

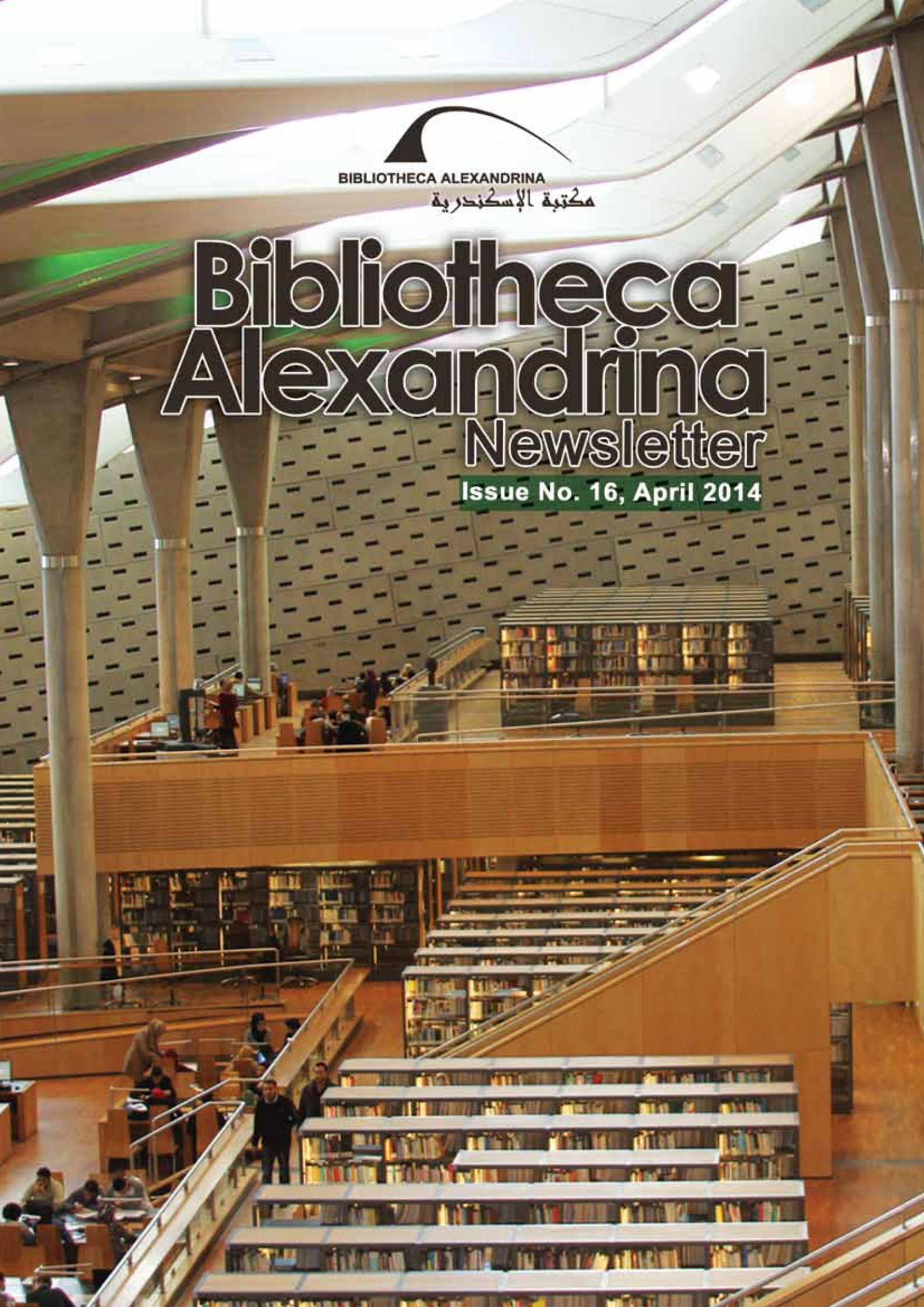


BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA

مكتبة الإسكندرية

Bibliotheca Alexandrina Newsletter

Issue No. 16, April 2014



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٢٧ مارس إلى ٨ إبريل ٢٠١٤



Alexandrina International

10th Anniversary

BOOK FAIR

In cooperation with The Egyptian Publishers Association

27 March – 8 April 2014



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Population and Resources*

Ismail Serageldin

The debate on population and resources has been joined at least since Malthus and Condorcet.... The former could not foresee anything except population growth hitting resources limit that would lead to famines and death. Condorcet saw that human imagination, science and technological innovation would be able to meet the needs of a growing population. Condorcet was right.



* This article is an edited version of the keynote address delivered by Dr. Serageldin at the First International Summit of the Book at the Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

Neither of these two worthies, writing in the late 18th century could imagine in his wildest dreams a world population exceeding 7 billion, much less one that exceeds 9 billion... Condorcet could not imagine the scale of consumption and waste that is associated with our western lifestyles, or how our technology can disrupt the ecological web of our planet on which we all depend.

Indeed, the demands of a growing population is due both to the increase in population, and to the increase of income, whereby people demand more animal proteins in their diet, more energy, and an unlimited supply of manufactured goods and services. That is what is making the ecological footprint for each of us ever larger.

- Ever more agricultural production for food and feed, noting that agriculture already commands 40% of the Earth surface, and some 70% of the global freshwater withdrawals;
- Ever more energy;
- Ever more solid waste with its complex problems, recycling and disposal;
- Ever more demands for better ways to manage our ever expanding cities and make them truly smart cities; and
- Ever more pollution that accompanies many of our industrial processes.

Each of these topics has been much discussed, including the ranges of policies and programs that could address it.

So, when it comes to the population side of the equation: Why does global population continue to grow? Is there something that we can do to slow it down?

The Demographic Transition

The reality of the population issue is the demographic transition that all societies go through. Initially, less developed societies

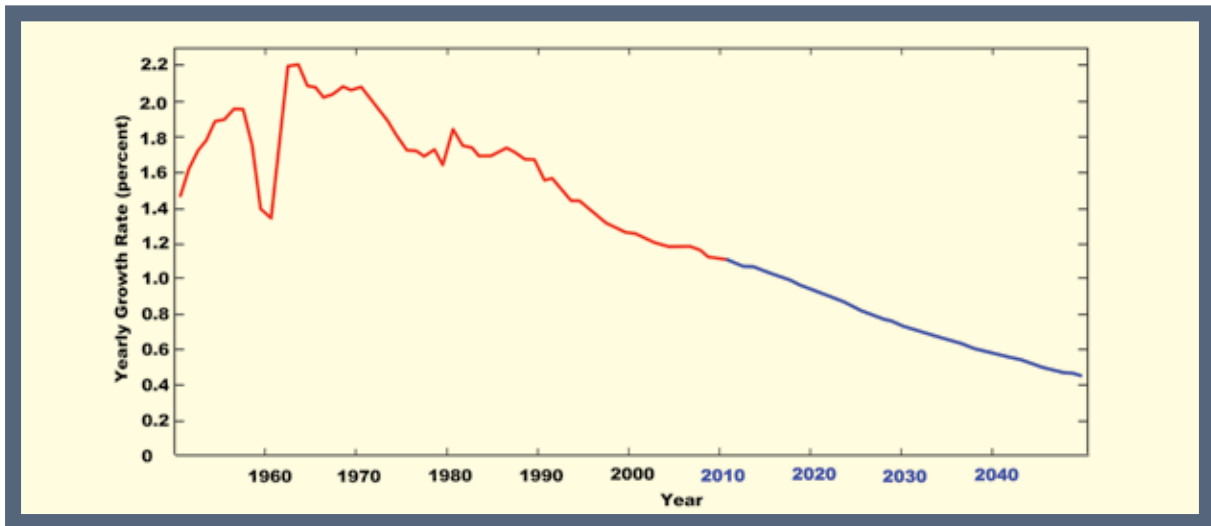
had a stable population with high fertility, high birth rates and high death rates. Health improvements reduce infant mortality with a sudden spurt in population growth, producing the characteristic broad-based population pyramids of the poorer developing countries.

If the society grows well enough, and at a pace which could keep pace with that demographic wave, then the population stabilizes again, but this time with low fertility, low birth rates and low death rates. These population stable societies face two separate problems: The ecological impacts of the consumption pattern on a per capita basis, and the special needs of an aging population, and even a declining population if fertility falls below the replacement rate.

That is the pattern that the advanced industrial societies have experienced. Other societies are just catching up on that demographic transition. Today, the transition is being accompanied by a rapid rise in the ecological footprint of all societies in the developing world, even as the industrialized world is unable to curb Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and hold, if not reduce, their ecological footprint.



