

Daniszewski, J. (5 December, 2004) "In Bustling Cairo, Oasis of Green Arises," [The Boston Globe](#).

OVERVIEW

Residents of Cairo, a city of 17 million famous for its dust, heat, and traffic, have turned something lost into an unexpected find. Thanks to what Daniszewski calls "an unusual initiative combining horticulture, community development, and archaeology," the [Aga Khan Trust](#) for culture has created a 74 acre park atop a 500-year-old garbage dump.

Max Rodenbeck, a longtime resident of Cairo and author of [Cairo: The City Victorious](#), says "It's lovely, one of the nicest things to happen in Cairo over the last 50 years." Indeed, a decade of planning and construction appears to have paid off. Not only is the park lined with palms, fountains, ponds, streams, waterfalls, alfresco dining services, and hundreds of thousands of new plants, it is also situated in the historic heart of the Egyptian capital.

Though some residents worry the maintenance task will be too great to manage, the Aga Khan Trust is committed to directing things for three years, then making its oversight available to the city. For now, most residents are thrilled to have a new sweeping space in which they may walk, dine, converse, and simply breathe.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. What do you think the presence of this park will mean for the people of Cairo?
2. Is such a renovation project worth the time, effort, and cost?
3. What is it about urban living that makes such ideas desirable?
4. Are there many green spaces in or around your neighborhood?
5. If so, what purpose to they serve for adults and teenagers?

IMPLICATIONS

Large cities do not often develop with an eye toward preserving natural

spaces, much less rehabilitating garbage dumps. The achievement of the Aga Khan Trust is admirable, both for its ingenuity, and for its ability to ward off other, perhaps more profitable, development initiatives. It is likely the quality of life in urban areas would be greatly improved by similar measures in America's cities and towns.

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