

Hellenistic Alexandria

Celebrating 24 Centuries

Papers presented at the conference held on December 13–15 2017
at Acropolis Museum, Athens

edited by

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Opening of Hellenistic Alexandria Conference

Wednesday 13 December 2017

Address by Mrs Marianna V. Vardinoyannis

UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, President of *Marianna V. Vardinoyannis Foundation*,
Member of the Advisory Board of the *Bibliotheca Alexandrina*

Your Excellency,
Your Beatitude,
Ladies and gentlemen,

We are particularly honoured and moved to welcome you to this symbolic venue at the Acropolis Museum on the occasion of the 'Hellenistic Alexandria: Celebrating 24 Centuries' International Conference.

This day is a great moment for our Foundation, as we are embarking on an initiative of national significance on which we have been working for several months, culminating with this conference. Its aim is to draw the attention of researchers and the public to the Hellenistic world, particularly to Hellenistic Alexandria and its importance to global civilisation.

The idea for the conference was enthusiastically received by His Excellency, the President of the Hellenic Republic, Mr Prokopios Pavlopoulos, from the very first moment we brought it to him about two years ago. The idea is rooted in the heart of our Foundation's mission, which incorporates the values of culture, science and education and highlights the long friendship and historical ties that link Greece and Egypt.

Since Alexander the Great founded Alexandria in 331 BC, and with the establishment of the Ancient Library in the 3rd century BC under the patronage of Ptolemy I, to collect all the knowledge of the known world under one roof, this place has been associated with some of the greatest achievements in knowledge and culture, many of which continue to inspire awe in us all. This was because Ptolemy's vision became reality and his successors followed his example. With the contribution of ancient Greece, all the sciences flourished and the most important writings of the ancient world found a place in the Ancient Library.

The famed Pharos of Alexandria, one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world, remains to this day its immortal symbol, which Strabo prophetically described as a mirror that reflected the light dozens of kilometres away. This light of the Hellenistic world, Hellenistic Alexandria, inspired generation after generation of scholars and scientists to reach us – 24 centuries later – here in Greece, where we respectfully pay homage to the grandeur of this massive legacy handed down to humanity. It played a role in all areas of learning, offering all that was great in human thought, modern science, culture and civilisation.

In the course of history, we are the generation that was fortunate to witness twenty-seven years ago in 1990, the historic meeting that took place in Aswan, Egypt, where the Declaration for the Revival of the Ancient Library of Alexandria was signed. With UNESCO at the helm of this undertaking, the first steps were taken to implement one of the greatest achievements in the history of the modern world. In the fifteen years of its operation, the Library of Alexandria – the *Bibliotheca Alexandrina* – has become a new beacon of knowledge for the entire planet. This constitutes a major contribution on the part of the Egyptian State to humanity and enjoys the complete support of H. E. the President of Egypt, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. And we are truly grateful.

Since joining the *Bibliotheca Alexandrina*'s first Board of Trustees, the work I follow and in which I participate makes me feel truly proud, not just as a Greek, but as a citizen of the world whose visions, discoveries, explorations and expressions found refuge in this colossal undertaking.

We wanted the light of the golden pages of the Hellenistic period and the historical ties between these two peoples to shine by establishing and funding the 'Alexandria Centre of Hellenistic Studies' at the *Bibliotheca Alexandrina* in 2008. Since that time, our Foundation, working through the Centre, has enabled students from all over the world

to carry out undergraduate and postgraduate studies in history, literature, arts, archaeology, architecture and philosophy. At the same time, we have staged numerous events, lectures and seminars about the Library. Today's conference is a continuation of that work, as we seek to add another page in our partnership with the Library with an event of a commemorative as well as an interdisciplinary nature.

In preparing for this conference, we joined forces with the Alexandria Centre for Hellenistic Studies at Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the Acropolis Museum and the Mariolopoulos-Kanaginis Foundation for the Environmental Sciences, and invited distinguished scientists specialising in Hellenistic Alexandria. We are honoured that they are taking part in the conference, as they focus on the significance of the extraordinarily pioneering ideas of the Hellenistic years and the innovative climate prevalent of that era. The conference will address historic, as well as cultural and scientific issues, highlighting the impact of Hellenistic ideas on philosophy, art and modern science.

I would like to express my deepest thanks to H. E. the President of the Republic, Mr Prokopios Pavlopoulos, who placed the conference under his auspices, supporting it from the very first moment and who honours us today with his presence and his keynote address. His support of our effort was priceless; his personal contribution to crystallizing the philosophy of the conference invaluable; and his participation in the event reaffirms the national dimension of the undertaking with which he entrusted us.

I would like to express my sincerest thanks and highest respect for His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, for being here with us today and for his blessing of our every step. His participation in our conference is a great honour for us and his contribution is valuable and so symbolic. The Patriarchate of Alexandria, founded by the Apostle and Evangelist Mark in AD 43, has a history in Egypt and Africa dating back 2,000 years, with a rich intellectual legacy, important missionary work and critical humanitarian activity. It is a major chapter in the history of Alexandria and is now represented by His Beatitude.

I would also like to give special thanks to the new Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Dr Mostafa el Feki. It is an honour and joy to welcome him to Greece and to have worked with him to stage this conference. I would like to wish him every success in this important mission he has undertaken at the Library and in achieving his visions. He can rest assured we will be his allies and enthusiastic supporters in this endeavour.

I want to extend a big 'thank you' to our co-organisers:

the Mariolopoulos-Kanaginis Foundation and its president, Professor Christos Zerefos, who, despite his heavy schedule and obligations abroad all these months, tirelessly headed our Organising Committee with enthusiasm and his well-known love for the sciences of antiquity, and was the soul of the organisational effort. And, the Acropolis Museum and its president, Professor Dimitrios Pandermais, who has once again embraced one of our initiatives and is hosting it in this magnificent museum, while also taking part in the conference with his extensive knowledge.

I would like to thank all of those attending the conference and taking part with their talks, which will bring Hellenistic Alexandria to life for us. It is our special privilege to welcome them to Athens and share with them this undertaking, which we intend to make internationally known by publishing the proceedings.

A special thanks to the special members of the conference Organising Committee for their help in staging it and their valuable support for our work.

I thank you all from the bottom of my heart for being here with us today and honouring us with your presence, providing even greater impetus to our efforts and contributing in this way to their success.

According to the legend reported by Plutarch, Homer appeared in Alexander the Great's dream and led him to discover this blessed land – Pharos Island, in the port of Alexandria. With the certainty I feel that the legend is true, I would like to share with you in closing my deepest belief that Hellenistic Alexandria will continue to light our course and that the new Library of Alexandria will continue to serve as a depository for knowledge from time immemorial to the infinite future.

Thank you!

Address by the Honorable Dr Mostafa El Feki

Director of Bibliotheca Alexandrina

Your Excellency, The President of the Republic of Greece
Your Beatitude, the respected and blessed Patriarch of Alexandria and all Africa,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives my colleagues and myself great pleasure to attend this important occasion in your beloved city of Athens, the capital of Greece.

While listening to all these speeches now, I couldn't help but feel the power of our history, and to appreciate that we all come from the same stock.

As history shows and geography proves, we are very close to each other. Greece and Egypt have always been united together. Our cosmopolitan Alexandria is the symbol of that. As you know it was founded by Alexander the Great, his successors carried on his message of civilization, and built up the city as we see it now.

I feel that during these days, whenever we use the terms 'globalization' and 'clash of civilizations', we should be reminded of the historical links between two nations like Greece and Egypt.

We always sense that the dialogue of civilizations, which is a central pillar in our quest for stronger collaboration and peace, was established through the Mediterranean centuries ago.

On behalf of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, which is a representation of the cooperation between our two countries, I take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Marianna Vardinoyannis and her association for their support and to the Greek people as a whole.

At the end of the day, and because we believe in the message of the common civilization, we cannot talk about Alexandria without referring to the Greek contribution made towards its establishment and its decades of glory.

Now, I deeply sense the cosmopolitan spirit of this city, which has embraced Greeks and other nations and populations, such as Italians, Armenians, Jews, and so many others.

I firmly believe that the city will never gain back its identity and image unless those people who have left would come back home, and they are most welcome. As you know, human civilization does not believe in national or other barriers among humankind.

We always feel that all of you are welcome to claim back the sunny days we used to have on the land of this glorious city.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of our President, His Excellency President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and his government, I would like to convey Egypt's strong belief in the importance of our bilateral and historic relations, in the appreciation of how close we, the Egyptians, are to Greeks. I have always perceived that cooperation between our two countries as endless. In fact, we have never actually faced a serious dilemma in Egyptian-Greek relations throughout history. On the contrary, we have been supported by you on certain occasions, such as in the events that preceded the nationalization of the Suez Canal. It is definitely an extension of the common history between our two cultures.

Today, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (The Library of Alexandria) is dedicated to working towards further strengthening these bonds of friendship. In this context, it is an honour to celebrate with you all '24 Centuries of Hellenistic Alexandria', which is the embodiment of a melting-pot of two nations.

Thank you, Mr President, and thank you all. I assure you that we will do our best to continue the cooperation between our institution and your distinguished country. Again, Thank you and I wish you all great success.

