

Development, Megaprojects and Social Costs: **A snippet into 2020**





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Introduction: on megaprojects and development-induced displacement

Development entails a complex of policy packages designed to drive social change and improve people's quality of life. Assets, capital, and resource management are all needed in order to start implementing any developmental plans. One of the significant ways in which states set their development plans is through resource management and reorganization. Understanding these development plans in the context of larger economic processes is vital, whereby the rationale of these transformation processes unfolds from the motive of increasing the economic value of areas¹. Such transformation processes occur through increasing investments in areas that are perceived to have economic potential in the future; thus, driving urban reconfigurations through reinventing spaces². The reinvention of spaces unfolds as a way in which capital owners reorganize resources. Therefore, resource management is at the core of the process. Generally, resource management would not be problematic if the social cost is taken into account. However, with particular megaprojects seen as part of a larger developmental goal, one sees high social costs particularly in the form of human displacement. In 2020, we saw a high focus on mega national projects in state discourses and practices.

Reviving one's civilization is important, particularly to free it from being fixed in a certain past. It opens possibilities for it to converse with the present. Broadening public interest in our long history can generate conversations between the past and the present in interesting ways³. The current trend is the redevelopment of particular sites as part and parcel of a broader development strategy through the reconfiguration of urban space. Within such a framework, the question is, how can local populations be engaged rather than alienated from these reconfigurations? For example, the objective of growing tourism, local or global, to increase economic revenues is important. However, it cannot be seen in isolation from its social cost. Neither should it be reproduced through another form of cultural patrimony. Efforts in reconfiguring landscapes need to prioritize local neighborhoods that are part and parcel of the reconfiguration rather than establish national goals at local neighborhoods' expense.

This paper examines two of these national megaprojects focusing on reviving the Egyptian civilization through two of its primary resources: the river Nile and ancient Egyptian monuments. Both of these can be seen as ways in which the state reorganizes current resources to optimize their use. Through surveying two major patterns of human displacement that are resulting of two national megaprojects, the first of which is the 'Mamsha 'Ahl Masr' megaproject, an example of water resources management (the river Nile), and the second is the 'reviving the Rams road,' an example of historic monuments management. The paper seeks to raise questions relevant to examining the

¹ These areas are seen as assets and signify potential opportunity for increasing wealth

² See also David Harvey's *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (2005)

³ See also Fabian, J. (2014). *Time and the other: How anthropology makes its object*. Columbia University Press.



social and material consequences of these megaprojects on local populations. It questions whether the projected improvement of these spaces outweigh these consequences.

First displacement pattern:

‘Mamsha ‘Ahil Masr’ and water resources related displacement

In April 2015, President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi had signed the ‘Nile document’ and announced joining the Nile guards committee⁴. The committee and document’s goal is to protect the river Nile from any encroachments and pollution, noting that the Nile is the “primary source of life for Egypt”⁵. Accordingly, ‘Save the river Nile’ campaign started in January 2015, where President Abdel Fattah al-Sissi announced the megaproject entitled “The walk of the people of Egypt” (‘Mamsha ‘Ahil Masr’). The project requires the removal of all encroachments across the Nile from Aswan to Cairo, including branch Rasheed and branch Damietta, and the construction of a new corniche⁶. The state plan of rebuilding the river Nile corniche will later work on opening up commercial spaces such as restaurants, cafeterias, banquet halls, and open-air theatres along the Nile banks⁷. The development and commercialization processes are projected to increase the economic value of the space. According to newspapers, in January 2020, PM Moustafa Madbouly has spoken of “The walk of the people of Egypt” (‘Mamsha ‘Ahil Masr) as one of the current state megaprojects with several objectives. These include changing the Nile’s face to revive the “Modern face” of our governorates, increasing per capita green spaces, and revitalizing tourism⁸. According to Hany Youssef, the media

⁴ نشر صورة ‘وثيقة النيل’ بعد توقيع الرئيس السيسى عليها Publication of ‘The Nile Document’ after President Sissi Signed.” 2015. 3yon News. <https://www.3yonnews.com/648186>.

⁵ Mohamed Farag. 2015. AlSissi Signs Document Launching Popular Campaign to Save the Nile.” 24.ae. <https://24.ae/article/153630>.

