Visions of a General Framework for Egypt's Cultural Policy

Culture

Support to Cultural Diversity and Creativity in Egypt Action

BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA
مكتبة الإسكندرية

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Two years of tireless work throughout Egypt, from Alexandria to Aswan, were required to implement the Support to Cultural Diversity and Creativity in Egypt project—a project supported by the European Union.

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina youth have journeyed throughout Egypt to rediscover the country with a new approach by exploring Egypt's villages, towns, and cities. As a result of the collaborative efforts of numerous ministries to support the BA, such as the Ministries of International Cooperation, Culture, Higher Education, Antiquities, Education, and Foreign Affairs, in addition to the participation of over a thousand official and civil society organizations and creative individuals, the report in hand has been created following discussions, workshops, and activities to formulate a cultural vision for Egypt; a vision that bolsters nationalism, motivates cultural work, and provides creators with the freedom to innovate for the future.

This report has posed questions concerning the current state of affairs, the methods of addressing shortcomings, and future ambitions. These questions will certainly create a widespread debate to preserve the aspired vision, framed by those who contributed to the report, so that the Egyptian national culture can become the promising prospect that we all anticipate. The culture of work, tolerance, and limitless creativity leads to social peace and a comprehension of the youth's energy. So, let us dream of the future. Here, at the BA, we will try our best to accomplish as many of the aspired goals as we can, and we will strive to present this report to the designated authorities, legislative councils, and decision makers. This is what we can promise. However, we can only grow if we all work together; without partnerships, we will not be able to move forward on the path toward the future. This is the form of collaboration we sought through this project.

Dr. Ismail Serageldin
Director of the BA

Introduction

Support to Cultural Diversity and Creativity in Egypt

"Support to Cultural Diversity and Creativity in Egypt" is a 24-months project, co-funded by the EU, that has been implemented by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (BA) in different governorates in Egypt following the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions.

The global objective of this action is to provide increased access to culture, to contribute to social cohesion, to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions and to improve the environment for creative and cultural production in order to have an impact on sustainable socio-economic development.

The Action started on 25 November 2013 through a set of diverse activities grouped under the 3 following pillars:

- Pillar 1: A dialogue process for a National Cultural Strategy/Policy in Egypt
- Pillar 2: Interventions to support Egyptian cultural industries and already existing Egyptian talents and cultural operators
- Pillar 3: Actions to support youth and new talents and increase access to culture.

The activities implemented under this action targeted Egyptian Population counting Egyptian artists, cultural operators, cultural industries, cultural institutions and officials and NGOs with a special attention to youth, children, women and disabled. The activities contributed to creating a future policy for Egyptian culture, identifying and profiling cultural actors in the country, nurturing existing talents and artists as well as emerging artists, boosting the activities of cultural centers and institutions. The activities also supported capacity building and the restructuring of the cultural and creative sectors.

The Action built upon the experience and knowledge of the BA and reinforced its role as an independent institution supporting national efforts in the field of culture. Basing its vision upon three main pillars and through a variety of activities prepared for the Action, the BA seeks to use the rich cultural heritage of Egypt and human capital to benefit from arts and culture as a strong support element to the development of the country, and to promote artistic and cultural education.

In line with the overall and specific objectives of the action, its main outputs and results, specific activities were designed to impact a considerable number of Egyptians working in the field of culture and on normal Egyptians who did not have the chance to be exposed to cultural manifestations in their life or need to be encouraged and engaged further. The activities were designed in a way to be self-sustained, to have a continuous effect on the Egyptian cultural sector, and pave the way to encourage creativity and promote diversity.

Based on the BA's experience in implementing a variety of activities, programs and research, the activities were regrouped in the following 3 main pillars.

Pillar "1": A Dialogue Process for a Cultural Policy in Egypt-The Organization of Conferences, Seminars and Workshops.

This pillar mainly focused on initiating a national dialogue in the country to lead to the formulation of a cultural strategy for Egypt. This national dialogue was coordinated by the BA involving public and private cultural institutions and individual experts. The BA acted as hub providing its facilities, organizational capacities, expertise and access to cultural stakeholders and coordinated between them to issue cultural policy papers and recommendations to be launched in the final conference. The activities of this pillar are as follows:

1.1. Cultural Debates: Vision for an Egyptian Cultural Policy

The BA created think-tanks of young and senior intellectuals, cultural operators, artists, ministries and public authorities amongst others, to assess the current cultural situation and the main actors in the country and the challenges to be addressed. The members of the think-tanks engaged in a structured dialogue to draft a National Cultural Policy to be presented to the concerned Egyptian authorities for discussion and adoption. In addition, some eminent experts produced researches defining the elements, constraints, challenges of the cultural reality in Egypt.

For achieving the desired outputs the following took place:

- Forming and engaging members of the think-tanks through twelve periodical working meetings to discuss and draft the cultural policy.
- Setting up a small secretariat office at the BA to coordinate and support the work of the think-tanks.
- Organizing four workshops where experts, policy makers were invited for debates and brainstorming.
- Compiling the research and statistics conducted by members of the think-tanks and merging the findings of pillar 2 (Mapping Exercise) and Pillar 3 (Arts in the Classroom) to produce a draft National Cultural Policy.
- Organizing a final workshop for final review and discussion of the produced draft cultural policy.
- Printing of the final document that will be presented to policy makers and distributing it during the final conference.

The meetings were attended by representatives from different Ministries, such as the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of International Cooperation, Ministry of Antiquities, Ministry of Foreign affairs, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education. Different Universities were also represented such as the Univeristies of Ain Shams, Cairo, Assiut, Mansoura, New Valley, Alexandria, Portsaid, Ismailia, Beni Suef, Sohag and Aswan amongst others .

Also, eminent experts, senior and junior intellectuals, artists, novelists and journalists from different cultural backgrounds and specializations represented various institutions in the debates, such as the UNESCO Cairo office, Almawred Althaqafy, l'Atelier d'Alexandrie, the Union for Egyptian Writers, Egypt's Writers Syndicate, the Egyptian Journalists' Syndicate, Al-Ahram Newspaper, Alyoum Alsabea Newspaper, Almasry Alyoum Newspaper, the General Egyptian Books Organization (GEBO), the National Television, Alhoreya Center for Innovation and some Palaces of Cultures, Egypt Public Libraries and many Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) among others.

1.2. Conference on the "Policy Framework for Culture in Egypt"

In order to disseminate the results obtained at the Action in general and the Cultural Debates in particular, the final conference will be held to gather a large and diversified number of participants. The conference will highlight and showcase the following:

- The work of the think-tanks: this will include all produced documents as well as the final version of the draft national cultural policy.
- The Directory and Portal of Pillar 2.
- Exhibitions capturing the work done in the activities of Pillar 3.
- A fair for the providers of cultural industries where they will display their activities and products.
- A documentary about the whole action.

This conference will be the main visibility public event showcasing the efforts and results of the whole action and drawing attention to the continuation to the follow up work to be done in support of the activities that were completed.

Pillar "2": Interventions to Identify and Support Egyptian Cultural Operators and Industries

This pillar seeks to identify and consolidate the existing cultural industries and operators and provide them with the requested tools to boost their activities. The activities are designed and implemented in a way to

upgrade their capacities and to facilitate their future national, regional and international exposure, including their interaction and participation to cross-cultural exchanges.

The activities of this Pillar encouraged the participation of cultural centres, institutions and operators from Egypt to ensure a cross cutting participation of the different categories of stakeholders as follows:

2.1. Mapping and Supporting Cultural Industries in Egypt

Component 1: Mapping of Existing Cultural Industries and Operators

The importance of Egyptian cultural industries has been proven since long in the history of the Arab world and the Middle East ranging from being accounted as one of the largest producers of film industry in the World, a well-established Book-Publishing Industry, a flourishing Sound Recording Industry to a dynamic Software Industry. The role of Cultural Industries in the Egyptian economy is on a rising trend. Despite such importance Cultural Industries in Egypt remain understudied. The untapped potential such industries have and the positive contribution they can provide to the economy of Egypt triggered the initiative to study, map and profile the existing ones in the country.

This activity included identifying and consolidating the existing cultural industries and operators to upgrade their capacities and to facilitate their future national, regional and international exposure, including their interaction and participation to cross-cultural exchanges. The activity also aimed to tackle the noticeable shortage or rather inexistence of structured data about cultural industries in Egypt by establishing a database on the national level with the existing cultural operators in Egypt while creating an efficient online network bringing together cultural actors in fifteen governorates of Egypt as well as providing training opportunities and capacity building.

Therefore, a team of young researchers worked on mapping the already existing cultural industries and operators in Egypt. The research covered both individuals and cultural institutions.

In order to map the most diversified cultural aspects in the society, a research plan has been conducted for the implementation of this activity. The plan has considered that Egypt is a large community with a diverse multicultural components. Therefore, the team of researchers sub-divided the Egyptian society into four categories according to environmental, geographical and cultural aspects as follows:

1. Urban Environments,
2. Rural Environments,
3. Desert Environments,
4. Coastal Environments.

The Upper Egypt Region is included as it has its unique cultural aspects. From each category, a governorate has been chosen for having the best cultural characteristics and best reflects the group it belongs to and the total number of governorates covered is fifteen governorates.

The research relied heavily on personal and field visits and meetings as well as internet search and phone conversations to identify where the working operators are, the fields they are active in and the kind of cultural productions they are involved in. Once located, the cultural industries are profiled following a unified template used for the collection of data. The profile includes their contacts, type and work areas among other information.

The collected data of the located operators and industries was availed in an online Directory linked to the Action's website while categorizing them according to their nature and field of work. The data is available in both Arabic and English languages. The Directory was also produced in hard copies to be distributed in the final conference.

The Egyptian Handicrafts Festival

Throughout the process of collecting and mapping the cultural industries and operators, it became evident that many important cultural activities, industries and crafts are on the verge of being extinct due to various reasons; such as economic reasons or the un-interest of the new generation to inherit the business, the high prices of the used materials and the cheapness of some imported similar works. This indeed has an effect on the economy, the development and the identity of some governorates. Accordingly, since the Mapping activity aimed at supporting as well as mapping the cultural industries as a whole, the team hosted an event to benefit the craftsmen from different governorates of Egypt and to build synergies between the craftsmen and other cultural operators and institutions as an attempt to bring to life those crafts that are fading in an effort to save them.

The event took the form of a festival, where various booths were provided for different kinds of craftsmen to show and sell their work for their own private benefits.

Component 2: Capacity building and training of cultural operators and Industries

2.2. A series of training workshops

Throughout the implementation of the Action, four workshops were conducted in Alminia, Fayoum, Sharm Elsheikh and Aswan under the theme of "Building Perceptions and Developing Capacities in the Egyptian Cultural Fields". The workshops were attended by participants selected through a public call of expression of interest. The workshop covered the following topics:

- Cultural Industries Management,
- Building the artists' capacities,
- Use of marketing and digital media tools for cultural and artistic production.

It is worth mentioning that the capacities of the team of young researchers working on the implementation of this activity increased due to the skills they gained in dealing with various individuals and cultural operators from diverse levels, backgrounds and cultures. This is in addition to the experience they acquired during their travel to different governorates and being trained by the BA experts.

From the Network for Cultural Consulting in Germany, Dr. Patrick Fohl, the Founder and Director, was invited to conduct a workshop for selected members of some main cultural operators and industries in Egypt to train them on Audience Development: Arts Marketing. Dr. Fohl provided training manuals that would be translated into Arabic and distributed to operators in Egypt and posted on the Action's website.

2.3. Opportunities for Online Training and Exposure

In addition to the training materials of Dr. Fohl and the series of workshops, the mapping team identified opportunities and training links and posted them on the website.

Pillar "3": Actions to Support Youth and New Talents

This Pillar intended to support and reinforce the capacities of Youth and nurture new emerging talents through the established centres as well as the BA and its other affiliated facilities. Actions implemented under this pillar targeted different age groups with special emphasis on children and youth aged 12-15, and adults from 18-34.

3.1. Creation of Centers to Foster the Development of Artistic Professions

In order to encourage access to culture and cultural participation in underprivileged areas with important young population, the BA usually encourages the rehabilitation and establishment of permanent cultural outlets. This is to engage the inhabitants of these areas as well as visitors in artistic and cultural activities, encouraging and equipping them with required training to develop their skills and utilize them as future career and shall also

house and support the activities carried out by young artists in Egypt and advance the burgeoning contemporary art movement in Egypt.

These centers shall also support new talents by offering tools for their professional development and being spaces for their exhibitions, rehearsals and networking.

For this purpose, the BA provisionally selected two sites:

a) The Sinnary House

The Sinnary House was built in 1798 and has been refurbished by a French mission under the supervision of the Supreme Council of Antiquities. The Ministry of Antiquities secured the utilization of this house to the BA as a cultural outlet in Sayeda Zeinab, an underprivileged overpopulated area in Cairo.

The need to use the Sinnary House as a cultural outlet came as a response to the lack of culturally and historically rich venues throughout Egypt, especially in areas that are not open to more diverse and cultural trends that shape everyday life.

Through this Action, the House was equipped with some necessary tools to run the facility in a way to increase its outreach in an underprivileged neighborhood, which has poor access to cultural and artistic productions. The House, which is already operating, offers and hosts cultural and artistic activities all around the year.

The objective was to make of the Sinnary House a beacon of cultural activities and to revive a historic building in the heart of Historic Cairo to be a cultural hub and a space of freedom for multiple forms of expression, in words, texts, painting, music and art. It acted as a mean of linking talented youth in the capital with youth outside of it.

The BA has also succeeded to secure the utilization of the land next to the House to set up an outdoor theatre to host different performances and activities that are planned to take place at the House. Two main sets of

activities were introduced through the Action to youth from different governorates of Egypt free of charge as follows:

1- Creativity Youth Forums

Through eight forums, creative young amateurs aged 18- 34 interested in various fields including graphic designing, painting, literature, filmmaking, painting, photography, visual arts and comics from all over Egypt were invited to participate in workshops to gather, improve their skills and work together in promoting cultural heritage and the advancement of developmental processes.

Open calls for applications were published in the Newspapers, on the Action's website and through the Action's social media tools. Specialized trainers were contacted by the team to provide valuable training opportunities to the young participants.

2- Bi-Annual Art production Competitions

Bi-Annual Art Production Competitions were announced inviting young talents wo age categories – 12 to 15 years and 18 to 34 years to enter competitions in painting, photography and literature, each time touching upon a specific theme.

For each round of the competitions, 5 winners from each age category were selected by a team of judges composed of experts and renowned Egyptian artists.

As an outcome of the Forums and the Competition, the artworks produced by the attendees (posters, drawings and the documentary movie) were exhibited following each event at the main courtyard of the Sinnary House for all visitors to see. They will all also be exhibited during the final conference of the Action.

b) Kom Aldikka Neighbourhood in Alexandria

Kom el Dikka is an area that grew during the latter quarter of the 19th century and the early half of the 20th century when workers migrated from rural areas and Upper Egypt to find work opportunities as laborers and

builders in the new neighborhoods where the European contemporary buildings were being constructed. Arriving by train mainly, they settled in this area because of its proximity to both the train station and the construction sites they were employed in. In the 20th century, Kom el Dikka acquired fame because one of its creative masons, who lived there, Sayed Darwish, turned to music and became one of Egypt's most famous singers and composers. Today there are carpenters in addition to the regular workers who still inhabit the area.

The location is thus important for a number of reasons. As the neighborhood is where the composer of Egypt's national anthem lived, the area has vast cultural significance. It is also a poor area where the residents, though conscious of their cultural heritage, do not have much access to art or culture. While it is not a densely populated neighborhood, and thus its space can be used for the promotion of artistic events, it is central and can be easily accessed. It is also close to the Greco-Roman amphitheater and a number of other cultural centers with whom synergies and collaborations can be achieved.

This activity aims producing a study report about the Kom Eldikka district to facilitate cultural and artistic future activities in the Kom el Dikka being an underprivileged area at the heart of the central district of Alexandria and propose the rehabilitation of the district involving rethinking and planning the public space, as well as encouraging owners of cafés and other modest establishments to consider an extended or upgraded use of their facilities. There is also an unused cistern which could be turned into workshops and art classes, exhibition space, and a place for musical performances and the dissemination of audiovisual works.