Address by Professor Ashraf Farrag

His Excellency, the President of the Hellenic Republic, Mr Prokopios Pavlopoulos
Mrs. Marianna Vardinoyannis, Goodwill ambassador of UNESCO, founder and president of the Marianna Vardinoyannis Foundation
Diplomat and political thinker, the Hon. Prof. Mostapha El Fekki, Director of the Library of Alexandria
Professor Dimitrios Pandermalis, President of the Acropolis Museum
Professor Christos Zerefos, The Academy of Athens

Ladies and Gentlemen ... Good Evening ...

It is my pleasure to talk to you tonight on behalf of Professor Essam El Kordy, President of Alexandria University, who apologises for not being able to attend Athens tonight due to unforeseen circumstances requiring his staying in Egypt. I convey to you his greetings and gratitude for the kind invitation to attend this very important conference and speak at the opening ceremony.

We are meeting today at this conference to celebrate together twenty-four centuries following the foundation of 'Hellenistic Alexandria', the cultural and scientific capital of the world. This unique model in human history that was a result of Egyptian-Hellenic (and Hellenic-Egyptian) cooperation since ancient times.

'Hellenistic Alexandria' emerged as a model for dialogue between civilizations, the mingling of cultures and knowledge, the science of East and West, in one source.

On the landscape of ancient Alexandria in the 3rd century BC, the dream of Alexander the Great was fulfilled, and from Alexandria began his great civilizational project to create a cosmopolitan city; a true global polis with a mixed universal population.

The result was a scion from which a cornucopia of knowledge emerged, with no similar example in the history of human thought; and the greatest boon from this scion was the ancient Library of Alexandria (Bibliotheca Alexandrina) and its Museum (Mouseion). This Museum, or the ancient University of Alexandria, was the offspring from the Library, as opposed to our modern times, whereby libraries derive from within universities.

The 'Mouseion', or the ancient university of Alexandria was the product of the great revolution in knowledge that took place in Alexandria in the 3rd century BC, and which was to become the destination of all the most famous scientists, thinkers and artists, induced there by King Suter from all over the world and encouraged to stay in Alexandria. This enlightened ruler provided them with all the comforts and placed in their hands everything they required to help them to think, create, invent, and innovate.

Suter, and then Philadilphos, devoted considerable resources to the acquisition of the most important and valuable books and documents. They also paid attention to science and scientists, allocating open budgets to thinkers and scientists to attend and work at the Museum. The accommodation included study rooms, offices, courtyards, roads, and gardens for the scientists and their students, all very equating to a modern university 'campus' environment. In addition, the Museum had a wonderful facilities and residential areas for the scientists and their families. It seems that all the costs were met for educating the children of the scientists, including their food and clothing.

As a result, 'Hellenistic Alexandria' was to become the cultural and scientific capital of the world without a rival. And thanks to the Library and its Museum, the era was one of progress, prosperity, invention, and innovation in all fields of knowledge and science.

Thus, we can see, Ladies and Gentlemen, that 'Hellenistic Alexandria' was a unique model of cooperation – Egyptian-Hellenic/Hellenic-Egyptian – a model for true dialogue between civilizations, and one which aims to promote peace and security among nations and peoples, and to fight ignorance and blind intolerance, to address radical thought and the shadow of terrorism.

Thank you very much.

Address by Professor Dimitrios Pandermalis

President of the Board of Directors, Acropolis Museum

Mr President of the Republic,

It was a great pleasure for the Board of Directors of the Acropolis Museum to accept the invitation of the 'Marianna Vardis Vardinoyannis Foundation' to host this conference, a conference about Alexandria, a celebrated city for which there is rich historical information but extremely limited archaeological evidence. Accordingly we welcome every new find and every new detail enthusiastically making this Conference all the more important for the field.

I would like to mention that in addition to the Museum's hosting of this significant event, we have also chosen to extend the Conference theme to our visitors: the video you enjoyed moments ago, is an Acropolis Museum production and will be shown to our thousands of visitors with its screening on the large video screen in our lobby up until Christmas. As is this Conference, the Museum is celebrating Alexandria. In this context I would also like to thank the filmmaker Costas Arvanitakis, for his cooperation and the intense work we undertook to produce the video, completing shoots within the 48 hours that we were in Alexandria. Of course there was considerably more work involved in producing the final product including the need to undertake on-site research about the correct interpretation of what we were saw in Alexandria, I won't tire you with many details, but I would like to mention two examples, which are interesting instances of Alexandria's art in the Hellenistic period.

Earlier you saw this mosaic floor (Figures 1 and 2). It consists of two pieces that belong to the same building. They were discovered in 1993, during the laying the foundations of Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Their quality is obviously



Figure 1

superb. They are most probably linked to the 'androns' (rooms for men) – at least this is what we concluded from the restoration we saw in the *Bibliotheca Alexandria* – and their subjects are very interesting: scenes from everyday life. The first offers a brief look into the *palaestra* in a scene that would have part of real life in Alexandria at the time. The bodies of the wrestlers are rendered in remarkable detail. One is black and the other is white, and all the features of their bodies are rendered with realism. Next to the wrestlers, is the basin where the wrestlers would wash after a fight.

The second part of the mosaic depicts a monumental image of a dog with particular characteristics. First of all, and most notable, is its intense gaze. The configuration of its snout is extremely interesting, and beside it there is an object, some sort of vessel, which the dog has probably knocked over. Several interpretations have been made about this object, but it is clearly a vessel with a special purpose that we have come upon in other findings. Coincidentally, we very recently had the opportunity to host two such vessels in the Acropolis Museum exhibition *The Oracle of Dodona*. One of those, which bore an inscription mentioning the *agonothetes Machatas Parthaios*, who hailed from a region in the northern part of Epirus, had been dedicated to the Oracle of Zeus in Dodona. Clearly the use of a similar vessel in a dedication to the Oracle indicates its specific significance for athletic contests. Examining the details of this find you observe that the handle is missing; however, restoration is possible by following the image depicted in the mosaic. The interpretation one might offer for this image is, of course, neither of a mythological nor of any other erudite nature. Once again, we have a depiction of an aspect of everyday life. It seems that the vessel in hand contained something that drew the dog's attention; the canine reached for it and, in doing so, knocked the vessel over. Hence its guilty sideways look towards the spectators. This is a living moment, an illustration capturing a moment of everyday life, and it is very characteristic of the art of Alexandria.



Figure 2

The second art work I would like to mention is this statuette of *Aphrodite* (Figures 3 and 4), an art work that was discovered in the greater region of Alexandria and seems to have been very popular in the ancient world – there are nine copies of it in Alexandria alone, while a study published in 1970 mentions the existence of 180 copies in all. Research has shown that the original, of which this is also a copy, dated from the Hellenistic era, while the one we see here dates from the late 2nd century AD. What is of particular interest is something that was discussed thoroughly in the research: of course, the statuette represents *Aphrodite*, but what is questioned is whether she is shown before or after taking her bath. Now, someone might ask: Does it matter? For purposes of interpretation, yes, it does.



Figure 3

whom we enjoyed an excellent collaboration. I would also like to mention that I was quite delighted and surprised: we've known each other for many years and I am aware that he is an expert in the natural sciences, but I had no idea that he is also a musician! (The composition you heard in the video was by Mr Zerefos.)

I would also like to thank the 'Marianna Vardis Vardinoyannis Foundation', the 'Mariolopoulos-Kanaginis Foundation', the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, and all my colleagues from Egypt, from Alexandria: Dr Mostafa El Feki, Dr Mohamed Kenawi, Mr George Kyriakos Mark, the architect Dr Mohamed Awad, and, of course, for the automaton you saw earlier, Prof. Tassios, who is with us, and Prof. Manolis Korres, who implemented the project.

Mr President, I think that the conference's success is a given. Your presence serves to show and underline the importance of this conference. And we all wish this conference all the best.

Thank you very much.



Figure 4

Look at Aphrodite's sandal. This particular copy of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina features a unique element: under the sandal. We can see a set of fingers. The fingers belong to a second Eros, of whom only the feet have survived and who is trying to help Aphrodite put on her sandal. This is a very attractive image, which affords the goddess even greater prominence in the eyes of the viewers of that time.

These art works are but a small sample of the urban art of Alexandria. Alexandria was in fact the first major urban centre of antiquity. It has been estimated that about one million people used to live there during the late Hellenistic years, and Alexandria was the first instance of an ancient city functioning on the basis of a model similar to that of an organised modern city.

I believe that such art works render the art of Alexandria particularly appealing; and I believe that it was not by coincidence that while the entire Roman Empire was divided into provinces under the Senate, Egypt and Alexandria became the personal property of the Emperor.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my colleague and academic Christos Zerefos, with

Why Hellenistic Alexandria?

Address by Professor Christos Zerefos

Academy of Athens

Your Excellency Mr President,
Your Beatitude Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa,

The selection of the Conference title by its organisers was based on two criteria. Firstly, on the Egyptian's sentiment and, secondly, on the great revolution in Sciences, Art and Letters which began in the Alexandria of the Ptolemies. Egyptians (Greeks from Egypt) remember the August moonlight that was worshipped as the goddess Isis, showering all Egypt, the Nile and the country's north coastline. They remember the biological luminescence on the coastal areas of Egypt with the diffuse underwater green light from the aquatic organisms there. They remember glorious times extolled by great poets, artists and music composers. Many of us remember our youth. However, we also remember, according to Lucio Russo, the forgotten revolution in sciences which, unfortunately, had the same fate as the Hellenism of the Diaspora.

