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## **AlmaTourism**

Journal of Tourism, Culture and Territorial Development

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### **Training of Local Community Youth in Dahshur, Egypt, as Local Tour Guides and Heritage Guardians**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

In an attempt to shift the strategy in Egypt toward sustainable heritage tourism a project was designed aiming to (1) integrate the archaeological site with local natural and rural heritage resources, (2) increase local awareness, (3) engage local community in a scheme of heritage economic development, and (4) valorize of Dahshur as a special tourist destination. The pilot project was implemented in Dahshur, which is a part of the World Heritage Site-Memphis and its Necropolis. The project included a training program for local tour guides who were introduced to (1) of how to become a tour guide, (2) Introduction to archaeological, natural, and rural resources of the area, and (3) the basic elements of cultural heritage management. Another program was devoted to enhance the awareness of local youths of the significance and values of the heritage resources in their vicinity, and to encourage them to take part in protecting and conserving heritage at risk from looting, neglect, and a transformation of local traditional dwellings. Without such programs, no measures for protecting Egyptian heritage, now in great danger, and promote sustainable tourism will succeed given that local communities are at present marginalized and excluded from the management of Egyptian heritage resources.

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**Keywords:** Heritage Resources, Youth Training, Tour Guides, Sustainable Tourism, Local Communities, Egypt

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### **Background:**

UFE has been contracted by UNESCO Cairo Office to conduct a course “*Building Heritage Awareness among the Community of Dahshour*” . UNESCO Cairo Office was implementing the Joint Programme (JP) for the “Mobilization of the World Heritage Site of Dahshour for Community Development” under the leadership of United National Development Programme (UNDP) and together with other UN Agencies, in particular International Labor Organization (ILO), United National World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and United Nations Industrial development Organization (UNIDO). The aim of the JP is to protect the area of Dahshour pyramids and its ecosystem while fostering sustainable development, cultural and ecological management and revenue generation in the surrounding community. The JP has addressed the importance of the community development and the identification of informal leaders within the community to spearhead the project and has, as a consequence, adopted an inclusive approach to community mobilization and involvement. iverse activities organized by UN agencies in the 5 targeted villages of the Dahshour community developed local capacities: i) for decent working conditions and sensitizations towards the creation of culture of entrepreneurship; ii) for tourism awareness, for existing tourism SME’s, and for sustainable rural tourism; iii) for creative and traditionally present industries; iv) for cultural heritage protection awareness; v) for microcredit management and self-employment.

Within the framework of this JP, UNESCO is in charge of establishing a training program for the local community in cultural heritage awareness. According to a report prepared for this JP, 41% of all woman and 27.3% of men in Dahshour were not aware that their area live next to many ancient monuments of value. This part of the project is essential in ensuring sustainable management of the heritage site as it will instill awareness and pride in the community, create cultural ‘representatives’ who in turn can liaise successfully with outside networks, and create a core of activists who can hopefully provide protection to the vulnerable area and aid in tourism revenue.

### **Trainees:**

UNESCO Cairo Office provided UFE was two lists of potential candidates. The recruitment of these representatives has been conducted and around 60 people from the 5 villages in the Dahshour area (Manchiet Dahshour, Dahshour and Zawiet Dahshour, Manchiet Kasseb, Mazghona) were identified. All nominees identified, and for whom telephone numbers were provided, were contacted.

A meeting was also arranged with the Director of the Dahshur archaeological district, Mr. M. Yousuf, who identified four inspectors to attend the training program with the UFE team.

In addition to those on list, others who heard about the course came to some or all the sessions of the course. The total number of those who were exposed to the course

total 91 individuals.

**Database:** All those who attended were required to fill a form to provide the following information:

*Name (as in National ID):*

*Occupation:*

*Terms of Employment and date:*

*Age:*

*Residence:*

*Previous occupations:*

*Previous training:*

*Skills:*

*Languages:*

*What is heritage?*

*What are the cultural heritage resources of Dahshour:*

*What is tourism in your point of view?*

*What is the importance of Antiquities?*

### **Overall objectives**

The overall objective of the training was to increase the sense of awareness and solidarity of the citizens towards their heritage.

### **Specific objectives**

To create a group of trusted community members to support the local Antiquities Inspectorate in activities of security measures and to raise awareness among the local population on heritage issues.