This use of the area will not only allow access to culture to the less privileged population of Kom el Dikka, who are too overawed to enter places like the Opera House, foreign cultural centres or even the BA, but will also encourage businesses to grow round these activities, thus leading to the development of the area. It is expected that the success of this activity would be a model to be replicated in other areas in Alexandria and Egypt.

The activity will be implemented through 4 different phases. However it is important to outline that only Phase 1 was executed under this action.

- Phase 1 : Initial survey report and preliminary project
- Phase 2 : Final detailed project (description - phasing and budget)
- Phase 3 : Implementation phase
- Phase 4 : Evaluation and final report

Detailed activities for other phases of the project will be determined after conducting the survey report and preliminary project (phase one). Once the report is issued, the BA will move to the second phase, which will be the final detailing of the project (description - phasing and budget) according to the findings and resolutions of the report and then the beginning of the implementation (phase 3).

Since the main output of this activity was to produce a report about the Kom Eldikka district, the participants in the implementation were divided into three teams as follows:

1. The Architectural and Planning Studies team
2. The Archaeological Studies team
3. The Socio-Economic Studies team

The team also included a Structural Engineer, a Researcher and twenty interns from the Architectural Departments of the Faculties of Engineering of both Alexandria and Pharos Universities. The activities undertaken were as follows:

Preparation

In order to give participants a background and information about the project, an introductive meeting with the all teams' members was held to orient them on the project; its aims, plans and schedules. The BA team has also provided the interns with a training session on the wider context of the city of Alexandria and its history. The team worked on collecting previous studies and documentation and examined other previous experiences in Egypt such as El Darb el Ahmar district.

Survey

The project team visited the site several times and explored the streets and buildings of the area. The team met with residents and people in the street to have their views and visions about the development and the needs of the area in terms of physical environment and potential of development. Based on the visits and insights from residents, SWOT analysis of the area were made in order to identify potentials and opportunities of the area, the points that need to be highlighted and problems that need to be solved to achieve the project's overall goals.

In addition, the socio-economic studies team conducted the following steps to achieve the set goals of the study:

- Site visits to Kom el Dikka district,
- Meetings with various stakeholders such as artists of the area, local researchers in the fields of art, music and culture, and owners of cafés in the area. (16 meetings),
- Mapping of the current cultural initiatives and activities and identifying their nature, number of attendees and scope.
- Collection of data and statistics about the socio-economic profile of the residents of the area from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS).
- Casual meetings with local residents in the streets, around the corners and in cafés to identify the local needs and the residents' perceptions of the development.
- Conducting SWOT analysis: the project team identified many challenges of the area such as poor infrastructure, fading architectural identity and disappearing vocations.

The only challenge faced by the team was obtaining the necessary permissions from the authorities to visits to" Ibn Alnabeeh" water cistern located at the Kom Eldikka area, which they successfully obtained.

This activity entailed a study of the Kom Eldikka district through three research teams covering three topics: the Architectural and Planning Studies team, the Archaeological Studies team and the Socio-Economic

studies team. The activity also engaged twenty interns from the Architecture Department of the Faculties of Engineering of both Alexandria and Pharos Universities. Training sessions were given to these intern students to give them background information about the wider context of the city of Alexandria and its history. The team worked on collecting previous studies and documentation and examined other previous experiences in Egypt such as El Darb el Ahmar district.

The project team visited the Kom Eldikka site several times and explored the streets and buildings of the area. The main aim of this survey was to:

- To identify merited buildings and buildings with distinctive architectural styles,
- To find violations and encroachments to the Building Codes,
- To trace the use of the ground floor plan and street life and activities,
- To identify problems of the buildings and the district as a whole,
- To investigate urban linkages of the area with other neighbouring parts of the city.
- To identify the problems with streets pavements, urban features, lighting and infrastructure,
- To study the urban connectivity of the study area with the main urban fabric and other attractions and nodes within the area,
- To locate the site of Sayed Darwish's house (currently vacant).

For these purposes, the team met with residents and people in the street to have their views and visions about the development and the needs of the area in terms of physical environment and potential of development. Based on the visits and insights from residents, SWOT analysis of the area were made in order to identify potentials and opportunities of the area and points that need to be highlighted and problems that need to be solved to achieve the project's overall goals.

In addition, the archaeological team conducted the following steps to explore the archaeological aspects of Kom el Dikka district:

- Literature review about the history of the district,
- Research about the history of classical Alexandria and its relation to the history of the area as a whole. The study included the connection of the site with the Roman Amphitheatre archaeological site.
- Survey of old and historic maps of Alexandria to trace the area within the wider context of the city,
- Study about the existing mausoleums at the area,
- Acquisition of historic drawings, plans and elevations of the Ibn Alnabeeh water cistern from the archives of Greco Roman Museum drawn by Kamil.
- Literature review about the water cisterns of Alexandria and a specific study of the cisterns located in the area,
- Mapping the exact location of the water cisterns on the updated maps of the area.
- Contact with the authorities to acquire legal permission for the visit of the Ibn Alnabeeh water cistern,
- Site visit to Ibn Alnabeeh water cistern; the visit included inspection of the existing condition of the cistern and observation of aspects of deterioration, subsoil water level, structural integrity and photography.
- Setting and proposing potentials of re-use of the cistern in collaboration of the architectural study team and the socio-economic studies team.

Furthermore, the socio-economic studies team conducted the following steps to achieve the set goals of the study:

- Site visits to Kom el Dikka district.
- Meetings with various stakeholders such as artists of the area, local researchers in the fields of art, music and culture, and owners of cafés in the area. Discussions with these stakeholders took place to increase their awareness on the importance of culture for achieving a sustainable development.
- Mapping of the current cultural initiatives and activities and identifying their nature, number of attendees and scope.

- Collection of data and statistics about the socio economic profile of the residents of the area from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS).
- Casual meetings with local residents in the streets, around the corners and in cafés to identify local needs and residents' perceptions of the development.
- Conducting SWOT analysis: the activity teams identified many challenges of the area such as poor infrastructure, fading architectural identity and disappearing vocations.

On the other hand, a structural engineer has visited and inspected six selected buildings by the architectural team in order to inspect their structural integrity. These buildings are located along the proposed path of movement in the district and in areas of potential development. A researcher was also commissioned to investigate the ownership of these selected buildings.

In addition, visits to the local authorities and offices of the local district were conducted and current laws and legislations and codes were studied in order to crystalize the legal framework where the owners of these buildings are tempted to allow the usage of their properties for the development plan of the area.

According to the inputs and findings of the socio-economic and archaeological teams, the architecture team set up the goals of the development and developed an urban and architectural proposal. The proposal was scaled on two levels:

- the urban level: a walking path was proposed to connect the main and major attractions of the area and to connect the area with the other urban attractions nearby such as the Alexandria National Museum, the Greco-Roman museum and the Roman Amphitheatre.
- the architectural level: the proposal includes choosing 12 significant buildings with distinctive architectural characters that can be re-used for cultural uses. In addition, three projects were proposed as follows:

1. Sayed Darwish; a Visiting Centre.
2. The re-use of the underwater cistern as an Archaeological Cistern: a 3D showroom about the history of Alexandria.
3. The re-use of old Turkish style residential houses as Oriental Music Centres to be also used to hold other cultural activities.

3.2. Arts in the Classroom

This activity was designed to enhance the awareness of governmental schools' students awareness as well as understanding of culture, through providing interactive sessions on four types of art; plastic arts, music, theatre and cinema. The activity was implemented within the boundaries of their classrooms through 4 coaches in these respective disciplines and one artistic mentor to supervise their work and notice the talented students aged from 12 to 16 years old.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, 12 governorates were chosen for the implementation and the visits were scheduled to start on the beginning of the school year 2013-2014.

Accordingly, the team started schools and the "Exploratory Centres and Cities of Science and Technology" in the selected governorates to hold the workshops. Students from different governmental and elementary schools attended the workshops.

The role of schools and Exploratory Centres the covered the following:

- Nominating 40 students from the three school-years of the preparatory stage, taken into consideration the gender balance.
- Dividing the selected students into 4 groups (10 students at each group), taking into account the proportion of the number of the boys to that of the girls, and the number of the students from each school year. Each group was specialized in one of the four arts (fine arts, music, filmmaking or theatre). Regarding the selection process, students are selected and divided according to their talents and their distinctiveness in the fields of specialization, if there is a previous experience which

indicate that. The student's own desire to participate and to learn a particular type of art was also considered.

- Nominating four teachers from the school to oversee the events and activities of the project. One teacher is assigned to each group/specialization, preferably with one with an experience in the area of specialization, or at least an interest in the field.
- Providing suitable places for the four training workshops, each to accommodate 10 students, their coach and assisting teacher throughout the four school days.
- Providing a space to accommodate 40 students, the four mentors and four teachers, for one hour daily.

In parallel, the teachers were provided Training of Teachers (ToT) by the coaches in the four arts. The training day was divided into four parts as follows:

1. An orientation session given by one of the mentors, each to introduce the form of art they are working on. The session is attended by all participants including students, teachers and other mentors (each session lasts for 30 minutes).
2. An open discussion on the same type of art with the mentor. The discussion is also attended by all participants and lasts for 30 minutes.
3. This is followed by a 15 minutes break, after which the four groups are divided and each is assembled at their training locations, in such a way that each group is composed of 10 students, a mentor and a teacher. The groups start working for 2 hours and 15 minutes, intermitted by a 15 minutes break.
4. Each training day concludes with a quick assessment of the productions of the day, in order to determine the areas of strengths and weaknesses of the produced work. The assessment acts as a feedback that helps to emphasize the strengths of the artworks and to avoid the weaknesses through the days that follow.

After completing the training day with the students, an hour is allotted for knowledge transfer, as the mentor and the assisting teacher sit together and the former shares his/her expertise regarding the form of art they are

both working on. In this light, throughout the workshop, each student covers 8 hours of practical training with the mentor on one type of art, in addition to covering 4 hours of theoretical and scientific information about the four types of arts. On the other hand, each teacher covers 8 hours of overseeing practical training, 4 hours of interaction and knowledge transfer with the mentor, and 4 hours of theoretical knowledge regarding the four types of arts. By the end of four days, one hour is cut out from the final training day to showcase all the artworks that each group produced throughout the workshop, and is attended by all participants.

This activities highlighted the importance of interaction between the students through activities other than what they encounter on the daily routines practiced at school. The students' participation in the four programs enhanced both their social and artistic skills.

The project team remained in contact with the teachers and invited three students and a teacher from each of the twelve governorates to attend the exhibition where their artworks produced during the workshops will be displayed. Students were selected according to their talents and interaction with the mentors, while the teachers will be selected according to their interaction with the students and the mentors.

3.3. North and South - An Aesthetic and Exploratory Vision in the Eyes of Egypt's Youth

Egypt is a country with an immensely rich historical and cultural background full of cultural interaction that is at the origin of Egypt's cultural richness. In every major city exist monumental landmarks, intangible heritage and traditions that shape communities inhabiting each. This action is an attempt to link history, antiquities and art through a comprehensive program.

"North and South" drew on Egypt's rich historical and cultural background. It attempts to link history, antiquities and arts in Egypt through a creative journey.

This program targeted young artists aged 18-34 from both genders and from different governorates of Egypt to embark on an extraordinary journey across Egypt. Accordingly, a call for applicants was posted in the newspapers, on the Action's website to select 100 young artists to participate in the program.. The call was also promoted through the social media channels of the project. The announcement also included a detailed time plan for the journey with dates and destinations of the trip. The team has also contacted different universities and institutions to help out in promoting the call for applicants to the widest audience possible.

The call invited the artists to submit samples of their work in the five disciplines to be evaluated during the participants' selection. The selections of have been performed according to the criteria described in the call for applications through a committee of specialized artists in relevant fields.

The program tackled 5 artistic forms expressing the Egyptian historical and cultural identity:

1. Painting.
2. Writing (Essay, short story, diaries) in both colloquial Arabic and/or classical Arabic.
3. Photography.
4. Graphics (digital graphic design).
5. Video Art.

The activity focused on developing the participants' artistic skills. It also enhances the spirit of teamwork, and reinforce a feeling of belonging, where the participants will develop a sense of pride of their rich and diverse culture.

Selected participants traveled on a 21-day journey. The Journey started around in Alexandria, where the participants spent 3 days. They were divided into groups to be trained in the five artistic disciplines according to their specializations. They were given some materials for sketching for the whole journey. They later traveled to spend four days in Cairo, where they were provided with orientations about the Egyptian history and cultural heritage. This was followed by a 7-day cruise along the river Nile.

As an essential part of the journey, participants also visit Luxor and Aswan to experience actual interaction with the culture and the heritage of cities on the Nile Banks.

Finally, participants returned to Alexandria where they spent 6 days to finalize their work and submit their projects, which were evaluated by specialized experts. An exhibition of the participant's creative works was displayed during the final conference of the Action where some participants were invited to attend.

For further information about the different activities of the Action, please visit: www.bibalex.org/culture

1- Preliminary Overview

Culture is a way of life in a society. It is depicted through different aspects of life in a community, including the collective and individual behavior and way of thinking; how people deal with public and private property; how they enjoy life; how they cook and dress; and more. Human history has never witnessed a society progress without a developed culture. A society's culture appears as one walks through its squares and streets to observe how its members behave, how they deal with each other, and, most importantly, how they manage their shared affairs in a way that would help develop the quality of life of the society as a whole.

In addition to these public manifestations, the spread of scientific culture is considered an aspect of cultural renaissance, for it includes a vision of the world and its laws and includes a system of thought and a method for dialogue and decisions. It also relies on logic and rationality; invokes argument and proof; refutes occults; and rises above criticizing beliefs as a sign of respect of them and to emphasize that they have their own field, separate from the fields of science and knowledge—i.e. the fields of worldly knowledge that is based on observation through the senses, reasoning through analogy, deduction through logic, and the realization of the human mind.

Our popular cultural reality has to localize scientific culture and an authentic cognitive tendency—one that is compatible with the call for civilization propagated by Arab scientists through the ages, and one that is also compatible with the nature of the time we live in. A society cannot forcefully move toward science and knowledge without caring about the future or about its youth who are the driving force of coming times. The great potential available in younger generations has to be activated and utilized in full force to ensure the inclusion of the Egyptian society and its popular culture in the era of cognitive, scientific revolution.

However, Egyptian culture is in a crisis that could be seen in various manifestations, such as behavioral deterioration on all levels; the absence of critical thought; the increase of diatribes that have no input or impact in the

development of the community; the prevalence of verbal and behavioral violence on a societal level; and the intolerance toward the ones who are different in their culture, gender, education, or religion.

The issues Taha Hussein, The Dean of Arabic Literature, raised in his *The Future of Culture in Egypt* in the first half of the 20th century applies to our world today. However, the difference between both, this research and the book, lies in the societal context in which each was written. Taha Hussein published his book during a time when the issue of liberalism and the secular state was resolved, whereas nowadays, people are divided into a group that supports the concept of a civil state, and another group that calls for a religious one. What makes matters more complicated is the absence of communication between both groups. We advocate the civil state because it does not oppose religion; it rather acknowledges the freedom of belief and religion with all their creeds, opinions, diligences, beliefs, differences, and problematics. The civil state is also an institutional state that relies on council—an authentic, Islamic principle—as a means of making decisions and running the affairs of the country. Additionally, it gives the people the authority to monitor the government through disciplined mechanisms, a state council, and the House of People's Representatives, and the civil state issues its decisions in accordance with the people's best interests which change to adapt to the circumstance and the changes of time.

The mission of the civil state is to be impartial and to guarantee the rights of all people regardless of their religion, race, nationality, creed, and thought. This is achieved through implementing the principle of citizenship in terms of equality in rights and duties among all citizens, men and women, Muslims and non-Muslims.

