

History of the Tourist Guide in Egypt

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Abstract

Egypt is a very well-known tourist destination starting from the Graeco-Roman period till nowadays. The Tourist guide is the most influential person the visitor will meet in his journey. The researcher tries here to trace back this profession in Egypt starting from the ancient times and spot the light on its development throughout the ages. During the ancient times, it seems that the role of the guide was played by the priests precisely inside the temples (religious and therapeutic tourism), while the bilingual persons used to guide the tourists in the archaeological sites. The travelers' writings that dates to the medieval period have no reference to the tourist guides. It was not until the seventeenth century that the tourist guide started to appear in the travelers' writings. During the reign of Mohamed Ali and his successors, the dragomans used to accompany the tourists in their travels, till they were replaced later by professional tour guides. The research also referred to the effort made by the state to organize this job through issuing regulations and establishing an academic study to enhance the skills of the tourist guides.

Keywords: Tourism, interpreter, dragoman, tourist guide.

1. Introduction:

Egypt is a very well-known tourist destination; whose monuments attracted the visitors since a long time ago. This is confirmed by the graffiti and the papyri, which prove that this tourist activity was known since the Pharaonic period and continued during the Graeco-Roman era. The first known foreign visitors, who visited the ancient monuments and engraved graffiti on them, were a party of Greek mercenary soldiers, who visited Egypt early in the sixth century BC. They went up to Elephantine during the reign of Psammetichus II; they journeyed on to the second cataract, and at Abu-Simbel carved their names on the colossal statues in front of the rock-temple. However, the real flood of foreign people to see the ancient monuments of Egypt began after Alexander's conquest and continued till the end of the Roman period. Those visitors were either the Greeks and Romans who lived in Egypt or those who came from their countries for sightseeing in Egypt. The most faraway travelers who visited Egypt during the Graeco-Roman period are from Marseille in France (Magdy H., 2006).

The most important tourist destinations for the cultural tourism in Egypt during the Graeco-Roman period are: the tomb of Alexander the Great at Alexandria, the ancient lighthouse of Alexandria, the sphinx and pyramids at Giza plateau, the region of El-Fayoum, the colossi of Memnon at Thebes, and the Valley of the Kings at Thebes.

The tomb of Alexander the Great in Alexandria was visited important personalities, such as: **Julius Caesar**, who visited Alexandria in 45 B.C. and paid his respects to the legend that he idolized. **Emperor August:** his visit is described by Suetonius and Lucian. He dedicated a wreath to the body of Alexander. It was reported also that he bent over to kiss the great conqueror, Augustus accidentally broke Alexander's nose. Augustus's guides offered to take him next to the tombs of the Ptolemaic dynasty which were located nearby. To that Augustus answered that he came to see a king and not dead people. **Caligula:** he paid a visit to the Sema and left with Alexander's cuirass. **Septimus Severus:** He eventually closed the tomb to the public because he was nervous about its safety under the hoards of tourists who rushed to visit. **Caracalla:** He visited the tomb in the third century A.D, as he believed that he was Alexander's reincarnation. This emperor reportedly dedicated a treasure of offerings to the body of Alexander, among which was a mantle, rings, and other jewellery (Magdy H., 2006).

The Colossi of Memnon were the most important tourist attraction in Egypt during the Roman period. On which travelers used to engrave their names as a memory of their visit, starting from the time of Nero and on. The most important visit was the one made by Emperor Hadrian. There was also the religious tourism in which the visitors came to pay homage to the gods in their temples. The

temple of Isis at the island of Philae captured the imagination of countless travelers to Egypt from the early times. These visitors flew to the island starting from the Ptolemaic period. The island of Philae continued to attract the pilgrims for so long till the sixth century AD. (Magdy H, 2006).