Green footprint @dobigthingsblog.files.wordpress.com



World population growth rate 1950–2050 @wikipedia.com

The growing children put enormous pressure on schools, universities and other social infrastructure in society, and as young adults, at the most critical moment when they graduate from formal education and join the labor force, they are at their most vulnerable, and that is roughly when they will be forming their own households to bring up their own families.

If that does not happen, it is likely that youth unemployment will be very problematic, as a younger generation without stake in the future of the society that rejects them will gravitate towards criminality, marginalization and political extremism.

Societies going through this demographic transition, mostly in Africa, South Asia and West Asia, have an opportunity—with proper education and socialization—to make good use of that unstoppable demographic wave of young people to drive a green economic expansion and to move faster towards stabilization of their populations as these youths become economically and politically active members of society.

The schools and universities that handle the 12–24 year-old age group are essential institutions in any society, as they handle the transition of adolescents into adults, and of dependents into full-fledged citizens.

Between the ages of 12–24 years, youth undergoes five transitions, where the choices they make in each case will have a long-lasting impact. These are:

Continuing to Learn: Whether to drop out of further structured instruction and university participation, or not, is the single most important decision in the teenager's life. Its repercussions and the future path of their career will be inevitably affected by it.

Start to Work: The transition from a dependent student to an independent participant in the labor force occurs in these years, and traditionally with a pre-college or college education. A smooth transition into a growing labor market will be very beneficial. Sustained unemployment will enormously increase the chances of marginalization and even deviance into criminality.

Developing a Healthy Lifestyle: Key decisions on smoking, experimenting with drugs, attitudes towards sex, and other choices that confront youth at that age can make all the difference in terms of their adoption of a healthy lifestyle or not.

Starting a Family: Family formation starts at the older end of that age group. Thus, the attitudes they gain in those years can make all the difference between a society

with solid family units and one with broken homes. Household formation is about more than demographic change.

Exercising Citizenship: The political awareness of the new generation is formed during those years, usually it is at university that they join political parties, start to vote, and are exposed to a wide spectrum of ideas and debates. The attitudes they develop towards politics and society will also make the difference between the rise of extremism and the success of pluralistic politics.

We must reach out to our youth, especially women, and ensure that education for tomorrow is far more than training for marketable skills. There will be an education revolutionized by the Internet, from the tablet to the MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), education will involve changes in everything from content to method to participants to setting.

Women

There is no question that women play a central role in both sides of the population and resources equation: Empowering women through education, access to credit, opportunities for employment, support to their entrepreneurial initiatives with micro credit and SME (Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises) support structures, that is the fastest route to bring down fertility, and move towards a stable population. Women are also the primary builders of social capital and the main vectors for the transmission of values, and thus their involvement in the environmental and resource issue will help broaden the base of support for the more efficient and less wasteful use of resources, and the adoption of new technologies that will help move us towards the path of sustainable development.

Never before have the stakes been as great. Never before has the pace of change been so fast, the possibilities for action so promising, and the costs of inaction so great. Yet, precisely because of this speed, of this novelty of tool and product, people are nervous and alienated.

Today, more humans are better educated, and live longer, and freer lives than ever before; but we are moving on an environmentally unsustainable path, and some of the members of the human family are still incredibly deprived.

That is what this Science and Technology in Society (STS) effort is all about: To bring together the leaders of science, politics and business to generate a consensus on these complex problems with all the lights and shadows that our technology casts...

We must have the vision to be bold, the courage to act decisively, and the wisdom to recognize that our own well-being is tied to that of all others. Let us promote development that is people centered and gender conscious, which places short-term actions within a long-term perspective, and that works with nature not against it. That is the path for a sustainable future.



The Library participates in the 79th IFLA General Conference in Singapore

Hadir Shady

IFLA PUBLIC TALKS

Future Libraries: Infinite Possibilities



The Bibliotheca Alexandrina (BA) participates every year in the World Library and Information Congress of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), which is the leading entity in the field of libraries and information since 1927 on the international level.

This year, the IFLA Conference was held in Singapore, 17–23 August 2013. The BA has

positively contributed to the success of the Conference by the significant participations of Dr. Ismail Serageldin, Director of the BA. In addition, the BA delegation headed by Miss Lamia Abdelfattah, Acting Chief Librarian, Library Sector, has also participated by being members of different Section–Standing Committees that are the core of the Federation.



Dr. Ismail Serageldin was invited to give a keynote address at the IFLA 2013 Pre-Conference Satellite Meeting on Information Literacy and Reference Services, 15–16 August 2013, organized by The IFLA Information Literacy (IL) Section and Reference and Information Services (RIS) Section, together with the National Library Board in Singapore.

The theme of the Meeting was “Re-defining and Refining Information Literacy and Reference Services in the Digital Age.” Dr. Serageldin addressed a speech entitled “Information Literacy for Tomorrow.” The Meeting was successful in bringing together leading members of the library world.

At the opening session of the Second International Summit of the Book entitled “The Meaning of the Book in Human Civilization,” on 16 August 2013, hosted by the National Library Board Singapore (NLB), Dr. Serageldin gave a speech on “The Book in Arab–Muslim Civilization,” where he explored the role of the book in human civilization. This Summit is an initiative by the Library of Congress to celebrate the enduring influence of the culture of the book, and the importance of libraries and books in preserving national cultural identities and the human civilization. The Summit this year focused on the meaning and future of the book, from an Asian and global perspective. The Summit was very successful in bringing together leaders of great libraries, eminent authors, and thought leaders and publishers of both the old and the new media in a spirited exchange of ideas.

Dr. Serageldin also attended the Public Talks at the National Library Board Singapore (NLB) on 17 August 2013, by giving a talk entitled “From Antiquity to Modernity: A Look at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and Its Re-engagement with the World”. At this event, notable librarians and authors were invited for a series of public talks aiming at engaging the public. Dr. Serageldin's talk was very significant in demonstrating how the Bibliotheca Alexandrina rejuvenates itself as a cultural institution, while meeting the complex demands of the digital age.

At the UNESCO session of The World Library and Information Congress, and the 79th Conference of the National Committees of the IFLA, Dr. Serageldin gave an update on the focus and development of the World Digital Library (WDL), of which he is Chairman of the Executive Council. The session was entitled “Preserving our Past for the Future—the Importance of Long-term Preservation for the Cultural Heritage Sector.”

Miss Lamia Abdelfattah led the BA delegation that consisted of a group of highly-skilled staff members, who were elected as members in Section Standing Committees according to their specialties and expertise. Serving on a Section Standing Committee is one of the best ways of contributing to the work of IFLA. The Standing Committees help develop policies, carry out surveys and other projects, prepare guidelines, and organize open sessions and workshops at the IFLA World Library and Information Congress.

The BA delegation members were: Suzanne Samir, Head of Education Section, member of the Education and Training Standing Committee; Mandi Amin, Director of Technical Services Department, member of the IFLA Cataloging Standing Committee; Rehab Ouf, Director of Arabic Bibliographic Standards Department, member of IFLA Classification and Indexing Standing Committee; Dalia Hamada, Deputy Director of the Special Libraries Department, member of the Libraries for Children and Young Adults Standing Committee; Dina Youssef, Head of IFLA Center for Arabic Speaking Library, member of the Africa Section Standing Committee; and Marwa El Sahn, Director of Francophone Cultural Activities Center, Chair of the Audio-visual and Multimedia Standing Committee.

Furthermore, Dalia Hamada gave a session entitled "Required Skills for Children and Youth

Librarians in the Digital Age at the Libraries for Children and Young Adults." Dina Youssef also gave two presentations at the Award Session and at the Opening Session.

It is also worth mentioning that since 2007, the BA is hosting the IFLA Center of Arabic Speaking Libraries. The Center plays a major role in linking the Arab libraries and information associations with their counterparts on the global level. The Center has established an electronic communication network between most of the libraries and information institutions in the Arab world, through which it provides an Arabic translation of news and information on the latest technologies, and librarianship professional accomplishments, as well as the most important research papers and other important news concerning library and information science.

During the IFLA Conference, the Center provides Arabic simultaneous interpretation of the sessions, as well as translation of the daily newsletter. This year, the Center has invited all librarians from Arab countries attending the IFLA to the Arab Caucus meeting. The Meeting aimed at discussing the IFLA projects, promoting its activities, and encouraging Arabic-speaking countries to participate at the IFLA conferences, and to join the standing committees, and give speeches.



