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## Management of World Heritage Sites: A Case Study of Historic Cairo

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### ABSTRACT

Given the significance of Historic Cairo as a world heritage site, and since Egypt's application to the UNESCO in 1979 to register Islamic Cairo, and upon changing the name of the site into Historic Cairo in 2007, and after the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) approved the registration in 1979, proceedings were given stating that the information related to identifying such heritage site as insufficient and that it's required to specify the name and address of the owning authority. Furthermore, since 1993, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre has repeatedly recommended the need for a clear and effective management system, proposing protection and management measures, emphasizing that these procedures require a comprehensive management system to address weaknesses, and developing a management plan consistent with the guidelines issued by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. In 2001, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre referred to the lack of coordination highlighting the great complexity of Historic Cairo as a World Heritage site, which is reflected in the large number of responsible actors, such as the Ministry of Antiquities and the National Organization for Urban Harmony (NOUH) of the Ministry of Culture, Cairo's Governorate, and other concerned parties. In addition to other ministries, such as Awqaf, Interior, and Housing which established an authority in the name of Fatimid Cairo, operate in different administrative ways and for different goals which represents the main research problem. Therefore, there must be one authority that coordinates and is responsible for the rest of the bodies concerned to facilitate the implementation of a management plan that is consistent with the guidelines approved by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre as soon as possible which is the main purpose of this research. This paper relied on a descriptive research approach and then the deductive research approach to achieve the mentioned goal. Therefore, this research attempts to solve the mentioned issues through proposing a management plan that implements sustainable procedures, planning tools, detailed action plans supported by appropriate laws, high coordination between all the various parties concerned to prevent further damage to the urban fabric and buildings of such World Heritage site.

**KEYWORDS:** Architectural Heritage - Management - Islamic Cairo - Areas of Cultural Value - World Heritage Sites

ادارة مناطق التراث العالمي: دراسة حالة للقاهرة التاريخية

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## الملخص

نظراً لأهمية القاهرة التاريخية كـممتلك للتراث العالمي. ومنذ تقدم مصر لمنظمة اليونسكو في ١٩٧٩م لتسجيل القاهرة الإسلامية، وما تم من بتغيير اسم الممتلك ليصبح القاهرة التاريخية في عام ٢٠٠٧، وبعد موافقة مجلس الايكوموس على التسجيل ١٩٧٩م فقد اعطي ملاحظات أفادت بان المعلومات الخاصة بتحديد الممتلك التراثي غير كافية وأنه من المطلوب تحديد اسم وعنوان الجهة التي تملك هذا الأثر والذي يخرج عن الملكيات الخاصة. ولقد أوصي مركز التراث العالمي مراراً منذ عام ١٩٩٣ وحتى الآن بضرورة وجود نظام إدارة واضح وفعال، واقتراح إجراءات الحماية والإدارة والتأكيد على إن هذه الإجراءات تتطلب نظام إدارة شامل لمعالجة نقاط الضعف، ووضع خطة إدارة تتفق مع المبادئ التوجيهية الصادرة عن مركز التراث العالمي. وفي عام ٢٠٠١ اشار مركز التراث العالمي الي الافتقار إلى التنسيق، وسلط الضوء على التعقيد الكبير في القاهرة التاريخية كموقع للتراث العالمي، وهو ما يعكسه العدد الكبير جداً من الجهات الفاعلة والمسئولة، مثل وزارة الآثار والجهاز القومي للتنسيق الحضاري التابع لوزارة الثقافة. ومحافظة القاهرة وهذه هي الأطراف الأساسية. بجانب وزارات أخرى مثل الأوقاف والداخلية والإسكان التي انشأت جهاز باسم القاهرة الفاطمية وكل هذه الجهات تعمل بأهداف ادارية مختلفة. وهو ما يمثل مشكلة البحث لرئيسية. لذا يجب وجود جهة واحدة تكون مسؤولة وتقوم بالتنسيق مع باقي الأطراف ليسهل تطبيق خطة إدارة تتفق مع المبادئ التوجيهية، وتعتمد من مركز التراث العالمي واليونسكو في اسرع وقت. وهو ما يمثل هدف البحث. كما يجب وضع خطة إدارة تُطبق إجراءات مستدامة، ويجب وضع أدوات تخطيطية وخطط عمل تفصيلية مدعومة بقوانين ملائمة، والتنسيق بين مختلف الإدارات والهيئات المعنية لمنع المزيد من الأضرار اللاحقة بالنسيج العمراني والمباني في الممتلك التراثي العالمي.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** التراث العمراني- إدارة - القاهرة التاريخية - المناطق ذات القيمة - ممتلك التراث العالمي