If we go back to Taha Hussein's book, we will find that we both share the belief in the importance of education in building the future, and that it is difficult to separate education from culture. Thus, the reformation of Egyptian culture is a fundamental necessity in regulating life in the community on the basis of rationality. The reform we aspire and seek to achieve is not a mere increase in cultural products of creative and artistic works, even though this increase is essential. What we aspire for is the

increase of people's participation in cultural activity and of the popularity of its products so that cultural values would turn into a mindset, a way of life, a vision of the future, and a new awareness that molds the consciousness of the Egyptian citizen.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that reforming Egyptian culture is the key to reconstruct the contemporary Egyptian character, so that it would be more open to plurality and more accepting of the other opinion; would believe in rationality and the scientific approach; would have an amount of scientific culture; would be a person of great historical and cognitive knowledge; and would be well-informed of what is happening around the world.

An all-inclusive cultural reform is the true gateway to the renaissance of the Egyptian society and the restoration of Egypt's status among other nations, for status is built on mutual respect and appreciation; it is not taken by force or through victory and it could not be bought. It is acquired through generous and abundant giving, and it is verified through hard work and continuity.

<u>Egypt in five cultural circles</u>

Egypt has a fundamental cultural role in five cultural circles, and I emphasize that this is strictly concerning Egypt's cultural role, not its political, economic, or military one. These five circles are:

Firstly: The Arabic Circle: Culture cannot exist without language, and the Arabic lnguge deems the Arabic circle the first one of all five. Egypt has been playing a significant role in the Arab cultural scene for ages, even if this role has weakened in the past few decades.

Secondly: The Islamic Circle: Not every Arab is Muslim, and not every Muslim is an Arab. Nonetheless, the Arab World plays a significant role in the ancient Islamic World with its 1400 million peoples, as well as groups of Muslims in various other countries, including Western ones. Egypt represents moderation, and none of the other three countries that play essential roles in the Islamic cultural scene could compete with Egypt in

that. The three countries are Saudi Arabia with its Wahhabi principles, Shiite Iran, and Turkey with its Western and secular inclinations.

Thirdly: The African Circle: Egypt has a political presence in this circle. However, this presence has weakened through the years as Egypt has not extended genuine or real bridges of cultural communication, despite of the richness of the African cultural heritage and its international impact on fine arts, music, dancing, an international literature written in English and French.

Fourthly: The Mediterranean Circle: This dimension was apparent in the thoughts of our pioneers of Enlightenment in our countries, such as Taha Hussein, and it was part and parcel of our history through the centuries.

Fifthly: The International Circle: This is where features of an international civilization with clear cultural dimensions emerged in the international scene. These dimensions include the ideology of human rights, democracy, pluralism, respecting the environment, scientific culture, and more. Egypt is capable of contributing in this international scene to the same extent as it would be able to develop its national and regional cultural role in the four other circles.

In my opinion, the Egyptian contribution in the first four circles will immensely strengthen each one of them. It will not come at the expense of what others achieve in any of the circles; it will rather complement these achievements. Indeed, the Egyptian presence in different scenes will activate each scene individually, link between them, and then contribute in emphasizing the role of Egypt in the fifth, international circle in the same manner it will assume its role in the first four circles.

However, this depends on the complete reformation of the cultural scene in Egypt, the ending of the cultural crisis we are witnessing, and fighting the Salafist trends—the trends that gnaw at the bones of our community, want to spread its limited, narrow-minded view of the world and of history among people, and impose its control over what people are allowed to see, hear, or read.

Our question is: do all these circles defect the contemporary Egyptian Identity?

Our Arab Culture and the Culture of Knowledge

Our contemporary Arab culture poses many questions in facing the culture of our present age with all its hopes and challenges, its achievements and failures. Thus, we are in need of reviewing our intellectual strategies, which lead our collective movement, in order for them to suit the tendencies and trend of individuals. However, we still do not have the collective willpower or the necessary awareness to keep up with or continue this pioneering forefront of our intellectual leaders.

The monitoring of cognitive transitions and of the great differences between human cultures lets us pinpoint the radical contrast in what occupies people, and it allows us to properly name things in the manifestations of backwardness and progress without submitting to explanations or surrendering to the inevitability of reasons. I do not see any structural impediments stopping us from a speedy progress toward the path of creative and constructive cultural creation.

Culture is not only measured by the culmination of knowledge, literature, arts, and antiquities in the possession of nations, nor by their historical accomplishments in sciences and innovations; it also is measured by the remaining power from all of these aspects that would generate renewable and creative energy for human beings, as well as the aptitude to confront all human obstacles and natural impediments, and to address their demands. The variance between different cultures lies in the extent and vitality of this energy. Accordingly, what are the signs of this vitality, and what do we get from it in out Arab culture?

First: we inherited the unilateral perception of controversial issues from the periods of cultural stagnation. We have become opinionated, selfish, and falsely accusing others without a true perception of the necessity of carrying out a detailed analysis of multi-dimensional problems,

acknowledging the varying aptitudes of public figures, and taking advantage of their greatest expertise.

Second: being intolerantly and unilaterally opinionated results in the shallowness of analysis and the failure to raise awareness of others' motives and arguments.

Third: for more than a thousand years, the Arabs and Muslims raised the slogan of science and knowledge, during their rebellion against the Aristotelian heritage, and laid the foundation of modern scientific approach that is based on experimentation and analogy. This dates back to six centuries prior to the emergence of Galileo, who was brought before inquisition courts in Europe and eventually had to keep his promise to withdraw all of his condemned opinions. In the meantime, science had evolved in the Arab-Muslim world owing to the significant contributions of eminent scientists, such as Alhazen.

Fourth: the society of science and knowledge, which emerged during the medieval ages, was founded on tolerance and openness. One must remember eminent Arab figures, such as Abul ʿAla al-Maʿarri, a blind Arab poet who lived in Maarrat al-Nu'man town and was coeval with Alhazen. He was a controversial rationalist of his time who unleashed his thought, imagination, and words that were regarded at that time by his society as atheism. However, he is still a proof of language, an imam in literature, and a reference in philosophy of thought till date.

Fifth: this open and tolerant society does not give room to literary and artistic creativity only, but also opens the way for expressing doubt and faith in those figures, such as Abul ʿAla Al-Maʿarri, who disclose their hearts on their journey from doubt to faith. This society neither fears cultural invasion nor abandons the traditional and cultural legacy for fear of embracing new and foreign concepts. I have to admit that singing the praises of the glory of our ancient cultural heritage, lacking the real perception of its fundamentals, resulted in taking our conception of the past and our attempts to preserve and glorify it as a model that we should replicate and follow in making the future. These are most destructive and misleading misconceptions. Though it

was crucial for us to call on the past, from which we derive a resistance force and self-confidence for the purpose of gaining confidence in our national identity, and avoiding being crushed by others, especially during colonial periods. Yet, after overcoming this phase, we dramatically harm ourselves when we have come to worship our ancestors rather than merely show respect. It is sufficient for us to look around in order to see how others have faced this and learn from them in our process. What we need to stress in this field is the education of girls, and empowering women, to enable "her" to fully assume her role in all fields.

Sixth: the remoteness from contemporary scientific culture has become the true measure of vitality of cultures. Philosophy has been widely known in ancient times as the mother of all disciplines and peak of knowledge that represents the foundation of thoughts, and directs peoples' civilian or military movements. Today, scientific thinking and culture have become pivots that direct the course of knowledge and civilization, thus the sovereignty of scientific thinking and culture guarantees the dissemination of knowledge and realization of progress. There is no way for us to contribute to shaping the contemporary civilization except through access to such scientific context, using our utmost physical and human powers, on all individual and societal levels.

Seventh: another critical issue is forcing religion in matters that have nothing to do with it, consulting men of religion in various life matters, in addition to the outbreak of an era of random fatwas, and the dominance of professional and volunteer preachers. The major virtue of Islam is its absolute concern with worldly affairs and its appeal to human experiences in running them. Since the famous incident of palm fertilization took place in Islamic heritage, and in reminiscence of Prophet Muhammad's (Peace be upon him) universal saying: "You know better about your worldly affairs", we have freedom in running our worldly affairs, depending on public benefit, reasoning, historical experience, and growth of scientific knowledge, in addition to passing laws that serve public benefit, in order to become familiar with our understanding of the fundamentals that constitute our heritage, as well as opening up to new evolutions and their requirements.

It is necessary then to consult those who specialize in those matters, not consult religious scholars. Those matters are not related to the permissible or prohibited, but rather to being true or false based on public benefit that is subject to change according to time, place, and circumstances. This has become especially important after the emergence of this phenomenon of consulting religious scholars for fatwas to resolve every single worldly issue, even if far from religious. We have learned from Abbas Mahmoud al-Akkad, one of Egypt's eminent intellectuals, that "Thought is an Islamic obligation". Reasoning and reflection are also obligations on Muslims. The other side of this disquieting phenomenon is intruding religion in the aesthetic evaluation of artworks and innovations, including a fierce social censorship on what the society can read, listen to and watch, imposed by a secluded fanatic group. We do not undergird the confiscation of thought, not only because it confines freedom, but also because it publicizes and disseminates unworthy works. It is time for us to preserve our religion through upholding its spirit, abiding by Islamic values and ethics, and abandoning the literatim of some Islamic jurists in their measures of running worldly and societal affairs, to become stronger and more advanced.

When we follow the paths of parallel cultures in the old and new continents in the East and the West, we realize that we are not the only country facing such dilemmas, and that others have victoriously overcome obstacles hindering the development of science and knowledge. We also recognize that ancient nations managed to shape their heritage and adapt their culture to openness and pluralism. While maintaining the spiritual underpinnings of our unblemished culture, all of these factors guarantee the establishment of knowledge societies and consolidating them in our public awareness and our absolute will. Intellectuals, by nature, should take a critical stance toward their societies. Their role is not emphasizing the prevailing ideologies but questioning them, for they are the tools for intellectual renewal within their societies. Nevertheless, he is, at the same time, the keeper and preserver of the society's identity, for every living, changeable, renewable culture must connect with its past and be open to other cultures.

A society cannot forcefully move toward science and knowledge without caring about the future or about its youth who are the driving force of coming times. The great potential available in younger generations has to be activated and utilized in full force to ensure the advancement of the Arab society and its popular culture toward the gates of the future. Perhaps this would be, at the same time, our path toward a future that would allow us to provide the necessary space for youth to do their part in the leadership of the Arab societies' movement; open the doors to pluralism and to communication with global movements; and entering the era of cognitive, scientific revolution.

About the Egyptian Identity

Identity is no small matter; it is a notion that contrasts with unilateral thought. Identity has objective and neutral components that are created by accumulative experiences and the ramifications of a person's decisions. However, it also has internal components (what I feel towards myself and others) and external components (how others view me, and how they deal with me according to this view). Many try to reduce identity to nationality. This tendency ignores the fact that various other aspects contribute to the formation of identity, including the sense of belonging and affiliation; psychological and physical alienation; and faith. Identity is also related to life experiences and cultural practices.

The Egyptian identity has diverse tributaries and sources that thinkers have expounded in the past and in the present. Some, whom I agree with, have found the following among its interwoven components: the Hellenistic heritage (known to many as the Greco-Roman period), the rich Christian heritage in Egypt, the Arab cultural legacy, the Islamic cultural heritage, the African cultural legacy, and the legacy of various Western cultures that have reached an extent of international dimensions.

Some try to reduce identity to a single dimension without acknowledging the existence, stature, and effect of the others. All societies Have become characterized by multiple identities, even if a certain element may dominate over others. This pluralism has prompted a rich cultural

environment, despite the occasional conflict among some communities that identify themselves according to one or the other of the complex dimensions of identity, disregarding the other elements. For example, Alexandria in the nineteenth century represented a society of pluralism in its diverse communities and their perpetual interaction among themselves, and with Egyptian society in general, and how this contributed to a milieu of cultural vitality in the city. This led to Alexandria being the city where independent newspapers emerged such as Al-Ahram, the oldest newspaper in Egypt; where the first women's magazine appeared, and it also boasted advanced urban development that preceded any other city in Egypt. Similarly, the arts flourished when Levantines immigrated to Cairo and enriched the theatre, and Rose Al-Yusuf is one notable example. Likewise, the Egyptian movie industry, one of the largest in the world in the last century, was born in Alexandria. All of this wealthy cultural produce became part and parcel of the Egyptian cultural reality that validates the Egyptian identity with its richness and openness.

Countering the Current Conditions

Our reality today the farthest it could be from that history, for culture in Egypt has deteriorated; it ceased to be a scene of sophisticated, intellectual dialogue, and it is no longer an open space for different opinions with what they offer of cultural wealth and cognitive momentum. Culture in Egypt is where objectivity; the commitment to logical and scientific approaches; and the clarity of vision have become absent and have been replaced by an abundance of rumors.

Nonetheless, we should have high hopes in the rising generation of Egyptians and what they can accomplish in restoring the splendor of cultural life. But we – the middle-aged and the elderly – must empower this rising generation by opening doors, removing obstacles and acknowledging achievements. It is also essential that we remember that there are important sectors of cultural production, such as film and theater, where youth cannot accomplish and create without significant institutional partnerships. That is why it is necessary for us to review the mechanisms of our cultural

institutions, and to restructure them according to the requirements of the age, both in terms of technological developments and the needs of our youth.

These circumstances call for a candid and honest self-confrontation; most Egyptians do not respect science and knowledge; do not appreciate imagination and creativity; and do not allow voices of opposition and different opinions to be expressed. Thus, it is essential to review the statuses of the institutions of culture, media, scientific research, education, and higher education. It is also necessary to give back the university its privacy and independence.

In executing this vision, we must include all intellectuals, accepting the differences and arguments that will ensue as such debates and dialogues are a part of the atmosphere we want.

Intellectuals, by nature, should take a critical stance toward their societies. Their role is not emphasizing the prevailing ideologies but questioning them, for they are the tools for intellectual renewal within their societies. At the same time, they are the guardians of society identity. Therefore, they should maintain the ideologies of renewal and consolidation, guaranteeing the ability to go back to our deeply-rooted traditions on one hand, and seek the spirit of openness to new ideologies on the other. Consequently, renewal with rooting is the role of the intellectual in every society, for seeking all that is new without going back to one's roots will lead to a sense of loss and confusion; and being stuck in the past and refusing all that is new is a surrender to a slow suicide.

2- The Current Cultural State of Affairs

Egyptians in the 19th century had the latent capability to implement the renaissance project launched by Mohammad Ali, especially as they realized its significance and magnitude. Egypt was among the first of the Arab countries to adopt the new contemporary state pattern. As a result, a new intellectual sector emerged in the society and expressed their opinions and points of view in the newspapers. The press witnessed a leap during the rule of Khedive Ismail reflecting the interactions among the Egyptian society. All Arabs looked up to this progress with admiration and praise and recognized Egypt's leadership in this field.

The current state of affairs requires an uplifting of the Egyptian society's potentials in a manner that keeps up with the spirit of our age, and unleashes Egyptian creativity. This cannot be achieved without a review of the current status quo, which reflects two main points:

First: the change in the cultural relationship between Egypt and other Arab countries, as a result of cultural development is some Arab countries and the success of cultural projects outside Egypt, such as the success of the Kuwaiti projects, which were founded by Egyptians (such as: Fouad Zakaria and Ahmed Zaki). In addition and due to several reasons, Arab societies lack confidence in some of Egypt's intellectuals and consequently Egypt lost the credibility of some of its cultural icons.

Second: the stagnation of Egyptian cultural institutions as well as the unproductivity of intellectuals, which deprived the cultural movement in Egypt of its dynamism and led to the lack of any cultural and intellectual debates.

The current state of affairs caused a recession in the Egyptian role in both the regional and international arenas. The Egyptian influence on the Arab region has become very limited. Following the major impact of Om Kalthoum, Abdel Halim Hafez, Taha Hussein, and Ibrahim Nagy on everyone and the eagerness of all countries to imitate the Egyptian flag,

Egypt has become only a major entity with inherited rich heritage and limited influence on Arabs' daily life or on the Arab scene in general.

