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**A Touristic Artistic Study of The Nile Museum in Aswan  
And A First-Time View of Its Collections**

Shaban Samir Abd Elrazik Mohammed

Assistant Professor in Tourist Guidance Department,

Faculty of Tourism and Hotels

Minia University

Mohamed Sahry Bershawy Abd ElAzim

Lecturer in Tourist Guidance Department,

Faculty of Tourism and Hotels

Minia University

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**ABSTRACT**

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The paper deals with the Nile Museum in Aswan, which is one of the most important specialized museums in Egypt, due to the great significance of the Nile River. The museum exhibition used to depend on the type of artifact or its era until recently. However, the new approach is for these artifacts to tell a story about an era, manufacturing method, artistic style, or way of life. The museum guide can narrate a captivating story to attract visitors. Therefore, the importance of this study lies in its unique focus on one of the main museums that document the history of the Nile River. The museum houses numerous artifacts that tell the story of the Nile River's flow in Egypt across different historical periods, starting from ancient Egyptian times to the modern era. The study also covers a wide range of artistic artifacts that are being published for the first time, including tools and equipment related to the Aswan Reservoir and the High Dam, coins, stamps, and ethnographic artifacts.

**Research Objectives**

- Studying the Nile Museum in Aswan and shed light on its collections for the first time.
- Providing scientific material for tour guides so that they can fulfill their role as information givers satisfactorily.
- Maximizing an important component of the tourism presentation, which is showcasing the importance of new tourist destinations, added to the tourism programs.
- Revealing the significance of the museum as a historical,

## 1. Introduction

The cultural heritage is considered an important source of information that speaks about the history of humanity, ancestors, their lifestyle, way of thinking, and their skills. All of these things can be accessed through various artifacts. Museum collections act as a bridge between the things that have disappeared and been forgotten and our ability to understand and reconstruct the history of present humanity.

The Nile Museum in Aswan is the first cultural and historical edifice in Egypt that connects Egypt and the countries of the Nile Basin. It documents the relationships between its people, immortalizing the history of the Nile from its journey through the source countries to its delta. The Nile Museum in Aswan is a destination for the public from various groups and is an important tourist site in Aswan, providing information about the history of the Nile River.

## 2. Aswan city

Aswan is one of the most important tourist areas in Egypt, and its southern gateway, and the point of contact between Egypt and Africa<sup>(1)</sup>. It was known as "Swnw" in the ancient Egyptian era, which means "market" where it was a commercial center for caravans coming from and to Nubia. Then, it was named "Syen" in the Ptolemaic era, and it was named "Swan" in the Coptic language, and from it came its Arabic name "Aswan"<sup>(2)</sup>. Aswan was under the control of the *Qusite* administration during the Islamic era until the end of the Mamluk era. In the Ottoman era, it became the gateway of the *Gerga* province, as *Asiut* and *Akhmim* administrations were merged into one province named *Gerga*<sup>(3)</sup>. *Ibn Al-Ji'ān* mentioned that Aswan region was under the authority of the tribal deputy of Upper Egypt, then it came under the authority of *Al-Maqar al- Al-Seifi yushbik Al-Ashrafi Al-Dudar*<sup>(4)</sup>. Aswan continued to develop during the era of Muhammad Ali, where it was annexed to the Isna directorate. In 1888, Aswan became the capital of the border directorate, and in 1900 the directorate was named

(1) شوهدي عبدالحميد عبدالقادر الخواجة: التنمية السياحية في محافظة أسوان، دراسة جغرافية، مجلة كلية الآداب، عدد ٣٩، أغسطس ٢٠٠٦م، ص ٤٩٥

(2) سعاد ماهر: مدينة أسوان وأثارها في العصر الإسلامي، مطابع دار الشعب، القاهرة، ١٩٧٧م، ص ٤.

(3) سعاد ماهر: مدينة أسوان وأثارها في العصر الإسلامي، ص ١٦.

(4) ابن الجيعان، الشيخ شرف الدين يحيى بن المنقر (المتوفي ١١٨٥هـ / ١٤٨٠م): التحفة السنوية بأسماء البلاد المصرية، مكتبة الكليات الأزهرية، القاهرة، ١٩٧٤م، ص ١٩٥.

Aswan, and it continued until 1960 when it became the Aswan Governorate<sup>(5)</sup>. The city of Aswan is located on the eastern bank of the Nile, between latitudes 220 and 250 north, and between longitudes 3120 and 3033 east. It is 85 meters above sea level and approximately 879 km away from the city of Cairo.

### 3. The importance of the Nile Museum in Aswan

The museum contains documents and information about the Nile River, as well as a large collection of artifacts that record the journey of the Nile River from its sources below the Ethiopian plateau to its end at the Mediterranean Sea.

The museum also houses rare historical artifacts and memorabilia dating back to the construction of Aswan Reservoir since 1898, and the construction of the High Dam in the 1950s and 1960s. It also contains the tools and devices used by engineers in the construction of these two great structures, in addition to showcasing the most important national projects of the Egyptian Ministry of Irrigation, which has been involved in them since their establishment, starting with Al-Qanatir Alkhayria during the era of Muhammad Ali. The museum contains 250 archaeological artifacts. The Ministry of Culture also donated 61 important art pieces to the museum, illustrating the highlights of Egyptian artists' depiction of the journey of the Nile in Egypt.

The Nile Museum in Aswan plays a significant role in strengthening Egypt's relations with the Nile Basin countries through mutual cultural ties. Several halls have been allocated to each Nile Basin country, containing their own treasures and specific information to enhance visitors' awareness and provide them with geographical and historical knowledge about each country.

### 4. The concept of a museum

Museums are one of the most prominent means that contribute to the preservation of the cultural heritage of nations over successive years. Therefore, museums combine cognitive and civilizational characteristics, representing an important record for documenting human heritage, with the aim of transferring it to future generations for knowledge and enjoyment<sup>(6)</sup>.

The concept of the museum has evolved in line with developments in society. The International Council of Museums (ICOM) has defined the concept of a museum as a permanent non-profit institution aimed at collecting the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity, preserving it, and displaying it to the public for educational purposes and

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<sup>(5)</sup> محمد أحمد عبداللطيف: مدن وقرى مصر في نصوص بعض البرديات العربية في العصر الأموي، دراسة أثرية حضارية، رسالة ماجستير غير منشور، كلية السياحة والفنادق، جامعة حلوان، ٢٠٠١م، ص ٣٢.