After the death of Alexander the Great, the vast empire that he created was ruled by the dynasties of his three generals – Ptolemy, Seleucus and Antigonos. The Ptolemaic Dynasty, with Alexandria as its capital, ruled Egypt, Cyprus, Cyrenaica, Phoenicia and Palestine. The Seleucid Dynasty, with Antioch as its capital, ruled Syria, Asia Minor, Mesopotamia and Persia. And, finally, the Antigonid Dynasty ruled the Macedonian kingdom and certain cities of Greece. It is worth noting that the Greek Diaspora was also followed by the diaspora of Art and Science throughout the former empire of Alexander the Great. From Marseilles to Syracuse, in Rhodes to Bactria, Greek civilization, as well as the technology that had been developed, mixed with that of the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia and India. The culmination of the Hellenistic spirit that triggered the renaissance and enlightenment of Europe traces its roots in Alexandria. It was there that the first university was established, where arts, letters and sciences were worshipped in the renowned premises of the Muses, the Museum. The first director of the Museum was Demetrius of Phalerum, but it is unclear who the last one was, after whom the Museum's activities fell silent. Knowledge was then transferred to Antioch, from where, following the Arabic conquest, it moved to the West via Spain and was diffused through the Ottoman and Arabic worlds during the Middle Ages.

If Samos saw the birth of the Pythagorean Theorem in 5th century BC, Alexandria saw the birth of Geometry by Euclid, as well as stereometry of conical sections by Apollonius and Theon. It was in Alexandria that Statics and System Mechanics were begun by Archimedes. It was in Alexandria that automata sprang up, and Aristarchus' of Samos heliocentric Astronomy was spread. It was in Hellenistic Alexandria that Optics and Hydrodynamics were conceived by great scientists such as Archimedes, Euclid, Ctesibius, and many others. When the science of Optics was at its peak, there appeared one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Lighthouse of Alexandria, whose fame was due to its mirror transmission system of light over a great distance, from either the sun or fire. Unfortunately, the catastrophic earthquake of AD 365 and the efforts to repair the Lighthouse some 1,000 years after its construction eliminated every trace of the renowned mechanism, which was also a government secret, as shown by the lack of sources interpreting this scientific wonder at that period. The science of indeterminacy in mathematics by Diophantus, as well as Pappus' theories, were also started in Alexandria. The city is also the birthplace of Physiology, as the foundation of Medical Science, by Herophilus, and his School developed the results of knowledge via osmosis from Pharaonic embalming to the creation of Anatomy as an experimental science. Pharmacology developed here to such an extent that, towards the waning of the Hellenistic period, Cleopatra gained profound insights into Botany and Pharmacology. The science of Geography and coordinates were born in Alexandria. Claudius Ptolemy, in now Imperial Alexandria, writes his famous 'Mathematical Structure', translated as 'Almagest' (The Greatest) by Arab scholars centuries later. Arts continue the tradition of Classical Greece, while Music encourages instruments. Alexandria witnessed the first keyboard-wind instrument, the *hydraulis*, built by Ctesibius. Scenography, the Theater, and all aspects of advanced culture were to find no more fertile conditions for development than those of the Hellenistic Period.

Mr President, Your Beatitude,

The works of the anniversary Conference for the '24 Centuries of Hellenistic Alexandria' are based on thirty-two presentations by the most distinguished scholars on issues of Hellenistic Alexandria covering the fields of History, Archaeology, Philosophy, Literature and Arts, as well as the Sciences of Medicine, Technology, Culture, Law and Environmental Sciences.

At this point, I would particularly like to stress the great importance of certain significant extreme environmental events in the development of the Hellenistic Age. These events will also be discussed in the Conference for the first time, together with historic events. For example, the Library, the Museum and the Lighthouse of Alexandria were destroyed by the huge tidal wave that destroyed Alexandria in AD 365. The fragments from the ruins of ancient Alexandria were illustrated by Napoleon's engineer, Gratien Le Pere, who, when he landed at Alexandria in 1803, walked everywhere among the débris of ceramics, glass fragments, and marbles.

Le Pere writes that he encountered a 'field of ruins', where two small hills protruded. These had formed as a result of the collection of all sorts of fragments on the orders of Selym in 1517, as mentioned by Leo of Africa in his homonymous textbook. The same author also reports to have found eighty-eight mosques, six hundred guilds for textiles, thirty soap industries that imported oil from the Peloponnese, Crete and Syria, as well as small industries processing red leather from goat hides. He met 8,000 souls, and paced the trade bazaars and docks, with the port of Alexandria handling imports of wheat, rice, coffee, and other commodities from as far away as India. A warehouse-city without fresh water, however, an abandoned city in many regards. Approximately three hundred years after Leo, in 1833, Robert Curzon described a scene in a central street of Alexandria, which astonished him. He writes that he saw hundreds of half-naked men selling 'moya' – water to thirsty passers-by for a few coins. The famous underground water supply network in the city of the Ptolemies had run dry centuries ago.

Hellenistic Alexandria had almost vanished, not only in the mists of time but also in the depths of the sea: the results of the gradual submergence of those areas in the Rosetta region, which are now the underwater realms of the Greek, French, and other archaeological missions who have been working continually in the search for drowned evidence of Alexandria's legendary past.

I hope that one day, today's hints that many significant monuments of ancient Alexandria lie submerged outside its ports will be confirmed and once again radiate in the Mediterranean light, so that the grandeur of that glorious period of Greco-Egyptian civilization we are all so proud of, can once again be celebrated.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Members of the Conference Organizing Committee, the various Foundations that have lent us their support, and especially the organizational secretariats of the Conference for their exceptional contribution to its success.

Address by His Beatitude Theodoros II

Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and all Africa

Mr President, my friend,
Dear Children,

Today, Alexandria borrowed a felucca from the River Nile. And tonight, Alexandria is telling us: 'Come, come to me, discover me, love me, perambulate me humbly.' Together with the poor Egyptians, eating their pita bread and inviting you to join them: 'fatteh – come, share it with me.' This is Alexandria, dear President, dear children.

And I am glad because, a week ago, I was in the frozen St Petersburg and, as I was talking with the Mayor, I said to him: 'Mr Mayor, look at all these statues that adorn this space. They are all from Hellenistic Alexandria.' This is the city's mystery and sacrament, this is her love. And it is a sacrament that invites us to discover her every day – for you cannot discover her if you do not love her.

Dear President, in that short film that was screened earlier, we saw the cemetery where our great benefactors have been laid to rest. Every Good Friday, all alone, I put aside my patriarchal staff, pick up a thurible and walk around the graves. 'Mr Konstantinos' – I went to him again this year – 'I have not forgotten you.' For you can never take farewell of Alexandria when you love her. And then, I put on my vestments, the few Greeks that are left here gather together, we all pick up the Epitáfios and circumambulate the church of Evangelismós. And I do the same from one church to the next, sounding the bells to make the Greek voice heard.

So, from the bottom of my heart, before I return to Alexandria, I want to extend to you my great, great gratitude.

Dear President, Your Excellency, you spoke as a true Alexandrine sage. 'Dear Lord,' I thought to myself while listening to your words, 'I wish he would keep talking and never stop!' Such is your love and wisdom. And upon my return to Alexandria, I will go to the Ptolemaic underground galleries at the Patriarchate, and I shall see Hypatia telling me: 'Mr Theodoros, I am holding the cone and seek to support my theorems.' I shall see the Ptolemies, their aqueduct underneath, prompting me: 'Come, keep us company for History's sake.'

Two months ago, I had a discussion with President Sisi, and he told me: 'I love Greece, I love Cyprus. The triangle formed by our three countries must illuminate the world.'

Dear President, Father of Hellenism,

All we expatriate Greeks, who live all over the world and carry Greece in our hearts, carry its grandeur and convey it across the globe, are grateful to you.

Dear Marianna, lady of our throne,

You give hope to the children of the world, like I do to the children of Africa, the children of Egypt. But you also shed light on knowledge, on the sciences, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Dear Director, beloved friend,

The great Bibliotheca Alexandrina waves in salute to our library, the patriarchal library, with its 50,000 manuscripts, which will come very soon, with the help of the Greek State and our dear Egypt and your own library and the A. G. Leventis Foundation, revamping mathematics and philosophy. This entire building, which Dr Awad and we constructed with so much love and so much toil, over a period of three years. May you always be well.

Dear Christos, my dear Academic,

You, the Greeks of Egypt, the Egyptíotes, are the children of Egypt, who have drunk her water, who honour the arts and sciences but never forget that you were born in this beautiful country, our dear Egypt. And we thank you for never forgetting our beautiful country, the queen – now old, but always a queen. May you always be well and happy.

My friend Dimitris Pantermalis,

We thank you that the Acropolis Museum will be presenting our dear Alexandria.

And upon returning to Alexandria, my dear Mr President, I shall go to Abu Qir and I shall ask the waters: 'Is King Alexander still alive?' And the waters shall respond: 'He is alive and well and ruling over the world.'

Thank you, my children.

Address by H.E. Prokopios Pavlopoulos

President of the Hellenic Republic

Your Beatitude,
Mrs Vardinoyannis – my friend Marianna,
Mr Pantermalis – my friend Dimitris,
Mr Zerefos – my friend Christos,
Mr Director of the new Library of Alexandria, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina,

Two years ago, in the summer of 2015, during what was a difficult time for both our country and me personally, as you can imagine, I received a visit to my office from Marianna (please, pardon the first-name basis, but this is how I truly feel), Christos and the Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina at the time, who asked me to consider the possibility of organizing this conference, which we are currently attending. For me, this was truly a means of escape and a way to draw strength, because it is through initiatives such as this one that one may see the power of Greece, the power of Hellenism – through Hellenistic Alexandria. Thus, from that point forward, we embarked on a journey that brought us to this destination, today's occasion, which is an end as well as a beginning, for I am certain that this conference marks the onset of many more in this direction. Probing into the history of Alexandria, its twenty-four centuries of uninterrupted cultural history, is a never-ending task. And one that begins today.

So, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Marianna V. Vardinoyannis Foundation, the Acropolis Museum, Dimitris Pantermalis, the Mariolopoulos-Kanaginis Foundation for the Environmental Sciences, Christos Zerefos and, of course, the new director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina who is here with us today.

Twenty-four centuries of history, history and culture, of a city that remains to this day, and will remain forever, one of the brightest jewels on the crown of world culture and the history of civilization. And even if it currently lacks in radiance, its glow from the past is leading us towards the future. For what transpired, as explained by Mr Zerefos, during that period, the Hellenistic period, in sciences and art, was the opening up that enabled us to get where we are today. And, if you will, to be able to go even further ahead from where we are today.

Many ancient cities had the misfortune of living in a myth, so to speak. They were discovered by accident and we don't know much about them. But about Alexandria, despite the tremendous destruction inflicted upon her by the earthquake, we know plenty. We know plenty, from the day she was built until the day that she collapsed. We learn plenty from what has been done and is yet to be done at the level of excavations, both terrestrial and underwater. We are fortunate enough to know how the city was built thanks to a compelling testimony: that of Arrian of Nicomedia in his *Anabasis of Alexander*, where he describes how Alexander built Alexandria in 331 BC – a part of Arrian's book that is well worth reading. How, when Alexander reached the Nile Delta he marched on westwards, between the Lake Mareotis and the island Pharos, to indicate the site where Alexandria would be built. And – could this be fiction? I don't think so, seeing as it was written by Arrian – how Alexander, having no other means to indicate the delimitation of the city walls, poured flour to draw the white line demarcating the walls of the first city of Alexandria. Thus, Alexandria was built in 331 BC by the great city planner Deinocrates of Rhodes. It was built to the west of the Nile Delta, between the lake Mareotis and the island Pharos, site of the ruins of the ancient Egyptian Rhakotis.

The good fortune of Alexandria does not limit itself to Alexander the Great. The good fortune of Alexandria also includes Alexander's successors, the Diadochi. And most of all, the Lagids and Ptolemy I, Soter, founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty and ruler of Egypt (323-285 BC) who, during the Wars of the Diadochi – also known as the Wars of Alexander's successors – was the keeper of Alexander's remains, a symbol of power at the time, which he carried to Alexandria. Since then, Alexandria became, during the time of the Lagids and for some time thereafter, the centre of all things left behind by Alexander the Great from his great conquest. Thus began the history of Alexandria, with the splendour of the Ptolemies of that time.

The city was built up quickly. We already know plenty about what took place there, what the city's major landmarks and monuments were. We know the significance of its port – the greatest port of antiquity, as Alexandria was also, at one time, antiquity's largest city in terms of population. We also know about the Pharos, the great lighthouse of Alexandria, said to have been designed by Sostratus of Cnidus. But, of course, as Mr Zerefos pointed out earlier, we

do not know the secrets of this lighthouse, the light of which was visible from some thirty miles away, limited only by the curvature of the earth – which also goes to show the calculating capacity of the time.

We also know about the Library of Alexandria, this stunning structure, the first major treasure trove of knowledge, featuring some five hundred thousand papyrus scrolls of its time. One may easily understand, Mr Director, what the significance of the Library of Alexandria was and what a heavy burden we all carry, not only the people of Egypt but the entire humanity and especially we the Greeks, to restore, even symbolically, this library as a centre of constant emission of knowledge.

It is also known that Alexandria was the first cosmopolitan city that humanity has ever known. Such was the power of its cosmopolitanism, such was the power of assimilation by osmosis of people and knowledge, that the term ‘Alexandrine’ came to signify the lack of a localised origin of knowledge and Alexandria came to be identified as a place affording its inhabitants a special status, especially if they are interested in knowledge. And this went on for many years. And even today, when we describe someone as ‘Alexandrine’ (at least, in Greek) we are referring to his or her Renaissance-type attitude toward knowledge. Or we are referring to someone of particular significance in matters of the intellect in any way. Let us not forget, that the first person who comes to mind when we hear the word ‘Alexandrine’ is the great Greek poet Constantine Cavafy.

Alexandria brought together all the knowledge accrued since the time of Ionia, Athens and the Golden Age. That was where all this knowledge was synthesised, resulting in an explosion of the sciences and the arts. A boom, which actually marked the transition from antiquity and the birth of science to its subsequent development. That was the time of the greatest scientific discoveries, which still guide us to this day, in terms of scientific method.

I don’t think that I could list everything that took place at the time – besides, I am not an expert. This is what this conference is for. And I see among you leading scientists, who I am certain shall help us embark on this great journey of discovering Alexandria and learning what it left behind for us, its legacy, and what we can achieve in the future. So, in view of their expertise, let it suffice for me to say that there are certain pieces of writing that have fascinated me since the time when I, too, mostly from the viewpoint of my discipline, was looking into what transpired in Alexandria at that time.

One of these reads, for example, which I would highly recommend, is the well-known study *Science Awakening* by the great Dutch mathematician Van der Waerden. Published in Greek by the Crete University Press (CUP) in 2010, the book’s title brings to mind what Max Weber had said when he spoke of the birth of science in Ionia and Ancient Greece, pointing out how that was where and when the world left myth behind, or, in other words, when he spoke of the ‘disenchantment of the world’ (die Entzauberung der Welt). It is that same ‘disenchantment of the world’ that Van der Waerden proposes as the ‘awakening of science’. Science was awakened at the time. It had already been created, but, over the course of Ionia and the Golden Age, it remained in a state of torpor or hibernation. It took the mediation of the Hellenistic age to awaken it; it took Alexandria.

In his book, Van der Waerden describes all the marvellous developments that took place at the time, in the field of philosophy – how philosophy was reborn, from Aristotle to Theophrastus – and, particularly, in the glorious field of the sciences, and, most importantly, of mathematics. For if we really want to prioritise things in the progress of humanity, we will find that the greatest breakthrough was effected in natural sciences and mathematics, primarily through the work of Archimedes, Apollonius, Aristarchus, and Eratosthenes. And in the discipline of astronomy, through the work of Hipparchus and, of course, Ptolemy himself, as is well known.

Before closing, I would also like to mention another book, by one of our own, a great Greek scientist, a great mathematician, a great Alexandrine. I am talking about the mathematician Dimitris Christodoulou.

Dimitris Christodoulou gave a lecture in 2012, in which he talked about mathematics in ancient Alexandria, focusing on the contribution of Archimedes and Euclid. Dimitris Christodoulou was, and still is, a mathematician who crossed over and beyond the narrow confines of mathematics, delved into the general theory of relativity and, of course, ventured into hydrodynamics – a field, which, as you know better than I do, is directly linked to the discipline of mathematics – and analyzed the contribution of Archimedes at that time. No other instance in the history of science saw greater progress in knowledge by a single man than the progress achieved by Archimedes: from the geometry of the sphere to hydrostatics, a discipline cultivated by Archimedes, not only at the level of theorems, but also at the level of proof. In order to truly grasp the importance of all these things, let us not forget that the ‘Antikythera Mechanism’, which is known to be based – at least, as per the prevailing opinion – on matters of hydrostatics was, in all probability, also a creation of Archimedes or his successors or, in any case, a mechanism that was created on the basis of the achievements of Archimedes at that time.

Through his book, Dimitris Christodoulou is showing us how important the thought of Archimedes was, one of the greatest representatives of the Hellenistic age, if I may say so, and how important the salvation of his work by the Library of Alexandria was; how that time witnessed the promotion of the science of mathematics, as it was later passed on to the hands of the Arabs during the Renaissance, and, as the science of mathematics progressed, as an instrumental tool in the service of all the natural sciences. For, as you well know, without mathematics, without geometry, the other sciences could not advance, at least not at the level of proving their accuracy and correctness, when we know the difference between mathematical logic and the factual logic of the natural sciences.

All this was born in Alexandria. As I said: a great explosion took place in Alexandria at the time, a 'big bang' of human knowledge. Knowledge, science, was created in Ionia and cultivated in Athens; but I am telling you for a fact: the great boom took place during the Hellenistic age in Alexandria. And it was the aftershock of that explosion that fertilised the entire course of sciences and the arts, all the way to the present day.

This conference marks the beginning of exploring this fascinating twenty-four-century-old history. Hence, its significance is self-evident. As I said in the beginning, I believe that this conference also marks the start of many more events in this direction. We are all fortunate to be here today. There will come a time, when a series of such conferences will be well underway, when we shall be unveiling and discovering Alexandria, not only at the level of its ruins, but also at the level of the knowledge it bequeathed us, that we shall look back to this day, when we were fortunate enough to be here and experience these moments; what is more, at such a difficult time, not only for our country, but for the entire region that is being sorely tried. And such events are precisely what we need in order to be able to become inspired during such challenging times.

Once again, I thank you all very much.

