

# Tourism in Egypt

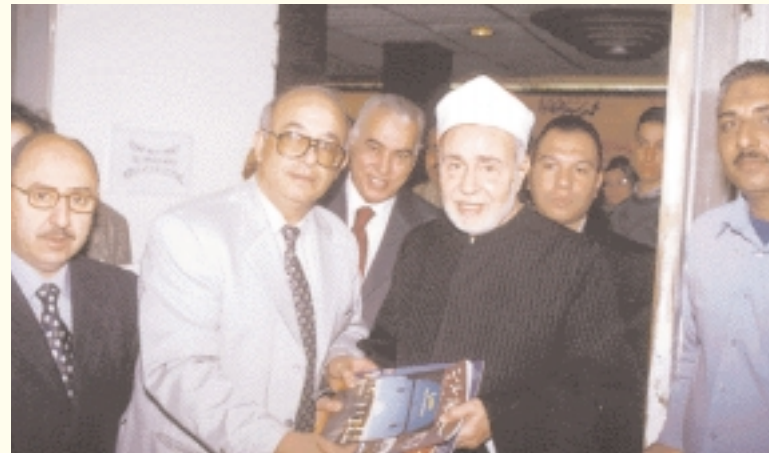
## From Islamic and Economic points of view

Cairo-Mounir El-fishawy

Last month, the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism organized a conference: "Tourism in Egypt from an Islamic and Economic Point of View", in collaboration with Al-Azhar University. The conference was held in the university's congress hall.



Dr. Tantaoui, the Imam of Al-Azhar, with our representative



الشيخ الدكتور طنطاوي إمام الأزهر مع ممثل المجلة

Conference participants included Imam D. Mohamed Sayed Tantaoui, the Sheik of Al-Azhar and representatives from the Ministry of Tourism. Many university professors from Al-Azhar, Alminya, Fayoum, and other universities took part along with journalists and interested members of the public. A number of papers treating the religious, economic and professional aspects of tourism in Egypt were presented.

In his inaugural speech, Dr. Tantaoui affirmed the legitimacy of tourism, based on many verses from the Koran. He also described the various benefits of tourism: the exchange of knowledge, fostering trade, scholarly exchanges in science and literature and opportunities to promote the benefits of Islam. Islam also confers on the Moslem a certain degree of spiritual and material civility, provided that the tourist is interested in life enhancing rather than sinful pursuits.

Dr. Tantaoui added that tourists do not pose a problem as long as they respect the culture, traditions, and laws. As Egyptians we must welcome them warmly, transmit the tolerance of our religion and its code of civilized behaviour and work to attract visitors with the aim of developing our country.

Adil Abdul-Aziz, the former president of Egypt's Organization of Tourism Promotion affirmed in his intervention that tourism is the ideal solution to the problem of unemployment. This sector currently provides 2.2 million work opportunities and brings in \$1 billion in income. It is connected to 72 local crafts and industries. "If tourism prospers, trades and industries thrive with it".

After the opening speeches, three workshops were held to discuss tourism in Egypt, its reality and future prospects; tourism in Egypt from the Islamic and economic point of view; the economic

reality of tourism in Egypt, stock management of environmental tourism and Egyptian tourism and globalization. Interesting scholarly and professional debates followed, through which, the participants expressed their agreement about the legitimacy of tourism, in its various forms and the significant role that it plays for individuals and the national economy, particularly in reducing unemployment. They also called for joint efforts by the state and the private sector for the development of tourism in Egypt and its promotion inside and outside the country.

The representative of Islamic Tourism described in his intervention the role that the magazine and its web site play in promoting international tourism through its Arabic, English, French, Spanish and German editions. Sheik Tantaoui expressed his satisfaction and appreciation when he received a copy of the magazine. ■