This can be explicitly noted in the following:

- The emergence of film festivals competing with Cairo film festivals and the rise of cinema in Lebanon, Morocco, and Tunisia. However the Egyptian cinema is still the most prominent amidst a growing rise in the quality of Turkish and Indian movies. Bureaucratic complications also led to the international cinema to film scenes of the Arab region in other countries, especially Morocco. This threatens the artistic production infrastructure in Egypt.
- With the exception of some plays held in national and independent theaters, there is no real integrated theatrical movement that comprises all elements of the theatre: the script, production, and audience, and thus limited its impact, while in the Gulf theatrical movements are growing. Lebanon presents fascinating musical performances which are welcomed in all Arab cultural festivals, amidst the absence of any Egyptian participation. This requires an immediate rescue of the theatrical movement in Egypt, especially the musical theater.
- In addition to the necessity of promoting and sponsoring puppet theatres by the state as an important educational tool, supporting puppetry and shadow arts, as well as adding puppetry to the World Heritage List.
- Egypt was an pioneer in the revival of Arab poetry, where the Apollo "school" emerged and offered a clear contrast between tradition and contemporaneity. If we exclude Ahmed Abdel Moaty Hegazy, Farouk Shousha, Farouk Gewida, Mohamed Ibrahim Abu Senah, and Abdel Rahman Al-Abnoudy, Egypt has not added new figures to the cultural scene, this while other Arab figures have appeared in this creative field in Mauritania, Amman, Yemen, Syria, and Lebanon. Egypt has ranked less than expected in spite of the fact that areas like Delta, Qena, Matrouh, Sinai are rich with poetic talents who need support and nurture in order to reach the road to success.

- The increasing Arab capabilities in several fields, such as writing novels in Libya by Ibrahim Al-Kawny, in Algeria by Wassiny laareq and Taher Watar, and the emergence of new intellectual capacities, such as Radwan Al-Sayed in Lebanon, and Abdel Haq Azouzy in Morocco. In addition to new schools of Arab literary criticism outside Egypt, for instance in Tunisia, Morocco, and Kuwait, and the presence of many new Syrian and Lebanese artists, especially singers. All this raises a difficult question of how Egypt will recover its pioneering role in Arab culture.

The current cultural state of affairs in Egypt is partially due to importing and imitating –by Egyptians working in the Gulf- of the luxurious gulf lifestyle which consumes Egyptians savings, in addition to the negative impact of some misinterpretation of Islamic beliefs on a large sector of Egyptians, which has in turn adversely affected the state of moderate Islam in Egypt.

When addressing the cultural reform issues, we have to discuss the following points: A clear strategic goal to restructure the contemporary Egyptian character to have a certain identity, which is open to the other, believes in pluralism and dialogue, appreciates heritage and beauty, and is able to communicate with the world and reach out to the future. To achieve this, we need to support a wide cultural movement in all fields and geographical regions of Egypt and to address cultural production dilemmas, such as book publishing, film and TV production, and theatrical production and marketing. In doing so, we have to:

1. Develop cultural institutions in a way that ensures their cooperation and avoids the duplication and conflict of roles.
2. Review cultural legislations.
3. Open up to regional and global cultures.
4. Use modern technology in promoting and disseminating culture.
5. Produce and disseminate culture, and most particularly in the scientific cultural domain.
6. Ensure that cultural production and diversity are in conformity with the society's requirements.

7. Devote attention to the culture of creativity and promote freedom of expression.
8. Foster creative potentials and promote dialogue across generations.
9. Expand cultural options in terms of heritage and creativity.
10. Promote and publish the translation of all works in the Arab culture into other languages and vice versa.
11. Nurture children's culture.
12. Enhance and make proper use of the cultural palaces along with their missions and objectives.
13. Make an inventory of all historical and archeological buildings in Egypt that require restoration and renovation.
14. Consolidate cultural values and presenting background information on the different regions across Egypt.
15. Issue national cultural bulletins that deal with national history, folklore, and distributing free copies among university and school students.

The Egyptian Cultural Society

The Egyptian cultural society bring in new blood from all over Egypt, in order to shed light on them so that they become Egypt's icons in their towns and villages in the following domains:

- **Arts:** including novels, short stories, poetry, and literary criticism. To achieve this, cultural palaces and houses, and faculties of arts and education have to spread in different regions of Egypt.
- **Thought:** There is no doubt that the Egyptian contemporary school of thought has declined, so encouraging a new generation of Egyptian thinkers and philosophers is of major importance, with a special focus on maintaining the diversity of intellectual trends. So we should give serious consideration to scholarship grants for study abroad in the fields of humanities and languages as well as re-discovering the intellectual and creative abilities of the new generations. Since Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Lebanon and Syria are strong competitors

for Egypt, therefore the re-formation of the Egyptian school with diverse trends will reclaim Egypt's leading role in this arena.

- **Art:** including music, singing, visual arts, dancing, cinema, and theater. Egypt's pioneers in music and singing have limited abilities at present; therefore, nurturing and re-discovering new talents is essential. Moreover, the role of music conservatories and opera house with all its branches is pivotal in this domain, assuring seriousness in the production. Concerning visual arts, providing artists with incentives and full-time grants is a good way to set a new generation apart from them that can compete internationally.

- **The Intellectuals:** To present a new generation of intellectuals, we must provide them with capacity-building training courses that aim primarily to discover young intellectuals, and then re-cultivating them in the best possible ways, before engaging in public life.

- **Cultural Magazines:** Egypt was the pioneer in the Arab world in issuing general and specialized cultural magazines, but unfortunately since the end of the sixties until present, the number of magazines has declined due to several factors:
  - The Journalists Syndicate insists that only active members are eligible for the position of magazine chief editors, at a time when affiliation membership to the syndicate was closed which once allowed pioneers, like Taha Hussein, Hussein Moanis, and Ahmed Hassan El Zayat, to become the chief editors of cultural magazines.
  - The poor distribution of magazines as well as the unavailability of their printed editions, which is the case now in Al-Hilal magazine that is not widely circulated inside and outside Egypt.
  - Having a secluded Egyptian culture without attracting Arab writers to write in those magazines.
  - The migration of many distinguished Egyptian cadres to work in the Gulf magazines.
  - The unavailability of sufficient editions of specialized magazines such as Fusul "Seasons"; one of the most successful magazines in the field of Egyptian and Arab literary criticism.

Despite the importance of the media, Internet, digital publishing, and any other contemporary means (all of which will be discussed later), cultural magazines remain the backbone of the cultural movement in most societies; thus, reforming their statuses will be of importance in the proposed cultural reform.

To address all these challenges of the local decline and foreign competition, this report offers many proposals for cultural reform in Egypt, all of which collaborate for the renewal of the Egyptian public discourse, whether inside or outside Egypt. The inputs of such discourse manifest themselves in the contemporary Egyptian character that bears these characteristics: moderation, openness to plurality, acceptance to the other and the other opinion, belief in rationality and scientific methodology, a degree of scientific culture, a vast historical and cognitive background, and exposure to global current affairs. This is the desired outcome of this plan.

<u>Key cultural issues pertaining to the book, the song, the cinema, and the theater</u>

1. **The Book Issue**

There is no publishing industry in Egypt in its pure scientific sense, but we have printing pressmen of books, and publishing houses and organizations that either live on an old bequeath, or the continuous funds as part of the state support, or even subsist on publishing university books, or take advantage of a number of the remaining eminent Arab figures in the world of authorship, without bringing in new generations.

The fact is that there may be no publishers as such, except a few who publish without any prior plans, and are unaware of the content of the books being published, in pursuit of financial benefits. Those publishers, if not many, complain about their industry recession? As there is no good demand for their products. For example, this is one of the publishing houses that publishes what is known as Islamic books that if it recesses, it suddenly turns to publishing books on cosmetics, beauty, diet, cooking, and car repair. However, you also find one of the organizations specialized in publishing

unpopular articles written by male and female journalists in books out of courtesy to make reasonable profits that would eventually become a propaganda mouthpiece for the whole entity. Meanwhile, we witness a major calamity when enormous amounts of money are wasted on publishing all those encyclopedias that present obsolete information, putting all those who purchase them into trouble as their content and their dates are outdated. We also find publishing houses beseeching any Gulf State to print publications that promote their policies. That is why we were extremely surprised to find publishers pleading with authors to publish their books, but they also urge them to share the printing costs. After presenting all these facts, do readers still question whether we have any publishing industry or not?

This question actually requires a real answer that would analyze the current situation in Egypt and offer solutions to its dramatic, continuous decline that gets worse day by day.

Laying responsibility on one party while excluding others is a shorthand for the problem. To this end, we have to recognize all the concerned parties, as follows:

Official book organizations, the Egyptian Publishers Association and the Egyptian Writers Union, newspapers and different mass media, the faculties of fine and applied arts, public and private publishing houses, the chambers of printing industries and printing presses, the ministries of finance, and the ministries of industry due to their responsibility for the paper industry.

To be completely honest, in the midst of this horrible nightmare and tragic reality, there are some publishing experiences that are worthy to be commended as destructive criticism is pointless, and highlighting some stray light is mandatory. In the Egyptian General Book Authority, the Tarikh al-Misryin "The History of the Egyptians" series succeeded in bridging a large gap in the Egyptian history and introducing young Egyptian and Arab historians to the cultural arena, becoming one of the crucial references for all researchers that was sold at affordable prices. The reason why we ruled this

series out is simply because the choice of its topics is based on a clear scientific approach regardless of the author's identity? Moreover, several publishing houses affiliated with the Anglo Bookshop have published outstanding books on Egyptian history, such as the works of Dr. Abd el-Aziz Saleh and Dr. Mostafa el-Abady.

There is a national translation project implemented by the Egypt's National Center for Translation. The diverse languages and topics being translated into Arabic and the serious concern about the content being published are what prompted this project to become at the vanguard of the Arab cultural arena. Moreover, the project has succeeded in introducing a new generation of young translators who will have a major impact in the coming years. Those who observe the project find out that it grows year after year, and during the past two years it published books on applied sciences— not only humanities.

The book industry is a complex, intricate process in its entirety, necessitating any publishing house to operate according to this industry mechanisms, in a regulated and proper approach. There comes a stage where the publishing house has to define its scope as a publisher and whether it will be a specialized or general-interest publisher, or perhaps both, such as major international publishing houses.

This phase is followed by defining the role of the publishing advisor, which is rare in Egypt. This advisor is supposed to be an intellectual and a reader who is familiar with the publishing movement, has experience in all stages of the book industry, and is capable of assessing the submitted work properly. His/her role is not that of a recipient, but the assessor who will ask for amendments on the content being presented to him/her and directs the author to render the content of his/her book in a more interesting and comprehensible way, or the scientific material in more substantial manner. Afterwards, the advisor directs book designer, identifies the target readers, and specifies the number of copies that can be printed. In order to make the author succumb to the publishing advisor's requests for amendments, additions, or summarization, we must safeguard the author's rights, which are often threatened in Egypt. In major publishing houses, the role of

advisors is rather more central as they ask the author or several authors to write on specific topics that—in their opinion—will become bestsellers or are untrodden in the publishing movement. Usually, they reach out to specific authors to help them carry out their publishing plan that would make reasonable profits for the publishing house. Such advisors and elaborate book marketing plans are the reason why the book sales hit millions in the United States, Europe, and Japan.

Because the publisher here considers the publishing process an integrated industry, we realize some publishers in the West advance part of the royalties payments for their authors' copyrights as they are interested in publishing one of their publications.

This brings us to the relation between publishers and authors in Egypt. We always talk about copyrights, without putting into consideration the author's rights. The author is the one who exerts the effort and spends the time to compose a book but does not earn what is worthy of his/her work. Some publishers consider the mere act of publishing the works of any author is an advantage. In fact, some authors have to pay money for publishers to publish their works. Hence, we must pass a law that safeguards the authors' rights, similar to the one that protects the rights of singers and composers. Such law will be the beginning of a genuine advancement of the book industry, in addition to establishing a specific contractual relationship, which protects the rights of the contracting-parties: publisher and author. Within this legal relationship, the publishers are committed to disclose their actual amount of sales. Respecting the authors' rights will make them in return respect their target audience, and will give us the right to hold them accountable for what they publish and compose.

Here we realize that the absent role of the Writers Union as it does not protect the rights of authors. There is a misconception that the membership to the Union is restricted to authors and script writers. Meanwhile, there are pioneers in other domains who have bestselling works with a broad readership, yet their memberships have been either refused or have become associate members. Thus, they stopped paying their membership fees. The questions that arise here: When will the Union stand up for the authors'

rights? Will the Union be responsible for claiming its own rights and the authors' with publishers? Will the Union include the authors? Will the Union rectify its role?

The abovementioned details will help us classify the published books as follows:

- Publications that meet the needs of specific readers, such as the services books about diseases and their treatment in a simple manner, decor and fashion, and computer programs.
- Publications for university's educational purposes, in which a large proportion of the Egyptian and Arab publishing houses are specialized.
- Publications for general public, cultural, scientific, literary dissemination, which represent the least ratio among all of the above-mentioned publications on the contrary to the whole world. Those include political publications such as autobiographies and books that analyze political events.
- Among all of the above, the monthly or weekly series exist, most notably in Egypt Iqra'a "Read", Tarikh al-Misryin "The History of the Egyptians", Kitab al-Hilal "The Book of Hilal" and Kitab al-Youm "The Book of Today", and Al-Maktabah al-Thaqafiyyah " The Cultural Library".

In this context, I will raise another issue: Are books considered means of entertainment and education? We find that most publishers did not realize the fierce competition among books, so they did not give much attention to their artistic direction and layout, to the extent that they even thought that the good layout is only limited to catalogs, and art and children books. Meanwhile, they disregarded other regular books. So, why would these products become eye-catching?

There are special and regular editions of books; however, most publishing houses are unaware of such classifications because their role is confined to publishing, and they have no one in charge of studying the book marketing and gauging the readers' interests. Illustrated books read by

families in the evening are uncommon in the Egyptian book market. In addition, the economic institutions do not support the book industry, since banks and corporations do not enlist books in their gift lists to clients, as in the West. On the other hand, we find that the pages and television programs specialized in book previews in general are either expository or courteous. Moreover, the critical spirit remained far from the book reviews; such spirit shows readers what makes this book special than others or states why the journalist recommends it to the readers.

Posing questions and trying to find answers to them are what will spark interest in any book. Moreover, the phenomenon of publishing books in the newspapers prior to publishing them independently will greatly help them become bestsellers. It is a very limited phenomenon in the Arab press. In addition, public libraries do not have clear-cut acquisition policies and programs that would help publishing houses determine their future programs. Furthermore, the relation between the paper and digital books remains questionable and needs to be discussed separately.

The necessity of doing away with state-owned printing presses and transferring the printing duties and responsibilities to the private sector, especially with the ever dwindling presence of the print book and the move towards digitization. Therefore, there is a pressing need to support the private sector's printing movement and decrease the number of Ministry of Culture service providers while recruiting more cultural management personnel.

It is necessary to integrate privately owned publishing houses, as publishers and distributers, into the Family Library project to promote the Egyptian publishing movement, thus strengthening the movement, encouraging better production, and introducing new writers to the cultural scene.

2. The Song Issue

Egypt is not only famous for its songs, and male and female singers, but also for nurturing the Arab musical talents. The Egyptian art gained a considerable fame thanks to legendary singers and musicians such as Umm

Kulthum, Mohammed Abdel Wahab, Abdel Halim Hafez, and many others. Nowadays, the song in Egypt suffers from a multi-dimensional crisis, which can be monitored as follows:

1. A crisis in the lyrics has emerged since there are no good, attractive texts that have long-term influence on the audience. This problem is associated to the decline in the Egyptian poetic output, and the lack of poetic texts suitable for singing, all of which were accompanied by the prevalence of singing patterns that lack logic, degrade the public taste, and do not create an artistic mindset to the audience, for example the prevalence of songs about animals and fruits, and others.
2. Combining singing and dancing in what is known as "Video clips" most often makes the song turn into a series of rhyming words performed on dance beats, requiring quick responses from the audiences. Such phenomenon resulted in a decline in artistic awareness and the rates of musical taste.
3. The song is correlated to television, similar to other art genres. Therefore, there is television theater, television cinema, and television song, represented in "the video clip", all of which have led to the declining interest in the song as one of the independent art genres. Nevertheless, they have become coupled with the TV, whether in advertisements or video clips of songs.
4. Violating intellectual property rights of songs is represented in song plagiarism by either streaming them on websites, and disseminating illegal copies, all of which negatively affect the song producers, the lyricists, and the singers. It is worth mentioning that Sout Al-Qahira "Sono Cairo Company for Audio and Video" was established in the first place with the aim of marketing for the song. Although the company's capacity had significantly declined, it reaped huge profits from the sales of Umm Kulthum's songs.