## INTRODUCTION

Historic Cairo was established in 969AD by Jawhar Al-Siqilli after laying the foundations for its walls and followed by building the Azhar Mosque. Under the Mamluks rule, it expanded, and rulers and princes competed in building mosques, schools, khans, and shops. During the Ottoman rule, it was inhabited, then came Muhammad Ali, and after him Khedive Ismail and regained its status as Egypt's capital witnessing great development in construction. Cairo was listed as a World Heritage site under the name of Islamic Cairo in 1979, in recognition of its historical, archaeological, and urban importance, and because of what it contained from architectural artifacts as well as large number of streets and residential areas that preserve its history, texture, and authenticity dating back to the Middle Ages.

There have been various studies on preserving Historic Cairo on both the academic and practical levels. Following up on this research, one will find a multiplicity of the responsible parties involved in Historic Cairo (Bakry, 2007). For example, the responsibilities of the Ministry of Antiquities towards Historic Cairo are limited to listed antiquities and archaeological excavation areas only. Whereas the legislation related to urban areas of distinguished value falls within the responsibilities of the National Organization for Urban Harmony of the Ministry of Culture. Moreover, Cairo's Governorate handles construction activities and decision-making responsibilities regarding determining the necessary permits for non-archaeological buildings as well as controlling the buildings that surround archaeological buildings and directly affect them. These are the primary stakeholders. Furthermore, other institutions and ministries, such as the Ministry of Awqaf, Interior, and Housing, which established an authority in the name of Fatimid Cairo and was working on restoring the northern wall and other sites. Therefore, coordination and partnership must be made between all authorities that own, manage, and are responsible for different properties in Historic Cairo to avoid any possible conflicts between projects. This could be achieved by adopting one clear and recognized authority that is responsible for such heritage sites and by adopting a management system to this historical city to manage Historic Cairo and preserve such Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) site.

This research shows a large number of authorities involved in managing such world heritage site of Historic Cairo, whereas each of which has different strategy, objectives, and management plan. They often conflict with one another as a result of the lack of coordination and agreement on one unified plan. Therefore, the main purpose of this paper is proposing the establishment of an entity that is responsible for the administration of Historic Cairo regarding planning how to deal with recent changes, determining the roles and responsibilities of each participant, timing management activities, and the amount and locations of any investment.

Upon Egypt's application to the UNESCO in 1979, after a month from registration, the World Heritage Centre requested:

- Specifying the name and address of a non-private entity which owns and manages such site.
- Develop a comprehensive management plan that implements sustainable and well-defined measures to protect Historic Cairo
- Planning tools and detailed action plans supported by the appropriate laws.

This is an urgent task that requires coordination between all authorities concerned in order to prevent any further damage to the urban fabric and historical buildings of value.

Upon assessing the reports issued by the World Heritage Centre from 1999 to 2017, it was found that managing Historic Cairo faces many difficulties due to the overlapping roles and responsibilities of different authorities and the absence of a single responsible authority (Junaidi, 2014). The last official study in 2014 formed of a steering committee and setting a vision for what can be applied later (World Heritage Centre, 2005). After more than four years, the steering committee expired. This represents the research problem; therefore, in this paper, the challenges of forming an administrative body that is responsible for such heritage site and coordinate with the rest of the authorities are addressed.

