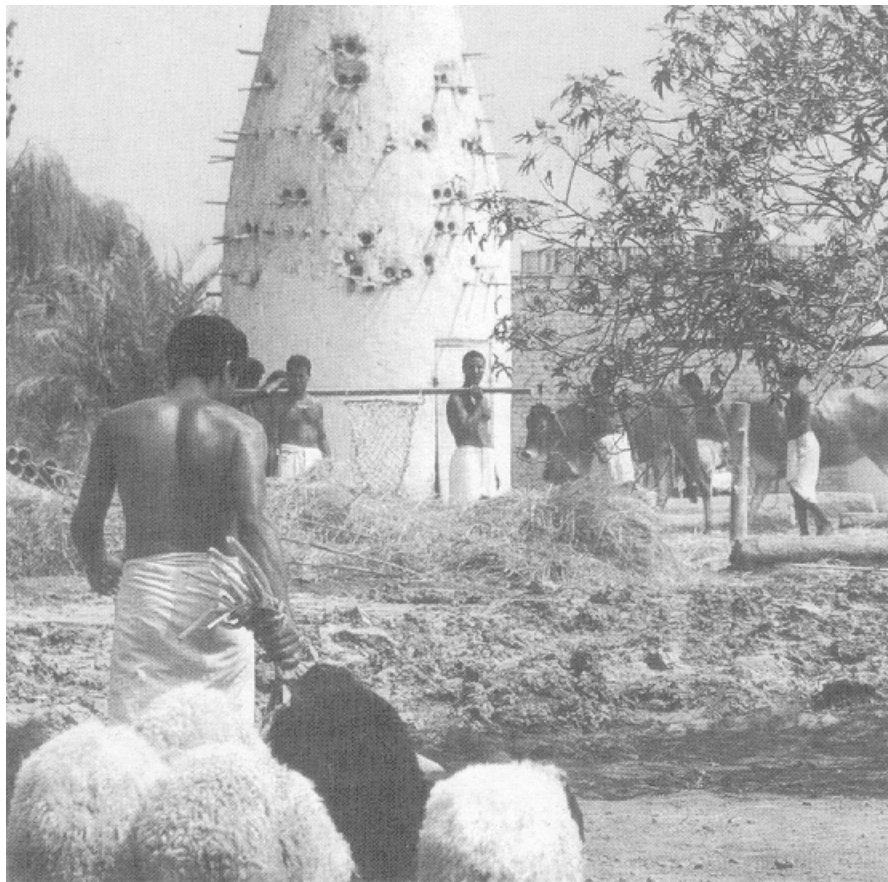


Among The Reeds Of The Nile

Gary A. Byers

Recently, the outside world became aware of a small island in the Nile delta where an ancient Egyptian village from the 15th century BC has been discovered. The unique thing about this village, located within the city limits of modern Cairo, is that it wasn't there during Egypt's New Kingdom in the 15th century BC! This ancient village is



Modern Egyptians recreating ancient Egyptian life in Ragab's village.

the 1984 creation of Egypt's former ambassador to China, Dr. Hasan Ragab. It is officially known as the Pharaonic Village.

The island on which the village is constructed belongs to Ragab. It is the plantation where he grows papyrus reeds to supply his floating Papyrus Museum, docked on the bank of the Nile near Giza. It was Dr. Ragab, in the 1970's, who rediscovered the techniques for producing smooth sheets of papyrus, an art lost for over a millennium. Today, hidden in the reeds of Ragab's papyrus island, the ancient village sits in the very shadows of modern Cairo's skyline.

Set in the days of Egypt's New Kingdom (16th-13th centuries BC), the village sits in an ancient Egyptian ecosystem totally created by Dr. Ragab. He has successfully recreated the trees, flowers, birds and animals which lived in the region about 1500 BC, many of which have long disappeared from the banks of the Nile.

The village is accessed by launch from the Nile's western bank. Upon arrival at the island, the boat navigates a narrow canal lined with the 10 ft high papyrus stalks. One by one, images of ancient Egyptian deities appear in the midst of the reeds. Amon-Ra, Thoth, Osiris, Isis, Horus and Bes all present themselves to the boatload of visitors.

The Pharaonic Village

At the end of the canal, the visitors from the present begin to view daily life in an ancient Egyptian village, a world with which both Joseph and Moses were familiar. White-kilted farmers plow their fields with oxen and wooden plows, sow seed by hand, irrigate with water from the Nile and winnow their wheat at a threshing floor. Further along, a scribe records baskets of grain poured into a whitewashed mudbrick silo for storage.

One by one, the vital industries of ancient Egypt are recreated. Modern Egyptians demonstrate fishing, wine making, papyrus making, linen weaving, perfume making, carpentry, boat construction, pottery production, brick making, sculpturing of monuments, wall painting and engraving. Village structures include a nobleman's house and garden, a farmer's hu...

You must have a subscription and be logged in to read the entire article.

[Click here to subscribe](#)

visitor : : uid: ()