<sup>(٦)</sup> محمد جمال راشد: أنواع المتاحف ومعايير تصنيفها، مجلة الإتحاد العام للآثار بين العرب، مجلد ٢٢، عدد ١ (٢٠٢١)، ص ٧٤٠.

enjoyment.<sup>(7)</sup> The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) defines museums as technologically and administratively equipped places for collecting and preserving human and natural heritage for the purpose of education and culture<sup>(8)</sup>.

## 5. The idea of establishing the Nile Museum in Aswan

The idea of establishing the museum came to commemorate the history of the Nile River, starting from its journey from the upstream countries to the downstream, as well as to promote convergence and strengthen relations between the Nile Basin countries. It was inaugurated in the presence of the Egyptian Prime Minister and the Egyptian Minister of Irrigation at that time, in addition to representatives from 11 African countries, which are the Nile Basin countries.

## 6. The objectives of establishing the museum

The objectives of any museum are diverse in general, and their importance increases according to the exhibited artifacts, especially with the tremendous modern development in various fields. The main objectives of establishing the Nile Museum are as follows:

1. Preserve the documents and belongings of all establishments located on the Nile River, including the High Dam and Aswan Reservoir.
2. Strengthening the eternal relations with the Nile Basin countries by dedicating wings to display the belongings of these countries, which has the greatest impact on the visitors' souls, especially Africans, when they see their country's belongings in the museum.
3. Continuously disseminate and deliver new information to visitors.
4. Attracting a larger number of tourists and this leads to an increase in national income as tourism is considered one of the main sources of national income for many countries.
5. The modern trend is for museums to tell a specific story or a certain cultural development through groups, so that the artifacts appear as if they are speaking for themselves. In addition, holding continuous seminars for visitors, equipped with workshops, documentaries, and more.
6. The museum reflects the past and present of the community to visitors and tourists.

## 7. Location and Area

The Nile Museum is located south of Aswan, specifically on the eastern side of Aswan reservoir (Fig.1). It was built in a distinguished location on a hill overlooking

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<sup>(7)</sup> دانا جهاد كنعان: مقترح موقع إلكتروني للترويج لمتحف التراث الأردني بجامعة اليرموك، رسالة ماجستير، جامعة اليرموك، ٢٠١٧م، ص. ٧٤٠.

<sup>(8)</sup> محمد السيد حلاوة: تنقيف الطفل بين المكتبة والمتحف، الدار العالمية للطباعة والنشر، القاهرة، ٢٠٠٣م، ص. ٧٤٠.

the Nile and Lake Nasser, with a charming view. The museum occupies an area of 146,000 meters, including facilities, exhibition areas, and the exterior fence.



*(Fig.1) Location of the Nile museum.*

*(Google Earth Website)*

## **8. Date of Establishment**

The construction of the Nile Museum in Aswan began in 2004 and continued until its completion in 2016. The museum was officially opened on January 10, 2016.

## **9. Museum Planning**

The total area of the museum is approximately 146,000 square, while the area of the museum building itself is about 2,052 meters. The remaining space includes the buildings attached to the museum. The main museum building is divided into two wings: the exhibition wing and the administrative wing. The museum building is decorated with a logo representing the countries of the Nile Basin gathered around the Nile River. (Pl.1)



(Pl.1) Overview of the Nile museum.

**The exhibition wing (with an area of 1,300 meters) includes**

Ground floor: It consists of 3 enclosed exhibition halls, an open exhibition hall around the path, and a distribution hall.

First floor: It includes two exhibition halls, a library, an uncovered terrace, and two distribution halls.

**The administrative wing (with an area of 760 meters) includes**

Ground floor: It includes the main lobby and a cinema exhibition hall.

First floor: It includes administrative offices.

## 10. Presentation Technology

The presentation is considered the beating heart of any museum and its backbone. It must be based on scientific principles, primarily relying on good taste and a high artistic spirit. This ultimately allows for a good and enjoyable viewing experience, leaving a positive impression and elevating the visitor's artistic taste<sup>(9)</sup>.

Therefore, the presentation becomes the window through which the audience views the artwork, and the more the presentation adheres to agreed scientific standards, the more familiar it becomes to all segments of society<sup>(10)</sup>.

The museum exhibition design is not a matter of aesthetics in making the exhibits impactful or indicating that the exhibit organizer is an important person, but it is the design of the exhibition that makes the displays come alive and function efficiently.

<sup>(9)</sup> عزت زكي حامد قادوس: علم المتاحف، مطبعة جامعة الإسكندرية، مصر، ٢٠١٢م، ص ١٩.

<sup>(10)</sup> شوقي شعت: المتاحف في الوطن العربي النشأة والتطور، ط ١، إصدارات دائرة الثقافة والإعلام حكومة الشارقة الإمارات العربية المتحدة، ٢٠٠٢، ص ٥٣.

All displays have a purpose or goal, and there must be complete harmony between the exhibited pieces. Colors also play an important role in the way the display is presented, such as ceiling and wall paint, coordination between the color of the floors and the exhibited furniture like paintings and platforms, display cabinets, lighting boxes, sculpture bases, columns, because poor color choices reduce communication between the visitor and the exhibits. It is also important to constantly consider improving and developing display methods, avoiding following a single pattern<sup>(11)</sup>.

The Nile Museum is rich in a vast collection of diverse museum exhibits of great historical significance. The museum display takes the form of a permanent exhibition aimed at giving the public a general overview of the museum's contents. The exhibits are presented in an engaging and attractive manner based on scientific foundations.

### 10.1. Lighting

Lighting is considered one of the essential elements of any museum, in addition to being used as a means to attract the attention of museum visitors to the displayed objects. Researchers emphasize the necessity of designing lighting in a way that enhances the effectiveness of the museum's exhibitions. Controlled lighting inside the museum can make a significant impact on the visitors, affecting their psychological state. Lighting can also influence the speed at which visitors perceive the exhibits, as they may spend a long time looking at a specific display or quickly glance at another in response to the lighting effect on the objects. Furthermore, lighting can highlight and clarify a specific historical period, not only that, but it also controls the movement of visitors within the museum as determined by the museum designers, through the placement of suitable lights and their appropriate direction<sup>(12)</sup>.