This research aims to propose an administrative body that is responsible for the heritage site and coordinates with the rest of the authorities in administrative issues and apply directive principles that are consistent with the guidelines approved by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. This is achieved through the following objectives:

- To identify the current situation and authorities involved in the administration of Historic Cairo.
- To propose a management system and structure for managing such heritage sites.

This paper is structured as follows: methodology, results and discussion, and conclusions and future research.

## **1. METHODOLOGY**

This paper relied on a descriptive research approach (theoretical study) and then a deductive research approach in order to achieve the mentioned objective of the research.

- The descriptive (historical) research approach traces the current situation and the authorities involved in Historic Cairo management throughout different

times in history, the importance of Historic Cairo management, and the development of the concept of historical site management.

- The deductive research approach is through inference by studying global practices and guiding principles then drawing conclusions and verifying their validity, then focusing on the local context of the Egypt and Historic Cairo in order to propose a system and structure for managing such heritage site and clarifying the extent to which the results are appropriate to the Egyptian context.

## **2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **2.1 Theoretical Study**

#### **2.1.1 Study concepts**

This section provides definitions for all the terms used and related to the management of historical sites from sources and studies, the most important of which are the reports of UNESCO and ICOMOS.

#### **2.1.2 Management**

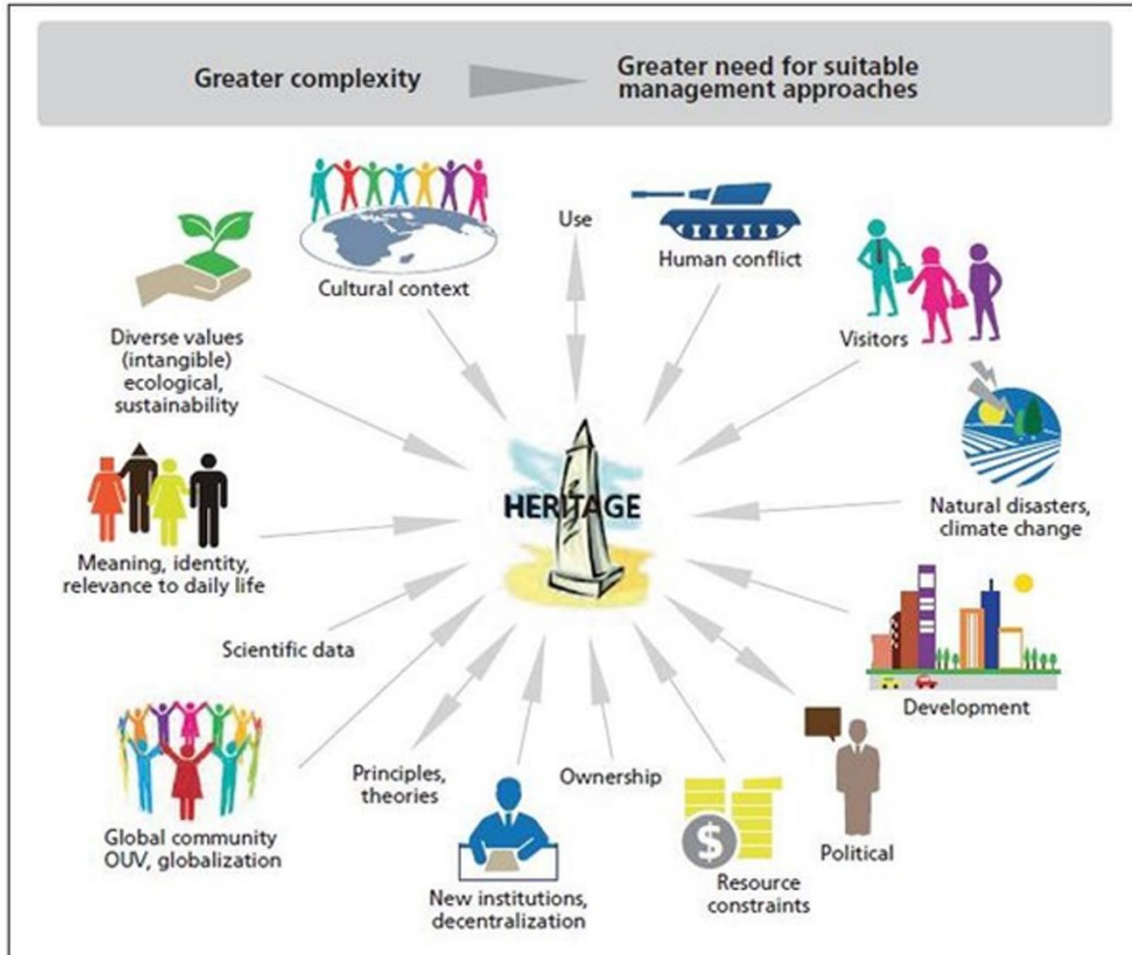
The success of any institution depends on the way it's managed, and management is defined as organizing and coordinating efforts in a scientific way in order to reach certain goals. It seeks to achieve organizational goals through the employment of human and material resources. It begins with setting the goals and includes many tasks that integrate and overlap in order to achieve such goals in a steady and continuous manner (UNESCO, 2016). Management is also defined as the process of planning, organizing the leadership, and supervising the efforts of all the members of the organization as well as supervising the utilization of all the organizational resources in order to achieve the goals set (World Heritage Centre, 2014). The research adopts the definition of management as a comprehensive and interdependent process of resources and capabilities considering the surrounding circumstances to achieve the goals in a timely manner, in a manner that preserves its sustainability and continuity for future generations.