⁶ Asmaa Nassar. 2020. إزالة 26 مخالفة على نهر النيل في أسيوط وسوهاج.” sohag.gov. <http://www.sohag.gov.eg/%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%8A%D9%84%20%D8%A3%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%81.aspx?ID=9631>.

⁷ Safeyya Hamdy. 2020. سيعير وجه القاهرة.. الحكومة تعلن تفاصيل مشروع «ممشى أهل مصر» على كورنيش النيل.” “It Will Change the Face of Cairo’. The Government Announces the Details of ‘People of Egypt Walk’ Project on the Nile Corniche.” almal news.

<https://almalnews.com/%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%BA%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%88%D8%AC%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%86-%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B5;>

Abdelfattah Farag. 2020. ممشى أهل مصر» لاستعادة رونق كورنيش النيل بالقاهرة.” The ‘People of Egypt Walk’ to Restore the Glow of Nile Corniche.” Aawsat.com. <https://aawsat.com/home/article/2062166/%C2%AB%D9%85%D9%85%D8%B4%D9%89-%D8%A3%D9%87%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%C2%BB-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86%D9%82-%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%86-%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B5;>

Abdelfattah Farag. 2020. «ممشى أهل مصر» لاستعادة رونق كورنيش النيل بالقاهرة.” The ‘People of Egypt Walk’ to Restore the Glow of Nile Corniche.” Aawsat.com. <https://aawsat.com/home/article/2062166/%C2%AB%D9%85%D9%85%D8%B4%D9%89-%D8%A3%D9%87%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%C2%BB-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86%D9%82-%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%86-%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B5;>

Abdelfattah Farag. 2020. «ممشى أهل مصر» لاستعادة رونق كورنيش النيل بالقاهرة.” The ‘People of Egypt Walk’ to Restore the Glow of Nile Corniche.” Aawsat.com. <https://aawsat.com/home/article/2062166/%C2%AB%D9%85%D9%85%D8%B4%D9%89-%D8%A3%D9%87%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%C2%BB-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86%D9%82-%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%86-%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B5;>

advisor of the ministers' council, in his statement to alSharq alAwsat, the main objective is to "provide the opportunity for Egyptians to enjoy a wonderful corniche through coherent planning"⁹.

The project execution is dependent on the partnership between the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management, the Ministry of Housing, local governorate offices, and the Engineering Military Authority¹⁰, and has started in August 2019¹¹. The Minister of Irrigation has spoken of capitalizing on underutilized lands by the Nile to create parking spaces, which would be not only beneficial for traffic management but also an additional guarantee to increase state annual revenues¹². The project plan is to be piloted in Greater Cairo by developing the Nile area across from Imbaba Bridge up until 15 May bridge first, before its full execution in the rest of the Nile's governorates¹³¹⁴.

As part of 'Save the river Nile' campaign, there were a total of 268,380 cases of removals/ evictions across the Nile-facing governorates, up until 3 April 2020, according to the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation website¹⁵. Just in March 2020, there were 1567 cases of removal¹⁶. In April 2020, there have been additional waves of removals across various governorates, with 180 cases removed only in the third week of April. These 180 removed cases included 28 cases in Al-Gharbiya, 5 in Al-Menoufiya, 30 in Al-Beheira, 7 in Damietta, 21 in Al-Minya, 19 in Assuit, 31 in Sohag, 1 in

⁹ Abdelfattah Farag. 2020. ممشي أهل مصر» لاستعادة رونق كورنيش النيل بالقاهرة«. The 'People of Egypt Walk' to Restore the Glow of Nile Corniche." Aawsat.com. [¹⁰ ممشي أهل مصر» على كورنيش النيل «The 'Walk of the People of Egypt' on the Nile." The Arab Contractors. <https://www.arabcont.com/project-608>.](https://aawsat.com/home/article/2062166/%C2%AB%D9%85%D9%85%D8%B4%D9%89-%D8%A3%D9%87%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%C2%BB-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%82-%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B4-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%A9.</p></div><div data-bbox=)

¹¹ Abdelfattah Farag. 2020. The 'People of Egypt Walk' to Restore the Glow of Nile Corniche." Aawsat.com. [¹² Safeyya Hamdy. 2020. 'سيغير وجه القاهرة».. الحكومة تعلن تفاصيل مشروع «ممشي أهل مصر» على كورنيش النيل«. It Will Change the Face of Cairo'. The Government Announces the Details of 'People of Egypt Walk' Project on the Nile Corniche." almal news. <https://almalnews.com/%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%BA%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%88%D8%AC%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%86-%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B5/>.](https://aawsat.com/home/article/2062166/%C2%AB%D9%85%D9%85%D8%B4%D9%89-%D8%A3%D9%87%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%C2%BB-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86%D9%82-%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B4-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%A9.</p></div><div data-bbox=)