The lighting in the museum is divided into two sections:

- 1- Lighting in the exhibition hall, it is preferable to have indirect lighting, with the light source not visible to the eye. The light source should be facing the wall or the ceiling of the exhibition hall, so that the rays are reflected from the light source onto the ceiling or a specific wall. The lighting should also be uniform within the hall.
- 2- Lighting of the exhibits, it should ideally highlight the exhibits themselves, clarify the idea behind them, and attract the attention of visitors<sup>(13)</sup>.

Lighting is of two types, natural and artificial, and the prevailing trend in modern museums is to rely on artificial lighting<sup>(14)</sup>. The Nile Museum is an example of

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<sup>(11)</sup> إبراهيم النواوي: علم المتاحف، مطابع المجلس الأعلى للآثار، القاهرة، ٢٠١٠م، ص١٩٢-١٩٦.

<sup>(12)</sup> إبراهيم النواوي: علم المتاحف، ص١٦٨-١٧١.

<sup>(13)</sup> عبد الفتاح مصطفى غنيمية: المتاحف والمعارض والقصور، القاهرة، ١٩٩٠م، ص٨٨-٨٩.

<sup>(14)</sup> أسس تصميم المتاحف، مجلة الكتاب العربي، يناير ٢٠١٦م، ص٥٠.

this, where artificial lighting is used to highlight a specific piece or group of displayed artifacts, with the aim of attracting visitors' attention and creating a sense of change and diversity.

## **10.2. Means of clarification**

Means of clarification take several forms where we find them representing every written, printed, drawn, illustrated, audible, or even visible tool, which can provide visitors to the museum with clarification and interpretation of the displayed exhibits in the exhibition halls. It is known that the public's interest in the museum has become associated with reinforcing its presentations with advanced technologies and its interaction with modern means of communication, which has necessitated meeting this growing need. Museum presentations have become associated with the use of audiovisual means, computer media, and the internet, all in order to provide and present more clarifications and information about the collection of exhibits present in the exhibition halls. These means have become an effective means of education, increasing the attractiveness and excitement of the presentations offered in museums (15).

The audio-visual devices were used at the Nile Museum, which are considered the latest means of illustration in the museum display, and the most effective. This is in addition to using traditional means to explain and clarify its exhibits, such as cards, maps, and models.

## **11. Museum display**

### **First: Ground floor:**

#### **Museum lobby (Pl.2)**

It is the first thing the visitor encounters when entering the museum building and is connected to a reception area, a sitting area, a museum model exhibition hall, a Habi cave, and a Habi plaza. The museum display scenario begins from there. The lobby is adorned with palm trees, symbolizing goodness, prosperity, water conservation, strength, and durability.

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(15) أحمد الرفاعي: طرق العرض الحديثة في المتحف، حوليات المتحف الوطني للآثار، عدد ٥، الجزائر، ١٩٩٦م، ص ٣-٥.



*(Pl.2)The Nile Museum lobby.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

### **God Habi Plaza (Pl.3)**

Habi is the ancient Egyptian deity of the Nile, represented in the form of a human carrying a cluster of lotus flowers on his head. His body exhibits both male and female characteristics at the same time<sup>(16)</sup>. Masculine features are evident in his leg and arm muscles, while feminine features are seen in his chest and abdomen. He symbolizes the fertile earth fertilized by the floodwaters. He was the lord of the river, bringing prosperity, and the lord of marsh birds, symbolizing the creatures he bestowed upon the Egyptians along with the Nile itself. Therefore, he was depicted in temples, offering sacrifices as offerings to the gods<sup>(17)</sup>. He has been represented in the Nile Museum in several statues of different colors, representing the materials of stones and metals in the region. He is depicted holding the document of the oath to protect the waters of the Nile, which was repeated by the ancient Egyptian king, saying, "I swear that I have not polluted the Nile and have not stopped the flow of the Nile River." This oath was a condition for entering paradise.

Hapi (Hep, Hap, Hapy) was possibly a predynastic name for the Nile later on, the Egyptians just called the Nile iterw, that means 'the river' – and so it became the name of the god of the Nile. ('Nile' comes from the Greek corruption-Neilos-of the Egyptian nwy which means 'water'.) Hapi was mentioned in the Pyramid Texts ("who comes forth from Hep("where he was responsible for sending the river to the underworld from some caves where he was thought to have lived at the First Cataract. The Nile was thought to have flowed from the primeval waters of Nun, through the land of the dead, the heavens and finally flowing into Egypt where it emerged from the ground

<sup>(16)</sup> روبرت آرامور: آلهة مصر القديمة وأساطيرها، ترجمة مروة الفقي، ط ١، المجلس الأعلى للثقافة، القاهرة، ٢٠٠٥م، ص ١٣٣

<sup>(17)</sup> سيد عاشور: نهر النيل نبع الحياة والحضارة، مطبعة البردي، القاهرة، ٢٠١٠م، ص ٢٧.

between two mountains which lay between the islands of Abu (Elephantine) and the Island of Iat-Rek (Philae). Hapi was also mentioned in the Pyramid Texts as a destructive power, but one that worked for the pharaoh <sup>(18)</sup>.



*(Pl.3) God Habi plaza at the Nile museum.  
(Photographed by the author)*

### **The Pathio Zone (Pls.4, 5)**

It represents the heart of the museum and includes a water design with eleven vertical columns, each symbolizing a country from the Nile Basin. Each column bears the flag of that country, and they are connected by rings representing the links between those countries. The water flows from the top in the form of a waterfall until it reaches the water collection basin below, which contains Nile crocodiles and sculptures symbolizing Egypt, which is a downstream country. Surrounding it is a simulation of the African forest with models of some animals and their sounds.