### **In accordance with the above information, UFE provided the following:**

Organized and implemented training sessions. All training was delivered in Arabic.

In this regard, UFE undertook the following

- 1) Organize the structure and subject matter of the training course so that the course included the following sections:
  - Cultural Heritage – Its concept and value
  - The history and story of Dahshour

- The concepts behind and importance of World Heritage.

The Course was delivered over a period of 4 weeks (see below), Training was for three days each week in the afternoon (2-6 pm) to accommodate trainees who work.

To ensure successful training (based on knowledge gained from previous training courses given by UFE to trainees from Dahshour) consisted of a mix of lectures, powerpoint presentations, videos, discussions in groups, student presentations, student homework tasks, quizzes, field trips, and seminars.

#### **The training and teaching staff:**

The teaching staff are all bilingual fluent in Arabic (native language) and English. They are all qualified CHM professionals or instructors who had formal training in one of the fields of CHM and are either instructors or ABDs in the Cultural Heritage Management Program at UFE.

**Venue:** training took place at Manchiyet Dahshour at Al Gami 'ya al-Shar'ia

#### **Content and Schedule of the Course**

The content and schedule of the course were as follows:

□ Cultural Heritage-Its concepts and Value			
27/3 Wed	Day 1	What is cultural heritage: from antiquities to Heritage- changing concepts  Cultural Heritage: Definitions, meanings and significance (with special reference to Egyptian terms)  The social construction of heritage	Instructors  Prof. Fekri Hassan  Dr. Mohamed Hosny  Arch. Momen Gabr
30/3 Saturday	Day 2	The spectrum of Heritage  Sites and Monuments: archaeological sites, urban sites, architectural heritage, vernacular heritage, cultural routes and itineraries  Intangible heritage and folklore  Cultural Landscape  Heritage and local communities.  The value and importance of Heritage: Heritage and the social good.	
1/4 Monday	Day 3	Heritage and civil society  Heritage and development of human	

		resources Heritage and economic development	
3/4 Wed	Day 4	Heritage and Tourism. Heritage between identity and awareness of the relationship between socialization, citizenship, humanistic values, and sense of self. Interpretation and presentation of Heritage	

The History and Story of Dahshour			
6/4 Saturday	Day 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Egyptian Heritage : from antiquities to Heritage.</li> <li>• The discovery of ancient Egypt.</li> <li>• From Snefru to Amenemhat III: a social history-1 (The Old Kingdom). The selection of Dahshour by Snefru. This session deals with the shift of royal cemeteries from North Saqqara in the first, second and third dynasty (Nebka, Djoser, Sekhemkhet to Dahshur with intermediate shifts at Zaywet el-Aryan (Khaba, Huni), provincial pyramids (Huni), and Meidum (Huni/Snefru). 2. The move away from Dahshour to Giza and afterwards South Saqqara. The collapse of the Old Kingdom, the first intermediate period, and into the Middle Kingdom.</li> </ul>	Prof. Fekri Hassan and Amr Atef
8/4 Monday	Day 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From Snefru to Amenemhat III: Part 2- The Middle Kingdom: The Fayuim, El-Lisht (Amenemhat I, Senusert I) and Mazghouna (Amenemhat IV) followed by a return to Dahshour (<b>Ameny Qemau</b> southeast rim of Lake Dahshur, <b>Senusert III</b> , <b>Amenemhat III</b>). <b>Mastabas of princesses Iti, Khnemt, Itiwert and Sitmerhut daughters of Amenemhat II, and Meht and Sentsenebtisi daughters of Senusert III</b> . The tombs contained jewelry in the Cairo Museum. Next to the pyramid was found the partly disturbed tomb of <a href="#">13th Dynasty</a></li> </ul>	