The Calouste Gulbenkian Prize is awarded to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina and its Director, Dr. Ismail Serageldin, received the 2013 Calouste Gulbenkian Prize, attributed annually to an institution or a person that stands out for their role in defense of the values essential to humanity.

The prize is awarded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation; a Portuguese private institution of public utility whose statutory aims are in the fields of arts, charity, education and science.

From among the 70 nominations received, the Jury for the International Calouste Gulbenkian Prize, honored the Library of Alexandria and its Director.

Dr. Serageldin stated that it is a great honor to receive this distinguished and most generous award that recognizes the Library of Alexandria and its achievements, and his efforts as the Director of the Library.

"The Library of Alexandria is a dream turned into reality; a dream to recapture the spirit of the Ancient Library with the tools of the third millennium, to bring that humanist tradition into the digital age...to re-launch it again in Egypt in the context of the country's vastly changed circumstances," he added.

In his words, to recapture that spirit required not only the combination of many types of institutions from specialized research institutes to forums for public events; but also devotion to both the arts and the sciences, and reaching out to the broad public, as well as to the specialists, with offerings for all ages and domains of interest.

"We had to help meet today's world challenges that not only require the knowledge of the natural sciences, but also the insights of the social sciences and the wisdom of the humanities," he affirmed.

The Jury, chaired by Jorge Sampaio, stated that the Library of Alexandria is unique in the sense that it represents a large Egyptian library, international in scope, endowed with the mission of serving as a center of learning, tolerance, dialogue and understanding between cultures and peoples, as well as a leading Institution in the Digital Age.

The Calouste Gulbenkian Prize distinguishes an individual or institution whose thoughts or actions make a decisive contribution to, and have significant impact on understanding, defending or fostering the universal values of the human condition: namely, the respect for diversity and difference, a culture of tolerance and the conservation of the environment in man's relationship with nature. The winner of the first edition of the Calouste Gulbenkian Prize, in 2012, was The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra.

Upon receiving the prize, Dr. Ismail Serageldin stated that the Library of Alexandria is an Egyptian Institution, with an international dimension and a mandate to serve all humanity.

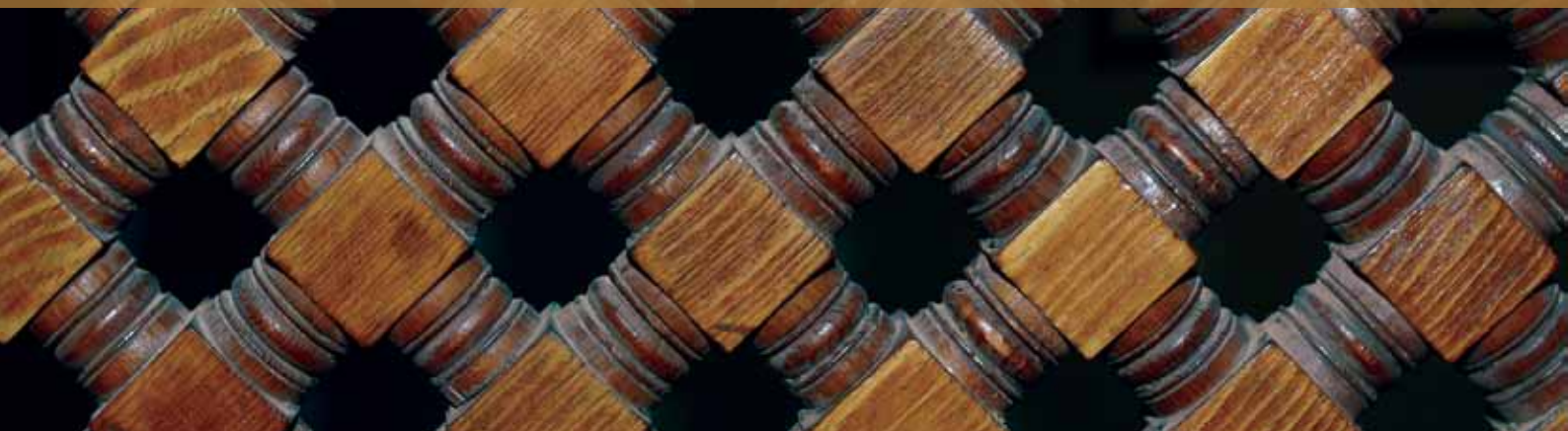
He also shed light on political events taking place in Egypt, explaining the role of the Library in the ongoing Egyptian Revolution. He said that the Library of Alexandria in modern day Egypt became a space of freedom where all points of view could be expressed, where all were welcome.

"The Library always stood for clear values: freedom of expression, freedom of enquiry, and pluralism. It welcomed over one million visitors, and organized over 700 events annually. Its websites receive millions of hits daily," he added.

"I hope that what we do in Egypt will also make its contribution beyond our borders, to bring about increased respect for diversity and difference, a culture of tolerance and better relations between all cultures, all civilizations, all humans, all individuals and their social and natural environment," concluded Serageldin.

The Future of Political Islam in Egypt: A Workshop in Bayt el-Sinnari

Muhammad Musaad Al-Araby



Islamism or Political Islam, one of the main features of the political struggles in Egypt and the Arab world in the 20th century and the threshold of the 21st century.

These chronic struggles between the Arab semi-secular modern State and Islamist factions seem to persist in the overseen decades. Muslim Brotherhood is the main political Islam party in Egypt, it is the mother community of all the other Islamist Arab groups.

The recent events in Egypt raised many debates on the future of political Islam in Egypt. In this context, a workshop was held by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina Unit of Futuristic Studies (UFS) in cooperation with the Arab Forum for Alternatives (AFA) in Bayt el-Sinnari, Center for Science, Culture and Arts affiliated to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, in October 2013.

The Workshop was divided into three sessions, the first was entitled "The New Islamic Actors in the Egyptian Scenery", presided by Dr. Khaled Azab, Head of the BA Projects Sector, who indicated the importance of the scholarly event in the light of the ongoing conflict between the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and the new ruling

regime in Egypt; this significance springs from fathoming the potentials of the conflict in the near future and tying the scholarly efforts with Realpolitik.

Ali Bakr, Islamic Movements Specialist in Al-Ahram Center for Strategic Studies, stated in his speech that the Salafi movement is likely to take the lead of the Islamic Movement. Despite being divided into many parties Al-Nour Party still is the biggest Salafi party that plays a major role in the new political equation. In general, during years following the Revolution, Salafis have proven to be more pragmatic and adaptable than the Muslim Brotherhood who were restricted by the organization.

Dr. Azab reached the same conclusion from actual experience in the countryside where Salafis have won over Ikhwanis (Muslim Brotherhood) in elections and dominated many of their influence areas. He stressed that the rural political actors would advance at the expense of the urban centers in Cairo and Alexandria in the forthcoming decade. Although the Ikhwan have chosen to make alliance with the Salafis in specific times, there was competition between the two main Islamist parties.

Dr. Ahmed Abd Rabou, Associate Professor at the American University in Cairo, stated that the Islamic Movement is in real need to make an intellectual revision of its thoughts and positions, and separate between religious Call "Da'wa" and politics. They need to absorb that social justice as a main demand of the Revolution pushing power, and that identity discourse cannot be a valid alternative for Social Justice shortcomings on the level of parties and the State. Moreover, Islamists should abandon the search for universal Islamic Caliphate, they have to show their full loyalty to the modern nation State.

The relation between the State and religion is demonstrated in the State of religion in the Constitution and religious institutions, that was the main theme of the second session headed by Muhammad El-Agati, Executive Director of Arab Forum for Alternatives (AFA). Dr Abdel Fattah Mady, Associate Political Science Professor, presented many models of the problematic relation between the State and religion that shall be considered in the world experiences as Egypt is drafting a new constitution.

He stated that the identity articles are still a domain of dispute between Islamist and secular parties as shown in the work of the Committee of 50 that is drafting the new constitution. He stressed that this chronic debate over Egypt's identity must be summoned to be a base for large political consensus that democratic systems are based on.

When it comes to religion in Egypt, Al-Azhar Al-Sharif comes to the forefront of discussion. Dr. Georges Fahmy, an AFA senior researcher, focused in his presentation on the role of Al-Azhar in politics, before and following the January Revolution. Tracing this role proves that the prestigious Islamic institution has always had its own ambivalent positions. Following the Revolution, Al-Azhar tried to play a main role in building a national consensus, Al-Azhar Charter of fundamental principles for Egypt's

prospective Government was the main symbol of these maneuvers. Now, many actors, both Islamist and secular, are demanding to grant Al-Azhar the position of a fully independent entity, and to be the sole reference for the Islamic affairs.

