

24 Years Euregional Prize for Architecture

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# The Nile Project

## Participant info

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## Project info

This project explores an infrastructure of great national and geopolitical significance: the Aswan High Dam of Egypt, completed in 1971. This monumental structure, which altered the Nile River's ecosystem and landscape, as well as Egypt's agriculture and energy supply, also triggered through its insertion a widely overlooked process of urban development.

This research presents a retroactive reflection on the construction plan of the dam and puts forward the hypothesis that this plan - in fact - entailed the creation of a new city. The project introduces possible scenarios of city growth based on a number of inquiries: How can a loose agglomeration of infrastructural, residential and administrative buildings amount to one connected city? What are the limitations of design in a location of great social, political and economic complexities? How could this city evolve 100 years after the completion of the dam, the reason for its existence?

Following an on-site investigation of the geographical and urban parameters surrounding the dam, my proposal translates the findings into a history of creation of the "City of the High Dam." Consequently, the analysis identifies areas of potential interventions by proposing a transport system connecting the city as well as transit hubs that restore a lost community spirit. Such interventions of different scales offer a better understanding of the daily city life and allow its inhabitants and visitors to experience their surroundings from different viewpoints and at varying speeds.

The project intends to reveal the rich history of this city and emphasises its specific cultural identity. It provokes a discussion about the boundaries of visionary urbanism and how it stands in contrast to Utopia. Rather than (consciously) criticising past political decisions, my contribution lies in using visionary urbanism as a tool to criticise the limits of reality as accepted by planners and seeks to visually project the "still possible".