¹³ Abdelfattah Farag. 2020. ممشي أهل مصر» لاستعادة رونق كورنيش النيل بالقاهرة«. The 'People of Egypt Walk' to Restore the Glow of Nile Corniche." Aawsat.com. [¹⁴ Asmaa Nassar. 2020. إزالة 26 مخالفة على نهر النيل في أسيوط وسوهاج. "Violations Removed on the Nile in Assuit and Sohag." sohag.gov. <http://www.sohag.gov.eg/%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%8A%D9%84%20%D8%A3%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%81.aspx?ID=9631>.](https://aawsat.com/home/article/2062166/%C2%AB%D9%85%D9%85%D8%B4%D9%89-%D8%A3%D9%87%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%C2%BB-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86%D9%82-%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B4-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%A9.</p></div><div data-bbox=)

¹⁵ وزارة الري تواصل حملات الإزالة على مستوى الجمهورية The Ministry of Irrigation Continues Removal Campaigns Nationwide." 2020. Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation. <https://www.mwri.gov.eg/index.php/ministry-4/news/item/1156-2020-04-05-08-17-30>.

¹⁶ وزارة الري تواصل حملات الإزالة على مستوى الجمهورية The Ministry of Irrigation Continues Removal Campaigns Nationwide." 2020. Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation. <https://www.mwri.gov.eg/index.php/ministry-4/news/item/1156-2020-04-05-08-17-30>.

Aswan, and 31 additional cases not referencing their exact location. These cases include residential buildings, backfilling, fish cages, amongst others¹⁷.

Envisioning Egypt with communal public parks to walk through for locals would allow a different relationship to unfold between citizens and space. This could lead to the formation of sustainable communities and building a sense of shared ownership over local spaces. Keeping this in mind, the aforementioned projected benefits need to be weighed against what losses the local neighborhoods incur, whether in terms of local informal vendor revenues or displaced local populations. The displaced populations may be unable to move to other spaces, and they are also used to certain resources being available to them, such as being in proximity to the Nile and having their agricultural lands and livelihoods dependent on such proximity. It is not yet clear from the news coverage and state discourse what form of compensation, if any, is available to the local communities. There is a heightened focus on questions of land ownership, whether the land is 'state property' and thus dwellers' presence on it was illegal, ultimately lending legitimacy to processes of displacement¹⁸. However, one questions where do these locals go? Can they afford such a move? Are there substitute housing opportunities provided to them that are clearly announced? One must not only focus on substituting one house with another in a geographically distant place. Rather, they can supply them with the agricultural land and water resources in which their daily livelihoods and needs are sustained.

¹⁷ Hamdy Kamel. 2020. إزالة 250 حالة تعد على النيل في أسبوع." Removing 250 Cases on the Nile in One Week." *Akhbar elYom*. <https://akhbarelyom.com/news/newdetails/3034377/1/%D8%A5%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9-250-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%B9>.

¹⁸ Hamdy Kamel. 2020. إزالة 250 حالة تعد على النيل في أسبوع." Removing 250 Cases on the Nile in One Week." *Akhbar elYom*. <https://akhbarelyom.com/news/newdetails/3034377/1/%D8%A5%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9-250-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%B9>.



Second displacement pattern: 'Reviving Rams (al-Kebbash) road' and archeological -related Displacement

Luxor is another governorate that has undergone major development-induced displacement cases; however, these were particularly archeological-related displacement. Luxor has had a long history of heavy dependency on the tourism sector, contributing to the national economy. Since 2012, the state has been exploring various ways to revive tourism, particularly after the latter had plunged in the aftermath of the 2011 uprisings¹⁹. In November 2019, the finance ministry announced that the government efforts in reviving tourism have paid off, as tourism-related revenues increased by 28.2%²⁰ in 2018/2019. In light of such national efforts to revive tourism in an effort to increase national income, one of the main patterns currently witnessed in state policy is to commercialize archeological spaces²¹. This state orientation is not new. One recalls Zahi Hawas' essay *The Egyptian Monuments* (1995) that discussed the clash between urbanization and monuments sites, calling on balancing between tourism and preservation, having a "comprehensive conservation and preservation plan"²². This hard balance rather takes a systematic shape in relation to the 'reviving Rams road' megaproject, referred to in state media as pharaonic 'old kings road', taking place in Luxor governorate since 2019²³. Major construction work has been taking place to create a Rams

¹⁹ Shenker, Jack. 2012. "Egyptian Frustration as Tourists Stay Away." *The Guardian*.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jan/19/egypt-tourism-visitor-numbers-collapse>.

