



Italian-Egyptian Year of Science and Technology

Newsletter Issue 1, January 2009



H.E. Hani Helal
Egyptian Minister of
Higher Education
and Scientific Research

Within the frame of the “Science Decade” launched by President Mubarak in December 2007 and in view of our firm believe in the importance of international cooperation in the field of science and technology, the Egyptian and Italian counterparts took the initiative to strengthen their bridges of cultural and scientific development between North and South through the implementation of Egypt-Italy Science Year (EISY 2009).

The main purpose of the Science Year is to expand and re-enforce the existing long-standing networks between Egyptian and Italian scientists and cooperating institutions. The major theme of EISY 2009 is to increase the public awareness of the role played by Science and Technology in our daily life.

Therefore, it is designed that EISY will host many activities and special events covering over-arching and specialist topics and thematic priorities of interest to our two nations. Cooperation will not only establish links for technology transfer through collaborative research projects but will also be extended to build major joint projects such as the Egyptian-Italian University and technical educational clusters. I’m quite confident that our cooperation in EISY under the motto “Science for the Community” will boost cultural and scientific ties between the two countries.

It is with great pleasure that I present the first issue of the Newsletter for the Italian-Egyptian Year of Science and Technology, which will be published monthly, with articles and comments on the various initiatives organized in the context of the Year of Science. It will be a valid instrument to spread the information on the excellent relations between our two Countries in the sectors of Science, Culture, Technology and Education.

The message we would like to deliver, throughout the Year, is that scientific discoveries can have a direct positive impact on everyday life for all people, in accordance with the motto “Science for People” chosen for the Italian-Egyptian Year of Science.

EISY09 will also be an opportunity to launch new projects in vocational training and higher education, as we will try to help young people, Egyptians and Italians alike, to acquire the capabilities to work with a view towards a common Mediterranean market and cultural zone.

Most of all, I wish that scientific progress will foster peace and prosperity for all people in this region of the world. Let us hope that the Italian-Egyptian Year of Science and Technology can make a small but tangible contribution in the right direction.



H.E. Claudio Pacifico
Ambassador of Italy
in Egypt



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Editorial

The Italian-Egyptian Science Year (EISY09) had a very good start on January 10th at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, where a highly successful launching ceremony was held (see related story Page 2). In Cairo, kick-off time was January 4th, with a three-day workshop on “Femtosecond Laser Applications” at the National Institute for Laser Enhanced Sciences. And on Jan 14th, a discussion day, hosted by Cairo University, saw the presence of Prof. Tullio Regge, one of the Italian icons of Theoretical Physics, who shared his views on where fundamental research in Physics is actually going.

At present, three scientific exhibitions are going on in Cairo. The first one is “Blow Up: Images from the

Nanoworld”, at the Open Air Theatre of the Cairo Opera House. At the Italian-Egyptian Centre for Restoration and Archaeology “Sama’khana”, in Islamic Cairo, you may view the exhibition on the History of another famous Italian physicist, entitled “Enrico Fermi’s Legacy”. [...]

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Bibliotheca Alexandrina: Launching Ceremony of EISY 2009

Launching Ceremony EISY 2009



Ribbon cutting for the Blow Up exhibition. On the left side H.E. Claudio Pacifico, on the right side H.E. Hani Helal

The launching ceremony of the Italian-Egyptian Year of Science and Technology was held at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, on January 10th, in the presence of His Excellency Hani Helal, Ministry for Higher Education and Scientific Research, and of Secretary of State Giuseppe Pizza, on behalf of Mariastella Gelmini, Italian Minister for Education, University and Research. The Italian Ambassador Claudio Pacifico was also there, and

so were several distinguished speakers and scientists from our two Countries. More than 300 people attended the event, including Presidents of Egyptian Universities, Directors of Research Centres, professors, members of the cultural, political and media world, but also students and ordinary people. H.E. Giuseppe Pizza announced that the Italian Government will invite Egypt, together with China, India and Brazil, to the next G8 Meeting on Science and Technology in June 2009 that will be held in Lucca, Italy.

Several speakers indicated the importance of communicating science to the general public, in accordance with the motto chosen for EISY09, i.e., Science for People.

It was not only an occasion for formal greetings and blessings, as business was meant from day one, with an impressive Round Table discussion, where practical proposals for joint collaboration were put forward. In particular, the representative of

the Italian Authority for Alternative Energies and the Environment (ENEA) presented possible collaborative projects on the application of solar energy to water desalination and the exploitation of marine algae for bio-fuel production. Progress in the realization of the Italian-Egyptian University was also discussed.

The exhibition “BLOW UP: images from the Nanoworld” was also inaugurated during the launching ceremony at the Library of Alexandria (see related story Page 7).



Launching Ceremony for EISY 2009

“Fermi’s Legacy”: research goes on. An exhibition on the life and studies of the Italian Physicist

The Photographic Exhibition “Fermi’s Legacy” was inaugurated on the 17th of December at the Italian-Egyptian Center for Restoration and Archeology *Sama’Khana* in Cairo and it will be open to the public until the 15th of February. The Exhibition was curated by Prof. Giovanni Battimelli, La Sapienza University, Rome.

The exhibition describes Enrico Fermi’s work, the great Italian Physicist who received the Nobel Prize in 1938 for his research on new radioactive elements and slow neutrons. His scientific legacy goes back to the days in the ‘30s when the Physics School of Via Panisperna was started - where other important scientists such as F.