Part 1

**Archaeology, History, Philosophy, Literature, Art,
Cultural Heritage and Legal Issues**

New data concerning the foundation of Alexandria

Jean-Yves Empereur

Membre de l'Institut, France

Recent archaeological discoveries in Alexandria and its environs have led to a reconsideration of the conditions affecting the settlement of Greeks around Lake Mareotis. Beyond the myth of the new capital's foundation by Alexander the Great, certain realities appear to shed new light on the well-known and oft-cited ancient texts. In this article we intend to reinterpret the conditions at

the foundation of Alexandria, with particular reference to the question of the city's population, based upon new data revealed by the interventions of archaeologists.

The discovery in 2008-2009 of a sanctuary to Bastet in the centre of modern Alexandria is of prime importance (Figure 1). The reader should refer to the article by



Figure 1. Location plan of the Boubasteion of Alexandria. C GI C. Shaalan.

© Archives CEAlex/CNRS. Published in Abdel el-Maksoud, Abd el-Fattah, Seif el-Din 2012: 428, Figure 1 (see *supra*, Note 1).



Figure 2. The Bubasteion of Alexandria, young boy seated. Alexandria, reserves of the SCA at Shallalat, inv. 334. Photo A. Pelle, © Archives CEAlex/CNRS. Published in Abdel el-Maksoud, Abd el-Fattah, Seif el Din 2012: 442, fig. 23.

M. Seif el-Din in this volume.¹ We will not repeat the content of her discussion, with which we fully concur, but we shall try to reflect upon the consequences of a discovery of such major importance on our knowledge

¹ On the excavations of the Bubasteion, see also M. Abd el-Maksoud, A. Abd el-Fattah, M. Seif el-Din, 'La fouille du Boubasteion d'Alexandrie: présentation préliminaire', in *L'enfant et la mort dans l'Antiquité, III. Le matériel associé aux tombes d'enfants*, proceedings of the international roundtable held at MMSH, Aix-en-Provence, 20-22 January 2011, A. Hermay and C. Dubois (eds) *Bibliothèque d'archéologie méditerranéenne et africaine* 12. 2012: 427-446 (henceforth cited as M. Abd el-Maksoud, A. Abd el-Fattah, M. Seif el-Din 2012); M. Abd el-Maksoud, A. Abd el-Fattah, M. Seif el-Din, 'Foundation Deposit Plaques from Boubasteion' *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique d'Alexandrie* 49. 2015: 133-153. See also A. Abd el-Fattah, 'A Preliminary Report on Archaeological Works Carried on a Hellenistic Site at Kom El Dikka', *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique d'Alexandrie* 48. 2009: 25-49.

of the state of the town of Alexandria just a few decades after its foundation. Indeed, this is one of the most significant new archaeological finds since the beginning of excavations in Alexandria. We should celebrate the urgent salvage intervention mounted by the Supreme Council for Antiquities; without this excavation in particularly difficult conditions, we would have known nothing of one of the oldest temples of the town, which dates from the first waves of immigration.

Most unexpectedly, this sanctuary is not dedicated to a Greek divinity but to an Egyptian divinity. The ancient sources tell us that Alexander himself chose the sites of the temples; this applied to the Greek temples and also the Egyptian, in that he selected the place where a temple to Isis was to be constructed.² This great Egyptian goddess had long since been adopted by the Greeks, and a sanctuary of Isis had been established at Piraeus some years before the foundation of Alexandria.³ But what can we say of Bastet, the cat goddess of the Delta, whose cult had barely spread beyond the frontiers of Egypt especially at such an early date? This Bubasteion was in fact intended for Greek visitors as is demonstrated by the four *favissae* filled with ex-votos, the initial publication of which gives a good idea. These deposits held more than thirty statuettes of young boys and girls, mostly of limestone (Figure 2), one of marble with Greek inscriptions, a further thirty-odd statuettes of female cats in limestone and about 500 terracotta female cats. Some cats are alone, others are suckling kittens (Figure 3a-b) or playing with a duck. The first question to be asked concerns the nature of these Greeks who established a cult to a child-protecting Egyptian divinity in Alexandria when the city had just been founded. This discovery shines a new light on the peoples who settled in this new town. These Greeks arrived with their cults already well anchored in Pharaonic religious traditions, and thus they had been settled in Egypt for certain length of time.

We should be very glad of this exceptional discovery for its novel additions to the history of Alexandria and the city's settlement. At the same time, we regret that sufficient time was not granted to the archaeologists to fully explore this site, which has now disappeared beneath twenty storeys of modern building.

² Arrianus, *Anabasis*, Book III, I, 11; 'Therefore he (Alexander) was seized by an ardent desire to undertake the enterprise, and himself marked out the boundaries of the city, pointing out the place where the agora was to be constructed, where the temples were to be built, stating how many there were to be, and to what Greek gods they were to be dedicated, and specially marking a spot for a temple to the Egyptian Isis'.

³ J.D. Mikalson, *Religion in Hellenistic Athens*, University of California Press. 1988: 143: foundation of a temple to Isis in Piraeus before 333/332 BC.



Figure 3a-b. The Bubasteion of Alexandria, young girl holding a cat nursing its young in the folds of her skirt. Alexandria, reserve of the SCA at Shallalat, inv. 205. Photo A. Pelle, © Archives CEAlex/CNRS. Published in Abdel el-Maksoud, Abd el-Fattah, Seif el Din 2012: 444, fig. 28a-b.

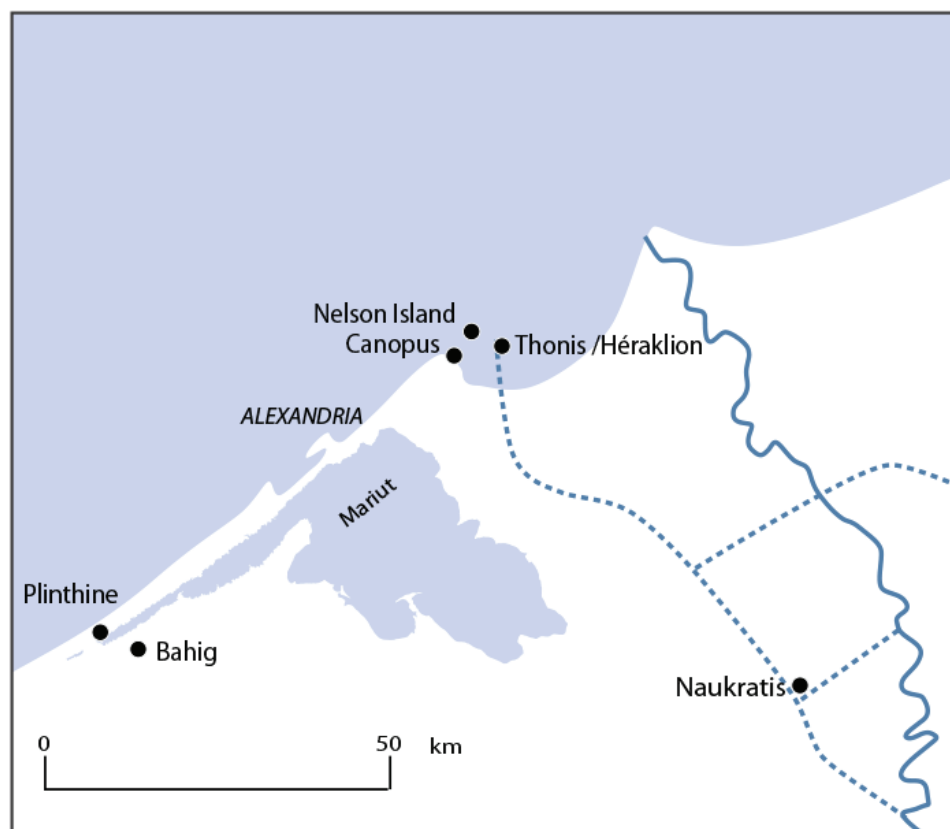


Figure 4. Map of the region surrounding Alexandria showing the sites of Nelson's Island, Canopus/Thonis, Plinthine, Kom Bahig and Naukratis. CGI Ismaël Awad, © Archives CEALex/CNRS.

Recent discoveries around Alexandria

Excavations currently underway in the environs of Alexandria also demonstrate in a novel and sometimes unexpected fashion an occupation that dates back to the Classical and even Archaic periods. This is the case on Nelson's Island to the east and Plinthine to the west of Alexandria, without forgetting the other sites to the south of Lake Mariout, where excavations are just beginning, and even other unexcavated sites where the surface presence of pre-Hellenistic ceramics are evident (Figure 4). Are these just the signs of simple trade contacts? Nothing could be less certain: the large proportion of excavated and surface pottery reveals the presence of a Hellenised, if not Hellenic, population since the Archaic period, several centuries before the foundation of Alexandria.

