



Newsletter

of the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities

Issue 27 * August 2018

Inaugurations

• HE President of the Arab Republic of Egypt inaugurated Sohag National Museum, in attendance of the Prime Minister, ministers of Antiquities, Social Solidarity, Culture, Interior, and Local Development, and the Governor of Sohag (12 August). The museum features two floors, containing 949 artifacts, displayed in six halls, in addition to the main one in the upper floor, and two halls in the basement, to tell the story of ancient Egyptian history. Some artifacts that were recently discovered during excavations in Sohag were also placed on display.



• HE Minister of Endowments, and the Minister of Antiquities, along with the Governor of Port Said, inaugurated Al-Abbasy Mosque in Port Said, after its restoration. The inauguration was attended by several top officials from the ministries of Antiquities and Endowments, in addition to several members of the Egyptian Parliament. The mosque is located in the Al-Arab neighborhood in the city of Port Said. It was built during the reign of Khedive Abbas Helmy II in 1322 Hijri/1904 AD. It is considered one of the most important and oldest monuments in the city (3 August).

Archaeological Discoveries

- The Egyptian-Australian archaeological mission sponsored by Macquarie University, working at the site of Beni Hassan in Minya, uncovered the burial chambers of Remu-Shenti and Baqet II, who were both high officials of the court during the Middle Kingdom. Several pottery vessels were also unearthed at the site.
- The Egyptian archaeological mission working at the Temple of Kom Ombo, in Aswan Governorate, has discovered two stelae belonging to Ptolemy V. They were found during the work undertaken to reduce the underwater table around the temple. The mission members are currently studying the stelae and moving them to the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization (NMEC).
- The team of researchers who studied the skeletons which found inside the Alexandria sarcophagus last month, uncovered some gold sheets. The sheets are being studied to identify their significance.
- The Egyptian archaeological mission of the Ministry of Antiquities, working at the Zeitoun Mountain site in Alexandria, uncovered a part of the western Ptolemaic cemetery of the ancient city of Alexandria. The team also found several tableware and lighting tools with distinctive decorations; in addition to glass and pottery vessels, amphorae, and round pieces of pottery with raised reliefs. The skeletons that were discovered were in a bad condition due to the bombing of the area during World War II and the chaos and disturbances that took place in those tombs during the 1930s.

Field work

Several archaeological missions started their new excavation seasons in August, as follows: the Ministry of Antiquities joint mission with the Dominican Catholic University of San Domingo, working at Taposiris Magna in Alexandria; the University of Berlin joint mission with the University of Sohag at the Shutob archaeological site and magazines in Assiut; Waseda University's Japanese mission at the tomb of Amenhotep III (KV 22) in Luxor; the Egypt Exploration Society's English mission at Naqada in Qena; Soissons Museum's French mission at Tell Dibko at San al-Hagar, in Sharqiya; the IFAO's French mission at Wadi Araba in Suez.

Repatriated Antiquities

The Ministry of Antiquities and the authorities at Cairo Airport seized 39 Ottoman coins, dating back to Mohammed Ali period, which were seized from a passenger while he was attempting to smuggle them out of the country.



Meetings and Visits

- The Minister of Antiquities attended several events in August, including: the opening of the Citadel Music Festival (2 August); and the farewell of the Ambassador of Japan to Egypt, which was held at the Grand Egyptian Museum (14 August). The Minister also attended the opening ceremony of the First International Coptic Orthodox Youth Symposium (August 27).
- The Minister and the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA), along with the Director of the Projects Sector, visited several archaeological sites and museums. They were accompanied by members of the ministry's staff. Among the main sites visited this month were: Sohag (the white Monastery, Sohag National Museum, and Abydos archaeological site) (4,9,10 August), and Asyut (the Red Monastery, the tombs of Meir) (11 August).
- The Secretary General of the SCA visited several archaeological sites and museums, including: Cairo (Egyptian Museum), Giza (the Tomb of Mehu, and the Saqqara archaeological site).
- The Director of the Ancient Egyptian Antiquities Sector visited several archaeological sites, including: Sinai (Sinai archaeological sites), New Valley (Valley of the Golden Mummies in Bahariya Oasis), Asyut (the Tomb of Hapy-Djfat in Meir), and Aswan (Talian Mountain, the Southern Quarry, and Kom Ombo), and the check point concerned with artifacts smuggling at Cairo International Airport.
- The Director of the Museums Sector visited several museums, including: Tanta, Alexandria, Gayer-Anderson, Sohag museums, Egyptian Museum in Cairo, Military Museum at the Citadel, along with the Museum of Islamic Art.
- The Director of Islamic, Coptic, and Jewish Antiquities Sector visited several archaeological sites, including: Port Said (Al-Abbasy Mosque), Asyut (sites along the path of the Holy Family's trip in Egypt), Sharqiya (Abd al-Aziz Radwan Mosque), Cairo (al-Ghuri Dome, the Citadel, Old Cairo, al-Muezz Street).
- The Director of the Projects Sector visited several archaeological sites and museums, including: Cairo (Imam al-Shafe'i Mausoleum, al-Tbatba Stela, al-Fath Mosque at Abdeen district), Port Said (al-Abbasy Mosque).