3. The Cinema Issue

The current status of the Egyptian cinema raises many questions. Although the cinema production seems evident, yet the reality—in contrast

to its counterparts in Asia and most particularly "Bollywood" in India—is not in favor of the Egyptian cinema, due to several reasons:

1. The decline of film industry with all its entire components, since there are not any ardent directors, actors, or film editors, but all of these do not perceive this industry as one integrated team; where it is a rare thing for all those to collaborate in one work, especially with the inflated "ego" of primarily actors. Thus, to address this problem, we need to increase and train those cadres to meet the requirements of the film industry.
2. The poor performance of the Higher Institute of Cinema and its cadres, which will be addressed within the "Arts Academy" theme, in addition to the scarcity of training programs for nascent talents.
3. The failure of the new Egyptian cinema to keep up with the cutting-edge technologies, which affect the spectators' opinion when being compared to other cinemas. This brings us to the issue of studios in Egypt, which had always keep abreast of the latest advancements at that time until they were nationalized by the state.
4. The cinema theaters in Egypt are not enough to ensure the well distribution of Egyptian films, in addition to the domination of the Arab TV channels on the broadcasting of those films.
5. Funding is a fundamental problem, along with the high costs of producing worthy movies; thus, we can address this problem either through providing bank loans by the cultural development fund for producers or engaging them in the production process, all of which are considered a crucial step to resolve this problem.

Addressing all cinema-related issues starts from the fiction and script, which represent the first fruit of the literary movement, as the Egyptian fictional creativity is only attained by presenting new generations of creative writers and then adapting their works to the screens. Script writing sometimes brings to light outstanding talents. Egyptian talents often lack experience and training; hence, they need to apply for workshops or training courses on script writing abroad, most particularly in the United States, which would be a turning point to enhance scenarios and the foundation on which this industry builds its constituents. The same case applies to fostering

the new generations in the other constituents of the industry, including direction, shooting and editing.

The crisis of the Egyptian film lies in the shortage and scarcity of historical films. Nevertheless, the rare ones were hindered through all stages of production. Therefore, the these genres of films require a direct support from the state throughout all the production stages.

Furthermore, addressing the crisis of the National Archives of Cinema needs enormous efforts, as it is considered the memory of national cinema, especially in light of Egypt's loss of a large number original copies of films.

4. The Theater Issue

The theater is considered a "cultural archive of human ontological thinking", which is real touchstone that determines the status of nations. It has what sets it apart from other performing arts such as songs and cinema, as it represents a direct and intimate relationship between the actors and spectators, in a way that creates a space for interaction and the formation of direct perceptions and feelings among the theatrical scenes and the actors performing them.

The Egyptian theater has played a pivotal role in promoting openness of the society to the Western culture through its extensive translation movements of plays and novels in the sixties, which is the very same role that the theater has to play at present, especially with the increase in the interaction among diverse cultures on the global level. Although the census of the Egypt's population reaches eighty million, the number of theater visitors does not exceed two hundred thousand, amounting to 0.25% of the Egyptian population.

The theater crisis is intricate, but we will focus on a number of drawbacks:

1. Devoting more attention to the experimental theater came at the expense of the theater with all its staff, theatrical texts, decoration, and its conventional form.

2. Reputable theatrical troupes, such as Naguib el-Rihani and Ramses theater groups, ceased to exist, in addition to the university theater in the sixties, which presented numerous distinguished theatrical cadres that became movie stars at a later stage, such as Adel Imam, Hassan Hosny, and Hassan Abdin.

3. Theaters are centralized in Cairo; however, they are limited in Alexandria and almost absent in different regions, cities, and villages across Egypt, most particularly Upper Egypt. Although there are a few stages in the cultural palaces of some cities, they are still inadequately utilized. In fact, we do not see any theatrical movement outside Cairo. Moreover, the emergence of street theater, one of the tools used by young Egyptian theater enthusiasts to express their artistic talents, has somehow managed to break through the theater movement, which is mainly controlled by the capital, in different Egyptian cities. This has been facilitated by the low-budget requirements of street theater.

4. The theatrical commercial production is dominant, which is in itself is not an issue, but has become one, except for some plays, that tend to disseminate frivolity and vulgarity and degrade the public taste, bearing in mind that the prevalence of such a cultural trend in the absence of a counter theater that is committed to discuss social and economic issues, results in the decline of the theatrical movement.

3- Cultural Reform in Egypt

Vision and Objective

The main objective of the Egyptian cultural reform is to recapture the Egyptian cultural vitality in all aspects of contemporary culture and to empower Egypt in its role within Arab, Islamic, Central African, and international circles based on a well-established local cultural foundation.

This well-established local cultural foundation depends on rebuilding the contemporary Egyptian character and emphasizing the role of youths in creating this new cultural future.

Specific Objectives

Long Term:

- **Reconstructing Egypt's image as a state on the following levels:**

- **Local:** Establishing Egypt's image as a state of cultural pluralism merged into one entity; which is the contemporary Egyptian character with deep-rooted cultural heritage that is up for the challenge and able to achieve its contemporary goals as a state and as peoples, while preparing a new generation to enter the local cultural scene to become symbols of public work.
- **Regional:** In light of the current developments in the Arab region, and the acceptance of the existence of partners in cultural life, the Egyptian cultural role must be strengthened through cultural products in all their forms, while fostering symbols of Egyptian culture from within the new elite group.
- **International:** Strengthening the Egyptian presence through international participations, beginning with digital space, multi-language publications, participating in international activities, and establishing a continued presence in conferences, festivals, and exhibitions.

Short Term:

- Strengthening the role of a number of cultural centers in Egypt and expanding their presence outside of Cairo and Alexandria. Now, a rapid renaissance must be launched by selecting centers with natural benefits, such as: Ismailia, Mansoura, Tanta, Assiut, and Aswan. Followed by another group of centers that include, for example: Desouk, Minya, Malawy El-Mahalla El-Koubra, and Qena.

- Traditional crafts are considered to be the closest to Egyptian people's hearts and the most sought out by Arabs and foreigners. Therefore, hosting an annual festival for traditional crafts will promote the role of these crafts in the national economy. This can also help revitalize several regions, if the festival is held in different locations in Egypt; one year at the Pyramids, and another at Luxor. Keeping in mind that Egypt contains crafts centers, some of which are endangered, including: Akhmim (textile industry, especially silk), Fuwwah (Kilims manufacturing), Rashid (palm leaves manufacturing), Sinai (manufacturing traditional women's clothing), and Qena (pottery making).

- Encouraging documentary filmmaking by awarding production grants to the best project ideas presented in this field, especially those related to history and antiquities that can also be transferred to DVDs and distributed on TV stations around the world. This will bring forth a new generation of directors, technicians, and innovators who can compete regionally and internationally, provided that their primary work contributes to the plan to reconstruct Egypt's image once again. The next stage will witness a move on to scientific films to be aired on local TV stations to reconstruct Egypt's image in the eyes of the Egyptian people. Therefore, some of these films will be customized to include a scientific representation of Egypt's achievements as an indirect convincing promotional material.

- Supporting Egyptian film production, as Egyptian cinema remains the leading Arab cinema with the most productions and the largest following. This can be achieved by restructuring and modernizing the High Institute of Cinema, as well as fostering new generations of

graduates from all its departments (Screenwriting, Cinematography, Direction, and Décor) so that they can join the film industry and create high-tech cinema revolving around profound topics to consolidate the Egyptian presence in this important field.

- Reconstructing the Family Library to restore the role of the pocket book, especially the well-known pocket book series in Egypt and the Arab world, such as Al-Hilal, Iqraa, and The Cultural Library, in addition to launching new publications. However, the price of one book should not exceed two pounds, subsidized by the government. This will lead to the emergence of a new generation of young authors in all fields. For example, supporting Al-Hilal series will encourage a new generation of novelists as this series of books carries a lot of honesty and authenticity for its role in launching many Arab and Egyptian writers who have now become well-established authors. A new genre of books, the Coffee Table Book, should also be introduced. This genre depends more on visual aspects and is the most wide-spread among readers all over the world. It is also capable of supporting commercial publishing houses, as it has been noted concerning the publications released by the AUC Press in Cairo, for example. Private sector publishing houses are also being integrated to become publishers and distributers of BA publications.

- Establishing an Egyptian cultural online gate to encompass all Egyptian cultural websites and provide a comprehensive view of Egyptian culture. The gateway should be updated daily, provide a number of Egyptian publications free-of-charge to the public, and include several Egyptian films, and other forms of Egyptian cultural products.

- Rewriting Egypt's history from prehistoric eras until today in the form of books and films for adults and children, as well as magazines. In addition to organizing competitions about Egyptian history as it is an integral part of the characters of the people of Egypt.

- Organizing competitions in all cultural and artistic fields on the national level, beginning with the villages and reaching the large cities, as a motivator for the new generation to integrate themselves

into public life and increase their awareness of their sense of nationalism.

- Encouraging the civil society to work on the revitalization of cultural life, so as not to be outside the public cultural framework of the State, but an integral part of it, in the form of funding projects and activities, especially with the success of the examples El-Sawy Culture Wheel and Dal Al-Kotob Al-Ilektronya.

- Reconsidering the role of museums and public libraries so as to transform them into active societal institutions, while also reconsidering the national museums plan, so that they may fit the needs of society. The plan was mainly to include a museum in every governorate's capital, regardless of the usefulness of its presence in that location. Kafr el-Sheikh City is not the appropriate city for a museum, while Fuwwah City in Kafr El-Sheikh governorate is better suited as it contains the most cultural heritage in the governorate.

- Transferring the association of cultural centers outside of Egypt to the Ministry of Culture (this requires a complete separation from the management of Scientific Missions), to become affiliated with the Supreme Council for Culture, which will parallel the organizational structure of the British Council. The current state of these centers does not serve the Egyptian policy, whether on the regional or international levels. The structure of these centers will be altered, as their activities are limited to the following:
  - General lectures
  - Library (Often containing outdated books)

So, their activities must expand to include the following:

First: Connecting intellectuals from each country to the cultural movement in Egypt. This is achieved through cultural exchanges, visits, exchange programs, seminars, book exchange programs, in addition to exchange programs for artists and theater groups.

Second: Introducing Egyptian culture to the general public in the Arab world and foreign countries. This is achieved through a range of

activities to display miscellaneous aspects of Egyptian life, and anecdotes from Egyptian heritage; including:

Organizing ancient Egyptian language courses, especially in Europe, the Americas, Japan, and Australia.

- Renting one or two shops to offer traditional Egyptian meals to promote Egypt in general, as traditional meals are considered part and parcel of Egyptian culture.
- Establishing a center to sell souvenirs and multi-language publications.
- Organizing various exhibitions (plastic arts – Arabic calligraphy – traditional crafts – fashion).

In this regard, we suggest focusing on a limited number of cultural centers and updating several of them. In accordance with Egypt's regional and international roles, these centers can be distributed as follows:

- **Arab Region:** Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Oman.
- **East and Central Asia:** Japan, China, Indonesia, Australia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkey, and Iran.
- **Africa:** Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria, and Senegal.
- **Europe:** Germany, France, Britain, Italy, Poland, Spain, and Denmark.
- **Latin America:** Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Peru, Costa Rica.
- **North America:** Unites States, Canada, and Mexico.

About Education and Media

The Educational institutions are among the most important influential rearing institutions in society; where children learn basic knowledge shaping their values and attitudes. Since most educational institutions rely on non-educational curricula, books, and methods, or call for using similar templates, which do not leave room for creativity, discussion or inquiry, they consequently affect the future of the individuals' way of thinking.

The gravity of the situation extends to universities or higher education institutions, where an individual's character is supposed to form and mature and through which a number of options are made available so that they can decide what best suits them. However, the reality of universities and higher education institutions in Egypt now is merely an extension of what is done in schools, such as indoctrination and not offering any opportunities for reflection and creativity; especially with the inadequacy of libraries in universities or higher education institutions, and the meager social and political university life.

In addition, the research requirements within the curriculum are minor, almost non-existent, or simply a matter of routine to fill the voids in the curriculum. This reflects the non-existent opportunities for thinking, creativity or imagination in any of the educational subjects, subjects related to real life, or practical applications outside the educational framework or school systems. This also reflects the weakness of student participation in university activities.

Taking a look at the scientific research institutions, we find that most - if not all – are in a state of barrenness, either because of laws, red tape, or the dominance of government bureaucracy or administrative bodies that directly overpower any talent or creativity, if any are available at all. Most of the scientific research institutions in Egypt have become subjected to routine, where bureaucracy runs rampant; in the form of standardization, refusing modernity, an excessive desire to maintain the familiar, lack of initiative, ignoring personal differences among individuals, among other issues that result in a repellant atmosphere, which is not a magnet for talent or creativity.

Moreover, the funds allocated for scientific research are spent mostly on salaries and bonuses without a real link to the modern production of knowledge. In addition to that, the same laws and regulations apply to most workers in scientific research institutions same as any employee in the state, in terms of the career ladder or salaries. These factors do not do encourage research and innovation, on the contrary, they thrust aside most of the competent skills replacing them with dull routine.

Last, but not least, most scientific research institutions are not sufficiently connected to international research institutes. Quite the opposite, their links to universities and higher education institutions are very weak, consequently they do meet society's needs in terms of solving problems or facing challenges.

All of this requires the minds and ideas of researchers to combat these challenges, which can only be done by giving full autonomy to scientific research institutions and not subjecting them to the same laws and regulations that govern other governmental institutions. Scientific societies must also be motivated, and consideration must be given to scientific research, keeping in mind that societies cannot develop without their valuable contributions.

In particular, scientific research institutions must have access to what is taking place in the developed world. Also, opportunities for cultural exchange must be provided gain knowledge of what is taking place around the world, and so researchers can learn about the origins of scientific research. This requires fostering creative talent; especially that of young researchers and for these research centers to develop methods that can lead to integration, and teamwork through which many accomplishments can be achieved.

If we have elaborated in talking about scientific research, it is because an important element of scientific culture, which must pervade Egyptian cultural life, is the status of science, scientific research, and scientists in society.

Among the institutions that could play an important role in development and cultural diversity, are media organizations, especially the platforms that reach people in their homes, such as television. But unfortunately many TV programs currently encourage negative values, even though mass media can play a role in the dissemination of a number of values that promote dialogue, acceptance of others, acceptance of differences, and stimulating intellect through the content they provide. Therefore, program content must be taken into consideration, for they must

take diversity into account, considering this is a complementary means of education alongside educational institutions of different types and levels.

Due to our interest in young people and youth issues, it is important to coordinate between youth centers, sports clubs, and culture palaces in localities to combine their efforts to advance the sought after cultural reform.

The Creative Industries

The creative industries is one of the foundations on which the future of culture in Egypt must be built, especially since the social function of creativity cannot be solely achieved when individuals become creative, but also when growth, money, infrastructure, regulations, markets, property rights, and large-scale operations are available to these individuals to foster their creativity.

It is certain that creativity is the driving force behind social and economic change in this century. Creative industries have become an important element in the formation of advanced economies. In 2001, the estimated net proceeds of US copyright industries reached 791.2 billion US dollars, which is equivalent to 7.75% of gross national income, and employs about 8 million workers.

In the United Kingdom, and in the same year, the creative industry revenues were estimated at 112.52 billion pounds, and they employ 1.3 million people. They also account for 10.3 billion pounds of exports and constitute 5% of the gross national income.

