**El Alamein, The Second World War, The Italian cemetery.**

El Alamein which we call in Arabic العلمين, its name means the “two mountains markers” about its location, it is located in matrouh governorate of Egypt on the Mediterranean about 106 kilometers (66 mi) west of Alexandria and 240 kilometers (149 mi) northwest of Cairo.

As we know that el-alamein was one dynamic Battlefields of the Second World War and before taking about the battles of el-alamein, I would like to introduce short notes about the Second World War and its participants

**The Second World War.**

It was a devastating international conflict began in the 7th of July 1937 in Asia and in the 1st of September 1939 in Europe while ended in 1945 with the surrender of Japan. However the Armed forces were about seventy countries participated in Air, naval, and ground battles Between the Allies forces and the Axis countries.

The Allied forces in the second World War includes a wide range of countries the most important of them were Britain, France and China, then and after the bombing of Japan to the American Pearl Harbor the united states of America joined to the Allied forces in the war against the Axis powers, while In June, Germany violated the agreement of
non-aggression which signed with the Soviet Union, and invaded it from the east, that making the Soviets to be one of the Allies.

Forces of Axis countries in the second World War includes mainly the Nazi Germany under the leadership of Adolf Hitler, and Italy led by Benito Mussolini then Japan joined after bombing the American Pearl Harbor and other countries such as Austria, Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary.

The war was primarily between the three Axis countries (the Japanese Empire – the Italian Fascism – the Nazi Germany) against the Allied (the Soviet Union - United Kingdom - United States of America), which ended with the victory of the Allies.

El-alamein was one dynamic Battlefields of the Second World War, why? because two of important battles were fought in the area, and the results were;

- At the First Battle of El Alamein (July 1 – July 27, 1942) the advance of Axis troops on Alexandria was blunted by the Allies, when the German Panzers tried to outflank the allied position.
- At the Second Battle of El Alamein (October 23 – November 4, 1942) Allied forces broke the Axis line and forced them all the way back to Tunisia.

From the famous sayings of Winston Churchill about this victory: "Now this is not the end. It is not even the
beginning of the end, but it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning." After the war, he wrote: "Before Alamein we never had a victory. After Alamein, we never had a defeat."

**The Italian cemetery,**

The marble Italian Memorial is considered the largest structure at al-Alamein, stands five kilometers beyond the German Memorial.

This Italian memorial was designed by **Paolo Caccia Dominioni**, who was a reserve colonel in the Italian army and the son of an Italian diplomat who served in Alexandria. After the battle he back to Italy, in which, he sold everything he owned and used all his wealth to come back to the desert for collecting the remains of the Italian and German soldiers. And then He designed and built this memorial and his villa (which locates on the top of a hill overlooking both the sea and the memorial), and kept visiting this site until his death in 1992.

Ahmed Hashem and the bust statue of Paolo Caccia.
Like the commonwealth cemetery, the visitor will pass through an arched entrance. Its outer side is marking by the title “Sacrario Italiano” means the Italian shrine, and a marble plaque inscribed with, "To 4,800 Italian soldiers, sailors and airmen. The desert and the sea did not give back 38,000 who are missing.” And by going forward, there is the Italian tank “Carro Armato M13” inside the entrance hall.
To the left of the entrance you can find the Libyan memorial made for honoring the Libyans who fought side by side with the Italians and fallen down, so that the fallen Libyans rest separate from their Italian comrades because of differences in religious burial methods. Before this memorial is a mosque where Muslim visitors can pray for the souls of the fallen soldiers. When a Libyan minister came and saw the original text on the edited memorial which was translated directly from the Italian as “Libyans who died for Italy”. But the minister didn’t like what he saw, so he covered it with a plaque which reads “Honoring the memory of the Libyans”.

Ahmed Hashem and Raed Allam, and we are standing before the edited Libyan memorial which topped by Libyan emblem.
also, the memorial Abd El-Rasoul Agila, the person who dedicated his life in guarding this cemetery and in 1951 Agila met with Paolo Caccia and became one of his best friends because of his well known of the desert and the location of its mine fields, and how to avoid it. While to the right of the arched entrance is a small gallery displays the remnants of World War II.

Ahmed Hashem beside the memorial of the knight of the Italian republic, Abd El-Rasoul Agila.
By going forward through the long path which leading uphill to the white marble tower which has a great hall called the hall of remembrances with thousands of white marble plaques bearing the names of the dead Italians and Behind these tiles are caskets hold the remains of the fallen soldiers, while on both sides of this hall are a chapels provided also with marble plaques for the unknown soldiers and the upper rows of it have no inscription as a sign of honoring the missing ones. The interior is illuminated by natural lighting through small openings in the ceiling, while the back wall of the building is a panoramic glass window facing the Mediterranean. In front of the window is a marble casket with a wooden cross on the wall above it, creating a chapel where visitors may pray for the souls of the fallen soldier.
Here I’m with my group and our dear Dr. Asaad Zaki, before the marble tower’s entrance.

A group photo inside the hall of remembrances with Dr. Asaad Zaki and Ms. Nagat Mohamed, Public Relations Manager.
Before the chapel of prayers.

A photo with Mr. Santo Pelliccia one few survivors of the Second World War, while Wearing his military uniform of the Italian parachute Corps.