International Participation

Several members of the ministry's staff participated in training sessions, symposiums, conferences, and exhibitions abroad, as follows: Zambia (Mr Emil Samir Nashid - Conservator at the Church of Saint Mena in Fumm al-Khalij), Monaco (Mr Tamer Ibrahim Mohammed - Director of Heavy and Composite Artifacts Section at the GEM; Mr Ismail Abd al-Razik Abd al-Mo'ity- Inspector at Sharqiya archaeological site), Germany (Dr Hosny Abd al-Raheem - General Director of the Nubian Museum; Ms Shaimaa Gomaa Saleh - Curator at the Nubian Museum), China (Ms Nesreen Mohammed Atef - Conservator at the GEM; Ms Amira Abd al-Hakim Hamdy - Conservator at the GEM), USA (Mr Ezzat Abu Bakr Saber - Head Inspector at Tod archaeological site in Luxor; Ms Hadeer al-Sayed Morgan - Inspector at the Mid-Delta Excavations Administration); Cyprus (Mr Ayman Saeed - Assistant to the Minister for Services Development at Archaeological Sites and Museums; Mr Hassan Ali Farag - Director of the X-Ray Laboratories at the GEM).

Temporary Exhibitions

The Minister of Antiquities, and the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, inaugurated a temporary exhibition that displays the recent findings of the various Italian archaeological missions working in Egypt. The exhibition is currently being held at the Egyptian Museum, and it includes 180 objects among them are on displayed for the first time (5 August - 5 September).



Cultural Events and Community Outreach

- The Cultural Development and Community Outreach Department at the Minister's Office organized a lecture, titled 'The Concept of Fake Rumors and their Sources in the World of Internet'. The lecture was held at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (August 1). The department also launched an awareness program at the Mosque and Sabil of North and South Shaykhun. The program was launched in cooperation with the Islamic, Coptic, and Jewish Antiquities Sector and the Resala NGO, as part of the 'Let Us Preserve This Beauty' initiative (August 10). In addition, the department celebrated the Holy Feast of Al-Adha at the Museum of Islamic Art, as part of the 'Tour and Sightseeing' program, in cooperation with the Museum Sector; the Islamic, Coptic, and Jewish Sector; as well as the 'Egypt's Will' association (13 August).
- The Cultural Awareness Department at the Ancient Egyptian Antiquities Sector organized a training session under the title 'Studies in the Development Process of Classic Currency'. The sessions are held weekly at Shatby Cultural Center in Alexandria (9 August -4 October).
- The Museum of Islamic Art organized a celebration with the Sufi whirling dervishes group, the Tanoura show, in cooperation with the Cultural Centers Association, every Saturday for the coming three months. The museum also organized a temporary photos exhibition to document the tragic events of the 2014 explosion. The exhibition includes 30 hologram representations of the artifacts that were destroyed as a result of the explosion, shown in their original form before they were turned into fragments. Alongside the exhibition, visitors can enjoy Islamic religious chanting and Sufi whirling dervishes 'Mawlaweya' groups (11 August -10 September).
- Sohag National Museum received its first Egyptian and foreign visitors free of charge since its official opening on August 12. The entrance tickets remained free of charge until the end of the month.
- The Egyptian Museum in Cairo organized a workshop on carving and polishing copper for the students of the Institute of Applied Arts. The workshop began with a tour around the museum (13 August - 13 September).
- The Textiles Museum at al-Muezz Street organized a religious celebration titled 'al-Mahmal'. The celebration was held on the occasion of the Hajj season and the Holy Feast of al-Adha. The celebration included a tour around the museum with a simple explanation for the children about the rituals of Hajj and how they are performed (16 August).
- On the occasion of National Education Day, the Egyptian Museum in Cairo organized an event titled 'Read and be intellectual', in cooperation with the General Egyptian Book Organization (GEBO). The event included a tour around the museum, and exhibition of books in the museum's garden (17 August).
- Malawi Museum held a panel discussion titled 'Discrimination of All Kinds - Educating Girls'. The panel was held in cooperation with the 'Morning Planet' association (18 August).
- The Ministry of Antiquities inaugurated a photographic exhibition called 'Artists of Palaces', at the Amaseely House in the city of Rashid. The exhibition was organized in cooperation with the Cultural Development Department at the Minister's Office, and the Cultural Development Department at the Islamic, Coptic, and Jewish Antiquities Sector, the Archaeological Awareness Department at Rashid Antiquities. The exhibition casts light upon major monumental palaces in Cairo (August 27-September 2). Additionally, a documentary called 'The Royal Village' was shown, and a lecture, titled 'Rashid Houses: the Magnificent Designs and Simplicity of Construction', was held at Saint Mark's Church in Rashid. The lecture emphasizes the architectural elements of the city of Rashid (August 28). Another lecture was also held, titled 'Female Palaces' followed by a movie called 'Know your Country' at the conference center of Saint Mark's Church (August 29).
- The Egyptian Museum in Cairo held an event called 'Ancient and Modern Egyptian Literature'. The event celebrated the memory of the Late Writer Naguib Mahfouz (August 30).



