacy and thus challenging the concept of ‘Clashing Civilisations’ using the media and literary domains as public platforms for contesting these repossession.

In contrast, however, I address how the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ and more specifically the ‘myth of confrontation’ synonymous with the now discredited account of the destruction of the ancient Alexandrina (cf. Ahmed 1992: 94-95)² has re-emerged in the guise of a myth of popular resistance. My reference here is to my interview with Abid (see Chapter Four) and his comments on a pre-project visit to Alexandria in which informants use the aforementioned myth as a means to articulate a voice of popular protest against the revivalist project and thus characterise the Bibliotheca as a provocative object in the local context and as essentially ‘foreign’, alien, ‘Greek’, ‘Western’ and thus potentially ‘colonising. It is, therefore, worth making comparisons between this local response and Saadawi’s defense of a strategic use of the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ myth/ thesis within the popular cultural context specifically as a means to resist what is perceived as the top-down commodification of culture from ‘outside’ (Saadawi 1997:180-181). All the above

² My reference here is to the fault-line appearing at the moment of the ancient institution's destruction, which in a dominant genre of Western history writing has been particularised as a 'clash' between 'Islam and the West' and synonymous with the burning of the Alexandrina by Arab Islamic incomers/ invaders (Ahmed 1992: 94-95).
examples thus show the complexities and contradictions at stake in contemporary rejections and repossessions of this myth.

My final statements on this issue reiterate to Said’s contention that the definition of a contemporary cosmopolitics needs to be tied to the recognition of a new humanism no longer tied to the spread of Western liberalism but instead acknowledged as originating in an earlier phase of cultural interaction and integration which is of resonance here and which is typified in the cosmopolitan history of Alexandria (Said in Bayoumi and Rubin 2001: 433). Said subsequently argues the need to re-address the basic humanistic virtues upon which Western culture has been for so long unproblematically based and in some sense both re-evaluate and also restore their salience as part of a common purpose of understanding what it is to be human. I reaffirm the importance of such statements to museology’s/ heritage studies own intellectual-operational ‘cosmopolitics.’

- ‘West’/ ‘Non-West’
The themes discussed in this section, like my thesis itself, have at the heart of them a certain sophisticated understanding and strategic use of the conceptual categories of ‘West’/ ‘Non West’. Once again, as is clearly outlined in my thesis my purpose in using the terms ‘West’/ ‘Non West’ is employed as a means to recognise and to engage in a critique a Euro-American set of attitudes and thought that have attempted to dominate the construction and shaping of knowledge and power. My initial focus is upon how what I term as ‘Eurocentric’ frames and sources exert their influence on the myth-historiography which characterises the Alexandria project/ Alexandrina paradigm in the ‘Western’ imagination. My point is to retain the terms ‘Western’ and ‘Eurocentric’ in order to challenge rather than to privilege the absolute worth and moral/ethical values and certainties synonymous with the force of ‘Occidental modernity’ (Venn 2002). Moreover, rather than pitching this against a ‘native point of view’ or the ‘non–west’ as different in temporal/spatial terms, my whole thesis is a commitment to drawing out the hybridisations of contact and identity-work across North and South which both historically and in contemporary times resist the simple ‘truth’ and moral/ethical validity of staging global identity work in such homogenised and hermetically sealed worlds.
SECTION FOUR – SAFOUAN: POWER AND DEHUMANISATION

My on-going thesis commitment to problematise the moral worth of institutional expressions of power and my related objective to draw out strategies of resistance capable of both re-instating the humanity and dignity of the individual and responding to the popular voice is the final dynamic I wish to reiterate. Here, I want to return to the complex and subtle arguments put forward by Safouan, the Alexandrian psychoanalyst who practiced in Paris under Lacan, which relate to this theme. My argument here is that Safouan's intellectual project engages with the core dilemma of the Bibliotheca's future institutional identities and one could argue of museology/ cultural heritage's 'possible futures': that of articulating an archival strategy and an archival empathy/discourse 'which holds' rather than that which 'destroys.' Safouan does this by asserting that institutions, bureaucracies, academies and, crucially for Safouan, analysts/ individuals themselves, as mediums of power necessarily, 'wrench themselves from the human condition' (Safouan 2000: 110). Safouan places within his vision of the institutional-psychoanalytical frame space to express and recover both the 'dignity' of analyst and analyst and thus a dynamic of empathy capable of transforming the institution as a 'site of authority' into a 'site of inspiration' (Rose 2000: 47).