In addition to the above, the importance of the creative industries is in their expected role as a wave of economic knowledge, and of support to industries and other services - through providing them, for example, with digital content, which translates directly into a competitive advantage and innovative energy for other sectors of the economy, as well as through embracing the creative capital and innovators.

The road to creative industries will lead to the transformation of the work environment from the blue and white collars to creative individuals, who determine their work hours, dress in simple white clothes, work in an

exciting atmosphere, and cannot be forced to work, even if they do not ever skip a work day. With the emergence of the creative class, this work method will move from the sidelines to the economic mainstream.

Creative industries combine creative arts and cultural industries. Arts and culture have become directly linked to huge industries, such as media entertainment, which indicates bridging the gap between the elite and the masses through the products of these industries that invade every home now, either via satellite or the world wide web.

The gravity of the lack of attention and comprehension paid to these transformations in Egypt, will lead to the collapse of the cultural institutions. For example, Reda Band for Folkloric Art should not be managed through the conventional administration. Their performances can be copied on DVDs and sold to those who are interested. They can also be sold to TV stations and over the Internet, and their performances can be commemorated on postcards, books, and models sold to children and adults ... etc.

The expression "creative industries" is derived from blurred line between the creative arts and cultural industries; freedom and luxury; the public and private sectors; commercial and state-owned; the citizen and the consumer; and between the political and personal.

It remains an important fact that creativity is the essence of culture, but the means producing, distributing, consuming, and enjoying creativity had a limited impact on gross national income in the past due to the fact that Egyptians perceive culture as an integral part of their lives and a means of entertainment. However, if creators' personal gain and their basis is expanded, as well as using their creative products to establish creative industries, will strengthen the cultural atmosphere in Egyptian society. It will also enhance Egypt's cultural role regionally and internationally.

There are several main observations concerning this topic:

1. Interactive Creative Practices:

Interactivity is an essential factor leading to the establishment of vital digital environments for entertainment or education. The new industries

interactivity through the creation of user experiences that promote and publish digital content. This content is then automatically disseminated among the public and it gets developed and updated in accordance with the public's response.

2. Creative Practices and New Forms of Cultural Production:

The transformations brought on by new technologies provide producers and creators with the opportunity to distribute their products in an unprecedented way. At the center of these transformations, we find the vital power of digital media (radio, mobile phones, television, e-mail, games, and websites); in terms of their ability to receive and transfer content. Cell phones and their ability to read and send text, sound, and images, is one of the latest platforms of creative work. The same applies to the creative abilities on the computer screen, after the big screen "cinema", and the small screen "television".

But taking into account the following:

1. Creative cooperation is clearly reflected when individuals with different expertise and abilities work together. This cooperation has led time and again to successfully resolving issues and revolutionary ways to view and address our daily struggles in the arts and sciences alike.

2. A creative environment affords individuals the time to try, fail, try again, discover, play, and connect amidst apparently contrastive elements. This experimentation or research may not lead to the application of scientific or artistic production until several years from now, just as all the initial ideas and authentic products are experimented. This sometimes seems aimless, but at its core there is a creative process.

3. Creativity is a basic human characteristic that must be fostered within every individual, and not only in artists and scientists. Freedom of learning, good character, adventure, failure, wonder, struggle, and growth, are the moral foundations upon which the United States was built. The dissemination of creativity among all people, of all locations, economic classes, and ethnicities, is necessary for public interest.

4- Institutions and Mechanisms

Culture, in its broad definition, is not a product of the institutions affiliated with the Ministry of Culture alone, but also the result of a constructive cooperation between them and:

- Education
- Higher Education
- Scientific Research
- Media and Television
- Religious Institutions
- Civil Society Organizations

In this context, we chose not to delve into the issue of religious institutions in this report, and to stick to the core of the topic, which is, first and foremost, the institutions affiliated with the Ministry of Culture.

Cultural reform requires the provision of new personnel supported by adequate resources to be able to modernize and build the institutions required for implementing the proposed action plan for the development and fostering of the cultural state in Egypt. There is also a need for technological devices to communicate with the sources of culture in Egypt and abroad. Here are some of the institutions affiliated with the Ministry of Culture and the important cultural sectors:

- Museums
- Libraries and the Family Library
- The Supreme Council of Antiquities
- The General Authority for Cultural Palaces
- The General Egyptian Book Organization
- The Supreme Council of Culture
- The Academy of Arts
- The Plastic Arts Sector
- The Theater Sector
- The Folkloric and Performance Arts Sector

- The National Theater
- The Opera
- Cinema
- The National Center for Traditional Crafts
- Scientific Societies
- Cultural Magazines
- The Egyptian National Library and Archives
- The National Center for Translation

Museums

The state must maintain the policy adopted for the advancement of museums in the last ten years. One of the most important features of this policy is to establish new museums, with new themes and in new locations, and the renovation of prestigious museums in keeping with the latest concepts adopted in this field.

- Considering museums as cultural institutions that organize interactive cultural activities and achieving interconnectivity among museums through a national network with a specialized secretarial department to form one servicing unit affiliated with the Ministry of Culture, and structured to follow the same network as the French national museums.
- Categorizing museums in terms of their importance; between national specialized museums, such as the Egyptian, Roman, Greek, and Coptic Museums, and between civilization museums, while granting the management of these museums a reasonable amount of administrative and financial autonomy. In this regard, the examples of the British Museum and the Louvre can be followed.
- Encouraging the private sector to establish museums for folk arts, science and technology. In this regard, the example of the Arish Museum for Folk Art can be followed.
- Paying attention to reproductions and other high quality sales products that are provided with scientific catalogs and specifying appropriate sales outlets for them in a particular place in each museum.

- Encouraging the establishment of associations of friends of the museum, to achieve more openness for museums toward educational institutions, and civil society organizations.
- Paying attention to specialized museums, such as the insects museum, the geological museum, the museum of education, and the agricultural museum, as distinct Egyptian museums regionally and globally. Moreover, restructuring the Egyptian Geographic Society museums, especially the Customs and Traditions Museum and the Museum of African Art, with the development of the Geographic Society building and its urban surroundings.
- Establishing new Egyptian museums for the history of music in Egypt, furniture, and cinema. This affords museums in Egypt important qualitative momentum.
- Organizing an annual exhibition, in every museum at least, to rejuvenate the display culture, introduce the museum's collections and archaeological and natural treasures, promote reproductions, in addition to organizing seminars and panel discussions. In this regard, Egypt may host exhibitions on the heritage of China, Latin America and India to achieve better communication with other human civilizations.
- Establishing a national network for museums to coordinate among all Egyptian museums and promote their capacities.

Libraries and the Family Library

Interest in reading and libraries has increased all over Egypt. The Family Library exerted a lot of effort in trying to establish the importance of the role of libraries, but we believe supporting this effort should be as follows:

1. Developing a comprehensive program to train librarians from various governorates through training courses held in Cairo and Alexandria to introduce them to the latest scientific developments and consolidate their understanding of service role - especially to the young – entrusted to

libraries. The Bibliotheca Alexandrina organizes these courses in Alexandria and the National Library and others.

2. Employing librarians to follow-up the efforts exerted in regional and local libraries across the country. Their work would be under the supervision of the Publishing and Depository Sectors of the Egyptian National Library at the Ministry of Culture.

3. Supporting the distribution of computers to libraries, and linking them to display screens or plasma screens, and making sure access to the Internet and the central distribution of materials is suitable for young people at certain periods. This is in addition to a television to screen children's programs such as "Sesame Street" and other programs at appropriate times.

4. Following-up on the updating process of available books in the regional and local libraries and providing them with additional books.

5. Providing libraries with some office supplies, so that visitors - especially children - can find what they need.

6. Emphasizing the role of the library as a center of local dissemination that requires more events, not just open doors and a librarian, hence the importance of training competent leaders to achieve that.

7. Establishing children's libraries to include - along with books and audio-visual media - the establishment of different cultural activities.

8. Creating a national index by means of a national network of libraries to exchange surplus books and coordinate work among them.

9. Defining the function of each of the following entities:
   - Municipality libraries affiliated with governorates
   - Public Egyptian libraries
   - General Authority for Cultural Palaces libraries

This is to eliminate any overlapping functions and integrate them into one authority, while providing each library a degree of administrative and artistic independence within a framework of clear general policies for Egyptian libraries.

It is natural that not all of this will be done all at once, but such a program can be implemented over the course of a few years by drawing on

the successful   Reading for All campaigns, which have become an outstanding example to follow internationally.

Ministry of Antiquities

- Developing the Ministry's administrative performance to improve work efficiency.
- Establishing an information technology sector.
- Combining studies, publication, and registration centers under an academic sector so that its workers are given the same benefits and advantages of university staff and the Ministry of Antiquities employees, and so it can conduct scientific research on antiquities.
- Improving the performance of the fund to increase the Council's resources, whether through a marketing plan, publications, archaeological models, renting, or re-employing some archeological buildings.
- Reconsidering some of the Ministry's projects and their benefits for society, as well as their economic returns, such as the Damanhur and Kafr el-Sheikh Museums.
- Qualifying a new generation of archaeologists and integrating them in public life to provide a comprehensive view Egyptian heritage to build a contemporary Egyptian character.
- Expanding the activities of international exhibitions held under Egyptian supervision or with Egyptian participation.
- Re-amending the law governing the preservation of antiquities allowing the Ministry to dismiss thousands of duplicate models, and allowing individuals to own artifacts belonging to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries while charging them certain fees.
- Developing a sector for Coptic antiquities at the Ministry of Antiquities.
- Establishing a project to save the Delta hills, especially the northern region, before they become submerged.
- Reconsidering the security system set in place to protect archeological locations, with the introduction of surveillance cameras and sophisticated alarm systems.

- Improving the performance of museums to transform them from storage and display units to interesting cultural centers, while maximizing revenues through cafeterias, tourist guides, and souvenirs that to this day are lacking adequate plans complementing the nature of each museum.
- Creating programs to foster archaeologists scientifically, economically and socially, while linking incentive systems to development in performance.
- Integrating the Ministry of Antiquities printing press, its publishing department and archaeological models, while formulating a clear cut commercial publishing plan for guides, catalogues, and digital publishing, in addition to the introduction of the management of intellectual property rights of Egyptian antiquities, the emphasis on the effectiveness of this program as a whole, and rebuilding Egypt's image on the local, regional and international levels.
- Establishing marketing networks and exhibitions to manage the economic aspect of antiquities, therefore increasing Egypt's revenues from this sector.

General Authority for Cultural Palaces

- Focusing on the values and principles upon which the authority was founded and attempting to transmit it to the new generation through amending the regulations
- Considering the current staff positions in order to keep the qualified in their positions or in a consultant position while taking in consideration that the priority is to hire trained youth
- Adjusting the regulations and laws to remove the obstacles facing the young staff in order to take up leading positions
- Revaluating the methods of choosing the Cultural Palace directors and approving the possibility of recruiting directors externally if required
- Increasing the activities budget from 40 million pounds to 100 million pounds through a 3 year plan

- Rotating culture; which means transporting urban culture to the provinces and vice versa which is ought to enlarge the creative minds and motivate them
- Stopping the severe expansion of the authority; the problem which caused a great number of totally unqualified employees to work in the cultural field while necessitating the setting a qualifying program to train those employees
- Reconsidering the method of which the Major Cultural Palaces work to enable them of having a variety of activities without limiting them to a specific activity (music, theater, cinema…etc.) according to the method currently as it would be more logical for the bigger palaces to be the more common ones whereas the smaller cultural palaces – specifically the smaller ones in size, ability and spread – would be the ones more specialized in specific fields for those who want a specific form of art
- Benefitting from the enlargement in the authority's activity throughout Egypt as the authority contains the cultural regions such as: Northern Upper Egypt, Southern Upper Egypt, Great Cairo and Giza, East Delta, North Delta, Central Delta, the Canal and Sinai. Due to the fact that those regions have contradictory social and geographical natures, there is a necessity that each region would have a specialized project which would extend from one to three years aside from the normal activities. Said project is ought to be related to the environment, the social and geographical natures that the region consists of which, in turn, identifies each region with a specific activity which increases the chance of variety and increases the activity's level drastically.
- Directing the activity of the cultural palaces towards setting up festivals and competitions between one another in cities – outside of Cairo and Alexandria – which focusing on the following:

    - Folk bands
    - Traditional crafts
    - Literary clubs
    - Science clubs.

- Renting some cultural palaces facilities as libraries to sell books, cinemas, cafeterias on condition that all the income returns to the Cultural Development Fund
- Allowing the cultural palaces some spaces so that each of them would submit a project which can be funded through the Cultural Development Fund and the evaluation is to happen yearly. Examples of those projects are the following:

  - Collecting and digitalizing the folk heritage
  - Websites
  - Writing the history of the city/providence
  - Documenting the local literature … etc.

- Increasing the number of special festivals such as Tahtib Festival, Youth Film and Youth Theater.

Egyptian General Book Authority

Reconstructing the authority according to the following:

For the Publishing, it would be transformed from an Administration to a Sector with the inclusion of the digital publishing methods to its activities on the condition that young authors are to be motivated and accepted in light of the following strategies:

- Writing the history of Egypt before dating to the current era.
- Providing scientific books that discuss new topics such as BioVision, the digital medication and space…etc.
- Motivating the literary production to the new generations.
- Producing Coffee Book books as they are considered the most appropriate for the current era.
- Developing the authority's printing houses and their staff to match the current era.
- Transforming the libraries sector to the economic sector while developing those libraries and the means of working in them as well as enlarging their branches especially in 6th of October city and Upper

Egypt, and increasing the number of branches outside of Egypt, especially in Tunisia, Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Sudan as a first stage.

- Assuring the importance of publishing in English, French, Spanish and increasing the participation in European, South American and North American book fairs.

The High Council of Culture

- Ensuring the neutrality of State Prizes
- Amending the voting system so that the specialists would have more weight to their votes in each prize field
- Enlarging the circle of nominations to each State Prize
- Reproducing the Arab Book series to ensure the connection between the Arab intellects and Egypt
- Reconsidering granting full-time scholarships to ensure their seriousness while expanding the fields
- Granting the council a chance to finance and sponsor Egyptian cultural projects
- Opening Arabic cultural centers first then European ones affiliated with the council
- Pushing the youth towards the council's membership.

Arts Academy

The Arts Academy is divided into the two following types of institutions:

- Performing Arts Institutions
    - Conservatoire Institute
    - Film Institute
    - Arab Music Institute
    - Ballet Institute
    - Theater Institute

- Theoretical Institution
  - Folk Arts Institute
  - Literary Criticism Institute

Notes to upgrade the Performing Arts Institutions

First: Upgrading the high stage methodologies:

The methodologies taught now are the ones that Russia and Poland relied on in the fifties and sixties of the 20th century regarding the content. There is a necessary need to upgrade those methodologies to match up with the modern requirements and the developed teaching methods of the world today. The goal is to prepare a student to be on the international level, not just the local one.

Second: The return of the non-systematic education:

It relies on receiving children in the primary stage to the secondary stage during their study in the different general schools. They are taught a specialization there (dancing, playing…etc.) in the evening or during the official holidays. Mass classes occur on Fridays which is ought to activate the role of the academy in the different schools which ends the prohibition of students – those who are in high level schools – from studying the different performance arts. There are a lot of examples for stars who joined the academy directly after they finished their non-systematic study in the academy until the secondary stage.