Egypt also knew the therapeutic tourism, as many temples were very famous for being healing-centers, such as: the Asklepiion of Memphis, Temple of Seti I at Abydos, the Temple of Deir el-Bahari, and the sanatorium of Dendara. During the Graeco-Roman Period, Egypt preserved her role as an educational center of the ancient world, therefore many Greek eager to come to Egypt, particularly to Alexandria, to receive their education. The fame of the library and its Mouseion was the reason that made the scientists and students of all nationalities flow to Alexandria in order to instruct themselves in all areas of sciences. Some of those scientists stayed at Alexandria, and held positions at the library, others came only to study and attend what we call today "Conferences" or "Somposiums", and returned home, such as: Euclid¹, Apollonius of Perga², Philitas³, Aristophanes⁴, Aristarchus⁵,

¹ Euclid is the most prominent mathematician of antiquity, who is best known for his treatise on mathematics *The Elements*. Little is known about his life except that he was taught at Alexandria in Egypt, worked under the reign of Ptolemy I and founded a school at Alexandria.

² Apollonius of Perga was born in the second half of the third century B.C (about 262 BC) in Perga, Pamphylia, Greek Ionia (now Murtina, Antalya, Turkey). He studied at Alexandria with the students of Euclid. He became very famous during the reign of Ptolemy III, as he was called "the greatest geometry scientist". Little is known of his life but his works have had a very great influence on the development of mathematics, in particular his famous book *Conics* introduced terms which are familiar to us today such as parabola, ellipse and hyperbola.

³ Philetas was originally from the island of Cos. He was the author of a miscellaneous glossary, called "Glossai Atoktoi". He played an important role in the field of poetry, as we can say that he was the founder of

Memnon of Side⁶, and Galian⁷ (Magdy H., 2006).

As long as there were tourist activities in ancient Egypt, there must have been tour guides. In ancient Greece, which was considered also a tourist destination in ancient times, the travelers mentioned the presence of the guides. These travelers used two words to refer to the guides: ἐχσεγετῆ (exegetes), and περιεγεταί (periegetai). Rarely, we find the word exegetes, as it was only mentioned by Pausanias in Pausanias journey to Greece and in an inscription from Olympia (SIG 1021.20) (Pretzler M., 2004). The most common word is periegetes. In epigraphy the richest source for such term happens to be from Olympia (3rd BC – 2nd AD). Elsewhere than in Olympia, epigraphic periegetai are rare. In literature the best evidence for the periegetai is from Plutarch. Lucian wrote: a character says:

"I was going around the colonnades in the sanctuary of Dionysius, examining each one of the painting, and right away two or three people ran up to tell me all about them for a small fee". (Pausanias, 2001).

the "Alexandrian Poetry School". He was tutor to the son of Ptolemy I of Egypt, and also taught Theocritus and the grammarian Zenodotus.

⁴ Aristophanes came from Byzantium. He was specialist of the Attic comedies and a pupil of Callimachus.

⁵ Aristarchus came from the island of Samothrace and was born in 310 BC. He was the most eminent grammarian, who was known as "The Prophet". Strato became head of the Lyceum at Alexandria in 287 BC and it is thought that Aristarchus studied with him there. He was certainly both a mathematician and astronomer and he is most celebrated as the first to propose a sun-centered universe. He is also famed for his pioneering attempt to determine the sizes and distances of the sun and moon.

⁶ Memnon of Side was in a study tour, so he had to come to Alexandria to read the best editions of Hippocrates in the field of medicine.

⁷ Galian studied at Alexandria where he got the opportunity to study the viscera and bones by direct observation.

A letter (CXIV) from Cleander to Hydaspes about a journey to Delphi, in the sixth year of the Peloponnesian War, mentioned:

"In the morning one of the Periegetai, whose profession is to show the antiquities of the place, made us an offer of his service, which they do to all strangers immediately after their arrival" (York P., 1800).

But what about ancient Egypt?

2. Literature review:

Although there are some books that dealt with tourism in Egypt during the different ages, there wasn't a specified study dealt with the tour guides. There is only one article that dealt with the history of tour guides in Egypt: Khattab M. et al (2018), "The historical development of the tourist guidance profession", *International Journal of Heritage, Tourism, and hospitality*, vol. 12 (2). However, it is not satisfactory nor comprehensive, specially in the concern of the development of this profession in Egypt during the ancient periods and during the era before the nineteenth century. The mentioned article also misses some information that could lead to a more interpretation to the development of this profession.