#### **2.2.3 Management of cultural world heritage**

The system and structure of heritage management differs from one country to another. Moreover, the administrative systems are diverse and some of the systems applied do not go in line with heritage management; nevertheless, they are administrative systems. The management of historical sites is defined as planning to preserve the material and nonmaterial aspects of the local community, and so that the relationship between heritage sites, society, and visitors can be regulated (UNESCO, 2011a). Moreover, it aims to identify the pains, needs, and goals of all stakeholders in developing management plans to preserve such heritage property. Therefore, the role of the authority does not end with drawing up plans; however, reviewing such plan at least every five years is crucial for assessing such plan (UNESCO, 2011a).

There has been progress in management practices due to the growing awareness for heritage management involving the local community which is essential to the heritage management process (World Heritage Centre, 2018);(National Organization for Urban Harmony, 2008).

Figure 1 demonstrates how to take into account all development partners, the local and international community, in order to preserve the identity of the place and its direct relationship to the entire population, and to cooperate between various ministries and the central and local government with the aim for preserving material and non-material urban as well as the sustainable development of the society, managing of such sites, and finding a sustainable and innovative ways for financing such preservation.

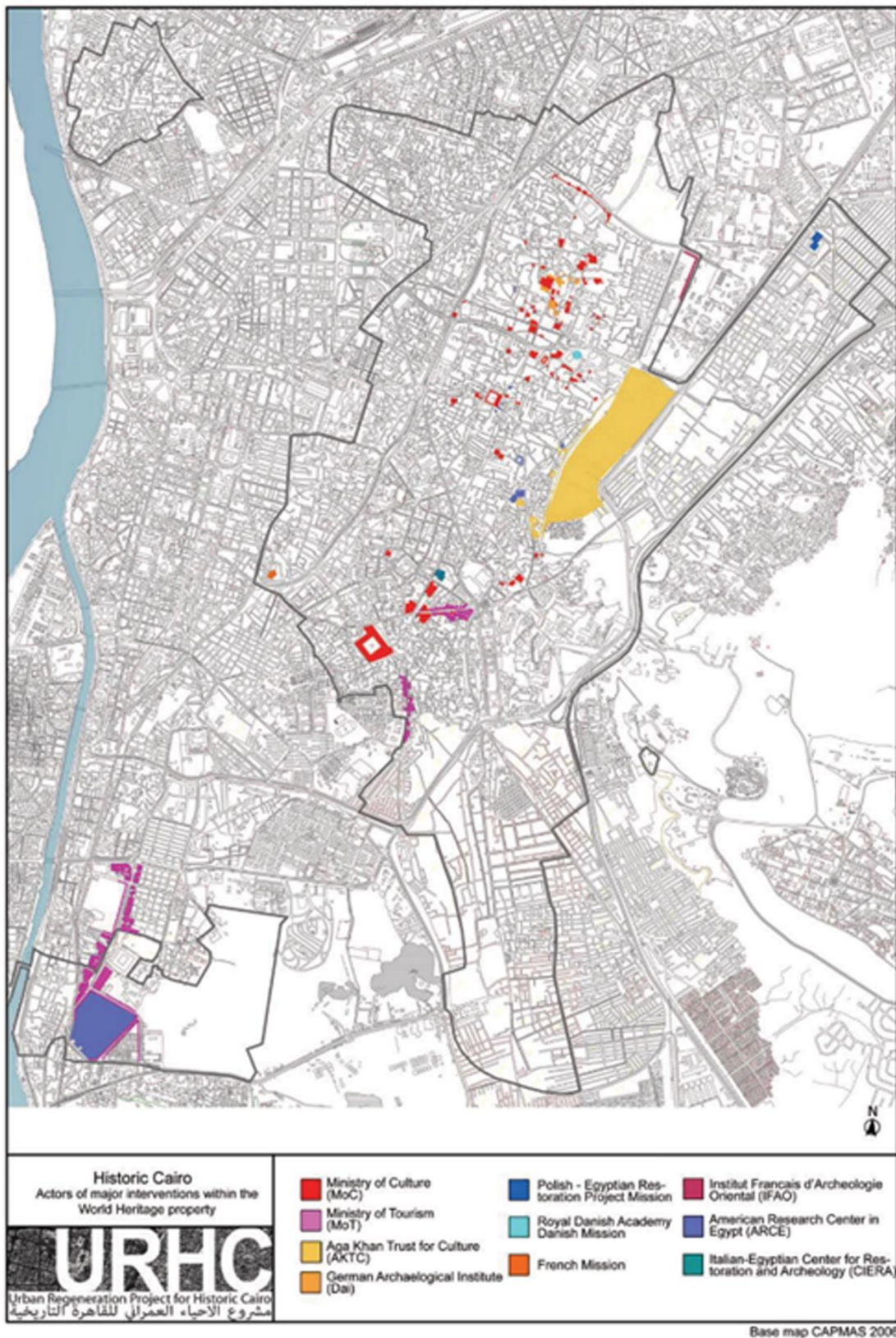