Projects

Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM)

- The Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) received the head of King Senusert I statue from the archaeological magazines of the Citadel (3 August).
- The GEM, in cooperation with the Egyptian Tourism Authority, held a ceremony to honor the Ambassador of Japan to Egypt. The Minister offered the Japanese Ambassador a replica of Khufu's boat as a gift at the end of the ceremony. The event was also attended by the Minister of Tourism, the Governor of Giza, the Head of the Parliament Committee for Antiquities, Culture, and Media, along with members of the GEM board of directors (14 August).
- The Quinary Committee, specialized in the support of the GEM, and the consultant group that prepares the bidding files to contract companies for the management and operation of the GEM's services, decided to postpone the deadline for submission of bids until 25 September 2018.



National Museum of Egyptian Civilization (NMEC)

- Mr Fahd bin Atiq al-Maleky, the General Manager of the Department of Museums in Saudi Arabia visited the NMEC (12 August).
- Ten storage boxes were moved to the NMEC from the Zaki Saad collection that was originally stored at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (21 August).

Conservation Projects

- The Ministry of Antiquities began a development project at the Temple of Tod, and the surrounding sites in Luxor. The project is carried out in cooperation with the Scientific Center for Training and Research in Upper Egypt. The development plan includes training programs for archaeologists working on site.
- The Ministry completed the consolidation works of the houses in the archaeological site of Radwan's shed in Khayameya. The consolidation was done to protect the minaret, the house, and the shop. Radwan's shed was built by Prince Radwan Bek Abd Allah al-Faqari, the owner of Radwan Bek's buildings in Khayameya area. The shed used to be called 'The House of Glory and Presidency'.
- Beni Suef archaeological site carried out a development plan of Medium Pyramid's area, which includes: work on the wooden staircase leading to the entrance of the pyramid; cleaning and restoring the gates of the pyramid and that of the mortuary temple. The plan also included creating new guiding signs and banners in English and Arabic.
- The Ministry began the restoration project of the Mastaba of Queen Tiye at Saqqara, in cooperation with the Czech archaeological mission. They completed the cleaning and color consolidation of the wall paintings. A passage for special needs visitors will be put in place.
- The Central Administration for Conservation at the Ministry of Antiquities completed the conservation works of the eastern side of the chandelier inside the Mohammed Ali Mosque at the Citadel. The project included the dismantling of all the pieces of the chandelier, restoring, and cleaning them, and completing the missing parts, with similar pieces. It is expected to be re-installed in its position in October 2018.



Training

- Five employees from the ministry were trained in copying inscriptions and reliefs with the Egyptian-German joint mission at the Western Mountain of Asyut (13 August -9 October).
- Four employees from the ministry were trained in documenting and excavating at Tanis with the French archaeological mission (31 August -1 October).
- Two employees from the ministry were trained in human resources development with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, for one week during August 2018.