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<sup>(18)</sup> BOHAI, Xu. The similarities between Hapi and Hebo (河伯), June 2019, p.3



*(Pls.4, 5) The Pathio zone at the Nile museum.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

### **Hall of the Bride of the Nile (Pl.6)**

In the center of the hall, there is a model of the Bride of the Nile, and in the background, there is a carved hollow on glass depicting aquatic life in a fantasy atmosphere, symbolizing the celebration of the fidelity of the Nile, which takes place every year on the 13th day of the month of "Buona" or June. During the celebration, a doll of a beautiful girl is thrown into the great river. This celebration has a mythical story from the ancient Egyptian folklore, narrated throughout Egyptian history, which tells of a drought in the Nile in one of the years, causing a state of barrenness and drought in various parts of Egypt. The priest suggested to the king that the god Habi, the deity of goodness, fertility, and prosperity, was angry because he wanted to get married and have offspring. The girls rushed to marry the god of goodness, and ceremonies and celebrations were held. The most beautiful girl was chosen, and after the completion of the ceremonies, the bride threw herself into the Nile, happy and satisfied. Because she will meet her beloved, the god of goodness, in the afterlife, and as the legend tells, the celebration continued for years and years until the princess, the most beautiful bride of the Nile, was chosen. She had a servant who took care of her and loved her immeasurably. The servant became sad and wanted to keep the princess, even if it meant preventing the Nile from flooding. So, she started thinking until her thoughts led her to create a doll that looked exactly like the princess, identical in every way except for the presence of a soul within her. Then, she adorned the doll and planned to throw her into the Nile with her own hands, to deliver her to her beloved. The ceremony took place, the celebration ended, and the king was struck with deep sadness, despair, and grief over the loss of his beloved daughter, to the point where he became bedridden and unaware that the servant had hidden the princess in her own home among her children. When she saw the king's sadness and his increasing illness, she felt sorry for him and told him the truth. Since then, the king decided to throw a beautiful doll into a festive atmosphere next to the Nile<sup>(19)</sup>.

<sup>(19)</sup> أمير عكاشة: الفرعنة حكايات وأساطير حيرت العالم، وكالة الصحافة العربية، القاهرة، ٢٠١٦م، ص ٩٩.

Anyone who follows the history, beliefs, and sophisticated civilization of the Egyptians throughout history finds it unacceptable, even impossible, to throw living girls into the Nile. This is confirmed by most of those who wrote about Egypt, such as Herodotus, Theodorus of Sicily, Plutarch, and Clement of Alexandria. That myth is incorrect<sup>(20)</sup>.



*(Pl.6) Hall of the bride of the Nile at the Nile museum.  
(Photographed by the author)*

### **The Hall's collectibles:**

#### **Royal tableware (Pls.7, 8, 9, 10)**

The hall contains some tools used by King Fuad during the construction of Aswan reservoir. These tools are a collection of royal tableware made of porcelain, and each piece is adorned with the emblem of the Egyptian kingdom. These pieces were transferred to the museum from King Fouad's rest house in Aswan.

There is a great similarity between these artifacts and other similar preserved artifacts in other museums, such as Abdeen Palace Museum and Manial Palace Museum in Cairo, is noticed.

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(20) مختار السويفي: الاحتفال بوفاء النيل أقيم عيد في العالم، مجلة الفنون الشعبية، عدد ٤٥، ديسمبر ١٩٩٤م، الهيئة المصرية العامة للكتاب، القاهرة، ص ٦٢.



*(Pls.7, 8, 9, 10) Royal tableware at the Nile museum. Published for the first time.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

### **Oil lighting bulbs (Pls.11, 12, 13, 14)**

The hall also includes a unique collection of oil lighting bulbs used to illuminate Aswan reservoir at night in the years before electricity generation.



*(Psl.11, 12, 13, 14) Oil lighting bulbs at the Nile Museum. Published for the first time.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

#### **Devices connected to The High Dam and Aswan Reservoir (Psl.15, 16, 17, 18)**

The hall displays many devices and equipment of historical value that contributed to the construction of Aswan reservoir or were used during that period. These include electrical measuring devices, surveying instruments, electric bells, and the telephone communication switch.





*(Pl.15, 16, 17, 18) Devices connected to the High Dam and Aswan Reservoir at the Nile Museum. Published for the first time. (Photographed by the author)*

### Coins and Commemorative Stamps (Pl.19)

The hall also contains a number of silver and gold coins, non-circulated coins, and some commemorative stamps issued by the Central Bank on several occasions, including the inauguration of electricity from the High Dam.



*(Pl.19) Coins and commemorative stamps at the Nile museum. Published for the first time. (Photographed by the author)*

### The Medals and Insignias

The hall also contains a collection of medals and insignias, as well as certificates of appreciation that were awarded to one of the workers involved in the construction of the High Dam, with the signature of President Gamal Abdel Nasser.



**(Pl.20) The Medals and insignias at the Nile museum. Published for the first time.**  
**(Photographed by the author)**

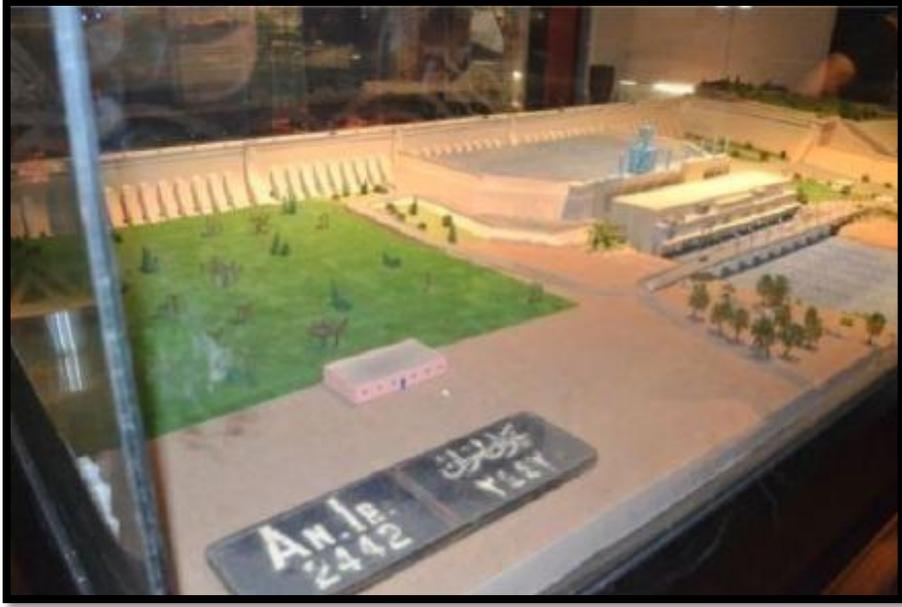
### **Aswan Reservoir Maquette (Pl.21)**

The hall also includes a maquette of Aswan reservoir (Aswan Old Dam) (plate), which was laid by Khedive Abbas Helmi II (1309 AH - 1892 AD / 1333 AH - 1914 AD). The construction of the dam began between 1899 and 1902, and it was inaugurated on December 10, 1902.