General Notes:

- Increasing the number of external scholarships
- Expanding the language and computer education to the primary, preparatory and secondary students who study in the academy
- Eliminating the idea of early professionalism and limiting students from working during their secondary and high studies by exhausting them in creative and innovative activities which would be a primary part in their evaluation
- Relying on external scientific exchange

- Activating the Sayed Darwish Hall to be a productive unit
- The necessity of developing art academies in Alexandria, the Delta, Central and South Upper Egypt
- Rewriting the regulation list with its goals and special mechanisms to reach the objective of increasing innovation
- International contract through international workshops and bringing professors from different countries to be introduced to the latest techniques and to get to know one another's culture
- Producing student works and teaching staff members verbally and visually according to each's expertise and offering them at a low price to the public
- Setting up a Publishing House for the academy to publish the scientific products of the teaching staff members
- Expanding the acceptance of Arab and African students in different institutes in the academy to ensure the cultural and artistic Egyptian role while easing the process for their expenses
- Adopting the academy as an artistic house to provide its consultation in its various artistic fields
- Upgrading the Film Institution and its workshops and supporting its production to documentaries and introducing them to the public while setting free courses in its different fields
- Upgrading and supporting the Folk Arts Institute
- Upgrading the Higher Institute of Dramatic Arts and opening the Sayed Darwish Theater to the public
- Reconstructing the Conservatoire Institute and the Higher Institute of Music
- Allowing the public to interact with the academy's activities when it could permitted

Visual Arts Sector

First: The Halls

- Opening four new halls for the artistic exhibitions in Cairo (Shubra, New Egypt, Ma'adi and Downtown)

- Renewing and preparing the Zamalek Arts Complex as it has been the most important arts exhibition in Egypt for tens of years.
- One of the major problems is that the private halls have taken the stage from the state halls due to the good advertisement and marketing for the artists who exhibit in them. That is due to the following:

  - Big artists' refusal from exposing their works in the State Halls
  - The decline of trial waves which flourished in the past years due to artists' keenness on producing works that are easy to market
  - The decline in the level of innovation to a number of the well-known artists and the disappearance of the passion that their works were known for due to the control of the trade and the monopolism of the private halls over them.
  - The transportation of the Egyptian market to the Gulf area due to the communications between the individuals and the private halls.

  Thus, the following must be done:

1. Preparing the international halls with the newest presentation technologies so they would be able to compete with the private halls again
2. Training and qualifying the employees in the state halls on presenting and marketing the artworks of the exhibiting artists, and taking advantage of the special feature where the percentage of the sale rates taken from the artists reaches 30%.
3. Activating an awareness and appreciation program to the value of visual art to face the decline of the exposers in some private halls which adopt a declined level for the exposers which has become a problem as it affects the general taste due to the great advertisements that those places offer (El Sawy Culturewheel)
4. Using the new technology to market the artworks exhibited by the artists in state halls.

Second: Activity

- There is a general decline in the level and the role of the Alexandria Biennale and the National Exhibition.

- The Ceramic Biennale and the Graphic Triennale have been canceled. Some specialized exhibitions have disappeared entirely such as the Sculpture Lounge and the Ceramic Lounge and thus, the necessity to create a research workshop to restore those activities to the map again arises.
- The expansion of the Cultural Palaces exhibitions in cooperation with the Visual Arts Sector and programming those exhibition in small halls such as Mukhtar Museum, Bayt al-Umma (Nation House), Ahmed Shawky…etc.
- Reconsidering the acquisition policy and raising the budget specialized for it.

Theater Section

- Expanding the small theaters (200-400 chairs) throughout Cairo and the regions
- Cancelling the contracts of the actors, directors and decoration artists within the different and replacing their contracts with contracts that last for two years as these known artists who have abandoned their stages whilst performing externally despite still getting paid
- Due to the overlapping between the active stages in the Theater Sector (Tali'a – al Hadith – Al ghad…etc) it is suggested that these theatres should be promoted and that they should host more activities led by the youth theater. It is also suggested that the National Theater and the Puppet Theater should be further supported than they currently are. They should also be more active and should open their doors to the state bands, as long as the category of the play is decided according to the Reading Committees and in each theater two bands stay, one of them is a governmental band and the other is independent to perform two shows. The independent band changes once every two years while the successful ones remain. The theater changes and the more successful bands replace the unsuccessful ones.

- Openness on the methods and the new schools in Europe in acting, criticism, scenography as the state theater movement is similar to a great extent to what is known as the 'Cognitive Rumination'
- Determining ticket prices and marketing them according to the economic feasibility as they should represent around 30-40% of the investment output
- The importance of having professional directors who are not stage artists to the theaters
- The National Theater: Determining the characteristics of the national theater as only classical works should be put on the theater stage
- Upgrading the theater boards and adding all security means to them

Folk and Performance Arts Sector

- Terminating the intruding bands which are not related to its name such as drama and music bands
- Cancelling the permanent employment system and replacing the current contracts with biyearly contracts as the employed artists in the sector are known to not returning to work while still getting paid as employees
- Reconstructing the similar bands of the sector and merging the similar ones
- Reconsidering the existence of the circus in the sector and finding a better formula for it (Transforming it into a shareholding company that the employees have shares in)

Opera

- The expansion of building opera houses in other cities
- The centralization of the region opera houses to Cairo should be terminated. This system is not used anywhere in the world and the centralization of smaller opera houses makes them a reception and not a production house. The smaller opera houses in the regions should be transformed into cultural and educational enlightenment centers as the artists within them should teach in the surrounding regions. That is ought

to develop a highly educated generation in the artistic field in the city, expand the base of audience with higher taste, and setting an educational artistic renaissance throughout Egypt.

- Encouraging the Egyptian authors further and producing their works as there has been a great dereliction in that matter
- Rephrasing the role of the opera with society as it should have a greater role especially with the middle and higher classes of society
- Reorganizing and upgrading the level of the bands working the Opera House

Film Industry

The Egyptian Film Industry is the oldest and biggest in the Arab World, Africa and the Middle East. It was the tenth ranked film industry in the world during the first 100 years of cinema whether it was in the quantity of production or its effect on the audience of Egypt and the Arab World. The number of Egyptian films reaches around 3000 long films and around 2000 short films. However, the number cannot be identified due to the fact that it was never documented.

The film industry has been a target for the extremist Islamic Religious Right ever since the 80s of the past century as it is supposed to be an expression of modernism. That shows in the two following aspects:

- The rise of what is known as 'Clean Cinema' to match up with the Iranian film industry ever since the Islamic reign in Iran ever since 1979. 'Clean Cinema' prohibits handling the aspects upon which drama was based ever since the 5th century BCE in the Greek Theater. Those are the aspects that brought the Egyptian Film Industry to its renaissance from 1933 to 1963.
- The second aspect is the appearance of what is known as 'repenting actresses' who either repent from acting or acting without Hijab as is the case with the Iranian films. This phenomena happen in Egypt only despite the fact that there are many Muslim actresses in the Arab World. However, it happened because of the influence of the Egyptian film

industry on the Arab World which is far greater than any other Arabic speaking film industry due to the historic accumulation.

Film Negatives (which the film positives are printed from) are stored in film laboratories where production and distribution companies print copies from an alternative original to keep the original safe. They pay the labs to keep the original in a good state and restoring it when needed. That is better than transferring it onto a physical form which could be burned if it was shot before 1950.

Unfortunately, production and distribution companies print out of the originals and keeps them in the labs in a very unofficial manner so they could be printed in return. There is no restoration center in any of the Egyptian labs. Thus, the need for the Scorsese Organization arose to restore the film 'The Mummy'. It isn't known whether the other Egyptian movies produced before 1950 were copied onto incombustible films or not.

Some countries such as France have transformed their movies on the states' expense as the films saved are considered national heritage.

Film labs have vastly developed in the past two decades; however, that advancement did not reach Egypt. It has been a common thing for Egyptian films to be copied in Europe as was the case when Sound Film just began. That is due to the nationalization of the studios and the labs in the early 60s of the past century and its subordination to a bureaucratic rule.

Production and distribution companies sell the movie rights through different ways with fixed-term contracts regardless of how long it is. With the spread of Satellite channels everywhere, some channels were founded to show Egyptian movies in the Arab World. The Egyptian television had to buy the rights to show those films although what happened is that two thirds of the Egyptian films by two Saudi companies (more than 2000 films) by Rotana and A.R.T. which are owned by prince Waleed bin Talal and Shiekh Saleh Kamel respectively. These companies did not buy the rights to those films, however; the ownership of those films were transformed to them, thus, they have the originals and all the copied version.

Rotana and A.R.T. Networks did not have enough when most of the Egyptian heritage was transformed to them. They own most of the new movies as soon as they are finished with the production because they fund them beforehand. The Egyptian Law does not prevent the owner from moving the original (negative) abroad.

Just like most of the other films in the world, the Egyptian films were silent at the beginning of producing short films in 1907 and then the production of long films in 1927. However, it was after the production of sound movies in 1932 that the silent films were unable of being distributed and would not bring its owner any income. There was no archive in Egypt to save and protect those movies like in some of the European countries that founded the film archives in 1935. There are sources that ensure that the Arab League which was founded in 1925 in al-Quds has bought the Silent Egyptian Films which are more than 1000 of different lengths.

That means that most of the Egyptian film heritage of silent films is in a university in Israel and most of the sound film heritage is owned by two Saudi networks.

Al-Jazeera network in Qatar has bought the sports channels. Al-Jazeera network, Abu Dhabi network and Rotana network are competing against each other to buy film channels and the over 1000 Egyptian movies in the possession of cinema and film channels. If Rotana is able to buy the film channels from A.R.T. it will own most of the Egyptian film heritage and most of the new films as well.

Associated Press released on 17 January 2010 that Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal – who is one of the biggest share owners in the Robert Murdoch network "News Corps" –and Murdoch have met on 14 January to increase their alliance further (According to several reports, "News Corps" might be thinking of buying shares from "Rotana" network). That means that the possibility that some of the Egyptian films that Rotana owns will move their ownership to the international News Corps. That was found in an article in Al-Ahram by Gamal Zeyadda on 20 January 2010 entitled "Murdoch Directs the Arab".

There are sources that ensure that Rotana and A.R.T. have not aired teens of Egyptian movies which they own because their topics and their methods do not match the Saudi censorship laws.

In every country that produces films, there's a film archive, cinematic or according to the Arabic Language Academy 'Dar al Cinema' (Film House) to match with 'Dar al Kuttub'. 'Dar al Cinema' does the same with films as 'Dar al Kuttub' does with books.

The film archive contains complete copies of all the films that were made in the country without any censoring or deleting for any reason. Those copies are sold non-commercially in the film archive for a nominal price.

The archive also contains documents of the films such as photographs, catalogues and posters and all the prints that came out in the film theater with the country's language, all the posters of foreign languages and everything that was published on the film locally and internationally, all the files on the film makes and all the film industry agencies. The archive also documents the films and issues an official filmography of all the country's films.

Unfortunately, Egypt is the only country that produces movies and does not have a film archive according to the scientific requirements mentioned. That and there is no Egyptian filmography to document the Egyptian films.

If it was not possible to restore the ownership of the films to belong to the Egyptian television or any other Egyptian administration, then the least that could be done is building an archive to keep up the film heritage and to defend Modernity and enlightenment.

The National Center for Supporting the Traditional Crafts

- Fusing the traditional crafts centers spread between the national center for visual arts and the cultural palaces authority to the national center for supporting the traditional crafts which is suggested to have the following activities:

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- Adopting the craftsmen, their generations, and creations to guarantee the quality level
- Setting up exhibition for the traditional crafts
- Protecting and setting up quality traditional crafts centers
- Supporting craftsmen as professionals and artists
- Setting up distribution exhibitions for the traditional crafts products in and outside Egypt

Scientific Societies

Scientific Societies present an important pillar of the cultural life pillars in Egypt; the country which has the sixth oldest geography society in the world, aside from the historic society, the philosophic society and the political science society. The number of those societies is around 48 scientific society that works in Egypt, regardless to how inactive they may seem due to the lack of the sources or due to how traditional their activities may seem. If those societies are activated, they will have a good impact on the human studies in Egypt.

The biggest problems that face those societies are the following:

They are subordinate to the Ministry of Social Solidarity which does not match its role or nature as they follow the laws that command the orphanages and civil charities.

- Some of them do not own headquarters.
- They are controlled by older generations.
- Their activities are repeated without renewals.
- Their scientific participation in the local and international levels is weak.
- Their funding is very low.

The funding problem can be solved by funding other research projects in those associations. That is done by submitting papers that expose the idea of the project, its scientific outcome and the financing methods. A committee is formed to choose the best projects yearly in order to fund them.

Oral Heritage

Oral heritage and folkloric customs and traditions are considered a national heritage that should be taught in schools and documented in the World Heritage Lists. The Arts Academy Institute for Folkloric Arts should also be supported and promoted as a national center specialized in research and studies.

Cultural fields and reforming their positions

To reach the goals of the envisioned reformist development the following cultural fields must be developed as follows:

- Developing and reforming the Helal magazine and reinstating its Editor-in-Chief to an intellect who has knowledge on journalism as it is one of the oldest cultural Arabic magazines
- Issuing a magazine on the human science and contemporary thought like that of the Contemporary Thought Magazine (al-Fikr al-Mou'asser) which has been discontinued and the Humanities Magazine (al-Insaneyyat) which also has been discontinued which cloned the World of Though ('Alam al-Fikr) in Kuwait and Introductions (Mokademat) in Morocco and so on
- Issuing a magazine similar to the American Geographic Magazine in cooperation with an Egyptian geographic association in the Arab area
- Reissuing magazine issues such as Message (al-Risala) and the Magazine (al-Megallah) or something that is similar to them as long as they contain the digital world within their contents
- Reconsidering the rewards given to the writers in the cultural magazines which range from 50-150 Egyptian Pounds as that is considered a waste to the value of thought which has led many of those writers to flee to Gulf magazines

We must also issue a general cultural magazine on science and knowledge to push the scientific culture in society and that should be in cooperation with the social associations such as the Egyptian Academy (after spreading its spirit). This should also be done in relation to the

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international scientific corporations in the field of scientific culture such as Smithsonian in the USA and the Royal Institution in the UK.

It is necessary to expose the old continued magazines and the new innovated ones in a digital form so that the youth could reach them with ease. It should also be done in touch with new suggested big projects such as Egypt Cultural Gate.

Dar al Kuttub and National Archives

Dar al Kuttub is witnessing a grand project to renew and upgrade it. The documents have begun to show up. We have hope that this reformation would take its status between the grand librarian corporations in the world.

The National Translation Center

The center is doing an excellent job; however, the funds and efforts must be doubled in addition to focusing on the genres of translation. Translation represents an major gate to openness to other cultures.

5- Funding

Cultural production needs, what we can call, a "business model", and what is meant by that is the production process and the marketing and consumption of the cultural product. If we take a look at cultural production, we will find—same as with any other product—that it needs production stages, marketing strategies, good presentation methods, and service development. The issue here lies in the availability of a financier, producer, and consumer.

There are two main issues in finding funding in the cultural field:

- Sometimes the producer of a work is also its creator. Some writers write then print, publish, and distribute their own stories. This places a large burden on writers, and it creates a lax environment in which cultural works are produced without any depth or deliberation, which keeps writers in a constant state of production that is tailored to the market's needs. This might not lead to achieving cultural and intellectual enlightenment; it could instead wind up supporting a closed, instinctive, and extremist culture. An example of that would be the enormous amount of books that incite extremist thinking and eroticism.
- The publication of many works is often delayed due to lack of funding, which causes frustration for writers and might push some non-serious ones to sacrifice the quality of their work in order to satisfy the needs of readers and offer easily marketable cultural products.

In order for the "wheel" of cultural production, so to speak, to keep turning and developing, every party involved in the cultural work model must play a part in the cultural production process. Together, the parties involved in the cultural production process become the producers who fund cultural works, creators, and the marketing needed to deliver the product to the consumer, taking into account different tastes, while creating a need for new products in the market. Consumers stand at the end of the production cycle. Consumer satisfaction with both quality and quantity is essential to the survival of cultural development in society. There is also a limited role

for cultural institutions whose mission is to provide new opportunities for creative expression—although these creative expressions might clash with prevalent ideas in society and fall outside public taste.

The proposed cultural work model presents direct benefits for each party involved in the cultural production process.

Within this context, we can discuss the cultural funding process: the present situation in institutions and what needs to be updated.

