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Sommario/riassunto	The Bibliotheca Alexandrina was launched with great fanfare in the 1990's, a project of UNESCO and the Egyptian government to recreate the glory of the Alexandria Library and Museion of the ancient world.

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The project and its timing were curious-it coincided with scholarship moving away from the dominance of the western tradition; it privileged Alexandria's Greek heritage over 1500 years of Islamic scholarship; and it established an island for the cultural elite in an urban slum. Beverley Butler's ethnography of the project explores these contradictions, and the challenges faced by Egyptian...