Aswan reservoir is the first dam built at that time. It is built of granite stones above Aswan Falls to be the largest dam built in the world at that time. Its length is 1950 meters, and the height of the summit is 36 meters above sea level. The summit width is 11 meters, and it has 180 gates. Aswan reservoir was raised in two stages, 5 meters between 1907-1912 to reach a level of 114 meters above sea level, and 9 meters between 1929-1933 to reach a level of 123 meters<sup>(21)</sup>. The rushing water from it was utilized to create two power stations, the first Aswan Power Station and the second Aswan Power Station, along with the construction of a road connecting the eastern and western banks of the Nile.

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Helwa, Amira M., Mohamed H. Elgamal, and Ashraf H. Ghanem. "Dam break analysis of Old (") Aswan Dam on Nile River using HEC-RAS." International Journal of Hydrology Science and p.562.Technology 10.6 (2020).



*(Pl.21) Aswan reservoir maquette at the Nile museum.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

### **Aswan High Dam maquette (Pl.22)**

The hall displays a maquette of Aswan High Dam (a painting), which is a rock-fill dam on the Nile River. It was built at a site located 7 kilometers south of the Aswan Reservoir<sup>(22)</sup>. Its foundation stone was laid on January 9th, 1960. It has a length of 3600 meters, a width of 980 meters at the base, and 40 meters at the top. Its height is 111 meters above the Nile's bottom and 196 meters above sea level. The water is discharged through six massive tunnels with a diameter of 14 meters. There are 12 large units for hydraulic power generators. The dam owns a large lake in front of it, which is Lake Nasser, with a storage capacity of up to 164 billion cubic meters and a height of 182 meters<sup>(23)</sup>. The dam has greatly helped in controlling water flow and mitigating the effects of Nile flooding. It is also used for electricity generation in Egypt<sup>(24)</sup>.

<sup>(22)</sup> محمد مدحت مصطفى: السد العالي ومشاكل مياه النيل، دار رؤية للطباعة، القاهرة، ٢٠١٣م، ص٥٣.

<sup>(23)</sup> Robinson, S., Strzepak, K., El-Said, M., & Lofgren, H, The high dam at Aswan. Indirect Impact of Dams: Case Studies from India, Egypt, and Brazil. Washington, DC, and New Delhi, India: World Bank and Academic Foundation, 2008, p.238.

<sup>(24)</sup> For more information about the High Dam, see:

- ليزلي جرينر: سد عال فوق أرض النوبة، ترجمة: على عزت، الدار المصرية للتأليف والترجمة، القاهرة، ١٩٦٦م.

- طاهر محمد أبو وفا: مشروع السد العالي وزارة السد العالي، ١٩٦٧م.

- توم ليتل: السد العالي إخضاع النيل لإرادة الإنسان ترجمة خيري حماد، دار الكاتب العربي للطباعة والنشر، القاهرة، ١٩٦٨م.



*(Pl.22) Aswan high dam maquette at the Nile museum.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

#### **Models and Dioramas of Historical Figures (Pls.23, 24)**

The hall also displays some models of ancient Egyptian temples associated with the Nile, as well as dioramas of contemporary Egyptian figures linked to the Nile. These include Mohamed Ali Pasha, the founder of Al-Qanatir Alkhayria, Khedive Abbas Helmy II, during whose reign Aswan Reservoir was built, engineer Daninos, the creator of the idea of constructing the High Dam, and the poet Hafez Ibrahim, known as the Poet of the Nile.

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- حسين طاهر تسكام: السد العالي في مصر دراسة في آثاره السياسية والاقتصادية والاجتماعية والثقافية ١٩٥٢م - ١٩٧٠م، رسالة ماجستير جامعة ذي قار، كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية، العراق، ٢٠١٢م.



(Pl.23, 24) Models of historical figures at the Nile museum.

(Photographed by the author)

### Hall of Ali Pasha Mubarak

After passing the Hall of Bride of the Nile, we immediately come across the Hall of Ali Pasha Mubarak<sup>(25)</sup>. This hall is dedicated to the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation in Egypt. It showcases the ministry's most important projects since its establishment, as well as introduces the ministers who have held responsibility for it. Additionally, it displays some tools, equipment, and devices that have been used throughout the ministry's history.

<sup>(25)</sup> The name Ali Pasha Mubarak is associated with the practical side of the modernization and urbanization movement in Egypt's history, and he made multiple contributions to it. He was born in the village of Bermbal Al-Jadida, which is currently part of the Menyet El-Nasr Center and was under the jurisdiction of the Dakahlia Governorate at that time, in the year (1239 AH / 1823 AD). When Khedive Ismail assumed power in (1279 AH / 1863 AD), Ali Mubarak accompanied him during his educational mission in France. As soon as Ismail ascended the throne, he summoned Ali Mubarak and appointed him as part of his entourage. Among the responsibilities assigned to him was the supervision of the Barrages Charity, making him the first Egyptian engineer to oversee this vital facility, which had been under the control of French engineers since its establishment until that date. Ali Mubarak studied the problems facing the barrages and proposed solutions that were approved by the Khedive. As a result, water flowed into the Eastern Nile Branch, revitalizing the land and its agriculture, especially during the summer season. He passed away in the year (1311 AH / 1893 AD).

أحمد أمين: زعماء الإصلاح في العصر الحديث، مؤسسة هنداوي، القاهرة، ٢٠١٧م، ص ١٩.

محمد عمارة: علي مبارك مؤرخ ومهندس العمران، ط٢، دار الشروق، القاهرة، ١٩٨٨م، ص ٨٧.

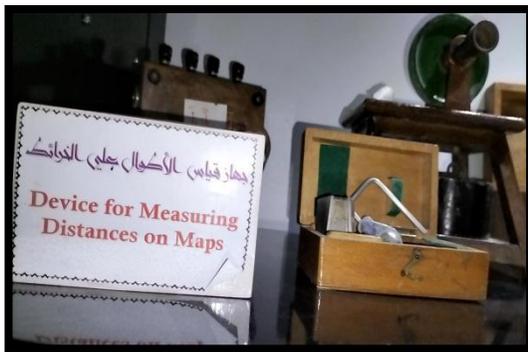
The first thing visitors see in this hall is the office of Ali Pasha Mubarak, which he used during his tenure as the Supervisor of Public Works. Beside it, there is a visual presentation about his personality, where he speaks about himself, his history, and his major accomplishments (Pl.25).