²⁰ "Egypt Says Luxembourg Stock Exchange Data Showing Decline in Tourism Revenues Incomplete." 2019. Ahram Online. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/356024/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-says-Luxembourg-Stock-Exchange-data-showing-.aspx>.

²¹ Fustat is an example of one archeological space that is currently under transformation. Fustat has been the site of a national megaproject, starting from 2019, falling under the state perception of 'development' through 'archeological revival'. Currently, the state is planning for Fustat's reemergence as the 'civilized' face of Cairo and Egypt, as part of the state's efforts to regenerate revenues off the space. The project is in process of turning the space into a major tourist attraction, reviving its present condition with a 'coherent' remapping of the area.

²² Hawass, Zahi. 1995. "The Egyptian Monuments: Problems and Solutions." *International Journal of Cultural Property*. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-journal-of-cultural-property/article/egyptian-monuments-problems-and-solutions/B10D1BF4C4A9286DE9F6663390F65ED3>.

See also Barry, Kristin. 2012. "Politics and Archaeology The Impact of Egyptian Cultural Heritage 'Spaces' on Archaeological Remains and Urban Populations." *Bell State University*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319914029_Politics_and_Archaeology_The_impact_of_Egyptian_cultural_heritage_spaces_on_archaeological_remains_and_urban_populations on the Comprehensive Development Plan for the City of Luxor (2002) and the Valley of the Kings, Luxor and Egypt Site Management Masterplan (2006).

²³ خطوات على طريق إحياء مسار ملوك الفراعنة بالأقصر.. رئيس الوزراء يلتقي بالمحافظ لبحث معوقات إنجازه.. مدينة الأقصر تبدأ خطوة ٤. 2020. "إزالة العمارات المتبقية على جانبي الطريق.. وعمال الحفائر يواصلون ترميم وتجميل الكباش Steps towards Reviving the Kings Pharaohs in Luxor .. Prime Minister Meets the Governor to Discuss Obstacles to Completion .. Luxor Begins the Plan to Remove Remaining Buildings on Both Sides of the Road .. Excavation Workers Continue Efforts in Resoring Rams." Youm7. <https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/2/24/4-%D8%AE%D8%B7%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D8%A5%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%85%D9%84%D9%88%D9%83-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3/4644156>.

pharaonic 2700-meter road that runs across Luxor and al-Karnak temples, where on both sides of the road, there are more than 1200 statues^{24 25}.

This project is undertaken as part of executing the presidential decree No. 201 for the year 2018, aiming to increase global tourism revenues²⁶. Echoing this decree is the pursuit of national megaprojects invested in creating ‘Rams road’ as an ‘open museum’ and resulting in Luxor’s displacement patterns. Until February 2020, there were over 130 houses removed to enable the road to be carved²⁷. The estimated social cost for the project is the removal of 400 houses, according to newspapers²⁸. Both the Luxor governor and engineer Hanna Ibrahim the governorate general secretary have been articulating the importance of the removals to overcome the obstacles in building the road in an expedited manner²⁹. Mustafa Alham, Luxor governor, stated that there are compensations only to those with the full and complete documents required that meet all terms and conditions³⁰. However, no information was found pertinent to how many have received

²⁴ Ahmed Marei. 2019. All You Need to Know about the Removals of Nagee Abu Asbah in Support of ‘Rams Road’ Project in Luxor.” Youm7.

[https://www.youm7.com/story/2019/5/29/%D9%83%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D9%87-%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%AA%D9%87-%D8%B9%D9%86-%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A5%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9-%D9%86%D8%AC%D8%B9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B9%D8%B5%D8%A8%D8%A9/4263278](https://www.youm7.com/story/2019/5/29/%D9%83%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%AA%D9%87-%D8%B9%D9%86-%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A5%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9-%D9%86%D8%AC%D8%B9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B9%D8%B5%D8%A8%D8%A9/4263278).