Miscellaneous

- During his official visit to Egypt, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs visited the Giza Plateau and Khufu's Second Boat, along with the GEM (6 August).
- The President of Vietnam, and the accompanying delegation, visited the Giza Plateau, as part of his official visit to Egypt (August 28).
- The Egyptian-American mission, sponsored by Alabama University, completed its work at Lisht Cemetery, where the team conducted documentation and excavation works at the southern part of the cemetery. They also excavated and cleaned Intef's tomb, dating back to the reign of Senusert I, and 802 burials cut along the cliff's edge were documented.



Appointments

- Mr Mohammed Ramadan as General Director for Legal Affairs.
- Dr Safaa Abdel Moneim as General Director for Studies and Research.
- Mr Ahmed Ebeid as General Director for Sectors Affairs.
- Each of the following were appointed as follows:
 - Ms Leila Ibrahim Mohammed as Supervisor of the Legal Consultant Office at the Minister Office.
 - Mr Mohammed al-Sayed Mehrez as Director of the Legal Consultant Office at the Minister Office.
 - Ms Iman Sayed Hosny as Supervisor of the Translation Unit at the Minister Office.
 - Ms Amany Qurany Sayed was appointed to work at the Scientific Office of the Minister.
 - Mr Ihab Ibrahim as Director of the Khufu Boat Museum at the Giza plateau.
 - Mr Abd al-Qadir Karmani as Director of the Central Administration for Archaeological Documentation.
 - Ms Mona Abd al-Hay as General Director of the Administration for Archaeological Documentation.
 - Ms Amal Ayad as General Director of the Financial and Managerial Affairs Office in Sohag.
 - Mr Mohammed Yehia as General Director of Luxor Antiquities.
 - Mr Adel Erfan as General Director of the Administration for Upper Egyptian Archaeological Sites Management.
 - Mr Mahmoud Galal as General Director of the Scientific Center for Sinai Antiquities.
 - Mr Mohammed Ali as Director of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.
 - A one-year contract renewal for Brigadier Hisham Samir Ibrahim as Assistant Minister for Engineering Affairs.

Committees

- A committee has been formed to study and review all incoming revenues received by the ministry (fees/ charges in return for special services, among others).
- A committee meeting was held to study the archaeological sites along the path of the Holy Family's trip, and to prepare the files to be submitted for their consideration as UNESCO's World Heritage sites. The committee is also considering placing the Wadi al-Natrun monasteries among the UNESCO's World Heritage sites list (15 August).

Decrees

- Within the Ministry of Antiquities's plan to increase its financial resource, the Board of Directors of the Supreme Council of Antiquities decided to increase the prices of Luxor and Cairo Passes for foreigners starting November 2018. The recent price for Cairo Pass is \$80 for adults and \$40 for students will be 100\$ for adults and 50\$ students. It includes archaeological sites in Cairo and Giza. Meanwhile the price for Luxor Pass, which provides access to all archaeological sites in Luxor along five consecutive days falls in two categories: The first one provides visits to all sites and museums in Luxor along with the royal tombs of Queen Nefertari and King Seti I, will be 200\$ for adults and 100\$ for a students instead of \$160 for adults and \$80 for students. The second category, which gives access to all sites and museums in Luxor without visiting both royal tombs, will be 100\$ for adults and 50\$ for students instead \$80 for adults and \$40 for students.

Ancient Egyptian Antiquities

Temple of Seti I

It is located at the village of 'Arabet Abydos, at Belyana area. It was built by Seti I, a king of Dynasty 19, and was completed by his son, the famous Pharaoh Ramses II. The museum is distinctive for its architectural elements, and consists of two pylons, which are now destroyed, as well as two open courts, two hypostyle halls, seven chapels, and a sanctuary.

Temple of Ramses II

It is situated to the north of the temple of Seti I, and was built by the famous pharaoh, Ramses II. It is equivalent to the temple of Seti I in its layout, which is traditional of the New Kingdom. The most important scenes decorating its outer walls is the scene of the famous Battle of Qadesh.

Kom Sultan

It is located at the village of 'Arabet Abydos, at Belyana area, and was inhabited during the prehistoric period. This site continued to have a role in Egyptian history throughout its dynasties. It contains several archaeological features, the most significant of which are the temple of Osiris khenty-Imentiu, which drew the attention of kings across different periods. Every year, a parade used to launch from this temple to celebrate Osiris, and it would travel to the site of Umm el-Qa'ab.