*(Pl.25) The office of Ali pasha Mubarak at the Nile museum. Published for the first time.  
(Photographed by the author)*

The hall also houses some tools and devices used by the workers and engineers throughout the history of the ministry, such as old surveying scales, electrical measuring devices, water monitoring devices with the telemetric system, wind speed measuring devices, humidity measuring devices, water level measuring devices, water currents speed measuring devices, as well as solar cells, sensing devices, some old clocks, and the first models of calculators used (Pls.26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33).





(Pls.26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33) Some tools and devices exhibited in Ali Pasha Mubarak hall at the Nile museum. Published for the first time.

(Photographed by the author)

Also, in the hall, there are a number of maquettes specific to the most important projects implemented by the Egyptian Ministry of Irrigation as follows:

#### Maquette of Al-Qanatir Alkhayria (Pl.34)

Al-Qanatir Alkhayria was constructed during the era of Muhammad Ali Pasha in the early last century, in the area where the Nile branches into the Rosetta and

Damietta branches. It is located 20 km away from Cairo and controls the water flow for three main branches in the Nile Delta (Al-Minufi, Al-Tawfiki, Al-Buhairi).



*(Pl.34) Maquette of Al-Qanatir Alkhayria at the Nile Museum.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

### **Maquette of old Assiut barrages**

The old barrages of Assiut were constructed during the period from 1898 to 1903 on the Nile River to divert water to the Ibrahimiyah Canal. The project was designed by the famous British engineer Sir William Cox, who also designed the Aswan reservoir. Its construction cost 870,000 pounds sterling<sup>(26)</sup>.

### **Maquette of the Edfina Barrage on the Rashid Branch**

The construction of the Edfina Barrage was started in 1949 and inaugurated by Mustafa Nahhas Pasha, the Prime Minister of Egypt, in 1951. It is located on the Rashid Branch at the end of the village of Edfina, 20 kilometers south of the city of Rashid.

### **Second: First floor (African Cultural Center)**

The African Cultural Center represents a new addition to the landmarks of Aswan Governorate and a shining sun rising in the sky of the dark continent, extending its rays of love and hospitality to all African countries, this center was established to be a beacon and ray of African culture, in addition to launching a library attached to the center that includes the most important books about African countries and some souvenirs and memorabilia that represent the culture, customs, and traditions of African peoples, so that it becomes a global destination in Egypt that reflects the cultures of African countries.

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<sup>(26)</sup> AYMAN, F. Batisha. Assiut Barrage in Egypt: Past, Present and Future. Irrigation & Drainage Systems Engineering, OMICS Publishing Group, 2012.

### **Exhibition halls of the African Cultural Center:**

The center consists of five sectors that have been divided according to the geographical and climatic nature of each region in the African continent which are (North Africa, West Africa, Central Africa, South Africa, East Africa), in addition to a sector describing the rivers of the continent. Each sector contains paintings that represent the region. These paintings are characterized by the use of expressive backgrounds with African colors and shapes to introduce the nature and environment of each region, in addition to placing pictures to introduce the capital, currency, major rivers, tribes, and tourist areas.

The center has been equipped with a number of touch-screen displays in each hall, according to the latest information systems technologies. Visitors can view and browse an interactive map of Africa containing information about the countries, as well as translated documentary films in three languages: Arabic, French, and English, for a total of 54 African countries. The films illustrate the geographical location, capital city, population, language, customs, traditions, religions, GDP, major industries, tourist attractions, as well as the main river basins, including the Nile River, Senegal River, Niger River, Congo River, Lake Chad, and the Zambezi River.

#### **The First Sector: (Pl.35)**

It includes collections of six countries from the North Africa region, which are (Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania). This region is characterized by its desert and arid climate.



*(Pl.35) Collections of the first sector at the African cultural center.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

#### **The Second Sector:**

It includes collections from 14 countries in the East Africa region, which are Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Uganda, Rwanda,

Seychelles, Comoros, Kenya, Tanzania, Madagascar, and Mauritius. This region is characterized by its tropical nature, savannah plains, and dense forests. It also includes the largest variety of wildlife and herbivores such as giraffes, elephants, deer, and zebras.

### **The Third Sector:**

It includes the area around the inner courtyard, comprising collections of 9 African countries (Burundi, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome and Principe). The dominant landscape consists of plains, savannahs, and dense forests. Researchers consider this region as the origin of human existence in Africa, renowned for its forests and lakes.

### **The Fourth Sector: (Pl.36)**

It includes collections from the Southern Africa region consisting of 10 countries (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Swaziland), known for their abundant forests, lakes, and islands.



*(Pl.36) Collections of the fourth sector at the African cultural Center.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

### **The Fifth Sector: (Pl.37)**

It includes collections from the western region of the continent and a total of 15 countries, which are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. It is a region rich in river basins such as the Senegal River and the Niger River, and it is characterized by dense savannahs and wildlife.



*(Pl.37) Collections of the fifth sector at the African cultural center.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

#### **African River Basins Sector:**

It includes of 6 panels dedicated to the largest African river basins.

#### **The Documentary Library: (Pl.38)**

Attached to the center, there is the Documentary Library and Information Center, which contains many books, documents, and important historical records about African countries, representing the cultures of African peoples. It has been electronically connected to the Central Library at the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation.



*(Pl.38) The documentary library at the African cultural center.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

**Hall of Nile Fish: (Pl.39)**

It contains large glass tanks that house many types of fish and aquatic turtles that live in the Nile River.



*(Pl.39) Hall of Nile fish at the African cultural center.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

### **Interactive Children's Hall: (Pl.40)**

The center also includes an interactive hall for children that contains:

- Screening of cartoon films aimed at raising awareness among children about the importance of preserving the Nile from pollution and introducing them to the relationships between Nile Basin countries.
- Several interactive touch screens that display a lot of useful information and games.
- Several interactive games that are conducted through projectors on the floor of the hall.
- Huge posters depict African life decorate the walls of the hall.



*(Pl.40) Interactive children's hall at the African cultural center.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

### **Africa Donations (Pls.41, 42, 43)**

The cultural center received numerous donations from some African countries, such as (Morocco, Sudan, South Sudan, Cameroon, Mozambique, Lesotho, Uganda, Kenya). These collections were displayed in a distinctive manner inside the cultural center's halls, showcasing them in the best possible way along with a brief description of each piece and the names of the countries that contributed their collections to enrich the cultural center.