²⁵ Ahmed Marei. 2020. The Completion of the Removal of Nagee Abu Asbah to Complete ‘Pharaonic Rams Road’ in Luxor.” Youm7.

<https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/2/27/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A5%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%A8%D9%86%D9%89-%D9%86%D8%AC%D8%B9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B9%D8%B5%D8%A8%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%83%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B4/4649176>.

²⁶ Ahmed Marei. 2020.. The Completion of Removing Nagee Abu Asbah Building to Complete the ‘Pharaonic Rams Road’ in Luxor.” Youm7.

<https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/2/27/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A5%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%A8%D9%86%D9%89-%D9%86%D8%AC%D8%B9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B9%D8%B5%D8%A8%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%83%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B4/4649176>.

²⁷ Basma Ragab. 2020. ‘‘مدير آثار الكرنك’:‘‘300 مليون جنيه تكلفة متوقعة لتطوير طريق ‘الكباش’’ Karnak Antiquities’ Manager: Expected Cost of Developing ‘Rams Road’ Is 300 Million Pounds.” alborsaanews. <https://alborsaanews.com/2020/02/19/1298086>.

²⁸ Ahmed Marei. 2020. The Completion of the Removal of Nagee Abu Asbah to Complete ‘Pharaonic Rams Road’ in Luxor.” Youm7.

<https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/2/27/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A5%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%A8%D9%86%D9%89-%D9%86%D8%AC%D8%B9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B9%D8%B5%D8%A8%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%83%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B4/4649176>.

²⁹ Ahmed Marei. 2020. The Completion of the Removal of Nagee Abu Asbah to Complete ‘Pharaonic Rams Road’ in Luxor.” Youm7.

<https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/2/27/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A5%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%A8%D9%86%D9%89-%D9%86%D8%AC%D8%B9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B9%D8%B5%D8%A8%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%83%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B4/4649176>.

³⁰ Ahmed Marei. 2020. The Completion of the Removal of Nagee Abu Asbah to Complete ‘Pharaonic Rams Road’ in Luxor.” Youm7.

<https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/2/27/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A5%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%A8%D9%86%D9%89-%D9%86%D8%AC%D8%B9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B9%D8%B5%D8%A8%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%83%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B4/4649176>

بدء إزالة منازل «نبع أبو عصبة» بالكرنك لكشف طريق الكباش في الأقصر.”

compensations, compensation packages offers, nor the content of such terms and conditions for eligibility.

The project has been announced to unfold in several phases: the first phase encompassed the forced removals, while the second phase is centered around continuing forced removals and removing any obstacles, which might delay the evacuation of the road according to state narrative³¹. The third phase entailed scheduling meetings with various tourism agencies to plan and take into account the demands of the tourism sector, which are pertinent to enlivening al-Kebash. This will include starting to accept applications from various vendors to institute their restaurants and cafeterias amidst the heart of Kebash road³². The fourth phase, which is currently underway, is focused on renovating the pharaonic Rams statues. This includes digging roads in Nagea' Abu Esba near Karnak temple and continuing to remove any other neighboring housing³³. The road was one that lived celebratory passings of pharaohs, initially containing 1300 Rams monuments on both sides³⁴. However, the number is now estimated to have decreased to only 300 Rams³⁵. The decrease was explained as a result of the historical eras that have unfolded after the pharaonic era that has destroyed some of those monuments³⁶. Further, the destruction was also linked to the local dwellers,

Beginning Houses Removals in Nagee Abu Asba at Karnak to Reveal ‘Rams Road’ in Luxor.” 2020. *Shorouk News*.

<https://www.shorouknews.com/news/view.aspx?cdate=25022020&id=d208c4b3-e871-4538-ab38-e6a5aad4c8bb>.

³¹ Such obstacles were not clarified in the statement of Madbouly to Luxor’s governorate.

³² Ahmed Marei. 2020. “خطوات على طريق إحياء مسار ملوك الفراعنة بالأقصر.. رئيس الوزراء يلتقي بالمحافظ لبحث معوقات إنجازه.. مدينة الأقصر تبدأ خطوة ٤.” Steps towards Reviving the Kings Pharaohs in Luxor .. Prime Minister Meets the Governor to Discuss Obstacles to Completion .. Luxor Begins the Plan to Remove Remaining Buildings on Both Sides of the Road .. Excavation Workers Continue Efforts in Resoring Rams.” Youm7. <https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/2/24/4-%D8%AE%D8%B7%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D8%A5%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%85%D9%84%D9%88%D9%83-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3/4644156>.