Shunet el-Zebib

It lies to the west of Kom Sultan, and north-west of the temple of Ramses II. It is used to be filled with building complexes, or massive funerary enclosure walls, that were rectangular in shape. The outer walls of these enclosures takes the form of the palace façade. These enclosures date back to the Early Dynastic Period, but the only enclosure that remains to this day is that of King Khasekhemwy, of Dynasty 2, and it is currently known as 'Shunet el-Zebib'.

Akhmim

Akhmim is located 5 km east of the city of Sohag. It houses a temple of Ramses II, which was re-used during the Greco-Roman Period. It is believed that it was the main temple for the worship of the god Min. The temple consists of a pylon, with two colossal statues standing at its entrance, one for Ramses II, and the other for his daughter Merit-Amun. Ramses II has another colossi that stands at the front of the pylon. The remains of the temples are still buried underneath the modern cemeteries.

Islamic Monuments

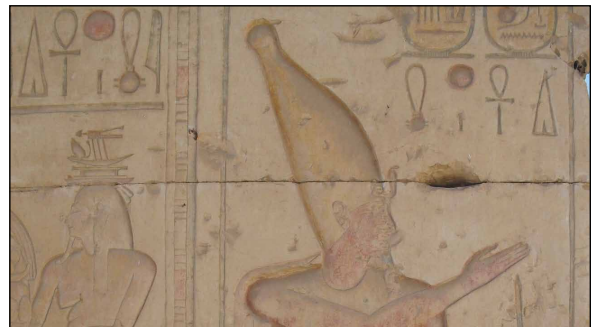
Sohag includes several magnificent monuments dating back to the Islamic Period, ranging from religious establishments, like mosques, to trade complexes like shops and markets. The most important of which are:

Mosque of Prince Hassan

It lies at Akhmim, at the north side of Prince Hassan Street. It was built by Prince Hassan in 1117 Hijri/ 1705 AD. It was completed in 1121 Hijri/ 1709 AD. It is considered a wonderful example of Ottoman religious architecture. It consists of a rectangular area that includes, an open court surrounded by four corridors with wooden ceilings.

The Chinese Mosque

It is located in the middle of the city of Gerga, in the vicinity of al-Qaysarya neighborhood, and was built by Prince Mohammed Bek al-Feqqary, a Mamluk of Prince Ali Bek al-Feqqary. He was the head of Feqqary House, and he became the ruler in 1117 Hijri/ 1705 AD. The mosque consists of five tiles, covered by a wooden ceiling, the covers the wall of the Qibla.



Mosque of Othman

Built by Othman Bek al-Gergawy in 1156 Hijri/ 1743 AD, when Ibrahim Gaweesh made him the ruler of Gerga. The mosque overlooking the Tekkya Street, and considered one of the largest ancient mosques of Gerga. Its facades were built in stone, in the distinctive style that was popular during the Ottoman Period in Egypt. The layout of the mosque consists of four corridors, surrounding an open court in the middle. The largest of those corridors is the corridor of the Qibla, which has three Mihrabs at the center of the wall.

Mosque of Galal

Also called the Mosque of Sidi Mohammed, known as 'Galal'. It was originally a Zawya for Sheikh Galal. Its façade overlooks the Galal Street, branching from Port Said Street. It was built in 1189 Hijri/ 1775 AD. The mosque from the inside is divided into six tiles, lying parallel to the Qibla wall. It is noticeable that the shape of the columns is similar to that of the columns in the Chinese Mosque, which are holding up the mosque's wooden ceiling.

Coptic Monuments

A large and wonderful monasteries, all are free of charge, the most important of which are:

The White Monastery

It is located 8 km west of the city of Sohag, and was called the 'White Monastery' for its white limestone that was used in its construction. It is dedicated to Father Shenouda, and dates back to the 4th Century AD. The monastery currently includes a church made up of a circular middle area surrounded by three half-domed atriums. The altar has three large and half-circular niches, and their walls are decorated with various religious scenes.