*(Pls.41, 42, 43) Africa donations at the African cultural center.*

*(Photographed by the author)*

### **Third: The open-air display area at the Nile Museum.**

#### **President Gamal Abdel Nasser's Car: (Pl.44)**

This car was originally assigned to Minister Engineer Mohamed Sedki Soliman, the Minister of the High Dam at that time. It was used by former Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser during his visits to Aswan to monitor the construction of the High Dam. Recently, it was deposited in the Nile Museum after being transferred from the open-air museum at the High Dam. This was done after it had been neglected for over 30 years inside the "scrap" warehouses of the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation.

The car is a 1958 Chevrolet Bel Air model, rare in its make. It is equipped with an 8-cylinder engine, with a capacity of 3,000 cc and a power of 167 horsepower. It comes in two shades of green: "Petroleum" and "Crombie". The thickness of the sheet metal used in its manufacturing is approximately 1.25 mm. Its maximum speed is around 120 km/h, but its actual speed reaches up to 100 km/h. It is equipped with a manual transmission with 4 speeds (3 front gears and 1 reverse). The tire size is 15 x 7.25 inches. It was sold to a scrap dealer for 1000 pounds<sup>(27)</sup>.

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<sup>(27)</sup><https://alwatannews.net/Life-Style/article/811080>



*(Pl.44) President Gamal Abdel Nasser's Car at the Nile Museum. Published for the first time. (Photographed by the author)*

## **12. The proposed plan for the tourist development of the Nile Museum in Aswan**

Tourism development plan represents the future vision for the museum's development through the precise identification of programs and projects that would achieve the goals of tourist development for the museum through the following:

### **Developing archaeological awareness among citizens:**

If we invite tourists to visit Egypt's archaeological sites, it is essential to increase the archaeological awareness among citizens about the importance of these places. Citizens' awareness should be raised at all levels and ages in general, especially children and students, through various educational, media, and cultural means. They should understand the significance of the artifacts, the necessity of its preservation and maintenance, and to deepen the sense of belonging to it. Additionally, the importance of tourists coming to Egypt and the role of tourism in supporting our national economy should be emphasized<sup>(28)</sup>. The awareness of citizens regarding heritage and tourism can be further developed through:

- 1- Instilling sound touristic ideas among citizens, students, and pupils at different educational stages through the distribution of touristic brochures, pamphlets, and tours.

<sup>(28)</sup> المجالس القومية المتخصصة: تنمية الوعي بتراث مصر الحضارى والآثارى، الدورة الخامسة، القاهرة، ١٩٨٤م، التنقيف التاريخى والأثرى للجماهير، الدورة السابعة، القاهرة ١٩٨٦، ص ٤٧ - ٥٧.

- 2- Holding seminars on the importance and benefits of tourism, specifically in colleges of tourism, hotels, and antiquities, as well as regional bodies responsible for tourism promotion in the provinces. The speakers in these conferences were individuals with extensive experience in the tourism field.

### **Tourism promotion for the Nile Museum in Aswan:**

There is no doubt that advertising plays a fundamental role in stimulating tourism, especially when implemented according to a well-planned scientific approach. This advertising should target international markets interested in the civilization and history of Egypt through campaigns that highlight suitable potentials<sup>(29)</sup>. This advertising can achieve the following:

- 1- Increase tourist traffic to this museum and showcase its diverse art collections.
- 2- Minimize the impact of rumors, political instability, and negative news on the strength of tourism<sup>(30)</sup>.
- 3- Attract the attention of many tourism companies, tour organizers, and tourism programs to include this museum in their visit itineraries.

The means of tourism advertising can be identified as follows:

#### **(1) The advertising**

It is considered one of the most widespread and influential means among customers and several types of advertisements will be used in the promotional campaign, such as:

A- Print advertisements: Some advertisements about the museum's artifacts and collections are published in newspapers and magazines that the public and decision-makers regularly read.

B- Television advertisements: Advertisements are shown on television channels, with a focus on the first and second Egyptian satellite channels, taking into account that these advertisements are displayed at appropriate times for that.

C- Signboards and road advertisements: The roads leading to the museum and the area are equipped with a number of attractive illuminated signboards for easy reading at night, displaying important artifacts and artistic collections.

#### **(2) The printed brochures and tourist guides**

A tourist brochure is being made about the museum and its important art collections. It contains a large number of attractive photos and the features of the tourist museum. It will be done in several different languages and distributed to

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<sup>(29)</sup> على العنتيل: فن تسويق السياحة، الهيئة المصرية العامة للكتاب، القاهرة، ٢٠٠٠م، ص ١٣٣ - ١٣٤.

<sup>(30)</sup> على العنتيل: فن تسويق السياحة، الهيئة المصرية العامة للكتاب، القاهرة، ٢٠٠٠م، ص ١٣٣ - ١٣٤.

tourism promotion offices, regional organizations, tourism companies, university libraries, and schools<sup>(31)</sup>.

### **The goals of the tourism development plan for the Nile Museum in Aswan**

The process of formulating the goals of the tourism development plan for the Nile Museum in Aswan is considered the main and fundamental aspect of this study. It crystallizes what the community desires to achieve for the museum and its surrounding area, in light of its values, needs, and priorities. In this context, and through analyzing the current situation of the museum, it was possible to identify the following goals for the tourism development of the museum:

**First:** Protecting the area from deterioration and ensuring its proper and sustainable use to enhance its quality.

**Second:** Confirming the functional role of the museum and continuing to fulfill this role.

**Third:** Maximizing the overall economic return of the area for the benefit of both citizens and society.

**Fourth:** Achieving the best possible quality of different services in the museum and organizing the accommodation of current and future demand.

### **13. Conclusion**

After completing the descriptive, analytical, and touristic study, it is worth mentioning that this study aims to discuss Aswan museum and the exhibited artworks and how to utilize it for tourism purposes. Several important findings have been reached, including:

- The study conducted a tourism development plan that includes how to utilize this place and work on incorporating it into tourism programs.
- The study published a model for the gates of Asyut's ancient barrages, which were designed by the famous British engineer Sir William Cox, who also designed Aswan Reservoir.
- The study covered a number of dioramas for figures in modern Egyptian history associated with the Nile River, including Muhammad Ali Pasha, the founder of Khedivial Barrages, Khedive Abbas Helmy II, under whose reign Aswan Reservoir was built, and Engineer Daninos, the owner of the idea of building the High Dam, presented it in one of the museum halls.
- A maquette of Aswan Reservoir was published, which was laid by Khedive Abbas Hilmi II in 1914.