<b>The History and Story of Dahshour</b>		
		<p>king <b>Auibre Hor</b> (Ka statue of the king in the Egyptian Museum) inside the enclosure of the pyramid of Amenemhat III and next to it the undisturbed burial of his possible daughter Nubhetepi-khered. There are several other pyramids of the <a href="#">13th Dynasty</a> at Dahshour, only the <a href="#">one of Ameny Qemau</a> is so far excavated. Extensive cemeteries of officials of the <a href="#">Old</a> and <a href="#">Middle Kingdom</a> have been found around all Dahshour's pyramids. Dahshour was Egypt's royal necropolis during the reign of the 12th Dynasty king <a href="#">Amenemhat II</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sand in the wadi of the Bent Pyramid gradually accumulated starting already in the Old Kingdom and continuing until the New Kingdom. New Kingdom pottery within a limestone sledgeway allows to fix the date of the dismantling of the lower temple of the Bent Pyramid to the late 18th Dynasty or to the Ramesside Period.</li> </ul>
12/4 Friday	Day 7	1. Fieldtrip to Dahshur archaeological site
13/4 Saturday	Day 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field trip to Saqqara and Memphis</li> </ul>
15/4 Monday	Day 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of world heritage sites: international, national, local, and economic significance.</li> <li>• Sites in Egypt on world heritage list.</li> <li>• Sites nominated by Egypt for the Tentative List</li> <li>• The emergence of the concept of World Heritage.</li> <li>• Criteria for nominating Sites on the World Heritage List.</li> </ul>

The Concepts Behind and Importance of World Heritage			
19/4 Friday	Day 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The World Heritage Convention 1972</li> <li>• UNESCO and World Heritage: The organizational framework.</li> <li>• Management plans and monitoring of world heritage sites, zoning, visitors, protection and conservation</li> <li>• Toward a Masterplan of Memphis and its Necropolis.</li> <li>• Masterplanning the Pyramids of Giza Area.</li> </ul>	Prof. Fekri Hassan, Momen Gabr, and Dr. Mohamed Hosny
20/4 Saturday	Day 11 Venue Dahshur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Endangered world heritage</li> <li>• Risks</li> <li>• destruction of site in central part of Dahshour for petroleum pipeline,</li> <li>• illegal quarrying,</li> <li>• encroachment on archaeological site by cemeteries,</li> <li>• garbage disposal,</li> <li>• graffiti,</li> <li>• neglect,</li> <li>• lack of respect for buffer zone,</li> <li>• illicit digging for antiquities,</li> <li>• security level,</li> <li>• adequacy of monitoring and response to threats, level of involvement of local communities and stewardship and community involvement in the protection and conservation activities,</li> <li>• information dissemination,</li> <li>• lack of information to tourists, visitors and local community on appropriate actions to safeguard the site.</li> </ul>	

22/4 Monday	Day 12	Examination	
16/5 Thursday		Graduation	

Teaching Materials: Readings and Presentations

The following **readings materials in Arabic** were prepared and distributed to the students:

Heritage for You التراث من أجلك

Cultural and Natural Heritage of Dahshur التراث الحضاري والطبيعي في دهشور

Cultural History of Dahshur دهشور في إطار تاريخ مصر الحضاري: من سنفرو الي أمنمحات الثالث  
From Snefru to Amenemhat III

Memphis and its necropolis: a management plan الخطة الشاملة لإدارة موقع التراث العالمي-  
منف وجباناتها

Overview of the attempts to prepare a management plan of the Pyramids of Giza Area  
نظرة علي محاولات إعداد خطة لإدارة منطقة أهرامات الجيزة- جزء من موقع التراث العالمي: منف وجباناتها

- Egyptian Sites on the world heritage list, How are sites inscribed on the world heritage list, International efforts to combat illicit trade in cultural properties ((from Gihan Zaki's The Other Side of Heritage).
- Threats to Heritage Sites

The following **powerpoint presentations** were prepared and used in classes:

- Heritage for You
- Egyptian Heritage: from Antiquities to Heritage
- The Old Kingdom: divine kings, religion, and pyramids
- Quintessential Egypt
- The Middle Kingdom
- Management of world heritage sites in Egypt
- The Dahshur World Heritage Site Mobilization of cultural heritage fir community development
- UNESCO's role in the conservation of the cultural and natural heritage (Arabic)
- Memphis and its necropolis: a management plan (Arabic)
- Masterplan of the Pyramids of Giza Area (Arabic)
- Threats to Heritage المخاطر التي تهدد التراث (Arabic).

**Explanatory Comments on the document “Heritage for You “ التراث من أجلك**

This is a text based on the original essay by Fekri Hassan entitled- “Heritage and Development in the Arab World”, in the volume edited by Fekri Hassan, L. de Trafford, and M. Youssef, published by the *Bibliotheca Alexandrina*. The language was simplified



to be accessible to the general public and those of average education. It has been illustrated to make the text both visually appealing and informative with the illustration serving as icons and cues. In addition, the text has been supplemented by **A map of Egypt** and **a timetable of Egyptian history** from Predynastic times to the Present.