The Red Monastery

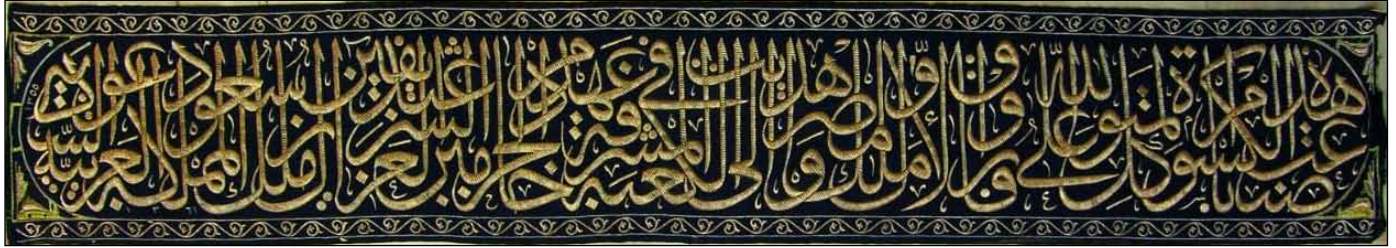
It is located 3 km north of the White Monastery, and it was called the 'Red Monastery' because of the Agar stone that was used in its construction. It dates back to the 4th Century AD. It is dedicated to Father Beshay, and includes a major ancient church, and the 'Palace of Empress Helana' (which is the atrium that is believed to be added by Empress Helana). In addition, it includes an ancient well.



Sites	Ticket Prices				Opening Hours	
	Egyptian	Egyptian Student	Foreigner	Foreign Student	From	To
Temples of Seti I and Ramses II at Abydos	EGP 10	EGP 5	EGP 80	EGP 40	7:00 AM	5:00 PM
Kom Sultan Site and Shunet al-Zebee at Abydos	EGP 10	EGP 5	EGP 40	EGP 20		
Ramses II Temple and the Statue of Merit-Amun in Akhmim	EGP 10	EGP 5	EGP 40	EGP 20		
Sohag National Museum	EGP 10	EGP 5	EGP 60	EGP 30	9:00 AM 5:00 AM	2:00 PM 10:00 PM

Object of the Month

Qa'aba Holy Cover



Qa'aba is the destination to which Muslims pray. It was always considered with respect and holiness by all Muslims and rulers throughout the history. Rulers used to endow entire villages to use their revenues to manufacture the Holy Cover of the Qa'aba.

The Qa'aba Cover covers the four walls of the Qa'aba from top to bottom, and are tied up with copper rings to the marble base. The cover is known by several names, such as, 'Cover of Happiness', 'the Blessed of al-Bushida', 'the Hijab of the Holy Qa'aba', or the 'Curtain of God's Qa'aba'.

The first person to cover the Holy Qa'aba was Profit Ismail (Peace be upon him). The tradition of covering it out of respect and holiness continued afterwards until this day.

Historians mentioned that the cover used to be made of Coptic textiles, then it began to be made by sowing with the development of Egyptian textiles techniques, and it used to be made of Deba textile with gold threads.

The cover is usually made up of eight parts (veils) to cover the four sides, such that each side is covered by two veils. The cover is decorated with verses from the Quran, and a verse line that circles all around the sides of the Qa'aba from the top, which is called 'Rank'. The two hanging bands at the two corners of the Qa'aba doorway are called 'Karadees'. The internal cover is made up of: a curtain for the doorway, called 'al-Baraqea', the cover of the mausoleum of Ibrahim (Peace be Upon him), the cover of the Prophet's Rock, the curtain of the Repentance Doorway, the curtain of the Minbar (pulpit) doorway, and a sac for safekeeping the Qa'aba's keys.

Several places in Egypt were home to manufacturing industry of the Holy Cover, the most famous of which is Sharqiya, Damietta, the Citadel, and the Princes Houses, the Alexandria House, and finally, al-Kharanfesh House.

Some Egyptian museums keep examples of parts from the Holy Cover since the early years of the Ottoman Period, and also from the years of the Mohammed Ali Period. The most famous of such examples are kept in the Textiles Museum in Al-Muizz street in Cairo, including one dating to the reign of King Farouk I, and it has a group of dark blue silk bands, decorated with verses from the Holy Quran, which were made with silver threads sown in Serma style. The name of the entity that ordered it, and its date were also sown onto the cover. It is worth mentioning that the cover used to be sent to Holy Mecca by a grand caravan of camels accompanying the pilgrimage caravans. The most famous of such caravans was the Egyptian one, which surpassed its counterparts from other Arab countries in the way it was prepared, organized, and celebrated.



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Printed by: MoA Press