3. Tourist Guides in Ancient Egypt:

Concerning the two Greek words that appeared in Greece referring to the guides: ἐξεγεταί (exegetai), and περιεγεταί (periegetai), they were not witnessed in any inscription, graffiti or literature in Egypt. The word exegetai however was mentioned as referring to officials in the towns and villages who had a range of responsibilities: they were appointed legal representatives for those whose interests needed protection. They supervised guardians' activities. They may also have a role in the registration of property transactions. Later,

they assumed some financial responsibilities. They also had a judicial role (Alston R., 2002). There is no mention of their job as a tour guide in Egypt.

The only word that appeared in the ancient Egyptian literature is "the interpreter". The first mention of those interpreters comes from the Sixth dynasty in the titles of the princes in the tombs of the Princes of Elephantine on Qubbet el-Hawa, a hill near Aswan, one finds

the term  *imy-r* Ⓝ, "overseer/chief of interpreters". However, this title can also be interpreted as "Egyptianized Nubian". It seems that this word when it is applied to an Egyptian it means "interpreters", but when it applied to a foreigner it means "Egyptianized foreigner". Those interpreters probably participated in every ancient Egyptian expedition abroad. In Sahure's pyramid complex reliefs that dates to the Old Kingdom, there is representation of the return of an Egyptian fleet from a voyage to Byblos. Asiatics were represented aboard the ships, in addition to Egyptian crew. Some of the Egyptian crew are labeled *iʕ(w)*. Those were probably the interpreters whose job was to translate conversations between the Egyptians and the Syrian shipmates. (Bell L., 1976)

Elephantine princes who used to bear this title, were often sent by kings to faraway places, e.g. to Byblos or Punt. A text from the time of King Neferirkara-Re, being an account of an expedition of a Temple superintendent to a copper mine on the Sinai Peninsula, contains, next to the list of miners and sailors, a list of interpreters. (Chrobak M., 2013).

Two New Kingdom tomb inscriptions refer to their owners as "interpreters". In tomb No.99 at Thebes, Sennefer is described as "*iʕ3w n(y) h3swt nb(w)t s(i) ʕry mdw(w)w.sn n n(y)-swt*"

interpreter of all foreign lands, who forwards their pleas to the king". (Bell L., 1976)

At the royal court there were diplomatic interpreters. The most important scene came from the tomb of General Horemheb, located at Saqqara (Fig. 1). We can see a frieze from 1350 BC in which an interpreter is represented performing his work as a mediator between the military chief of Tutankhamun and the Libyans and Assyrians emissaries. The interpreter is shown speaking on one side with the emissaries and transmitting to the other, the message is addressed to the General Horemheb so that it can reach Tutankhamun. The scene represents the interpreter is in three pieces, now preserved in the national museum of Leiden (Inv. N. H.III.QQQQ-a), Kunsthistorischesmuseum in Vienna (Inv. N. 214), and the Staatlich museum in Berlin (Ident.Nr. ÄM 22663) (Chrobak M., 2013).

It seems that the interpreters during the Pharaonic period were foreigners who spoke Egyptian language (Reggiani N., 2013). With the increase of the Greeks in Egypt during the twenty-sixth dynasty, as mercenaries and merchants, *Psammetichus* II decided to send some Egyptian children to learn Greek from the Ionians. Those men became the base of the presence of the interpreters in ancient Egypt (Donadoni S., 1986). It seems that those interpreters were distinctive in the ancient Egyptian society according to Herodotus who classified the Egyptian society into seven classes (the priests, the warriors, the cowherds, the swineherds, the tradesmen, the interpreters, and the boatmen), the interpreters came in the sixth rank. The importance of interpreters has declined, since they were not mentioned in the classification made by Plato, Diodorus Sicilius, and Strabo (Ibrahim M., 1968). However, it does not mean that this job has vanished, but probably did not gain the same

importance as before. Especially after the intermarriage between the Greeks and the Egyptians, that resulted in a bilingual generation.