The Cultural Development Fund

The cultural development fund is considered to be a good financial foundation. For this reason, the necessity of increasing its resources to keep up with the demands of funding the proposed plan should be taken into consideration in the following way:

- Renting out some parts of cultural palaces as cafeterias, cinema auditoriums, and libraries that will sell publications. This will also infuse these palaces with vibrancy and energy.
- Increasing the number of the fund's outlets and diversifying their products.
- Holding exhibitions for selling paintings and artworks to youth and exhibitions for traditional crafts. The fund will a receive a percentage of the earnings.
- Inviting private companies to contribute financially to projects that are partially funded by the cultural development fund.

Antiquities Fund

- Establishing a company that is affiliated to the cultural development fund. Its goal will be to hold antiquities exhibitions abroad and yield a high revenue for Egypt from these exhibitions.
- Establishing a company whose goal will be to mass produce archaeological models and special handmade products as it makes no sense to continue importing from China, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

- Establishing a company that will run archaeological sites and museum outlets and cafeterias to maximize its profit, whether through direct management or lease. There will be a focus on publishing guides and maps in several different languages.

The Private and Public Sectors

When discussing funding, it should be emphasized that the public and private sectors should play complementary roles when it comes to supporting cultural activities in Egypt.

The private sector is considered to be the primary source of funding for cultural productions, such as cinema and theater. Over the past few years there have been several examples of civil institutions funding cultural activities, such as the Culture Wheel and the Sawiris Foundation literary awards. This presents a new vision regarding the private sector's complementary role to the government when it comes to sponsoring cultural activities. For the government can allow the private sector to establish and sponsor public cultural activities through some governmental institutions. The government can also support some private cultural institutions within the framework of the projects presented by this sector until it can receive funding after the project is evaluated.

Using Government Guarantee

New means of funding can be accredited for cinematic and theatrical works. Commercial banks can fund products using loans, while giving the government a guarantee only. Granted this guarantee is only given through a special fund that has an evaluation and follow-up committee. From there, even if some of the projects fail financially, they will be limited in number, and it will not lead to the government guarantee not being activated, except in specific cases. In this way, governmental resources will be greatly benefitted from. It will also allow private banks to routinely participate in funding cultural products.

6- The Digital Revolution and How to Deal with It

No one can deny that we are living in the midst of a technological revolution in communications and information; its basis is the digital revolution and everything that it involves: communication speed, format and communication unification, production efficiency, and ease of printing, distribution, and storage. For this reason, it has become incumbent on our intellectual and cultural institutions to evolve in order to be able to cope with these changes.

The digital revolution has opened the door to a sweeping knowledge revolution that our modern culture must learn to interact with, embrace, and benefit society with.

However, we should understand that we are currently moving from the digital revolution into a sweeping revolution of knowledge that will completely change the whole structure of knowledge, the way it is introduced, and how we humans deal with it.

The New Knowledge Revolution (The Seven Pillars)

This new knowledge revolution has seven key characteristics, which I prefer to call "pillars", and these seven pillars shall affect how we think about the educational process and its institutions from kindergarten to post-doctoral levels; research, whether public or private; and last but not least, the cultural institutions that support our knowledge structure, such as libraries, archives, and museums. And these are the seven pillars of the new knowledge revolution:

First: Parsing, Life, and Organization

It is apparent that we have moved on from articles or books as units of knowledge to the internet, where connectivity happens through a structure that links web pages together and can be entered via a homepage, and words in these webpages are hyperlinks that lead to other pages or references. This

will lead us to a new sequence of material presentation, characterized by a new structure that has come out of text and gone into images, sound, and videos. Even more important is what I call "life", meaning that books are frozen in their format. They remain unchanged until a new edition of the same book is published (if another edition is published, that is), while webpages are full of life. They change every day and sometimes several times a day. The new structure of knowledge includes connecting people together through social networking (such as Facebook), and it is moving toward the semantic web, where we can search for relationships and concepts and not just objects. The structure of organization and presentation of knowledge will become one large interconnected vibrant living tissue of concepts, ideas, and facts that is growing exponentially and which will require new modes of thinking to interact with it. It will automatically spawn these new modes of thinking and scholarship will no longer be parsed like bricks in a wall; it will be more like a smooth, fluid flowing river.

Second: Image and Text

Throughout history, the primary means for the transmission of information has always been text. Images were difficult to produce and reproduce. This has changed. With the digital revolution, everybody can record images and video, and computer generated graphics are becoming affordable for everybody.

The human brain can process visual information with incredible rapidity. Enormous detail can be captured and processed in a fraction of a second. So some new features of the current knowledge revolution appear imminent. One is the far larger reliance on image— in addition to text— in the communication of information and knowledge and the changing forms of the storage and retrieval devices that this will require as we move from text dependent books and journals to digital stills and video image presentations as well as three dimensional virtual reality. And this is all subject to interactivity.

Third: Humans and Machines

With the exception of pure mathematics and some aspects of philosophy, it will no longer be possible for any human to search for, find and retrieve, and then manipulate knowledge in any field, much less add to it and communicate their own contribution, without the intermediation of machines. It is no longer possible to manually search through the enormous stock of available material. The 21st century is the start of a new era of human and machine interaction and human dependence on machines. This also brings up questions about artificial intelligence, but this is not the place to discuss a matter like this.

Fourth: Complexity and Chaos

The world we live in is remarkably complex, whether in ecological or biological phenomena. This complexity has become its own independent science: "complexity theory". The socio-economic transactions of a globalizing world are exceedingly intricate as, with the click of a mouse and the flight of an electron, billions of dollars move around the planet at the speed of light. The web of interconnected transactions is enormous, and the ripple effects of any single set of actions and its interaction with other effects are difficult to predict. These are issues that have been dealt with in "chaos theory", and they have begun to enter public perception and cultural consciousness in societies. We must embrace this in our updated cultural system.

Fifth: Computation and Research

Creative people and researchers viewed computer scientists and engineers as implementers who made their life less tedious. Wonderful tools, no doubt, but just tools all the same. Today, the concepts and the techniques of computing will become a central part of the new research paradigm. Computational science concepts, tools, and theorems will weave into the very fabric of science and scientific practice in all fields. The relationship

between humans and computers will become the primary relationship in different cultural fields in the upcoming decades.

Sixth: Convergence and Transformation

Domains are gradually converging. In the simplest terms, once upon a time we had chemistry and biology as distinct and separate enterprises, now we have biochemistry. Such moments of convergence, generating new sciences and insights, turn out to be some of the most fecund moments in the evolution of our knowledge and the development of our technologies. Today we are witnessing the convergence of three hitherto separate fields with the birth of BINT: Bio / Info / Nano Technology. It is unimaginable that how societies view themselves or the challenges that surround them—meaning their cultural vision—will not be affected by these developments.

Seventh: Pluridisciplinarity and Policy

We increasingly recognize that our real life problems, such as poverty and the environment, are all multi-dimensional and complex and require a special way of organizing all the various disciplinary inputs. Universities and research institutions over the decades, if not centuries, have stressed the independence of their different specializations in departments and colleges, each jealously guarding their territory, which has led to the cloistering of knowledge and a lack of interaction, which is needed to study the issues and challenges facing the new world, and as a result a lack of contributions toward drafting appropriate policies for our changing conditions.

These are the seven pillars of the new knowledge revolution, which should be taken into account when considering our educational institutions, kindergarten through post-doctoral levels; our research institutions, whether public or private; and the cultural institutions that support our knowledge structure, such as libraries, archives, and museums.

If the future of Egyptian and Arab culture is indeed connected to the culture of knowledge, then it is necessary that intellectuals and decision-

makers in our country take interest in the facets of this sweeping knowledge revolution and its seven pillars and various implications.

It is apparent that most writing in Egypt and the Arab world does not give enough attention to the specific changes happening in how we connect with knowledge. These changes could initiate a real revolution in everything we have known for the past three centuries up until the end of the 20th century, when the beginning of these changes loomed over the horizon. Many of our nation's children have sought change and development through emulating successful Western models of educational and research institutions or by following China's approach to modernization and industrialization unaware that these models belong to a different era, and that we need to prepare ourselves to face the challenges of the new era.

So, we will outline a few preliminary suggestions that stem from an interest in the new knowledge revolution.

A National Committee for Digitally Documenting Heritage

- Forming a national committee for digitally documenting heritage that includes a number of prominent figures from different cultural sectors, as well as a number of scientists who will be able to observe upcoming challenges in technology and discern the most suitable formats and the best techniques. This committee will be responsible for determining what constitutes "heritage" in a digital sense—similarly to how the Supreme Council of Antiquities registers antiquities—and who has the right to orchestrate its digitization and deposit the digital copy—suggested in the upcoming section—in the national digital repository. The committee will be responsible for setting the priorities for this national digital archive program.

A National Digital Repository

- Determining which institution will act as the national digital repository. I believe that the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (BA), with its suitable infrastructure and manpower, will be able to assume the responsibility of

preserving different forms of media in this digital repository: films, images, text, maps, drawings, etc. The BA will also be able to guarantee the preservation of the contents from material or technical damage as proven from its preservation of the Internet Archive.

- Every artist will be required to deposit a digital picture of their work in the national digital repository.
- This process will be organized by dividing the content of the repository into three sections:

  1. A section that has content that is similar to the traditional content in modern paper- and film-based repositories. Content will be selected in a manner similar to the traditional one and with the participation of publishers and through competitions sponsored by the cultural production fund mentioned earlier.
  2. A section that allows anyone to deposit their digital work, whatever it may be, and have it registered with the date of deposit. This section will be similar to an archive—like the Internet Archive the BA still maintains to this day.
  3. The aforementioned committee will select which works from our heritage and which digital photographs will be selected for documentation.

A Fund for Digital Works

A fund for digital works should be established and financed by the government (similar to what some other countries have done), and each creator should be given a (small) reward in exchange for publishing the copy they deposited in the national digital repository, which will guarantee that the creator's (the author) rights are respected while also allowing their content to be as widely available as possible to society. This will enrichen dialogue, increase diversity in the general cultural environment, and open the door to creative youth. The number of times a work is downloaded will be calculated. If the number exceeds a certain number (for example, 500 or 1,000), the reward increases according to a detailed formula stipulated in the

operational regulations of the laws pertaining to the national repository and the digital repository fund.

The Importance of Digital Publishing

The government should support electronic publishing in Egypt, for it is more advanced than traditional paper-based publishing, and it makes it easier for youth to connect to this age. We also believe that this would be an extension of the goals the government has set for the Reading for All campaigns, the Family Library, and the General Egyptian Book Organization. Digital publishing in the digital revolution world is as important as paper-based publishing.

There are several advantages to digitally publishing intellectual, literary, and scientific work, such as the following:

- Firstly, that it is interactive and allows people to comment and give their opinion on it.
- Work on a printed book ends as soon as it is published; digital books, on the other hand, can be added to and edited.
- Digital books can be linked to several other references. Videos, pictures, and other media can also be added to it to help flesh out its content.
- They do not need large storage areas like books do.

For this reason, digital publishing is the future. It is expanding at an exponential rate around the world through companies such as Amazon and Google. One can learn from their example in this field, for the cost of digital publishing is less than that of printed books.

If this kind of publishing finds support, a digital publishing house can be established with the primary goal of encouraging youth to sign contracts with them to publish their work. The aim of these contracts being to support and encourage youth. If a work becomes successful after a limited amount of digital copies have been distributed over the internet, the author of the work will receive more bonuses depending on how successful the work is.

There are also other ways of supporting the work of authors through selling books over the internet, similar to what Apple and (http://www.amazon.com/) do, and taking advantage of services such as "Print on Demand", which sends books via the internet to several centers who have this printer and prints any book the user wants.

On Intellectual Property in the Digital World

The rights of authors and creators are based on a "social contract" between the creator and society. Society welcomes these works and benefits from their existence and prevalence and gives the author, creator, or inventor in return for their creative work or scientific invention an intangible, eternal right and an exclusive ephemeral material one. The law protects this exclusive ephemeral material right for a limited amount of time because it is in the interests of society that the work return to the public domain so that other authors and creators can benefit from it and use it in new works.

Governing this system is an international agreement known as TRIPS, which came in continuation of two other international agreements from the 19th century: the Berne Convention and the Paris Convention. The former delineated copyrights (exclusive rights now last for 20 years), while the latter delineated the rights of the author, which in the 18th century lasted for 14 years with the chance of being renewed only once, then it was extended to last the entirety of an author's life, then it was extended again to include the entirety of the author's life plus 50 years (which is what is in effect now). In the USA, this was extended to last the author's life plus 70 years. The USA plans to extend this period again to last the author's life plus 75 years and, in addition to this, have the exclusive rights transferred to the publisher, and the publisher (as a company) does not die. In this way, the idea of a work returning to the public domain has been completely lost. Because of this, 70% of titles are no longer available and have not been reprinted, and there appears to be no intention on the part of the publisher to reprint them. They are still under the protection of intellectual property laws, and this situation does not benefit the general public.

The needs and interests of society should be given priority over commercial considerations. Now, in the digital world we live in, content can be published digitally and one copy at a time can be made on demand while preserving the rights of the author and publisher for this single copy. All this, and many other examples, aims to support the author and publisher and not the other way around.

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) has taken a stance regarding e-books and interlibrary loans and has also stressed the idea of "fair use", which is the right to quote and cite parts of a work without permission as long as it is for scientific, educational, or critiquing purposes and as long as the selection is printed in its original form.

There are exceptions to this in article 11 of the current intellectual property rights law in Egyptian law (Law NO. 82 for the year 2002). It might be useful to add a section about fair use as a general concept because in legislation, inference cannot be built on exceptions.

Also, article 148 in current laws allows the translation of works into Arabic as long as the author did not do so him or herself within three years of the work appearing. This is an important article that should be kept even if it clashes with current international agreements that generally cause developing countries to submit before industrial countries who have the most intellectual property rights in the world.

It is important that we take a stance for the good of Egyptian interests, and I mean by this the interests of authors and Egyptian society, and not just in order to comply with international agreements that essentially serve the interests of others.

It must be clarified that this is not an invitation to rebel against the international legal system; instead, it is an invitation to firmly stand for the interests of Egypt and Egyptians, to prioritize the interests of creators over that of businessmen, to stress the idea of fair use, and, above all, to motivate creators.

7- On Implementation and Follow-Up

Announcing something and not following through or following-up afterward, although well-intentioned, is a problem Egypt suffers from. Visions become fantasies and announced goals a mirage. Credibility is lost and the situation deteriorates. The problem is not in making a political decision: the problem has come to lie in implementation and the lack of effective follow-up.

Dealing with cultural reform is more complicated than dealing with engineering or agricultural projects. For culture is something that affects an entire people and includes behavior alterations and the updating of definitions, and it only happens with the participation of all intellectuals and with the audience that receives the cultural product and interacts with it.

We believe that it is necessary to involve a large number of intellectuals with different intellectual leanings, diverse specializations, from various geographical locations, of different ages so that the final picture of the plan referred to in this book can crystallize in the hopes that it will truly convince most of those who work in the cultural field, so that these suggestions are turned into a complete national cultural project that we are sure will be implemented.

At the end, intellectuals are the implementers, and they are the ones who will monitor implementation. They are the ones who will be able to assess the quality of a product, and they are the link between the audience in Egypt and Arab and non-Arab intellectuals and audiences outside Egypt, so that Egypt can play its historic role in the five circles (Arab, Islamic, African, Mediterranean, and international).

However, this does not mean that national cultural organizations do not have a role. On the contrary, they have an important role. And here the administrative capabilities of officials are as important as other factors, such as funding and political support.

Civil society also has an important role in creating culture. Its contributions started appearing in different forms in Egyptian society in the form of new cultural institutions such as the Culture Wheel and other civil society institutions that have embraced many youth and have managed to play a cultural role that complements what is offered by state-owned cultural institutions.

We also stress the necessity of supporting and publishing the culture of citizenship and social peace, which represent the cultural base of democratic transformation in Egypt, and entailing morals and values. It is what necessitates the establishment of a culture that accepts diversity, differences, and coexistence through channels of cultural and civilizational interaction with others. It also requires values related to moderation, forgiveness, and knowledge that are based on logic, commitment, and scientific method.