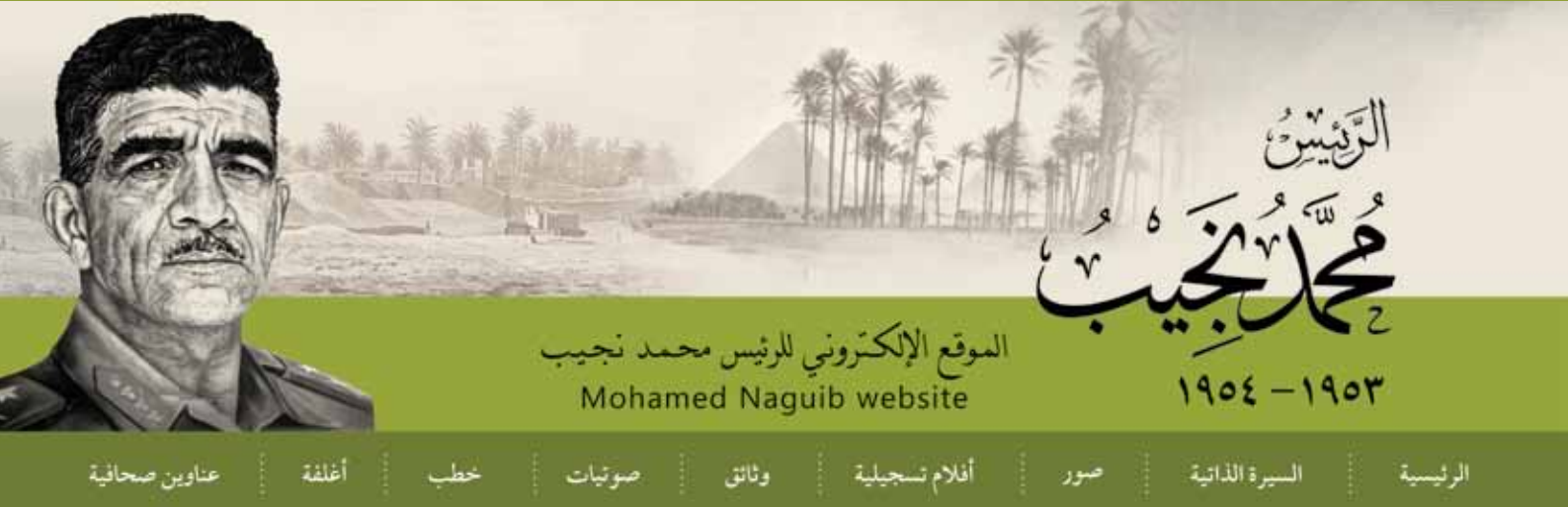
The last session was dedicated to fathom the struggles scenarios between the State and the Ikhwan. The Committee of 50 members and Islamic Movements expert Dr. Amr El-Choubaky indicated that the historical background of the conflict between the Ikhwanis and the State started in 1928, and during the Monarchy Era and the Republic Era. He added that the State is facing a new challenge by determining the legitimacy of the Ikhwan as a legal community. The Modern State cannot accept the secret communities as legal entities, he stressed. Also, he confirmed that the calls to have a clear vision in setting the relation between the State and religion, the new constitution leads to the importance of discussing the legitimacy of the religious parties.

Professor Ashraf Alsharif, AUC Political Science, stated that there are three possible scenarios: the first one would be the total violent confrontation as the Algerian and Syrian models; the second is the total reconciliation between the regime and the Muslim Brotherhood; the third is persistence of the street disorders raised by the Ikhwan. He assured that the Ikhwan are not going to revise intellectually their thought and organization structure, mainly because of their sectarian inner nature, as making such revision means delusion of the well-built organization.

The Workshop's speeches and discussions raised numerous questions on the limits of failure of the Islamic project in Egypt, and the intellectual fundamentals of Political Islam and its alternative futures. The Workshop aimed to be a beginning for wide debates in the scholarly circles and the public sphere, and to be part of a strategy to bridge the scientific research in social sciences with politics.

The BA Launches the Website of Mohamed Naguib, First President of Egypt

Sarah Elhaddad



On the 61st Anniversary of the 23 July 1952 Revolution, the BA has launched the website of the late President Mohamed Naguib (<http://naguib.bibalex.org>), the first President of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

The Naguib website is in accordance with the BA endeavor to document Egypt's modern and contemporary history.

Dr Khaled Azab, Head of the BA Central Projects and Services Sector, stated that the Mohamed Naguib website is within the Presidential websites series, also including the websites of Gamal Abdel Nasser and Anwar El-Sadat.

He added that the Naguib website complements this series, and provides due credit to the forgotten President, through an enormous digital archive that contains rare materials and documents that are published for the first time.

Amr Shalaby, Project Manager, stated that the website includes around 900 rare

photos, 200 documents, 675 press clips, 23 cover photos, 23 videos and 16 audio files, in addition to a detailed biography.

He confirms that the website exclusively publishes 97 speeches by Naguib. This outcome is a product of the intense work of a team that assembled speeches from newspapers, magazines, and old documents.

Mohamed Naguib (1901–1984) was the first President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, following the end the rule of the Muhammad Ali Dynasty in Egypt due to the Egyptian Revolution of 1952.

Naguib was born in Sudan, as his father was serving in the Egyptian Army in Sudan. He returned to Egypt after finishing school and joined the Military School in 1917. Naguib was a dedicated Military Officer. He served in Palestine during the Palestine War in 1948 where he met Abdul Hakim Amer and Gamal Abdel Nasser, and made the first connection with the Free Officers Movement.

Naguib was at the forefront of the Free Officers Movement. Following the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, he was appointed as Commander-in-Chief of Army, then the Prime Minister of Egypt. With the declaration of the Republic in 1923, Naguib was the appointed President of Egypt. He also served as Prime Minister and Chairman of the Revolution Command Council.



Presidency, compared to the rich legacy of the Presidents who followed, is seldom remembered.

Naguib was neglected for years. Now, his whole story comes to life once again through photos, videos, audio files and documents, and is available for general public through the website.

Naguib's conflict with the Revolution Command Council led to his isolation in November 1954. He was forced into an 18-year house arrest until his release by President Anwar El-Sadat in 1972.

The website includes eight sections, namely: biography, photos, films, documents, audio, speeches, magazine covers, and press clips.

According to Shalaby, not only does the website include rare materials about Naguib, but it also reveals different sides about the brilliant politician's life that the people never knew.

Shalaby stated that the search and documentation process has not come to an end, and that numerous sides that form the legacy of the first President of the Arab Republic of Egypt are yet to be unveiled.

Mohamed Naguib is often referred to as the "forgotten President". His very short-lived

The website traces Naguib's life through rich and variable materials. A detailed biography narrates the story of the forgotten President since his birth in Sudan until his passing away in 1984.

Strolling through the photos section, one can display a very interesting collection of Naguib's photos since he was a teenager. The final one is a photo of Naguib days before his passing away. The collection shows Naguib in meetings with journalists, photos with members of the Free Officers Movement, taking part in Military celebrations, performing Presidential duties, listening to the complaints of the people, and making official visits.

Videos available on the website include a video of the first speech given by Naguib from the Presidential Palace following the declaration of the Republic, and an important speech addressed to the people.

A special section in the website is dedicated to displaying magazine covers that

feature Mohamed Naguib, including the cover of the *Time Magazine* on 8 September 1952, entitled "Egypt's Strong Man Naguib", and the cover of *Der Spiegel* magazine, issue number 37.

The section also shows covers of the publications written by Naguib himself, including "Egypt's Destiny" 1955, and Naguib's own memoirs "I was a President of Egypt".

