

MANAGING CAIRO'S CULTURAL HERITAGE, IN A CITY OF CRAFTS AND TRADES

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Abstract

Cairo boasts some of the richest and most unique Islamic cultural heritage sites among its counterpart cities in the world. Historic Cairo alone, holds within its walls 313 registered sites. However, Cairo is also one of the most crowded and dynamic cities, facing a multitude of problems. Recently, focus has shifted towards sustainable cultural heritage management. However, very little attention has been given to preserving the historic and cultural aspects of its dynamic settings.

Al-Khayamiya (tent-making), Al-Sagha (jewelry-making), and Suq-Al-Aatareen (herbs market) are a few examples of the many regions named after the crafts and trades for which Cairo is so famous. Many of these go back to the time the city was actually built and quite a few have managed to survive till today.

In the first section of this paper, the researchers attempt to assess the values associated with some of these crafts and trades as being cultural heritage resources in and by themselves. Most if not all of these crafts and trades are directly related to the adjoining cultural heritage sites. They either serve those buildings, or they hold residence within them. Therefore, the second part of the paper is directed towards assessing the impact of the continued co-existence of these intangible cultural heritage assets with their surrounding tangible cultural heritage sites. Towards this end, sophisticated statistical and mathematical tools are used to analyze this relationship.