Although there is no clear evidence on the use of those interpreters in guiding, we can assume that, especially that Herodotus mentioned that one of them deciphered for him an inscription on the base of the Great Pyramid of Cheops:

" There are writings on the pyramid in Egyptian characters showing how much was spent on purges and onions and garlic for the workmen; and so far as I well remember, the interpreter (ἑρμηνεύς) when he read me the writing said that sixteen hundred talents of silver had been paid". (Herodotus, Book II, 125).

The word ἑρμηνεύς (hermeneis) or the Latin word *interpres* were not mentioned in any inscription or graffiti made by the Greek and Roman tourists on the Egyptian monuments. However, there is over one hundred Greek papyri, ostraca and inscriptions from Egypt mention of interpreters (*hermeneis*). They were more involved in translation, trade, and diplomacy. However, in some texts the profession of the hermenies was difficult to be identified (Mairs R., 2019). We can assume that some of them continued to work as tour guides, especially that other travellers visited Egypt to see the beauty of the ancient monuments and to study the beliefs and customs of the Egyptians, starting from the Pharaonic period till the Graeco-Roman time, such as: Hecataeus of Miletus, Hecataeus of Abdera, Polybius, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Flavius Josephus, Pliny the elder, Plutarch, Dion Chrysostomas, Pausanias, and Lucian of Syria. In addition to the flood of the Greek and Roman tourists. We cannot forget also the Roman senators who visited Egypt in the Ptolemaic era such as Lucius Memmius who visited Egypt in 112 BC (P.Teb. I.33). Thus,

they must have been accompanied in their visits by a bilingual interpreter or in other words tour guides in the modern sense.

Looking up in the graffiti and inscriptions left by the tourists on the monuments, we found in one of the tombs in the valley of the kings a Greek graffiti reads:

Δίδυμος
καθηγησ . . .

Means: "Dydimos, *καθηγησ*". This word was translated by Baillet as "guide", however, he mentioned that this term was not found in any other place (Baillet J., 1926). The researcher looked for this term in Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum (CIS), and the term does not exist in any inscription in Egypt.

It seems that in the temples, the priests were responsible for accompanying the tourists during their visits. Strabo during his visit to the crocodiles in the Arsinoite nome in El-Fayoum, mentioned:

"At any rate, our host, one of the officials, who was introducing us into the mysteries there ,went with us to the lake , carrying from the dinner a kind of cooky and some roasted meat and a pitcher of wine mixed with honey.

We found the animal lying on the edge of the love, and when the priests went up to it , some of them opened its mouth and another put in the cake ,and grain the meat, and then poured down the honey mixture.

The animal then leaped into the lake and rushed across to the far side, but when another foreigner arrived, likewise carrying on offering of first-fruits, the priests look it, went around the lake in a run, took hold of the animal, and in the same manner fed it what had been brought". (Strabon, Book XVII.1.38)

It seems also that the priests acted as tourist guides around the Colossi of Memnon in Thebes; as they translated the hieroglyphs to the tourists. There is the graffiti of the poetess

Balbilla who accompanied emperor Hadrian in his visit to the colossi as she engraved:

“Or Amenotnes, the Egyptian king, as those priests say, who are acquainted with the old myths” (Gardiner A., 1961)

The priests used to inform the visitors about the reality of these Colossi that it was the monument of an old Egyptian king Amenhotep III, and not the legendary Memnon son of Eos.

Despite the lack of evidence on the existence of tour guides in ancient Egypt, we can suppose that the tourist guiding was practised by the priests inside the temples and also by bilingual persons in the other tourist destinations throughout the Graeco-Roman period.

4. Tourist guides in the Middle Ages:

In the Medieval period, Egypt witnessed the journeys of the Arab and foreign travellers. They described in their books the monuments in Egypt whether the Pharaonic, the Coptic or the Islamic ones. However, the status of the Pharaonic monuments especially in Upper Egypt was very bad as most of them were partially buried under the sand. Although Ibn Battuta (visited Egypt in 1326) mentioned in his book about the pyramids and the monuments of Alexandria, he did not mention the monuments of Upper Egypt. (شمس الدين الطنجي، 1997) Although, Ibn Battuta mentioned the existence of a guide in his travels, there was no reference to this guide during his visit to Egypt.