On the back cover, the reader can find the **teachings of King Khety** to his son who lived between 2040 and 2134 BC. It speaks of the values of learning, equality, justice, meritocracy, mercy and compassion, goodness, love, planning for the future, honesty, telling the truth, speaking well, rewarding employees who obey the law, condemns violence, jealousy, and oppression. This should place the Pharaonic period in a different light, bringing it closer to the values cherished by Muslims and Christians alike, and dispels that notion that the "Pharaohs" were tyrants. It also provides a clue to the social virtues of Ancient Egypt so that it would not be seen just from the stones of a pyramid.

Continuity of ancient Egyptian virtues are represented by verses of a folk poet, **Ibn Arous** ابن عروس, who also speaks of the same virtues and admonishes against the vices repudiated by the peoples of ancient Egypt. He is reputed to have lived more than 500 years ago!

Closer to the present is the verse by Badie Khairy. "قوم يامصري مصر دائما بتناديك", written on the occasion of the 1919 revolution and made widely popular by Sayed Darwish in the same year. It has become almost the national anthem of ordinary Egyptians. Khairy refers specifically to the monuments of ancient Egypt and beseeches Egyptians to leave behind their lethargy and show off what they can do to restore Egypt's lost glory. He even states that Egyptians have desecrated the monuments of their ancestors. He also maintains that Muslims, Christians and Jews are from the same ancestors.

قوم يامصري مصر دائما بتناديك  
خد بنصري نصري دين واجب عليك  
يوم ماسعدي راح هدر قدام عنيك  
عيد لي مجدي اللي ضيعته بإيديك  
فين أثارك ياللي دنست الأثار  
دول فاتولك مجد وانت فوت عار  
ليه يامصري كل احوالك عجب  
تشكي فقرك وانت ماشي فوق دهب

The verses end with the words by Egypt's greatest modern people's poet, Salah Gaheen صلاح جاهين, who wrote an epic called, "*In the name of Egypt* ملحة علي اسم مصر", recalling the history of Egypt and the virtues of Egypt. No one has ever matched Salah Gaheen in the way he expressed how Egyptians love Egypt, and more so in a language of immediate appeal to the hearts of Egyptians.

The second brochure entitled, **Dahshour- from Snefru to Amenemhat III** provides a social history of the Kings from Snefru who built two pyramids in Dahshour during the Old Kingdom, to Amenemhat III who and his ancestors built during the Middle Kingdom several pyramids in the same area used by Snefru. This provides a social and historical

context to the pyramids, and fills the gap of more than 700 years between Snefru and Amenmhat III.

The third brochure entitled **The Cultural Heritage of Dahshour** provides a readable succinct text on the archaeology, cultural landscape and rural heritage of Dahshour. The sections of this brochure are as follows :

- General Introduction
- The Pyramids of Dahshur
- The Lake and Villages of Dahshur
- Farming
- Irrigation
- Crafts, Industries and Arts
- Houses and Villages
- Crafts, Industries and Arts
- Trees
- Mosques and Cemeteries
- Birket Al-Malek (Birket Dahshur)
- Lake animals and plants

#### **Evaluation**

**41 individuals** took a final examination (Table 2).

The distribution of grades is as follows:

A+	7	17.1%	A to A+	15	36.6%
A	8	19.5%	B- to B+	16	39.0%
B+	8	19.5%	Pass to C	10	24.4%
B	5	12.2%			
B-	3	07.3%			
C	4	09.8%			
Pass	6	14.6%			
Total	41				

Eleven students who had previously attended the UNWTO course for local tour guides gained the following high grades. Those who gained a grade of A to A+ are awarded a certificate as Chief Guardian of Dahshour's Heritage. Others who completed the examination are awarded a certificate of Guardian of Dahshour's Heritage.

#### **Qualification and Certification:**

Successful candidates were awarded a certificate certifying that they had successfully completed a course on building heritage awareness among the community and was accordingly awarded a certificate as a Cultural Heritage Guardians of the the cultural

heritage of Dahshour”. The best and most successful candidates were cited as “Chief Guardians of the Cultural heritage of Dahshour.