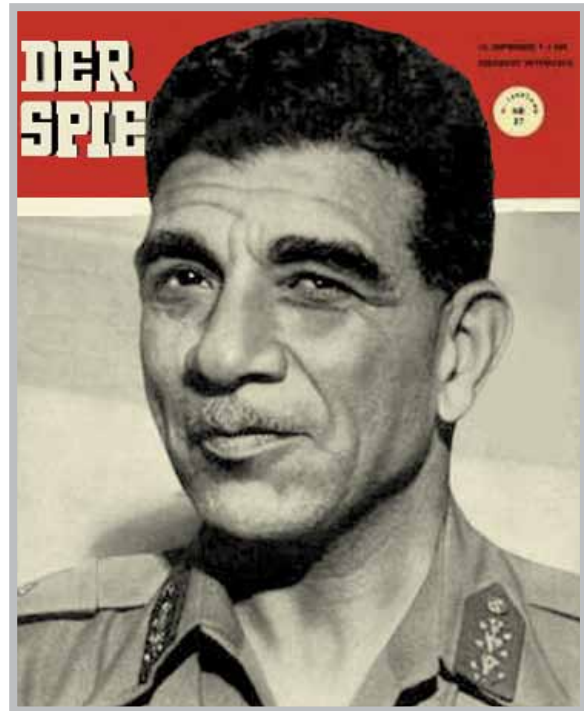
Unlike many sources, the BA Mohamed Naguib website has not neglected the years Naguib lived under house arrest. The website provides a glimpse on how the once-a-President spent years in isolation.

"He became devoted to worshipping; learned several languages, such as French, German, Hebrew, Italian, and Russian; and read the news in several languages," says the biography.

It is worth mentioning that the Mohamed Naguib website is the third of a series that includes the Gamal Abdel Nasser website and the Anwar El-Sadat website.

The Gamal Abdel Nasser website is a rich repository documenting the life of the late President Gamal Abdel Nasser, through a collection of different media pertaining to his Presidency period. The collection of documents, photos, movies, speeches, were donated to the Library of Alexandria by Gamal Abdel Nasser Foundation to be scanned, cataloged, indexed and subjected to Optical Character Recognition (OCR), and available to the users in a searchable easy to browse interface. The collection is continuously being updated.

One of the recent updates is the "This Day in History" feature, which allows users to view events, news, speeches, or documentary movies that occurred in a certain year,



on the same day. The collection has also expanded with new material including 43 speeches in video and audio, 29 greeting cards, 13 pamphlets released by the Free Officers Movement, and 22 documents



containing meeting minutes of the Egyptian Cabinet in 1,176 pages.

The Sadat Digital Archive provides the collection of late President El-Sadat in a searchable form for historians, politicians and researchers to analyze and study one of the most important transitional periods in Egyptian history. The project compiles all the material pertaining to the late President Anwar El-Sadat, in a digital archive documenting an important epoch in the discourse of the Egyptian history. Chronicles of the glorious October War, the protocols of Camp David Accord, the interviews of the late President with local and international broadcasts, are all available in an audio or video format among other 220 documentary films featuring El-Sadat on different occasions.

The material was compiled from different sources, such as news agencies, museums, and various other institutions, in addition to the collection graciously granted by the late President's family. The collection was published on the Internet with tools and features that facilitate easy navigation through the materials, as well as the capability to perform comprehensive searches among the different sections and categories of data.

The BA receives the Collection of the Royal Tropical Institute, the Netherlands



Dr. Ismail Serageldin and Dr. Derk Vermeer

Dr. Ismail Serageldin, Director of the Library of Alexandria; and Dr. Derk Vermeer, President of the Royal Tropical Institute—Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen (KIT) in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, signed on Thursday, 31 October 2013, a Memorandum of Understanding between the two Institutions by the which majority of the KIT Library collection, almost 400,000 books and 20,000 journals, will be allocated to the BA.

The collection covers different fields, and it is specifically important because it is Europe's largest Library pertaining to development issues. Most of the collection is in English, and some in French, German and other languages. The Dutch Government decided to keep all material written in the Dutch language. KIT has also agreed to make available to the BA the digital files of relevance, including the electronic catalog of the materials concerned.

The BA has obliged itself to protect this Library collection, and keep it publicly accessible. It will make special efforts to bring it to the attention of other institutions and interested parties, including Egyptian and regional universities, academies, and research institutions.

Dutch media and cultural circles have greatly commended the BA for this approach as a center for learning, tolerance, dialogue and understanding.

Voices from Cosmopolitan Alexandria

Sherihan Aref



The old Alexandria, as older generations consider it, had a rich multicultural atmosphere in which people from around the world mingled and lived in harmony. This was reflected in their daily lives, social, business, cultural, the films released and music heard. *Voices from Cosmopolitan Alexandria*, recalls memories of old Alexandrians of different origins and ethnic groups. The interviews reflect the perseverance and changes that took place in Alexandria over the years. The publication is edited by Mohamed Awad and Sahar Hammouda, published by the BA Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Center. It was initially published in 2006, and

due to its success this new edition comes in a different format with more photos emphasizing special meanings in the lives of the contributors.

This publication is part of the project “Mediterranean Voices: Oral History and Cultural Practices”, sponsored by the European Union and organized by London Metropolitan University. In partnership with countries of the Mediterranean, research was conducted to trace the prospect of life in the Mediterranean. Interviewees from different ethnic backgrounds shared their memories and remembered significant places, rituals and events in Alexandria.

Old Photo of Stanley beach



Voices

"It wasn't difficult to integrate because it was a period when everybody was cosmopolitan. All our friends were Egyptians, foreigners, Italians, Greeks. There was never a question of color or of creed."

Zizi Niazi-Badr

Contributors of Voices from Cosmopolitan Alexandria mirror the cosmopolitan experience evoking memories of life in Alexandria one-hundred years ago. The city represents many ethnic communities who privilege a variety of legacies making it hard to make classifications. As a result, many individuals of today's generations have mixed origins. That was due to the movement of many foreigners to Alexandria. This was originally the aim of Alexander the Great, who founded Alexandria in 331 BCE to be a diverse city of cultural exchange. Additionally, its geographic location, allowed it to be a trade center and a flourishing culture across the Mediterranean

in which many foreigners considered it a desirable harbor. Particularly following the modernization era by Muhammad Ali. For example, Tatiana Monti, the last member of the white Russian community in Alexandria, confers about her family's arrival during the Bolshevik Revolution.

The harmony broke the morale borders between the different ethnic groups. These included Armenians, Greeks, Italians, Lebanese, Russians, Syrians, Swiss and many more. Muslims, Jews, Christians, Catholics, Coptic Catholics, Syrian Catholics, Greek Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Copts, and Protestants lived together peacefully. There was a mix of international cultures and traditions that was translated in the daily lifestyle, and even the types of music heard. The Greek singer Demis Roussos was born and grew in Alexandria, where his parents were also born. He reminisced that radios in Alexandria played various music from Bill Hayley to Comets. He described the Arabic, Greek, French, and Italian music heard as "a melting pot of music" and expressed that this mixture was how he became versatile and well educated in music. Likewise, this pluralism is carved on the buildings and revealed in places. For example, Abou El Abbas Mosque, the most popular of the modern era, was designed by the Italian architect Mario Rossi. This cultural mix was applied even in education. Interviewees refer to the schools they attended such as, Lycee Francais, English Girls' College, Notre Dame de Sion, Victoria College and The Littorio School. The communities socialized at the Swiss Club, Greek Club, Sporting Club or visited theaters, many of which still have the acquired old architectural style; in addition to referring to beaches such as Stanley and Sidi Bishr. Moreover, many of today's famous cafes and patisseries were originally owned by Europeans. The cosmopolitanism was also officially practiced as the foreign consuls, the mixed tribunals and cotton stock exchange were all in Alexandria, that is besides the notable Port. Nevertheless, the

publication refers to almost every detail in Alexandria and describes the story behind it. The photos illustrate places that still exist, but with a different scenery that was far more cosmopolitan.

Contributors also shared experiences during transformations in their lives, the world and how it dramatically affected both Alexandria and themselves. Such events include World War II, the 1952 Revolution, the 1956 War, and the nationalizations that took place in the 1960s. Some foreigners believed that Alexandria was their home, and decided to remain in the city despite the drastic changes; others chose to leave, but Alexandria remains a main travel destination in which they feel nostalgic.

The publication incorporates the interviews, and is divided into sections by the different origins including, Arabians, Armenians, British, Chinese, Egyptians, French, Greeks, Iraqi, Italians, Palestinians, Russians, Serbian, Shawam (Syro-Lebanese), Swiss and Turks. Each interview is accompanied with original photos of places, people or scenes that shaped their lives. Khamis M. Khamis who has been working in the florists profession, and whose family opened the first and still well-known Egyptian florist stores "Florelle" and "Violette", talks about how the florists business was introduced in Alexandria by two French men and eventually the business grew among other Europeans. Likewise, the legendary Elite restaurant and Café was owned by the Greek Madame Christina. Khodary Gasser Hassabo, waiter at Elite conjures in the publication about the old days.