Nelson's Island

For some 20 years an Italian mission led by Paolo Gallo has been excavating a large settlement on Nelson's Island, 30 km east of Alexandria.⁴ This small island was

part of the continent in antiquity and it has revealed intense occupation since the Archaic era. Excavations have unearthed traditional Egyptian burials with mummified bodies bearing amulets, but also graves of untreated bodies with a different orientation. The archaeological material that has been discovered includes amphorae from Chios dating to the 6th century BC. The imported Greek wine and the accompanying pottery ware betray the active presence of Greeks in the region, and more precisely in the nearby port of Heraklion. Underwater excavations are currently being conducted on the town of Heraklion-Thonis, at the mouth of the Canopic branch of the Nile leading to the Greek trading post established at Naukratis since the mid-7th century BC.⁵

Regarding the local cults, Gallo shrewdly notes that at Thonis the child-god Khonsou takes on the aspects of a young Hercules, and that further up the Nile, the Amun of Naukratis is associated with Zeus, and his wife Mut with Hera. He adds that Neith, originally from neighbouring Sais is perceived as a form of Athena. These parallels between Greek and Egyptian divinities are known to us from Herodotus but the archaeological

⁴ P. Gallo, 'Une colonie grecque de la première période ptolémaïque près de Canope', in P. Ballet (ed) 2012. *Grecs et Romains en Égypte*: 48-49. Cairo, with notes 8 and 9, necropolis of the 26th dynasty; P. Gallo, 'Coloni greci a Canopo: l'Egitto senza Egiziani?', in A. Pontrandolfo, and M. Scafuro (eds) *Dialoghi sull'archeologia della Magna Grecia e del Mediterraneo. Atti del I Convegno Internazionale di Studi*, (Paestum, 2016), Paestum 2017: 81-100. P. Gallo, 'Évolution des croyances et des pratiques funéraires dans les communautés grecques de l'Égypte pré-ptolémaïque (VIe-IVe avant J.-C.)', in M.-D. Nenna, S. Huber, and

W. Van Andringa (eds) *Constituer la tombe, honorer le défunt* (Études Alexandrines 46) Alexandria 2018: 25-63.

⁵ Fr. Goddio, 'Heracleion-Thonis and Alexandria, two ancient Egyptian emporia', in D. Robinson and A. Wilson (eds) *Alexandria and the North-West Delta*. Oxford 2010: 121-137.

evidence takes on a particular value in the light of the discovery of the Bubasteion at Alexandria.

Plinthine⁶

The ruins of Plinthine are located some 40 km west of Alexandria on the *tainia*, overlooking the sea to the north and the lake to the south (map Figure 4). The necropolis, set upon the crest of the *tainia*, has been known since the 20th century for its excavations of the Hellenistic hypogea carved into the calcarenite. Since 2012 an archaeological mission, initially directed by M.-Fr. Boussac and since the current year by B. Redon, has been excavating this site (as well as in the neighbouring Taposiris Magna) with astonishing recent results. The mission has set about exploring the highest part of the site, Kom el-Nogous, which covers an area of almost 3 hectares in the form of a horseshoe. The nature of this site was not understood until the latest excavation campaigns. In the 2018 campaign report,⁷ the archaeologists describe how they have unearthed 'a dense occupation of the Saite-Persian period' (mid-7th century BC to the arrival of Alexander in 332) on the kom and surrounding areas, with housing and a wine press dated to the 7th century BC, while surface prospection indicates occupation since the New Kingdom (1500 to 1000 BC). They record that during the Archaic period, imported amphorae and other pottery sometimes reaches 60% of the ensemble of excavated material, raising the question as to the function of the site and the nature of its occupants. Who were these inhabitants with such a strongly Hellenised lifestyle?

Kom Bahig

The two hills of Kom Bahig sit to the south-west of Lake Mariout, some 50 km from Alexandria (map Figure 4 and Figures 5-7). They remained untouched from the end of antiquity and in 2017 prospection conducted by the Centre d'Études Alexandrines⁸ led to the identification

of surface shards dated to the end of the Ramesside period (20th Dynasty, 12th century BC) and from the beginning of the Third Intermediary Period (from the 13th to 8th century BC). In 2018 excavations on the eastern kom immediately revealed beneath the surface pottery material from the Late Period (probably dated to the Persian period, from the 6th century BC). Likewise, on the western kom excavations revealed deposits with amphorae from Chios, 'à la brosse' amphorae from Attica, and a vat from the 6th century BC. Pre-Ptolemaic buildings were unearthed on the summit of the hill. The first two excavation campaigns thus led to the identification of a site that was frequented roughly a millennium before the foundation of Alexandria, with Greek pottery becoming more plentiful from the 6th-5th century BC.

Naucratis

When one talks of Greek presence before the arrival of Alexander, one immediately thinks of Naucratis, the emporium situated on the Canopic branch of the Nile roughly 70 km south-east of Alexandria (map Figure 4). Greeks from Ionia, Caria and the nearby islands settled there from 630 BC under the reign of the pharaoh Psammetichus I, with the aim of trading with Egypt. In the following century the pharaoh Amasis, who understood the interest in channelling the exchange of wheat for imported products, confirmed the settlement of Greeks at Naucratis and a district was reserved and controlled for their use adjacent to the Egyptians, who lived in another part of the town.⁹ For almost a decade a huge project to study the site and material has been conducted by the British Museum, which has resulted in numerous publications.

Two remarks need to be made regarding the large reservoir of Greek population that Naucratis represented: the authors of the article on the Bubasteion give as a parallel to the pottery found in the sanctuary of Bastet at Alexandria vases known from that very Greek settlement on the Canopic branch of the Nile. In addition, when Alexander the Great arrived in Egypt, he called upon a Greek from Naucratis to build the new capital that he had just founded, and bestowed upon him quite considerable power, as we shall see below.

* * *

Until new archaeological excavations within Alexandria itself manage to demonstrate the contrary,

⁶ B. Redon, M. Vanpeene, with a ceramological appendix by M. Pesenti, 'La vigne a été inventée dans la ville égyptienne de Plinthine. À propos de la découverte d'un fouloir saïte à Kôm el-Nogous (Maréotide)'. *BIFAO* 116, 2016: 303-324; Z. Barahona-Mendieta, M. Pesenti, B. Redon, 'Évolution des assemblages céramiques du kôm de Plinthine, de la fin de la Troisième Période Intermédiaire à l'époque saïto-perse: étude des deux contextes stratigraphiques du secteur 2'. *BCE* 26, 2016: 5-38; S. Dhennin, B. Redon, 'Plinthine on Lake Mareotis', *Egyptian Archaeology* 43, 2013: 36-38. M.-Fr. Boussac, S. Dhennin, B. Redon, 'Plinthine et la Maréotide pharaonique'. *BIFAO* 115, 2015: 15-35.

⁷ On the 2018 campaign, see <https://taposiris.hypotheses.org/plinthine/le-kom>

⁸ The excavation is supervised by G. Soukiassian and the material studied by A. Simony, whom I thank for her identification of the vases reproduced in this article. See M.-D. Nenna, 'Les actions du Centre d'Études Alexandrines en 2015-2016. Kôm Bahig', in L. Bavay, N. Michel (ed.) *Rapport d'activité de l'IFAO 2015-2016*, online: http://www.ifao.egnet.net/uploads/rapports/Rapport_IFAO_2015-2016.pdf: 291-302; M.-D. Nenna, 'Les actions du Centre d'Études Alexandrines en 2016-2017. Kôm Bahig', in L. Bavay and N. Michel (eds) *Rapport d'activité de l'IFAO 2016-2017*, online:

http://www.ifao.egnet.net/uploads/rapports/Rapport_IFAO_2016-2017.pdf: 622-632.

⁹ J. Yoyotte, 'Les contacts entre Égyptiens et Grecs (VII^e-II^e siècles avant J.-C.): Naucratis, ville égyptienne'. *ACF* 1994-1995: 669-682. On the British Museum results, see, among others, A. Villing and U. Schlotzhauer (eds) *Naukratis, Greek diversity in Egypt. Studies on Greek pottery and exchange in the eastern Mediterranean* (British Museum Research Publication 162) London 2006.

