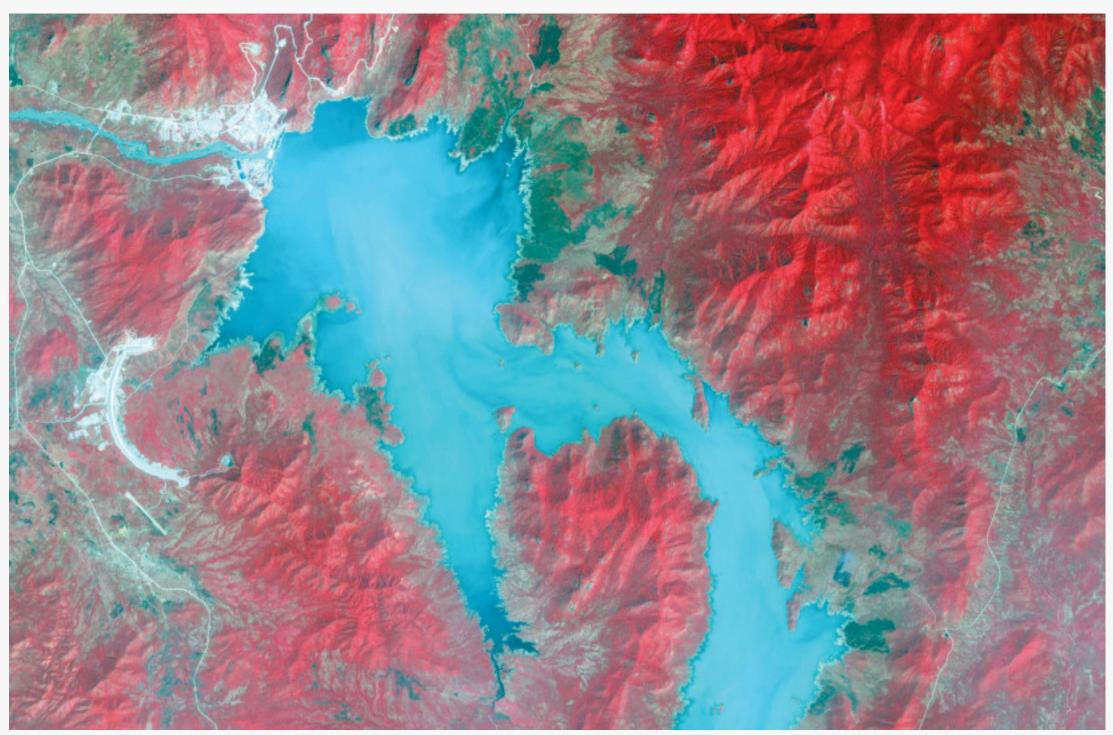
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# Cataclysm on African continent a pending world war

The Nile River has captivated mystery and myth from the time of ancient Greeks, including Herodotus and Alexander the Great. Today she could become the cause of a world at war.

By DARLENE CASELLA JUNE 19, 2021 16:19



THE NILE RIVER is seen as the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam reservoir fills near the Ethiopia-Sudan border. (photo credit: NASA/METI/AIST/JAPAN SPACE SYSTEMS/US/JAPAN ASTER SCIENCE TEAM/REUTERS)

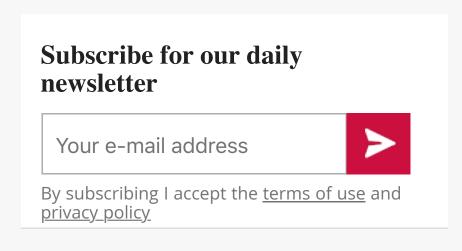


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The Nile River has captivated mystery and myth from the time of ancient Greeks, including Herodotus and Alexander the Great. Today she could become the cause of a world at war.

