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Heritage and Acquisition in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina
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On behalf of **Bibliotheca Alexandrina**, I would like to express my great pleasure in being part of this significant event which meets today's urging need for exchanging views and communication with others. Please allow me to convey our director, **Prof. Ismail SeragEldin**'s regards, who was keen on taking part in this important conference. I also seize this opportunity, to extend my deepest thanks for the kind hospitality, and the warmth with which I have been received. According to the programme set, I shall make Highlights on Heritage Revival and the Acquisition Policy of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, in which I am the director of the Manuscripts and Acquisition Departments; a full description of them is available on our website www.bibalex.org , as well as in this brochure - I have copies here if any of you wish to have one.

As we know, the new Bibliotheca Alexandrina is a revival of the ancient library that has long captured the imagination of mankind .. Today, this dream has come to reality. Now in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, we try to simulate the contribution of the ancient library which had, in turn, brought the preceding Egyptian and Greek heritage back to life, and presented this heritage in a new form, one that survived through the years. Two important examples are: the accredited text of the 'Illiad' & the 'Odyssey', and selected works of Galen known as "Alexandrians' Collection".

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heritage revival using the latest hi-tech, drawing on our long experience in this field. Springing from this idea, we have issued several publications, mixing traditional approaches of heritage revival – such as manuscripts catalogues – with modern technology applications which will shortly be displayed in my presentation.

*W*ithin the framework of this combination, the Bibliotheca has adopted other projects such as multilingual publishing, through which we seek to undergo a process of acculturation with the European World, since European culture is the closest to ours. In the course of this project, a unique manuscript by the eminent scientist Ibn al-Haytham, entitled ‘The Trace on the Moon’s Face’, has been published in four languages. The latest of our publications entitled “Selected Rarities of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina”, is issued in six languages – five of which are European languages. Further to our efforts in this long-term task, the BA will publish two more books in the coming few weeks, entitled: “An Introduction to Sufism” by al-Sulamiy and “A Treatise on Gout” by Rhazes.

*M*eanwhile, an ambitious acquisition policy runs parallel to heritage revival activities. The Bibliotheca’s content is enriched by three means: Purchase, Donation, and Exchange. The main files of acquisition are: Ancient Egypt, the Ancient Library of Alexandria, the City of Alexandria, Mediterranean Cultures, and History of Sciences. In addition, we have sub-files such as information sources related to Africa, fine arts, and periodicals. In all these files we try to cover all information media; printed matter, CDs, microfilms, microfiche, and other media.

*W*e are also interested in cyclopedias, dictionaries, masterpieces of human culture, multimedia productions, as well as internet facilities. So far we have taken great steps towards keeping the Bibliotheca up-to-date with the new information age; last month we have installed the internet archive, which is a huge project that would preserve the memory of the web. It should be mentioned that we have several ‘huge’ databases such as Silver Platter, Gale Group databank, Chemical Abstract, EMBase, etc. Our acquisition policy also aims at meeting the needs of its specialized libraries for children, young people, music, blind people, and businessmen.

*D*onations are an important acquisition source through which the Bibliotheca gets very old publications, that otherwise would not be available by purchase or exchange.

Our donations content has now amounted to 130.000 books, and 100.000 more books are underway. A celebration is held regularly (every 3 or 5 months) in honour of the donators, where they receive a shield as an acknowledgement of their contributions. on this occasion, we issue a brochure containing information about the donors and samples of their donations.

*E*xchange, on the other hand, is a kind of agreement or contract made, without any financial dealings, between the BA and the other libraries.

*A*lso, acquisition is coupled with heritage revival in three specialized halls for postgraduate scholars, namely: the Microfilm & Microfiche Hall, Rare Books Hall, and the Manuscripts Hall. These halls surround the Manuscripts Museum in which a collection of the rarest manuscripts and books in the world are displayed in show cases donated by the Italian Government. Some of these rarities were written in 368 H. (978 AD) such as “al-Jāmi‘ al-Sahīh” which is the oldest manuscript in the Bibliotheca. Others were printed in 1575 AD such as: “the History of Germany-Saxonia” by Albert Krantz and “the History of His Own Time” by Gilbert Burnet.

*A*s the Bibliotheca Alexandrina is not yet open to the public, it remains to be said that this is just a start, that will be followed by several acculturation activities, which will open new horizons for close cooperation and interchange between cultures. Hence, we expect the European community to support the BA in its mission to enhance the advancement of human knowledge and preservation of heritage. it goes without saying that we also have answers to questions related to the rise and renaissance of European civilization, thus it is a two-way road.

*F*inally, I have to say that the BA is not just a library, but also a cultural complex containing library services, museums, cultural activities, exhibitions, etc. Therefore, it is rather a bridge linking between different cultures and nations.

*N*ow, you are invited to a brief presentation of the latest product of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

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