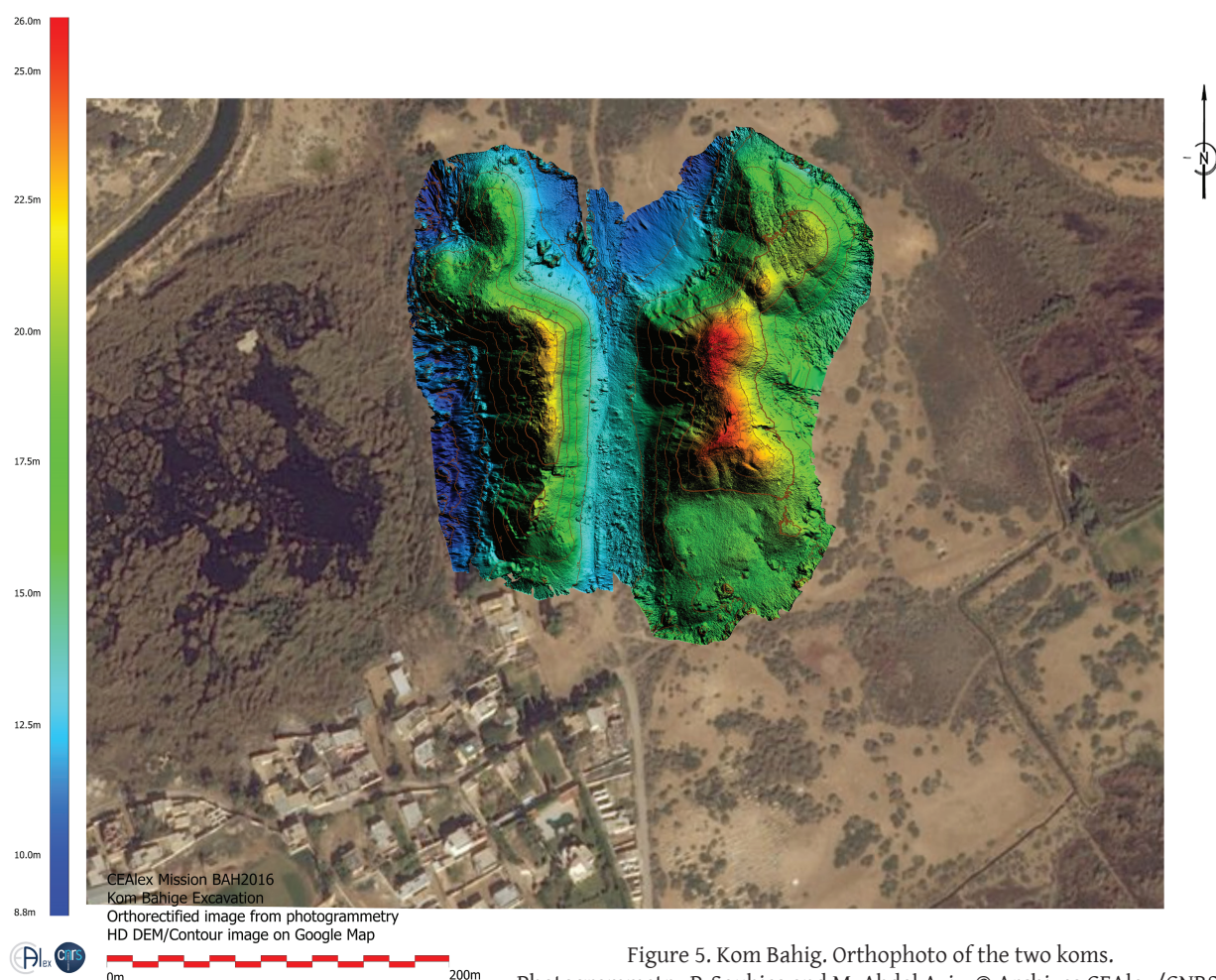


Figure 5. Kom Bahig. Orthophoto of the two koms. Photogrammetry P. Soubias and M. Abdel Aziz, © Archives CEAlex/CNRS.

we can maintain that the site of the future capital was not occupied by Greeks before January 331. At the same time, a new inventory of the pottery found in Alexandria proves that sherds older than the foundation of the town are very rare and negligible in quantity,¹⁰

which would tend to argue in favour of the sudden and simultaneous arrival of Greek settlers who had been established sometimes for two or even three centuries in places close to the newly-founded Alexandria.

Cleomenes and Canopus

To continue our discussion, we will leave behind the field of archaeology and turn to the key figure in the foundation of Alexandria, Cleomenes of Naucratis. As we shall see, this character, about whom we have hardly any biographical information, received scarcely any praise from his contemporaries or from posterity. With the death of Alexander in 323, Ptolemy I seized the satrapy of Egypt, to which Alexander had nominated Cleomenes some nine years previously at the end of 332 or beginning of 331. Ptolemy swiftly got rid of him, executing a person who more than probably was too well versed in Egyptian affairs. It appears that nobody mourned the sad fate of Cleomenes and, indeed,

¹⁰ M. Venit, 'Early Corinthian Alabastra in Alexandria'. *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 71, 1985: 185-187 with references to her thesis, *Painted Pottery from the Greek Mainland Found in Egypt, 650-450 B.C.*, New York, 1982. A re-examination of the provenance of these two Corinthian alabastra as part of a Franco-Italian CNRS programme, *Alexandrie avant Alexandre* (University of Turin/CEAlex) led us to review the entry journals of the Graeco-Roman Museum and the numbers do not correspond with the provenance put forward by M. Venit. Of course, recent excavations have revealed some extremely rare examples of pottery that are older than the city, such as the fragment of an Attic lekane lid dating to around 375 BC, but within Hellenistic era contexts showing that it is residual material: cf. J.-Y. Empereur, *Alexandrie redécouverte*. Paris, 1997: 50. See also the study by A. Abdel-Fattah, 'The question of the Presence of Pharaonic Antiquities in the City of Alexandria and in its Neighboring Sites (Alexandria Pre-Alexander the Great)', in Z. Hawas and I. Pinch Brock, *Egyptology at the dawn of the Twenty-First Century II*. Cairo, New York, 2003: 63-71. Paulo Gallo is preparing a monograph on the Aegyptiaka of Alexandria, showing how Pharaonic monuments, architectural elements, obelisks, sphinxes, etc. were brought from the great Pharaonic sanctuaries, mainly Heliopolis, by the Ptolemies and Roman emperors, but also that a good number of them are leftovers from the 19th century antiquities trade. Hauled to the harbour

of Alexandria, certain pieces were subsequently abandoned by the dealers because of lack of means or the poor state of the pieces in question.

Figure 6. Kom Bahig. Excavation of the eastern kom in April 2018. The sherds of the demolition 10088 which seal this occupation are older than the Ptolemaic period and date to the Late Period. Photo J.-Y. Empereur, © Archives CEAlex/CNRS.

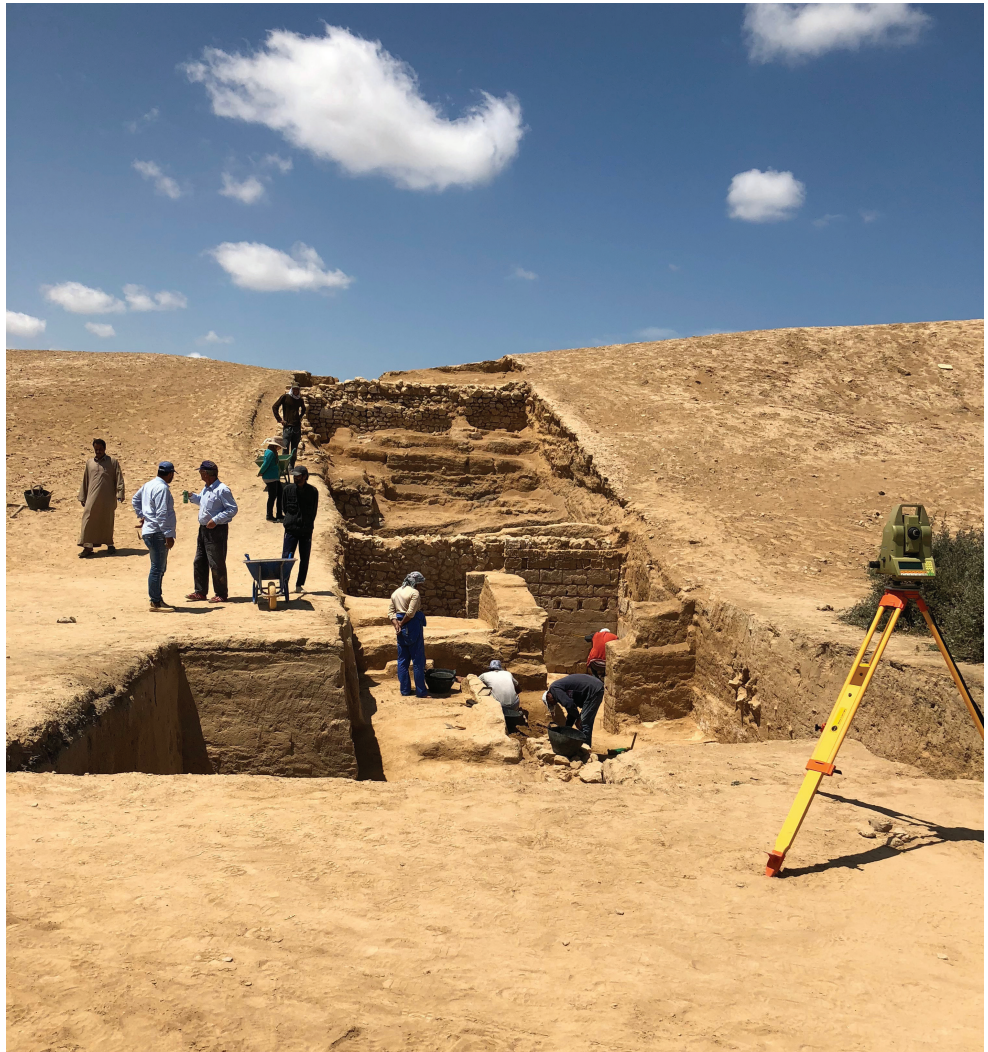


Figure 7. Kom Bahig, northern part of the valley between the two koms. The blocks of a dismantled temple. The most recent sherds in the fill 20023, including Archaic Greek amphora fragments dating to the 6th century BC. Photo J.-Y. Empereur, © Archives CEAlex/CNRS.



contemporaries repeatedly recount his misdeeds, such as the Pseudo-Aristotle in *Oeconomica* (II, 1352) and Demosthenes in *Against Dionysodorus*, especially as regards the unprecedentedly high tax on Egyptian wheat and the auctioning of Egyptian wheat in Greek cities of the Mediterranean in an attempt to sell at the highest price. In the *Anabasis*, written by Arrian in the 2nd century AD and recounting the campaigns of Alexander up to his death, a very severe picture of Cleomenes is presented, treating him as ἀνὴρ κακός. The main source for this work was the now lost *Memoires* of Ptolemy I and if this latter did write of Cleomenes, which one might well presume, one can just as easily imagine that it was not in order to praise him.

We quote here a passage from the Pseudo-Aristotle, *Oeconomica*, II, 1352, which illustrates the actions of Cleomenes:

‘When king Alexander commanded him to found a city near the Pharos and to establish there the mart which was formerly held at Canopus, he sailed to Canopus and told the priests and the owners of property there that he had come to transfer them. The priests and inhabitants collected and gave him a sum of money to induce him to leave their mart undisturbed. This he accepted and for the moment left them alone, but afterwards, when he had the material for building ready, he sailed to Canopus and demanded an excessive amount of money from them, which he said represented the difference to him between having the mart near the Pharos and at Canopus. And when they said they would not be able to give them the money he made them move to their city’.