Walrus-mustached British abolitionist Dr. David Livingston set out to find the source of the Nile River in 1864. He joined endless cadres of adventurous explorers that had searched for it since Herodotus made that attempt around 400 BCE. When all communications from Livingston ended, Henry Stanley led search caravans from Zanzibar to find Livingston. In 1872 Stanley was finally able to utter the infamous words "Dr. Livingston, I presume."

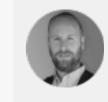
The Nile River has claimed romantic proportions for centuries, but today it may become the genesis of war.



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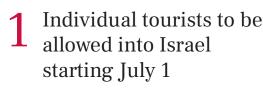


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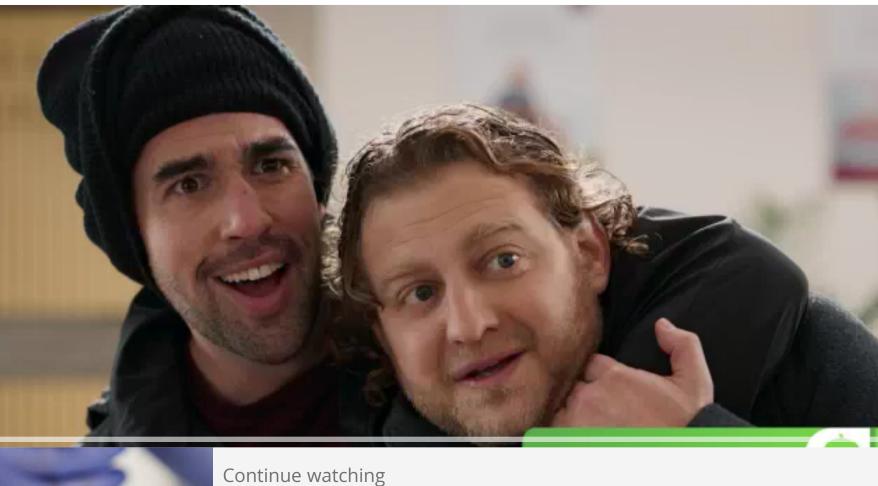
Dr. Livingston found the source of the Nile to be Lake Victoria in Uganda. It flows north, and the basin passes through eleven countries: Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Republic of Sudan, and Egypt. Her two tributaries are the White Nile and the Blue Nile. The Blue Nile begins in Ethiopia at Lake Tana. The two rivers meet north of the Sudanese capital of Khartoum, before it flows into Egypt and through Alexandria to the Mediterranean.

Construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), a \$5 billion mega hydropower dam on the Blue Nile River, began in 2012. This is being built with Communist Chinese help, and would be the largest hydroelectric power plant in Africa. Treaties in 1929 and in 1959 gave Egypt and Sudan rights to Nile waters, and veto powers over upstream projects that would affect their share of the water. These kingdoms have relied on the Nile since ancient times. Cultural and historic sites are found along the river banks. Egypt relies on the Nile for 90% of its water. GERD began without knowledge or approval from Egypt or Sudan.

Ethiopia is filling the dam's reservoir for a second time. Fearing Ethiopian control of water, Egyptian President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi declared that Egypt will take all necessary measures to protect their rights to the Nile waters. Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed claims GERD is needed for electricity, and responds that no force could stop building the dam.

This contentious project has been in mediation by the African Union, with no progress. At the request of Sisi, then-president Donald Trump began a US mediation. In the post-Trump era, Ethiopia thwarted the process in April.

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Cairo and Khartoum have asked the United States, the United Nations and the European Union form an international agreement to govern how much water Ethiopia releases downstream. The White House responded: "President [Joe] Biden acknowledges Egypt's concerns about access to Nile River waters. It underscores the US interest in achieving a diplomatic resolution that meets the needs of Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia."

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An Egyptian delegation to Nairobi, Kenya, signed an Agreement on Defense Cooperation. Egypt also has a Military Cooperation Agreement with Sudan, Burundi and Uganda. Sisi hosted Qatari Foreign Minister Abdulrahman Al-Thani in Cairo. Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates are agreeing to drop their boycott of Qatar.