The Littorio school

The Spaces

"It is evident that the ghosts are still there: in the air, perhaps, or within me. I meet them in the streets, and in certain shops that have kept their old names."

Laila Orfali

Furthermore, the publication includes "The Spaces" section; this involves interviews with residents of significant places in Alexandria. This section portrays stories of the square of the mosques, the Debanne Church, and rituals of the *moulids* (feasts). Residents of the popular neighborhoods, such as Kom el Dikk, Labban, Attarine and Qabbari, which were once upon a time resided by foreigners, described the multicultural atmosphere in which Christians, Jews and Muslims were friendly neighbors; French and Egyptians sat together at Cafes, and how the Greek *khawaga* taught the Egyptian young man the art of photography. All the different languages were spoken especially in Manshieh district.



Elite Restaurant & Café



Cinema Metro



Italian Charity Ball, 1955

The Changing Times

"That life is over. It will never return. It was a mythical Alexandria. The circumstances that led to its rise no longer exist in the world."

Omar Koreich

The publication closes with the section "The Changing Times" in which interviewees recall the political and social events that had great influence on their lives, and Alexandria as a whole. Contributors describe certain incidences they experienced during World War II, such as taking Italians to internment camps, street bombardments and the fleeing of foreigners whose countries were not allied with Germany. According to Egyptian contributor Omar Koreich, "The decline of Alexandrian cosmopolitanism began with World War II." Further in this section, following events such as 1952 Revolution, 1956 War and nationalizations of 1960s, interviewees portray mixed emotions, moments of fright, as well

as patriotic fascination towards the country and regret of almost losing the cosmopolitan existence. The Egyptian contributor Asma El Bakrai sadly vividly pictured her old French friend Sabine Couturier "I can still see her coming to the classroom saying goodbye to each one before leaving the country... there was a real wave of people leaving the country, that was quite terrible".



Sofitel Hotel



Muhammad Ali Club, now the Creativity Center

Translation of the New Real-time Social Media*

Dina Elmahdy

Throughout the twentieth century, language boundaries persist in creating a barrier to broaden distribution of content and knowledge. The Internet remains divided by language, with users of most social media sites largely interacting only with those from similar linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As more of the world comes online, the urge for viable interaction online will be even more compelling, yet critical.

The drastic increase in international interaction and population shift resulting from globalization, as well as the dramatic growth of noticeably multicultural communities—not to mention the intercontinental connections and cooperation both evidenced and compelled by events such as recent revolutionary movements in the Arab world, or the current global economic crisis—together mean that questions about integration, distinction, and identity have never been more current in our world than they are today. In this global context of intercultural negotiation and exchange, those questions are like a call for us to look more closely at translation, and to consider the broader scope of what it has to offer

to modern discussions of identity and its formation.

At the present time, the mass media played a fundamental constitutive role in the construction of the public opinion in liberal democracies. Both print and electronic media are seen as a critical watchdog over the political regime, as well as a major platform for translating the mobilization of social movements into salient, and ultimately actionable, political statements.

Revolutions in the Arab world have renewed and repolarized debates over the role of the Internet in mobilizations for political and social change. The new forms of media, the new real-time social media, are considered to have been useful tools in mobilizing and organizing protests—providing alternative channels of communication in a situation where mass media was largely controlled by the regime. The communications shutdown in Egypt neither stopped the protests, nor prevented the protesters from communicating with the outside world. Even during the days when the Internet and phone lines were cut, Bluetooth allowed the protesters in Tahrir Square to exchange messages.

* This article is based on the third cycle of The House of Translation Workshop "Translation and New Media" delivered by Ed Bice, CEO of Meedan, 12–18 February 2013, at the American University in Cairo, Egypt.



Having played a role that has drawn admiration or rejection from the international society, the new forms of media have augmented the practice of translation and promoted the role of translators—opening up a vast area of exciting comparative work across the boundaries of the multitude of languages available on the Internet.

Technology can facilitate mutual understanding across cultures and continents through translation; however, in spite of great advances in machine translation and the debate over the viability of Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT), language barriers continue to prevent broader, more networked discourse. Moreover, events of international importance, such as the current uprisings in the Arab world, often trigger a flurry of responses from a wide variety of users in multiple languages, yet most of these conversations and trending topics remain soloed in their own linguistic worlds. The new real-time social translation, therefore, has become compelling, yet challenging.

Nowadays, the new media can provide a much-needed bridge, and is designed to facilitate the new kinds of translation that are occurring on the real-time social media websites. For the highly connected Egyptian diaspora, Twitter was a relevant tool and the perfect forum for political satire and Internet

memes, in which users capture the moment in 140 characters or less. Statistics speak for themselves: 1.5 million Egypt-related tweets in the first week of the 25 January Revolution alone. At present, many activists follow tweets from within Egypt, translate and retweet/share to reach non-Arabic speakers in their network of press contacts, and wider audiences via Twitter or Facebook, thus performing a real-time translation which has inspired worldwide translations of the ongoing uprisings to demand change. At other times, they would intervene to offer online comments and critiques of coverage of events in Egypt in the global media, correcting misrepresentations and adding missing contextual information.

According to Ed Bice, Chief Executive Officer of the Meedan, a social technology non-governmental organization, the new social translation projects aim to increase the online exchange of media and dialogue between speakers of multitude languages on the Internet, and encourage the creation of new communities around interest areas that might be driven by keywords, hashtags, events, or individuals. These projects are designed to streamline the process of creating, requesting and reviewing real-time translations across the multitude of languages available on the Internet, from

Arabic to Mandarin to Spanish to English, and beyond.

To him, in our social media era, the role of translators is set to evolve just as dramatically as is the role of the author/journalist. Social media translators have to comprehend the anatomy of tweets and conform to the rules of translating tweets.

The Anatomy of an Original Tweet

- 1- If a tweet contains the letters (RT) then it is a Retweeted Tweet. Sometimes a comment is added to a retweet. In this case the structure of the tweet will be as follows: "Avatar/ twitter name/ user name [Comment] RT @username [original text]"
- 2- If the tweet is a reply, the tweet starts with the avatar of the one who is replying, then his/her twitter name, followed by the username of the person who wrote the original tweet preceded by @.

The Anatomy of a Translated Tweet

Rules for Translating Tweets

- 1- If you find a tweet that you believe is worth translation, click 'reply' to the tweet
- 2- In the reply field start with the initials 'TT', then translate the original tweet.
- 3- Begin and end your translation in quotation marks, for example TT "Meeting: In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local....".
- 4- Include (but do not translate) the original hashtags from the tweet. Usually hashtags are not translated but if you have to, you can add the translation between brackets following the original hashtag.
- 5- If you run out of space, use the ellipsis (...) and formality of 1/2 at the end of the first tweet, i.e. Tweet 1 of 2, for example: TT "Meeting: In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local...." 1/2 @BA_News_Events.

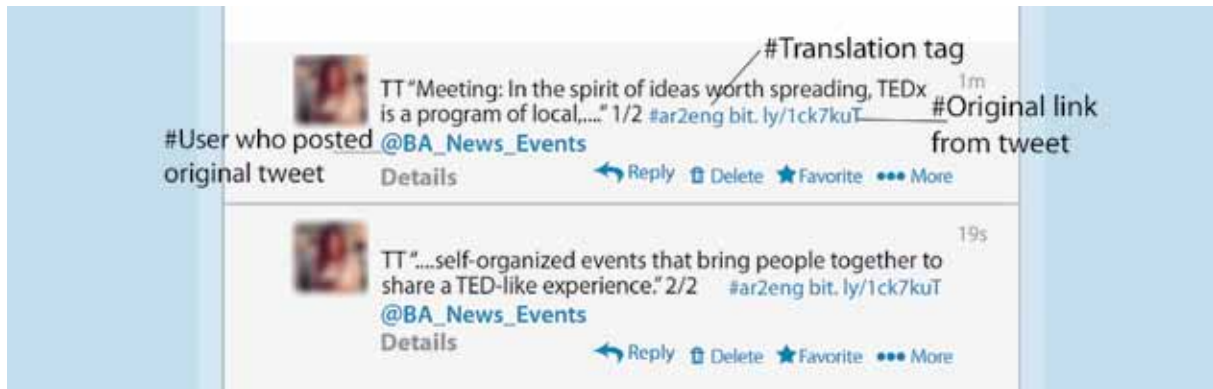
Then hit reply and begin the next portion of the translation, as follows:

TT "...self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience." 2/2 @BA_News_Events

- 6- Include shortlinks used in the original tweet. Use <http://bit.ly/> if needed to create a shortlink from a full length URL.