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<sup>(31)</sup> صلاح الدين عبد الوهاب: تخطيط الموارد السياحية، دار الشعب للطباعة والنشر، القاهرة، ١٩٨٨م، ص ٣٠ - ٣١.

- A maquette of the High Dam was published, which is a rubble dam on the Nile River, constructed at a site 7 kilometers south of the old Aswan Reservoir.
- A collection of devices and equipment of historical value were published, which contributed to the construction of Aswan reservoir and were used during that period. They include electrical measuring devices, surveying tools, electric bells, and telecommunication switches.
- A collection of tools used by King Fuad during the construction period of Aswan reservoir was published. They consist of a set of royal tableware made of porcelain, with each piece adorned with the emblem of the Egyptian kingdom.
- For the first time, a collection of medals, insignia, and certificates of appreciation received by one of the workers in the construction of the High Dam was published, signed by President Gamal Abdel Nasser.
- The study revealed that there are similarities between these artifacts and similar artifacts preserved in other museums, such as Abdeen Palace Museum and Manial Palace Museum in Cairo.
- This luxurious collection demonstrates the wealth of the Alawi family, who used to purchase valuable sets and import them from Europe, as well as request specific types of personal decoration such as monograms and royal crowns.
- The study indicates that the twentieth century witnessed openness to the Western world, which had a significant impact on arts and daily life.
- The study worked on describing the museum, which consists of three floors and houses hundreds of pictures and exhibits that narrate the history of the Nile and the Egyptian projects built on it.
- The museum contains a number of archaeological treasures, including 250 artifacts, documenting the journey of the Nile River from its sources to its mouth in the Mediterranean Sea. The Ministry of Culture also donated 61 important artworks to the museum, illustrating the highlights of Egyptian artists' exploration of the Nile River in Egypt.
- The study referred to the acquisitions donated by some African countries and displayed in the museum where the study took place.
- The study covered the documentary library hall and the information center, which contains many books, documents, and important historical records about African countries, representing the cultures of African peoples.
- Inside the museum, there is also a large section dedicated to displaying the history of the High Dam and documenting its construction, in addition to commemorating the martyrs who fell during the construction of the High Dam.

- The museum includes an exhibition of the most important national projects of the Ministry of Irrigation, in which it contributed starting from the Khedivial Barrages during the days of Muhammad Ali, passing through the Salam Canal and the Toshka Project, and ending with the 4 Million Acres Project launched by President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. It also showcases the ministry's work in flood control, as well as the achievements in the construction of Aswan High Dam and the projects for the protection and rescue of the Nile River.
- It also houses the most important historical documents, including the 1959 agreement between Egypt and Sudan and the document for the protection of the Nile River, which were signed by the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister.

## **14. Recommendations**

### **First: General Recommendations**

- The necessity to register and number all the pieces in the museum, as they are currently unregistered and unnumbered, in order to preserve them.
- Study the site and its determinants in detail before starting the design process and the necessity of easy access for emergency services to the museum site by studying the transportation network and roads.
- Study the site's capacity and its fulfillment of the current and future architectural program elements, and the general site's ability to provide means of protection to accommodate the future expansion of the museum.
- In the case of determining the location of the museum, whether it is in the city center or its outskirts, it depends on determining the type of museum to be established and the percentage of visitors, without neglecting the necessity of its proximity to cultural centers, whether centrally or peripherally.
- Delve into studying the foundations and design criteria of the general site, which may affect the protection before starting the design of the museum building itself.

### **Second: Special recommendations for museums located within cities should be applied to the Nile Museum in Aswan**

- Separating the movement of entering and exiting visitors, meaning that entry should be through the main gate and exit through another gate.
- Updating the electronic security system of the museum and expanding its scope to include the surrounding streets and squares, with the necessity of periodic maintenance.
- Modifying and changing the traffic flow on the streets surrounding the museum from two-way traffic to one-way traffic only, without any vehicle stopping stations.

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## دراسة فنية سياحية لمتحف النيل بأسوان وإطلالة لأول مرة على مقتنياته

محمد سهري برشاوي عبد العظيم

شعبان سمير عبد الرازق محمد

مدرس بقسم الإرشاد السياحي

أستاذ مساعد بقسم الإرشاد السياحي

كلية السياحة والفنادق، جامعة المنيا

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المخلص	معلومات المقالة
<p>سعت الورقة البحثية إلى وصف متحف النيل بمدينة أسوان، وهو واحد من أهم المتاحف المتخصصة في مصر، ذلك نظراً للأهمية الكبيرة التي يحظى بها نهر النيل. كان العرض المتحفي إلى وقت قريب يعتمد على نوع مادة التحفة المعروضة أو عصرها، لكن الجديد هو أن تكون هذه التحف قصة تحكي حول عصر أو طريقة صناعة أو طراز فني أو أسلوب حياة، بحيث يستطيع مرشد الزوار في المتحف رواية قصة تجذب الزوار إليه، لذلك نبعت أهمية الدراسة من كونها دراسة متفردة لأنها اهتمت بواحد من المتاحف الرئيسية، والتي توثق لتاريخ نهر النيل، حيث يضم المتحف بين جنباته العديد من المقتنيات التي تحكي قصه جريان نهر النيل في مصر عبر الحقب التاريخية المختلفة بداية من العصور المصرية القديمة وحتى العصر الحديث، كما تناولت الدراسة مجموعة كبيرة من المقتنيات الفنية التي يتم نشرها لأول مرة، وتشمل أدوات ومعدات مرتبطة بخزان أسوان والسد العالي، مسكوكات، طوابع، ومقتنيات إثنوغرافية.</p>	<p>الكلمات المفتاحية</p> <p>متحف؛ النيل؛ أسوان؛ العرض المتحفي؛ التنمية السياحية.</p> <p><b>(JAAUTH)</b></p> <p>المجلد ٢٥، العدد ١ (ديسمبر ٢٠٢٣) ص ٣٧-١</p>