³³ Ahmed Marei. 2020. “خطوات على طريق إحياء مسار ملوك الفراعنة بالأقصر.. رئيس الوزراء يلتقي بالمحافظ لبحث معوقات إنجازه.. مدينة الأقصر تبدأ خطوة ٤.” Steps towards Reviving the Kings Pharaohs in Luxor .. Prime Minister Meets the Governor to Discuss Obstacles to Completion .. Luxor Begins the Plan to Remove Remaining Buildings on Both Sides of the Road .. Excavation Workers Continue Efforts in Resoring Rams.” Youm7. <https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/2/24/4-%D8%AE%D8%B7%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D8%A5%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%85%D9%84%D9%88%D9%83-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3/4644156>.

³⁴ Ahmed Marei. 2020. “خطوات على طريق إحياء مسار ملوك الفراعنة بالأقصر.. رئيس الوزراء يلتقي بالمحافظ لبحث معوقات إنجازه.. مدينة الأقصر تبدأ خطوة ٤.” Steps towards Reviving the Kings Pharaohs in Luxor .. Prime Minister Meets the Governor to Discuss Obstacles to Completion .. Luxor Begins the Plan to Remove Remaining Buildings on Both Sides of the Road .. Excavation Workers Continue Efforts in Restoring Rams.” Youm7. <https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/2/24/4-%D8%AE%D8%B7%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D8%A5%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%85%D9%84%D9%88%D9%83-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3/4644156>.

³⁵ Ahmed Marei. 2020. “خطوات على طريق إحياء مسار ملوك الفراعنة بالأقصر.. رئيس الوزراء يلتقي بالمحافظ لبحث معوقات إنجازه.. مدينة الأقصر تبدأ خطوة ٤.” Steps towards Reviving the Kings Pharaohs in Luxor .. Prime Minister Meets the Governor to Discuss Obstacles to Completion .. Luxor Begins the Plan to Remove Remaining Buildings on Both Sides of the Road .. Excavation Workers Continue Efforts in Restoring Rams.” Youm7. <https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/2/24/4-%D8%AE%D8%B7%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D8%A5%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%85%D9%84%D9%88%D9%83-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3/4644156>.

³⁶ Ahmed Marei. 2020. “خطوات على طريق إحياء مسار ملوك الفراعنة بالأقصر.. رئيس الوزراء يلتقي بالمحافظ لبحث معوقات إنجازه.. مدينة الأقصر تبدأ خطوة ٤.” Steps towards Reviving the Kings Pharaohs in Luxor .. Prime Minister Meets the Governor to Discuss Obstacles to Completion .. Luxor Begins the Plan to Remove Remaining Buildings on Both

where it seems that some of the Rams' stones were used as foundations for their house-building projects³⁷.

The open museum Rams road megaproject is perceived as a real potential for economic wealth that can revolutionize Egypt's tourism³⁸. A member of the tour guides association, Mahmoud Tayyib, has proposed creating an overhead glass walk for tourists and provision of protective layers to wear over shoes to prevent glass stains³⁹. Additionally, such plastic protective layers worn over shoes are seen as a way in which tourists preserve the environment⁴⁰. Access to the glass walk would be through visiting fees, which shall be an additional revenue source to the state⁴¹. One of the main objectives of the enclosed overhead glass walk is that it can be air-conditioned. This would open up tourism all year long, again contributing to increasing total tourism revenues⁴².

Development is a necessary goal to achieve better living standards; however, it should not take place in a vacuum and cannot be taken up in isolation of local neighborhoods. One must account for how such developmental practices can be revenue-making, while thinking through the question of sustainability. Many of the local populations dwelling in touristic spaces make their livelihoods based on tourism. In state plans, particularly in these precarious times, one must include economic opportunities for local neighborhoods rather than close off informal labor altogether that are part and parcel of these touristic spaces' fabric. Rather than being an increasing source for their alienation, creating economic opportunities for locals in these developmental plans will not only improve their socioeconomic situation, but also help in engaging them with the monuments conservation and preservation. There has been a long history of government 'marginalizing rather than leveraging the informal labor under the discourse of exploitation of tourists'⁴³. However, making these economic opportunities available only to bigger businessmen would not improve the situation. Local populations need to be involved through their own small souvenir informal vendors or

Sides of the Road .. Excavation Workers Continue Efforts in Restoring Rams." Youm7. <https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/2/24/4-%D8%AE%D8%B7%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D8%A5%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%85%D9%84%D9%88%D9%83-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3/4644156>.