Pic. 1: The Anatomy of an Original Tweet



Pic. 2: The Anatomy of a Translated Tweet

- 7- Add the translation hashtag after the translated text, for example #ar2en or #en2ar.
- 8- Bring all punctuation marks and structure forward. Hyphens, periods and colons are the most used punctuation marks in tweets.
- 9- Use a spelling checker: If you find a spelling mistake in the original tweet, make sure whether it is used intentionally or unintentionally. If the word is misspelled intentionally, then leave it; otherwise correct the spelling mistake to avoid confusion.
- 10- If the original tweet contains a musical or poetic structure, the best translation should render a rhythmic treatment of the original, then add an annotation for further explanation.
- 11- If the tweet is ambiguous, the translator is not required to provide explanation.
- 12- Adding a glossary is essential when translating tweets.
- 13- Add original link from tweet, then the username.
- 14- Add @ before the username, leaving no spaces between the two. Usernames should not be translated, but if you have to, write the translation between brackets, for example @BA_News_Events (أخبار_فعاليات_مكتبة الإسكندرية @)

As the debate over the viability of machine versus human translation exists, and more of the world comes online, the

language barriers continue to prevent more networked discourse, and more conversations and trending topics about integration, distinction, and identity on the new social media websites remain soloed in their own linguistic worlds. Thus, the urge for new social real-time media translation has become more challenging and compelling—encouraging the increase in the range of voices that dialogue together and inspiring worldwide translations of ongoing uprisings in the Arab world. These new forms of media augment the practice of translation and promote the role of translators—increasing the online exchange of media and dialogue between speakers of multitude languages on the Internet, and encouraging the creation of new communities around interest areas that might be driven by keywords, hashtags, events, or individuals.



Ethnographic Research of Space and Place in Alexandria

Senni Jyrkiäinen*

This article is a description of ethnographic research in urban environment. The paper is related to my PhD research on Youth Culture in the City of Alexandria. My focus lies on middle-class Muslim youth who are active users of city space and consumers of new technologies. In my ongoing research, I study some social practices of the youth in virtual and urban spaces. This paper addresses the following topics and questions: What is ethnographic research? How can spaces and places be studied by applying ethnographic methods?

First, I shall handle the question of ethnography. Since Bronislaw Malinowski, anthropologists have carried out fieldwork in order to interpret cultures and social life, and to understand "the native's point of view". In the field, anthropologists are participant observers who attend the events they study. Anthropologists spend often at least one year with the local community in order to familiarize themselves thoroughly with the phenomenon they study. Meyer Fortes (1953: 145), a prominent South Africa-born anthropologist, has proclaimed that "[g]ood ethnography is both a continuous test of existing hypotheses and continuously creative of theory and technique (...)".

In my PhD, ethnography provides the basis for all my arguments. In the field I conduct participant observation and interviews in order to gain a sense of the experiences and thoughts of the youth. The spatial aspect is central in my study, and thus, I shall next

discuss the anthropology of space and place. In my research, I try to understand how young people perceive their home city, and how they use urban spaces.

In my research, I use Michel de Certeau's definitions of space and place. De Certeau's definition of place is very particular, and can be understood only in conjunction with the concept of space. According to de Certeau, a place entails an indication of stability, whereas a space is based on mobile elements: directions, velocities and time variables. By place, de Certeau refers to an immediate construction of positions. Thus, a place, can be understood as the order that arranges the coexistence of elements.

In conceptualizing the analysis of spatiality, de Certeau approaches space through mobility. By situating acts to their context and by examining dimensions and orientation, it is possible to observe how people participate in structuring space. The "theory of everyday practices, of lived space" is constructed from walking and other spatializing operations. For de Certeau, space is the outcome of human actions that operations such as orientating, situating and temporalizing produce. In the de Certeauan sense, "space is a practiced place"; that people move in places, convert them into spaces.

The idea that I find so interesting is the argument that public space comes into existence along with operations. Through the de Certeauan method of walking, I

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In June 2013, two workshops entitled "Arab Youth Culture in Flux" and "The transformational Power of Social Media" were held at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

explore Alexandrian spaces, and explore the meanings that young people provide to environment. In my view, landscapes are not meaningful as such, but rather as sites of action. In my research, I use the term "mobility" in depicting the transformation of place into space. By mobility I mean physical and social movement within space, between various places.

In my PhD research I try to view the developments of public space in Egypt. I am interested in studying how the practices of the youth are seen by the surrounding society. In her article about consumer culture and the reshaping of Egyptian public space, Mona Abaza (2001: 118) has interestingly pointed out that "the Islamization of public space in the 1990s coincides with survival strategies taking the form of a 'relaxation of norms' among youth, within an Islamic frame of reference". While many things, as Islamic veils and religious songs in public spaces may signal the revival of religious values, practices such as mixed-gender socialising have become popular in major Egyptian cities. At the same time, Internet, mobile phones and satellite television have offered a new medium through which people can connect and communicate easily as Frances S. Hasso has argued.

As in any major city, social media and mobile phones facilitate interaction between young women and men, and make socializing easier in Alexandria. Along with university campuses, cafés

and social clubs, for instance, Facebook and chatrooms are nowadays potential meeting places for the urban middle-class youth. Modern technologies belong to the bourgeois lifestyle, and they work as status markers for young adults. Thus, the usage of new technologies can be seen as part of the urban consumer culture.

Early anthropologists as Malinowski conducted their research in small-scale communities and Stateless societies. Anthropology has come a long way from its

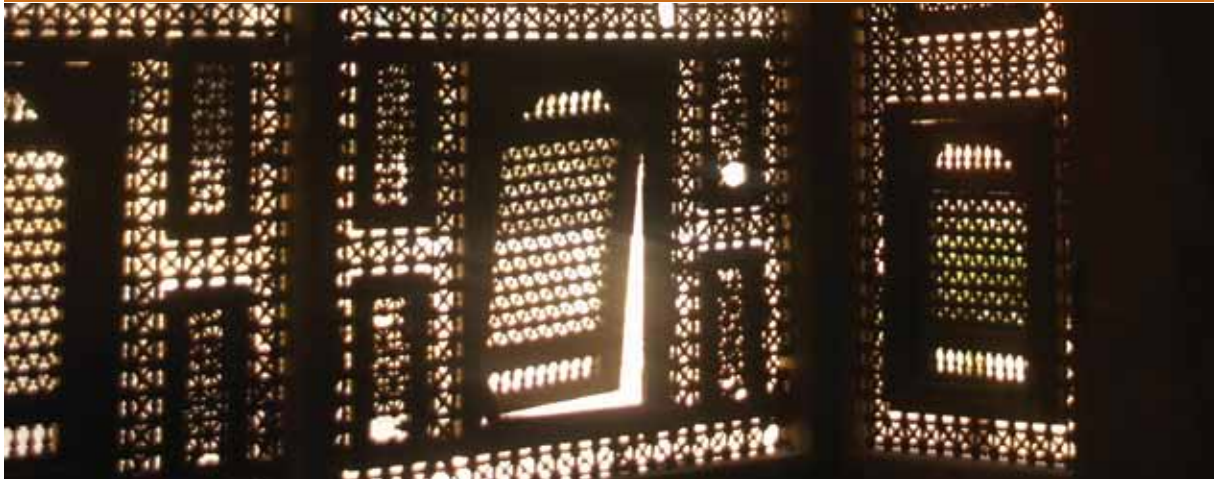
anti-urban origins. Anthropology of urban spaces is still a relatively new and developing field and carrying out ethnographic research in virtual spaces is an even more recent field. Indeed, the study of modern city lifestyles, where the usage of new technologies plays a crucial role, challenges anthropologists methodologically. My work in progress tries to fill in this gap. Following in the footsteps of early anthropologists but in new kinds of spaces, can hopefully highlight the voice and the vision of the urban youth.

Alexandria is full of cafes that gather young women and men, and offer free Wi-Fi as well



Residential Architecture in Islamic Civilization

Khaled Azab*



The subject of Islamic residential architecture is closely related to Islamic teachings on family life and lifestyle, as the family is considered the nucleus of society. In Islam, the home privacy is highly respected, and no one is allowed to violate this privacy by peeking at the house interior or its inhabitants. Allah decreed the sanctity of the home and warned against its violation, thus conferring much respect on the abode, not so much for its architectural value as for the people inhabiting it. From an Islamic perspective, the home is a social unit where the structure cannot be dissociated from the family living inside it. In fact, family needs, as they were addressed in Islam, were the factor determining the design of a house. The house was built from inside out, and not the other way around. The family defined its housing needs with the help of the constructor and according to its financial means. This entailed an actual participatory approach involving the house owner and the architect. In general, houses in Islamic architecture appeared simple, and similar in design, and were often white-washed in a way much similar to the houses in Granada.