Looking through the writings of the travelers, the researcher did not find any reference to an accompanying guide. For example, in the writings of Abdel Latif El-Boghdadi (a traveller who visited Egypt at the end of the sixth century AH) about the pyramids: *"On these stones, there are writtings with an*

unknown old language. I didn't find anyone in whole Egypt who clamied that he knew its meaning". About the sphinx he wrote: *"there is a head and a neck emergerd from the land in greatness. People called it Abu Al-Houl, and clamied that his body is buried underneath".* At Alexandria, he mentioned that he was told by a trusted person that the hight of pompey's pillar is 75 Span. (عبد الرحمن عبد الله الشيخ، 1998). It seems that the traveller was not accompanied by a guide as he received his information from the people.

Even the foreign travellers that visited Egypt such as the French traveller Jeun Thenoud (Egypt in 1512) (Thenoud J., 1888) and the Jewish Italian traveller Michollam (visited Egypt in 1481) (مصطفى وجيه مصطفى، 2017) relied in their writings on their observations with no reference to an accompanying guide. Although Michollam mentioned the existence of hotels in Alexandria specified for the foreiners, there is still no reference to the guides.

It is mentioned in one of their writings in the 16th century that there is a road led to the Pyramids, which could easily be reached if you are accompanied by a good guide (جيلان عباس، 1999). It seems that the guide that was mentioned here, was responsible for guiding the travellers in the desert not describing the monuments, as there is no mention for such guide in all the writings of the travellers.

5. Tourist guides in Modern Egypt:

In the 17th century the reference of the guides in the writtings of the travellers started to appear. The German Wansleben who visited Egypt in 1664, wrote three reports about his visit. In his writtings about El-Fayoum, he mentioned: *"When we had well seen these things, we returned to the Town, and in our way we went over the Ruines of the ancient Arsinoe, where I saw nothing remarkable, but*

some old Walls which my Guide told me were the remains of a Bath".

In his writings about Saqqara: "*But because we were without any Guide, and my Janissary was a very Coward, having none but him with me, he allarmed me several times with the fear of the Arabians, besides, our Beasts were tired with the deep way; I was therefore constrained to set bounds to my Curiosity, and to return to the Town".*

He also mentioned a guide called Paul "*He was a young Abyssin, of my Age, named Paul, a comly Person, wise and devout in appearance. I had a little before got acquaintance with him; and because he understood by my discourse, that I had a great desire to visit the Monastery of S. Anthony, where he said he had been before, and that I expected but a Guide, because the ways were difficult, But the familiarity ordinary amongst fellow Travellers discovered to me his disposition and temper, more than I could before; for all his visits at Cairo were studied and crafty. I found therefore that he was a dissembler, and without judgment, too hasty; I resolved therefore to shake him off, and to seek another, I met at Benesuef, very happily, a Coptie born at Busch, by Profession a Mebascier, or Arithmetician, who had travelled all about the upper Egypt. I found him fit for my turn, I asked him to be my Guide in this Voyage; he accepted of the offer, and I paid him beforehand". (Wansleben J., 1678)*

It seems that the guide was not always available for Wansleben, as he mentioned at Saqqara that he was not accompanied by one. We knew from his writings that sometimes he found that his guide was not as good as he desired, so he sought for another. He mentioned also that he paid for one of his guides in advance.

It was not until the French occupation 1798-1801, that resulted in the release of "Description d'Egypte", the book that regained the glory of ancient Egypt. Later, Muhammad Ali (19th century) was keen on preparing all the facilities for the tourists such as establishing the hotels in Cairo and Suez. The tourists at that time were rich people because the tourist trips were not very common among the middle-class people at that time (السيد سيد أحمد، 1994). The Dragoman⁸ appeared and became responsible for the guiding. The word dragoman is derived from the Chaldaen "Targem", and the Arabic word "Targam" means "to explain or interpret". The dragomans in Egypt during this period could speak different languages: English, French, and Italian. They were responsible not only for interpreting the monuments, but also for all the facilities needed by the tourist such as the hotel accommodation, fees and all the expenses. The fee of the dragoman varies according to the number and the requirements of the travelers, and the length of the journey (Baedeker K., 1898).