خطوات على طريق إحياء مسار ملوك الفراعنة بالأقصر.. رئيس الوزراء يلتقي بالمحافظ لبحث معوقات إنجازه.. مدينة الأقصر تبدأ خطوة "4" Ahmed Marei. 2020. Steps towards Reviving the Kings Pharaohs in Luxor .. Prime Minister Meets the Governor to Discuss Obstacles to Completion .. Luxor Begins the Plan to Remove Remaining Buildings on Both Sides of the Road .. Excavation Workers Continue Efforts in Resoring Rams." Youm7. <https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/2/24/4-%D8%AE%D8%B7%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D8%A5%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%85%D9%84%D9%88%D9%83-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3/4644156>.

إحياء طريق الكباش.. مشروع الدولة لإعادة الأقصر إلى سابق فرعونيتها" Mohamed AlSagheer. 2020. The Revival of the 'Rams Road'... State's Project to Bring Back Formerly Ancient Egyptians." e/Watan News. <https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/4607021>.

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otherwise. However, if fears revolve around the exploitation of tourists, then price regulations can be set. This way, one would not only increase revenues to local vendors and populations but also conserve monuments and flourish the tourism industry⁴⁴. Local residents do not need to feel that they are not as important as tourists but instead feel the real value of their presence in such sites.

⁴⁴ Michael Ross. 1998. "Ban on Souvenir Sellers: Renovation of Pyramids Stirs Uproar." <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1988-09-15-mn-2802-story.html>.



Conclusion: interdisciplinary planning is a must!

Displacement of local populations, associated with megaprojects, whether archeological-related or otherwise, is not a new strategy⁴⁵. However, as people relocate, it is important not to repeat historical mistakes. The process of displacement alienates people from their local neighborhoods. This creates problems that cannot be priorly calculated. Consequently, a primary way is to involve and engage them in cultural heritage and development projects⁴⁶. In order to improve touristic experiences, the past always must be presented in an open conversation with the present. Scholars such as Van der Spek, Meskell, Gamblin have criticized how reviving and developing of touristic areas displaces people from their homes to new spaces that they have no relationship or affiliation with⁴⁷. This not only negatively affects local dwellers but also presents an ‘inauthentic experience’ of their relationship with time and space for visiting tourists⁴⁸. Consequently, the city gets to be seen as a static civilization container, rather than seeing it in a constantly changing dialogue with it.

It is important not to reproduce neo-colonial ways of development in which gains from projects are reaped by particular hands while marginalizing others. Urban planning and practices need to incorporate notions of care, where solidarity and collectivism are part and parcel of any future one can hope to imagine. It is important not to dwell in comparative paradigms that dictate what a modern city is. Planning is important; however, it must be inclusive. Myopic planning takes the accounts of archeologists, architects and economists focused on the conservation of monuments and increasing financial values resulting from reconfiguring spaces. Inclusive planning would depend on the inclusion of not only local dwellers and residents, but also historians and anthropologists, amongst others to create a participatory environment. More importantly, development, this way, would be sustainable to all.

⁴⁵ Barry, Kristin. 2012. “Politics and Archaeology The Impact of Egyptian Cultural Heritage ‘Spaces’ on Archaeological Remains and Urban Populations.” *Bell State University*.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319914029_Politics_and_Archaeology_The_impact_of_Egyptian_cultural_heritage_spaces_on_archeological_remains_and_urban_populations.

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⁴⁷ Barry, Kristin. 2012. “Politics and Archaeology The Impact of Egyptian Cultural Heritage ‘Spaces’ on Archaeological Remains and Urban Populations.” *Bell State University*.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319914029_Politics_and_Archaeology_The_impact_of_Egyptian_cultural_heritage_spaces_on_archeological_remains_and_urban_populations.

⁴⁸ Barry, Kristin. 2012. “Politics and Archaeology The Impact of Egyptian Cultural Heritage ‘Spaces’ on Archaeological Remains and Urban Populations.” *Bell State University*.

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