This text is of interest in our discussion for more than one reason. Book II of the Pseudo-Aristotle’s *Oeconomica* gathers several cases of financial extortion by tyrants and magistrates in the Hellenistic world, in Sicily, Asia Minor etc. The work tries to illustrate celebrated examples of cunning without always understanding the public interest in these measures, or indeed the *real politik* of the business world. The case of Cleomenes is paradigmatic: having shown how he obtained gifts from the priests of Sobek after one of his slaves was eaten by a crocodile, before recounting other demands for contributions from the Egyptian clergy and the clever dealing with the price of wheat from which he manages to extract a large profit, the episode concerning Canopus is enlightening on more than one point.

The author informs us unambiguously on two important points: 1) that Cleomenes, whom he qualifies as Satrap of Egypt, received the order from Alexander to build a city near the Pharos; 2) that it was not Cleomenes who

commanded the removal of the inhabitants of Canopus to the new capital, but Alexander himself.

In the first instance, Cleomenes tries to execute the order he had received from his master and urges the priests and inhabitants of Canopus to move to the new capital. The monetary contribution that they offer is initially accepted as sufficient and he uses it not for personal enrichment but to buy construction materials. This first payment suits his purpose because it gives him time to lay out the urban framework with the architect Dinocrates of Rhodes, involving, aside from the walls laid out by Alexander himself, the streets, the size and ground plan of the building lots etc. Thereafter, once the urban site is ready to receive the first inhabitants, he fully executes Alexander’s order and forces the merchants and priests of Canopus to come and settle in Alexandria.

In passing, we can note two points regarding the priests. 1) Their status is not specified. Are they Greek or Egyptian priests? One might ask the question as to the cults practised in the at least partially-Hellenised town of Canopus on the mouth of the Canopic branch leading towards the trading post of Naucratis. 2) In addition, we learn that the cults are instituted from the first moment of the foundation of Alexandria. This was a normal feature in the foundation of any new city and corroborates the passage in Arrian indicating that Alexander chose the site and number of temples,¹¹ as well as the venerable age of the sanctuary of Bastet, which as we have seen dates back to the last decades of the 4th century BC, and the age the temple to Isis that was planned at the very moment of the new city’s foundation.

Modern historians have generally followed the unfavourable opinion of the ancients, although Cleomenes has known some defenders: an economist, A. Andreades,¹² a numismatist, G. Le Rider,¹³ and a historian/epigrapher, P.M. Fraser. In this latter’s survey of Alexandria published in 1972, he does not hesitate to qualify Cleomenes as ‘an administrator of great vigour’ (p. 6) and he develops the role of Alexander’s man in the development of Alexandria during the nine years prior to the arrival of Ptolemy. ‘Probably, then, Soter inherited from his late subordinate a city which was structurally well advanced, and had already been integrated into the economic life of the Aegean, and it is possible that the early prosperity of Alexandria, perhaps its very

¹¹ See Note 2.

¹² A. Andreadès, ‘Antimène de Rhodes et Cléomène de Naucratis’, *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 53, 1929: 1-18.

¹³ G. Le Rider, ‘Cléomène de Naucratis’, *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 121, 1997: 71-93; G. Le Rider, ‘Le monnayage d’or et d’argent frappé en Égypte: le rôle d’Alexandrie’, in *Alexandrie: une mégapole antique* (Cahiers de la Villa Kérylos 9), 1999: 11-23; P.M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, Oxford, 1972: 4-7.

survival, owed much to the predecessor whose memory posterity, and not least Ptolemy himself, so effectively damned' (p. 7).

Cleomenes was originally from Naucratis but not a citizen of Naucratis. This Greek emporium, which included an Egyptian quarter, would officially become a Greek city in the full sense under Alexander the Great, but Cleomenes chose not to become a citizen of his native city. Book II of *Oeconomica*, 1352, clearly names him Cleomenes the Alexandrian, Κλεομένης Ἀλεξανδρεὺς. He drops the epithet, *of Naucratis*, and he becomes a citizen of Alexandria. Did he bring with him the other inhabitants of Naucratis, in a similar way that he displaced the merchants of Canopus? This forced removal of the inhabitants of Canopus towards the new capital may also have been the fate of the other Greek communities in the surrounding regions of Alexandria within a radius of some 50 km: 30 for Canopus, 40 for Plinthine, 50 for Bahig, and up to 70 for Naucratis, without mentioning other farther-flung settlements such as Hermopolis Parva, Sais and even Buto where the excavated archaeological material has demonstrated the presence of Hellenised populations. In a vast synoecism, these populations, obliged to leave the places where they had lived in the land of Egypt, where their families had been settled for several centuries, would go on to form the integral core of the Alexandrian citizen body, a closed circle inscribed within the new tribes and demes, although we do not know how the allocation was determined.¹⁴ They would later on be quite distinct from the Greeks coming from other Greek cities, who would bear their own *ethnic* of origin.

A final point in the rehabilitation of Cleomenes of Alexandria: as Georges Le Rider has underlined,¹⁵ nowhere is there any mention of funds being laid aside for the foundation of the new city. Taxes paid by the Egyptians continued to go to Babylon, as in the time of the Persians. Cleomenes was thus obliged to invent expedients in order to gather the necessary financial means to carry out the mission ordered by Alexander. The episode of the crocodiles and the Egyptian priests paying compensation, the taxes on Egyptian wheat exports and speculation on the price of cereals, the financial demands made upon the inhabitants of Canopus were all most probably invested in the colossal costs incurred in the construction of Alexandria. And when Ptolemy I seizes power in Egypt in 323 he finds a country that has apparently been well governed by the careful hand of Cleomenes. Moreover, he finds 8,000

talents in the public coffers, and not in the pockets of Cleomenes.¹⁶

The new archaeological discoveries demonstrate the presence of Greeks settled around the future site of Alexandria since the Archaic period. The Canopus episode illustrates the forced displacement of Greeks to the new foundation. Might this experience have been extended to other Greeks living in close proximity to the new capital? We shall see that despite the cruelty of such uprooting of populations, this procedure was not unknown in the history of this era and this region of the Mediterranean.

The foundation of Antioch in Pieria

We will quickly look at the conditions of the foundation of Antioch — Antioch in Pieria or *ad Orontes*, to distinguish it from the 14 other towns of the same name.¹⁷ After his victory over Antigonus Monophthalmus, Seleucus I founded the city of Antioch, naming it after his father. In May 300 he destroyed Antigonia, the neighbouring town founded by his defeated rival and used the stones of its monuments and houses in the construction of his new capital. He moved the 5,300 inhabitants of Antigonia to Antioch.¹⁸ Downey notes (p. 70), 'The traditional account of the founding of the city is modelled in some respects upon the account of the foundation of Alexandria'. Similar to Alexander at Alexandria, he begins by designing the outline of the city, the walls. 'Libanius gives a conventional picture of the laying out of the plan of the city, with elephants stationed to mark the sites of towers in the city wall, and the streets outlined with wheat' (Note 68). The king also decides which temples to build inside the town.

And so the new inhabitants come from the destroyed city of Antigonia as well as the surrounding area. Cretans, Cypriots, Argives and Heraclides (i.e. Peloponnesians), who were settled on Mount Silpius overlooking the new town, were all gathered together. Added to this mix were Jewish veterans of the Seleucid army, just as had happened at Alexandria with the Jews of Ptolemy I's war fleet, although in both cities they did not receive full citizenship since they refused to worship the Greek gods, but they were permitted to live within their own communities. The Syrians too could not become

¹⁴ P. Fraser (previous note) suggests a territorial distribution (p. 38-39).

¹⁵ See Note 13, article from 1997.

¹⁶ Diodorus 18, 14, 1.

¹⁷ G. Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961 (754 pages) and the abridged version, G. Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963 (297 pages). See also G.M. Cohen, *The Hellenistic Settlements in Syria, the Red Sea Basin, and North Africa*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.

¹⁸ Downey: 81, although it is unknown whether this was the citizens or the total population, women and children included. The author cites Flavius Joseph and John Malalas as well as Libanius.

citizens and they inhabited their own quarter, in the same way as the Egyptians at Alexandria.¹⁹

Antioch was founded 30 years after Alexandria. Its foundation appears to have been inspired by that of Egypt's capital and the ancient texts are more explicit as to the origin of the Greeks who were moved to the

new capital. They had been settled in the surrounding areas and were obliged to leave their homes – in Antigonía and on Mount Silpius – in order to populate the royal foundation. One can imagine that same process was entailed at the almost military foundation of Alexandria with a similar displacement of peoples.

¹⁹ As in Rakotis district in Alexandria. On the meaning of Rakotis, see most recently A. Engsheden, 'Aux confins de l'étymologie. Rakotis, le nom indigène d'Alexandrie', in Y. Gourdon, A. Engsheden (ed.) *Études d'onomastique égyptienne* (RAPH 38) 2016, Cairo: IFAO: 87-100. This latest interpretation does not seem to have found broad support from those who understand the term Rakotis as meaning building site, cf. M. Chauveau, 'Alexandrie et Rakhôtis: le point de vue des Égyptiens', in *Alexandrie: une mégapole antique* (Cahiers de la Villa Kérylos 9) 1999: 1-10.