The dragoman could be a foreigner who lived in the country and nailed its language or could be one of the natives who is acquainted with one or more foreign languages. Examples of the foreign dragoman is the Italian Giovanni Finati who left the army, escaped to Albania, converted to Islam, and moved to Egypt. He worked as interpreter to several European travelers till he became the interpreter of Lord Prudhoe in 1826 who advised him to set up a permanent business as a guide. Nothing is known about Finati after 1829, as he was

⁸ The Dragoman was known in Egypt before the French occupation, but their role wasn't guiding the visitors but conducted negotiations with Ottoman and Egyptians concerning trade or diplomatic matters. They were more like translators. Most of them were European renegades and converts. (See: Jasanoff M., 2005, pp. 393-409).

probably dead. There is also the Greek Giovanni d'Athanasia (1798-1854), known as Yanni. He moved to Egypt with his father, he resided in Thebes for 18 years and became the interpreter of the English travelers (Mairs and Muratov, 2015).

Abbas Pasha I in 1849 issued a decree in which he regulated the work of the dragomans. The decree mentioned that any Egyptian wants to work as a dragoman should get a permission to work. As for the foreigners who want to be dragomans should get certificates from their consuls as a first step to get the permission to work. This decree allowed the government to punish the careless dragoman and set more discipline to the job. Moreover, the decree stipulated that at the end of the journey, the dragoman must obtain a signed certificate from the traveler that he did his job well. It's worth mentioning that the government set a monthly salary for the dragoman reach to 150 piasters, which is considered at that time an amount that enabled the dragoman to live a good life (السيد سيد أحمد، 1994).

Our information about the work of those dragomans came from the writings of the travelers. Some of them seems to have had a bad experience with the dragomans such as Baedeker who wrote his book in 1876 mentioning that there were 90 dragomans in Cairo at that time, but scarcely half of them are trustworthy. He mentioned also that their knowledge about the country and its antiquities are deficient. He advised the traveler to draw up a contract with the dragoman mentioning the costs (Mairs and Muratov, 2015). Gustave Flaubert a French traveller (1850), in his letters to family and friends in France, mentioned that most dragomans are appalling scoundrels, but he was pleased to find an exception in his own dragoman, Joseph (Mairs and Muratov, 2015).

While other travelers seemed to have a good experience, such as Miss Carey in her book 1863 which mentioned that she spent five whole months in Egypt. Her dragoman, Mohamed, was her constant companion and source of assistance and information and she trusted his guidance (Mairs and Muratov, 2015).

It seems that during the reign of Khedive Ismail, some dragomans started to work through travel agencies. We knew that in 1872, the Khedive authorized Thomas Cook to open his first Middle Eastern travel agency in Egypt. The next year he announced a Nile tour from Cairo to Aswan including dragoman for sight-seeing (Lyth P., 2013).

The dragomans continued to appear around the archaeological sites and continued to have a permission to work from the state. The evidence proved that in 1912 there were 50 dragomans in Giza. In 1920, the number of dragomans increased to 100. One of the most prominent tourist guides during that period, was "Tousson Khattab", born in 1870, who was called the "Chief Guide" as he guided the tours of many important personalities who visited Egypt such as "Aga Khan" in 1938 (Fig. 2). (Khattab et al., 2018)

The dragomans have later disappeared to be replaced by the tour guide, who is a more educated person. According to Khattab the first tour guides were graduated from the "School of Archeological Culture" in 1943 (Khattab et al., 2018). However, the school he referred to must be "the School of guides and dragomans" in Giza that was established in 1931 and closed in 1959 (Fig. 3). The director of this school was the famous archeologist Selim Hassan (Isam, 2007). In 1958 the same school was established in Luxor. In 1955 Law No. 618 limited the work in the tourist guiding field to the graduates from this school, in

addition to the graduates of the School of Archaeology.