Rasetti, E. Segre’, B. Pontecorvo, E. Majorana, E. Amaldi and O. D’Agostino were formed - up to present time.

Visitors of the exhibition will also have the opportunity to discover the wonderful *sama’khana*, a great hall built by the ancient Mawlawis Derwish confraternity, that has been recently restored (see related article).

“Fermi’s Legacy” was inaugurated by Franco Porcelli, Scientific Attaché at the Italian Embassy in Cairo, and by Adel El Nadi, professor of Electronic Engineering at Cairo University, who discussed the impact of Fermi’s research in Egypt. After February 15th, the exhibition will move through Egyptian universities.



An image of Enrico Fermi, during his period as professor in Rome

[More Details on www.eisy2009.eg.net](http://www.eisy2009.eg.net)

Who is Enrico Fermi?



Fermi receiving the Nobel Prize in Stockholm

Enrico Fermi (Rome, 29 September 1901 - Chicago, 28 November 1954) was an Italian physicist most noted for his theoretical and experimental work on the development of nuclear energy, and for his contributions to quantum theory and statistical mechanics.

Fermi was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1938 for his identification of new radioactive elements and the discovery of nuclear reactions induced by slow neutrons. He is regarded as one of the top scientists of the 20th century. Fermium, a synthetic element created in 1952, is named after him.

Sama’khana “The Hall of Listening”

If you are planning to visit the exhibition *Fermi’s Legacy*, don’t miss to notice the wonderful place that hosts this event.

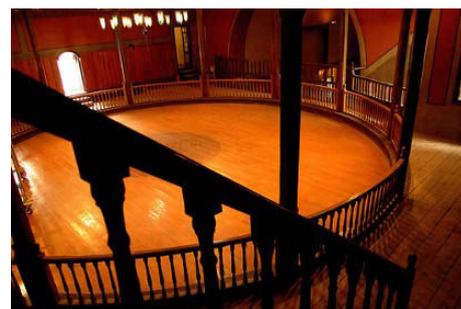
Sama’Khana - the “hall of listening”- was an area used by *Sufi* initiates for their religious rites. The followers of the *Sufi* mystic tradition are called *Dervishes*. The *sama’* performance, literally “hearing”, was a rite taken over in different ways by various *Dervishes* Orders, but it constitutes for the *Mawlawis* -the whirling *Dervishes*- the fundamental rite of the confraternity since the XIV century. By this rite they wanted to call up the heavenly spheres. Hence they played music to evoke paradise, and indulged in the practice of “hearing”. All the architectural elements in the *sama’khanas* were highly symbolic. The spectators admitted to the ceremony were supposed to feel by it the cosmic harmony.

The Cairo *Sama’khana* seems to have been one of the last of such edifices to be built in the Islamic world, and was probably one of the last to remain in active existence after the decree to close the Turkish *darvisher*ies in 1925.

The successful restoration of the Cairo *Sama’khana* has fortunately saved one of the most significant monuments of the *Mawlawi* symbol-

ogy and of *Sufi* thought. The preservation of this typical monument was assured by the “Italian-Egyptian Centre for Restoration and Archaeology”. The Centre worked in collaboration with the Supreme Council of Antiquities (S.C.A.) to recover the entire area of the *Sama’khana*. This experience led to the creation of the present restoration school, which prepares scholars in architecture, engineering and other experts of various degrees. The “Centre” offered its expertise also during the recovery of many damaged structures after the earthquake in 1992 October, and offers collaboration in several activities related to monumental restoration in Egypt.

See also Giuseppe Fanfoni
“Cento anni in Egitto -percorsi dell’archeologia italiana” Electa 2001 Milano



The *Sama’khana* after restoration

Upcoming events...

1st–28th February

Photographic Exhibition
 “Blow Up: Images from the Nanoworld”
 Open Air Theater, Cairo Opera House

2nd February

Inauguration of the Photographic Exhibition
 “Blow Up: Images From the Nanoworld”
 Small Theater, Cairo Opera House

16th February

Screening of the film
 “Going North” by Eugenio Manghi
 Bibliotheca Alexandrina

23rd– 24th February

Workshop on Nanotechnologies
 American University of Cairo

27th February

Meeting of the joint Committee
 on the Italian-Egyptian University
 Rome

17th– 19th March

International Workshop
 Nuclear Science and Education
 Cairo University

17th March

Launching Event
 EGY SOL: The Solar Water Heaters Facility for
 the Red Sea and South Sinai Hotels
 New and Renewable Energy Authority, Nasr City

21st– 24th March

Exhibition
 Abu Simbel: The rescue of the temples.
 Man and Technology.
 Nubia Museum, Aswan

24th– 26th March

International Congress
 Current Trends and Future Perspectives
 in Hepatic and Gastrointestinal Diseases
 Grand Hyatt Hotel, Cairo

30th March– 4th April

Conference
 Frontiers of Space Astrophysics
 Cairo & Alexandria

1st– 6th April

Exhibition
 Antarctic: Desert of Ice
 Bibliotheca Alexandrina

EISY 2009 NEWSLETTER

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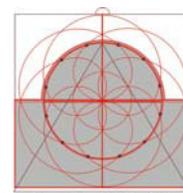
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