**Dr Dina Rezk on the Aswan High Dam – Part 1**

The construction of the Aswan High Dam, which permanently flooded archaeological sites and villages was from an antiquities perspective, controversial. But I think at the time we have to consider that ideas of development were much more pressing and important for Egypt's policy makers. Cultural preservation was in some sense a luxury, and the High Dam a real bench mark for Egypt's progress as a modernising, developing country. It produces half of Egypt's electricity, and the Dam essentially saved Egypt from some of the most severe droughts, and played a massive role the modernisation and industrialisation of the economy.

**Dr Dina Rezk on the Aswan High Dam – Part 2**

More symbolically, what the Aswan Dam represented was Egypt's national glory, and I think this is captured really nicely in a song by Abd El Halim Hafez (a kind of iconic musician during the Nasser period) where he sings the story of the High Dam, *Hekayet Shaab* - which means 'The story of the nation' - because in some sense the building of the High Dam was also about building the nation, it was about relinquishing control from colonialism, and effectively reclaiming Egypt's destiny in the hands of Egyptians. So, this was not just a material achievement for Egypt, but also a highly symbolic one.