In 1965, the number of the tour guides reached 200, and an assembly were made for them. In 1967, the united Nations declared this year as the year of International tourism to emphasize the importance of the tourism industry (United nations website). Therefore, new steps were taken in Egypt: the first regulation decree for the tourist guiding was issued. In the same year, two institutes were established: the higher institute of Tourism, and the higher institute of Hotels. The first one is divided into two departments one of them is concerned with the tourist guiding. This is considered the first academic study to graduate professional tour guides (Helwan Faculty of Tourism website).

In 1971, the state admitted the tour guiding as a paid profession. In 1975, the two previously mentioned higher institutes were merged to be the first faculty of Tourism & Hotels in Helwan University that preserved the three departments: Tourism studies, Hotel management studies, and Tourist guiding. In 1983, the first law that regulated the job of the tour guide was issued (law No. 121). The same year also witnessed the establishment of the faculty of Tourism & Hotels in Alexandria University (Alexandria Faculty of Tourism website). Later, many faculties of Tourism & Hotels were established all over Egypt. In these faculties, the students get a comprehensive information about the history and the archaeology of Egypt starting from the Pharaonic period till the modern ages.

In 1984, the fist syndicate for the tourist guides was established. In 2004, the Arab federation of tourist guides was established, whose main bureau is in Cairo (Arab federation website). According to the syndicate's database in 2016, Egypt has more

than 17,000 members. Most of them are specialized in the English, French, German, Italian, or Spanish. However, there are also guides who specialized in other languages such as: Korean, Turkish, or Romanian.

6. Conclusion:

The tourist guide was a profession that could be traced back in Egypt as early as the ancient times. The title of the profession changed throughout the ages. In the ancient times, they were called *ἐχσεγετὲ* (exegetes), and *περιεγεται* (periegetai). These two terms were not used in Egypt; however, other term was used which is the interpreters *ἐρμηνεύς* (hermeneis). Another unique title is found in one of the tombs of the valley of the Kings, which is *καθηγησ*. This title was translated as "tour guide", but it was never found elsewhere.

They used to explain the monuments such as the Pharos of Alexandria, the tomb of Alexander the Great, the pyramids, and the tombs of the valley of the kings. While the tourists that used to flow to the temples for religious or therapeutic purposes, they were guided by the priests. This could explain the disappearance of the word "tour guide" from the graffiti that were all found in the temples.

In the modern ages they were called dragomans till we reach to the common word "Tourist guide".

The toursit guides used to be either foreigners who lived in the country and nailed its language or could be one of the natives who is acquainted with one or more foreign languages. However, nowadays there is an obligation that the tourist guide should be Egyptian. the Egyptian Labor Act No 485 (2010), Article 17 prohibited the foreign labor from working in the tour guiding field and impose severe sanctions.

During the Medieval period, the guide's job was limited to show the travelers the trails in the deserts. It was clear in the travellers' writings that they gathered their information from the people and according to their observations. In the Modern ages, the dragomans suffered lack of knowledge and skills as was mentioned in the writings of the travellers. Their skills were improved by the the decree that was issued by Abbas Pasha that allowed the government to punish the careless dragomans and set more discipline to the job. This is considered the first regulation issued for the guiding profession. Their knowledge was more enhanced by establishing the first school intended for tour guides and dragomans in 1931, whose role was to acquaint the guides with more information and skills. Later, specified faculties were established in Egypt starting from 1967 that were responsible for graduating the tourist guides.

The Tourist guiding used to be a freelance job till the establishment of the tourist agencies during the reign of Khedive Ismail. The dragomans started at that time to work through those agencies.

The first regulation of this job was during the reign of Abbas Pasha. In 1983, the first law that regulated the job of the tour guide was issued (law No. 121). In 1984, the fist syndicate for the tour guides was established. The second millennia witnessed the arose of the role of Egyptian tour guides in the Arabic world. In 2004, the Arab federation of tourist guides was established, whose main bureau is in Cairo.

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