Zubarah: Uncovering a new history for Qatar and the Gulf

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The 2000s, a decade of a new movement towards architectural and cultural heritage conservation within the Gulf, saw Qatar’s first archaeological heritage protection structure. In 2000, the Qatar Museums Authority (QMA) was established by decree, to be followed by a new museum building. The foundation of this museum was a response to the work initiated by the Qatari Ministry of Culture and Tourism during the 1970s and 1980s. This was the beginning of a new cultural renaissance within Qatar.

In 2004, a project was launched for preservation of Zubarah, one of Qatar’s most significant archaeological sites. Located on the northwest coast of Qatar, Zubarah is a pre-Islamic town whose ruins consist of a large, rectangular fortification with a cut canal of massive proportions. The fortress was built within a defensive wall 2.5 kms long and 5m high, connected by a chain of small posts marking the inner edge of the wall. Zubarah is the third largest archaeological site in Qatar, after Al Khor and Al Wakra. The site was discovered in 1982, during port surveys conducted by the Qatari Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Since then, the site has undergone a series of archaeological surveys and excavations, under the supervision of the Qatar Museums Authority, the University of Copenhagen, and the National Museum of Denmark.

Zubarah is a significant archaeological site with a long history of human occupation, spanning from the late Neolithic period to the early Islamic period. The site was inhabited by pre-Islamic peoples, who used it as a port of entry and exit to the Persian Gulf. The site is located on a poor, knoll on a sheltered harbour, and is built on a site with advantages in a rocky, but water-rich location. It is also located within a defensive wall, which protected the site from outside threats.

The site is also significant for its pre-Islamic architecture. Zubarah is known for its impressive cut canal, which was constructed by the pre-Islamic peoples who inhabited the site. The canal was used for transportation and trade, and was a significant feature of the site.

In the 2000s, Zubarah became a focal point for archaeological conservation efforts. The site was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2009, recognizing its significance as a pre-Islamic town and a site of cultural heritage. The site has since undergone a series of archaeological surveys and excavations, under the supervision of the Qatar Museums Authority, the University of Copenhagen, and the National Museum of Denmark.

In 2014, a new museum building was opened on the site of the old palace of Doha. The museum is located within a defensive wall, and is designed to house a collection of artifacts and archaeological remains from the site. The museum is a significant contribution to the conservation and rehabilitation of the old palace of Doha, and is a testament to the commitment of Qatar to preserving its cultural heritage.

The project was developed in collaboration with the Qatar Museums Authority, the University of Copenhagen, and the National Museum of Denmark. The museum is designed to be a center for the study of pre-Islamic architecture, archaeology, and history. The museum is also designed to be a cultural and educational center, providing opportunities for visitors to learn about the site and its history.

The museum is designed to be an important component of Qatar’s cultural heritage conservation efforts. It is a significant contribution to the conservation and rehabilitation of the old palace of Doha, and is a testament to the commitment of Qatar to preserving its cultural heritage.