Allah (SWT) decrees that permission be sought before entering a house. For such purpose, the wooden doors of old houses were fitted with a knocker. This knocker was often metal, and the most simple in design consisted of a metal piece on which a wooden device was mounted, the two connected to the door with a flexible joint. The visitor uses the knocker to tap on the door three times. If permission to enter the house is not granted, the visitor leaves.

In most old houses, the entrance hallway is laid out at a 90 degree slant to prevent



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outsiders from seeing into the interior of the house and its inhabitants when the doors are open. Slanted entrances were extensively used in houses in Fustat and Baghdad.

The entrance often leads into a courtyard in the center of the house. The inner courtyard, considered the main activity hub of the house, serves many purposes, namely:

Climate modification: This consists of obtaining cooler temperatures within the courtyard. It is achieved through the shade cast by the courtyard's opposing walls and the existence of water features which favor humidification (fountains) and therefore a drop in temperature, and the reflection of part of the sunrays, thus reducing the absorption of heat. The presence of foliage is also a factor in ensuring climate mildness. In order to provide proper ventilation while preventing pollution, the courtyard, with its cool temperature serves as a high pressure environment, while the outside (street) provides as an outlet area (low pressure).



The courtyard also plays an important role in trapping the cool air which seeps during the night through the thick walls and rooftops. This allows a minimal use of external windows, and through the basement passageways which slowly absorb heat and humidity. Furthermore, and as the house is encased on three sides by neighboring houses, its exposure to sunrays is tangibly reduced.

Tranquility: Noise levels in modern cities are certainly beginning to threaten the psychological serenity and well-being of the population. The most important source of noise is the street which is crisscrossed by tremendous numbers of diverse vehicles which make a liberal use of annoying horns. Even in countries where the use of horns is banned, the large number of engines relying on air for their cooling has become in itself a source of disturbance. About 70% of the noise filters into the houses through the openings facing the street. Naturally, in the case of courtyard houses where openings into the exterior are reduced to the minimum, the noise penetration will occur in far lesser extents.

Privacy: The desire for privacy is one of the main motivations behind the choice of the courtyard as a crucial element in Islamic house planning. The in-depth analysis of the social aspects of this planning reveals that the courtyard plays a vital role as the focal point of the family's social interactions. It sets the scene for weaving family bonds, and usually hosts various social activities, all the while preserving total privacy.

House planning in Islamic architecture evolved with time, allowing us to observe the clear progression of these houses at the various phases they passed through. The various elements of this planning were conceived according to an Islamic vision. Special areas were dedicated to the male guests. These guest-destined areas were often set apart from the remaining units of the house and were known as the Salamlek.

In the houses of Ar-Rasheed, a town situated north of Egypt, the first floor was usually

reserved for guests. The staircase leading to the guest quarters came to an end on the landing of the second floor, and another staircase started from somewhere inside the second floor and other floors of the house. This reflected a desire to isolate the various floors of the house from the guest quarters. When food needed to be served to the guests in the upper guestrooms, a private staircase located in one of the rooms was used. Once the table was fully laid, the guest was ushered into the room where he would see the ready platters without having an inkling as to where the food had come from. In Ar-Rasheed, another interesting innovation used was the serving cupboard. This was a revolving cupboard fitted into the wall and made up of two shelves on which the food platters were placed. The cupboard was then rotated from the outside into the guest quarters where the house master presents the food set on the shelves to his guests. This ingenious system was used in two houses of Ar-Rasheed, namely the houses of Baqrawli and Gibri. The system was also used in the West in restaurants and hotels to isolate the kitchen from the dining area. The idea was imitated without realizing that it was rooted in the Arab cultural heritage.

Muslims have always been anxious to provide all comfort to their guests, especially the spiritual one. To provide such comfort, old Yemenite houses always contained an architectural element known as the *Mufraj*, a terrace on the roof of the house for guests, meetings and leisure. The terrace usually provided a view of the whole town and its scenic surroundings, and was also called the *mandar* or *mandara*. One specific feature of this place is the large windows which provide the guests with the unhindered visual pleasure of the natural scenery. The *Mufraj* is also referred to as the Large Room because it happens to be the largest room in the house. However, the *Mufraj* is not always built in the upper levels of the house. Sometimes it is an independent pavilion in the garden, overlooking a fountain and surrounded by flowery shrubs and trees.

Emirati houses, particularly those of wealthy people, have a similar element represented in the *Majlis*, a space dedicated to receiving people with two doors, one opening onto the street and the other leading into the house.

The Muslim builds his house in order to live in it with his extended family. With this in mind, the house structure usually allows for horizontal and vertical expansion to accommodate increasing needs that may arise from the marriage of one of the sons or new births, and as allowed by the topographic nature of the flat or mountainous landscape. Islamic houses were characterized by the structure's excellent design functionality. Building materials were derived from the surrounding environment, the dry mud in the deltas of rivers and riverbanks, ceilings made from palm branches, or domes from gypsum with marvelous yet simple arches which trap the internal cooling of the house and keep the scorching heat by reflecting sunrays outside, from the coral reefs of the seas, and from silt deposits, while palm trees or wood provide the roofing materials. In mountainous environments, houses were built from rock and were multi-storeyed to counterbalance the lack of space and meet the various and growing needs of the Muslim household for guests, children, spaces for performing religious rites, and for leisure and relaxing in the moonlight under the sky's canopy. In environments that combined mountains and flatlands, the houses were large and horizontally laid out, the walls were from rock and mud, and the ceilings were from palm trunks.

The façades of Muslim houses are in most cases exquisitely decorated. However, we will linger at the houses in Sanaa where the façades are so exquisite that one believes them to be the artwork of creative craftsmen. Unlike the façades of houses in other parts of the Islamic world, façades of houses in Sanaa are similar. This similarity is owed to the fact that these façades serve an architectural and artistic function that

truly reflects the need they were created to fulfil. No matter how myriad, the shape and diameter of window openings truly express at all times the need for which they were made. The end result is an extraordinary aesthetic display with an explosion of designs and decorations. The façades of Sanaa houses have the peculiarity of false windows which are painted on to look real, particularly in the floors housing female members of the household. Builders have resorted to this subterfuge to preserve the perfect and beautiful symmetry between the parts of the façade windows and those that do not. Façades in Sanaa present a wonderful amalgam of shapes with small, large, rectangular and circular windows fashioned with a pleasant spontaneity and naivety. The end result is a beautiful display free from dull repetition or disharmony. Above these windows one often sees wooden overhangs

shading the window apertures. These are locally known as *Kunna* and are fastened onto wooden bars affixed to the walls. These canopies protect the adorned windows from rainwater which may spoil them, and add further beauty to façades that are already lavish with geometric, animal and floral patterns.

Inscriptions are also a common feature in Islamic houses. Muslim households paid great attention to another element, namely the rights of their neighbors. This concern became manifest very early in their history.

The patterns of Islamic houses are numerous. We see them in Samarqand, Sanaa, Fez, Ispahan, Baghdad and Cordoba. They are rich with the jewels of Islamic architecture, and stand proud as representatives of the heritage of our Islamic Ummah.



WORDS TO REMEMBER

“Until the great mass of the people shall be filled with the sense of responsibility for each other’s welfare, social justice can never be attained.”

— **Helen Keller**

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

— **Martin Luther King, Jr.**

“All the great things are simple, and many can be expressed in a single word: freedom, justice, honor, duty, mercy, hope.”

— **Winston Churchill**

“There is a higher court than courts of justice and that is the court of conscience. It supersedes all other courts.”

— **Mahatma Gandhi**

“I’m for truth, no matter who tells it. I’m for justice, no matter who it’s for or against.”

— **Malcolm X**

“Knowledge without justice ought to be called cunning rather than wisdom.”

— **Plato**

“Imagination disposes of everything; it creates beauty, justice, and happiness, which are everything in this world.”

— **Blaise Pascal**

“If we do not maintain justice, justice will not maintain us.”

— **Francis Bacon**

“Justice is my being allowed to do whatever I like. Injustice is whatever prevents my doing so.”

— **Samuel Butler Quotes**

“In the rush for justice it is important not to lose sight of principles the country holds dear.”

— **Kofi Annan**