In defining his own intellectual project Safouan looks beyond stereotyped categories of identity and more specifically still centres within this project both a critique of the 'paradigm of relationships' by which 'power entrenches itself in an institution' (Rose 2000: 7-8). Safouan's critique thus offers a diagnostic tool in terms of highlighting the dangers of institutions asserting entrenched authoritarian, narcissistic identities. Here Safouan is influenced by Lacan's own critique of the extremes of this institutionalisation and bureaucratisation which he like Lacan ultimately locates (with echoes of Malraux 1967) in the, 'real of the concentration camps' and which he sees as illustrative of the dehumanising 'consequences to be expected from the reshaping of human groups by science, and notably from the universalisation which science brings to them' (Safouan 2000: 114). Moreover, this leads Safouan to characterise the way in which such dynamics, 'instead of leading to an administrative apparatus which incarcerates the
institution as ‘moral person’ it instead becomes, ‘a prop for souls suffering from identification’ (Safouan 2000:127). It is here that Safouan argues for a ‘new mode of instituting’ which is capable of both including ‘outsiders’ within the institution and sustaining critical questioning from within and as such is bound up in re-instating humanity and extending ‘hospitality’ by giving recognition to memory-in-exile and to multiple ‘voices’ within the institutional framing. Within this model everyone takes on board the consequences for the institution of their own position’ (Safouan 2000:127).

The relevancy of the above statements will be obvious to anyone familiar with the domain of museum studies and with critiques of the distopic logic of modernity’s rationalising tropes. Not only does one find correspondence with the anti-museum critiques expressed by Malraux but more specifically the Frankfurt School’s formidable and ground-breaking cultural Marxists critiques in this domain (see Chapter One). This powerful genealogy is also shared by a number of other intellectuals/ critiques who feature in this thesis: – notably Nietzsche and Derrida. Again, it is worth reiterating that in contemporary contexts and situations of power human beings (the morally/ ethically ‘weak’?) continue to be seduced into dehumanised behaviour towards those other human beings which power positions in any given moment in the category of the ‘other’.

Safouan, meanwhile, places within his vision of the institutional-psychoanalytical frame space to express and recover both the ‘dignity’ of analyst and analysand and thus a dynamic of empathy capable of transforming the institution as a ‘site of authority’ into a ‘site of inspiration’ (Rose 2000: 47). As argued in my conclusions, interestingly, by recuperating this closing vision of the institution/ analysis as a ‘site of inspiration’ Safouan’s own ‘utopian’ tendencies revives a quality synonymous with the Temple of the Muses and the Alexandrina’s own utopianism. Moreover, these are qualities which I argue need to be centred within museum/ heritage studies/ the academy’s ‘possible futures’ in order to as a basis for museological/ heritage discourses’ greater moral- ethical definition, as a core part of strategies of ‘humanisation’ and future action.
DEDICATION

The very sad news of Edward Said’s death was announced as I was completing this thesis. The great intellectual debt my work owes to Said, and the great privilege of meeting him at different junctures and in different locations during the particular pursuit and ‘working out’ of the epic ‘Odyssey’ which has been the writing of this thesis has been a source of inspiration and solace. In recognition of these things and of Said’s particular gifts of intellectualism, generosity and humanity I would like to give my final dedication and final words of this thesis to him:

On Intellectual Dignity: ‘The hardest aspect of being an intellectual is to represent what you profess is your work and interventions without hardening into an institution, or a kind of automaton acting at the behest of a system or method. Anyone who has felt the exhilaration of being successful at that and also successful at keeping alert and solid will appreciate how rare the convergence is. But the only way of ever achieving it is to keep reminding yourself that as an intellectual you are the one who can chose between actively presenting the truth to the best of your ability, and passively allowing a patron or an authority to direct you. For the secular intellectual, those gods always fail’

(Said 1994: 90)³