Egypt and Sudan are water-poor desert countries. The existential threat to them is not exaggerated. The narrow Nile Valley is home to 90% of citizens with expansive uninhabitable desert on both sides of the river valley. Lack of water, drought, and famine would cause mass exodus across the Middle East, to Europe, and perhaps even to the open borders of the US.

Without a political solution for this crisis, Cairo warns that a military option is now on the table. A military strike on GERD would cripple the dam for years. An armed conflict between Africa's two largest nations is a horrific prospect for Africa and for the world. Some alliances would join with Egypt and some with Ethiopia, which would plausibly cause a wider war. History shows us that this is how world wars have started.

The Nile, forever new and old, Among the living and the dead, Its mighty, mystic stream has rolled. - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

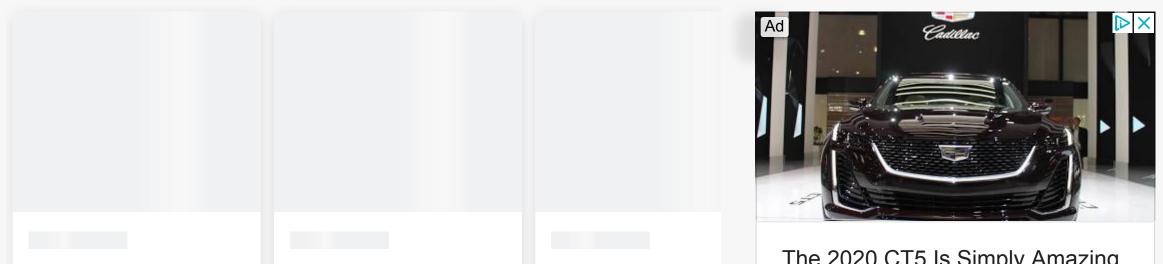
The writer is an internationally published writer, a former English teacher, stockbroker, and owner/president of a small corporation. She is active with Federated Republican Women, the Lincoln Club, the California Republican Party; and can be reached at darlenecasella@msn.com.

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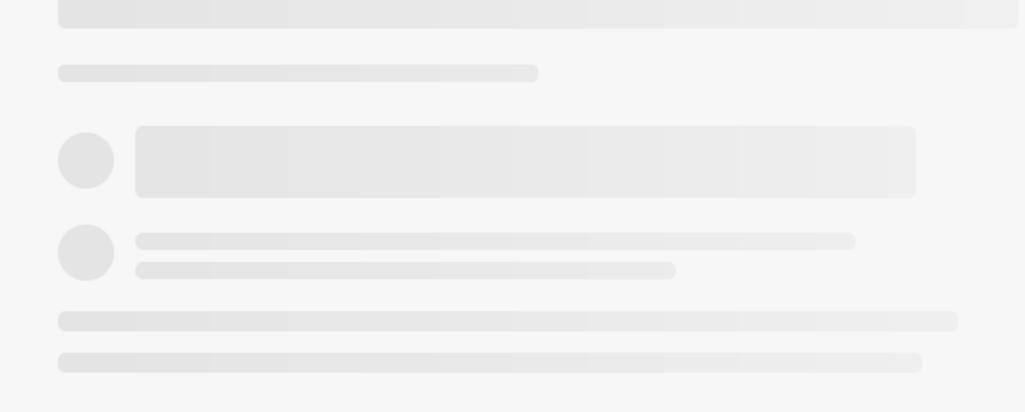
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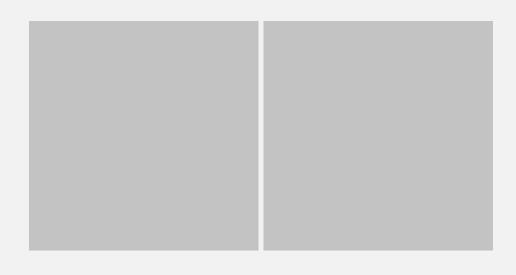
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