**Figure 1** Illustrating urban heritage management issues (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2013).

### 2.2.4 Quality and heritage management

Measuring the success of any department in achieving its goals is done through a quality system that monitors and documents all activities of the management process and defines responsibilities. The term quality is mainly an economic term that appeared based on industrial and technological competition between advanced industrial countries with the aim of monitoring the quality of production and gaining market trust (Al-Zahrani, 2012). Therefore, the quality standards are focused on achieving a product of excellence, and the quality is known within the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) to overachieve the expectations of the stakeholders (Al-Zahrani, 2012). Therefore, the main stakeholders determine what the required quality is that meets their desires and fulfills their consent; nevertheless, there’s a challenge in satisfying all stakeholders. The quality of heritage management is a process of planning, preserving,, maintaining, following-up, decision-making, application, documentation of policy systems, and cooperation plans (Abdel-Aziz, 2004).





**Figure 2** Main actors within Historic Cairo Site (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2012)

### 2.2.5 Evolution of heritage management

Initially, heritage management applications were limited to collecting rare heritage artifacts, and perhaps the first beginnings of an organized management form appeared during the Renaissance. The stages of approaching and developing heritage

management can be divided into four stages (Elmenshawy, 2013), whereas this paper focuses on the fourth stage:

- I. **The first stage:** the stage of interest from heritage enthusiasts, academics, and other stakeholders.
- II. **The second stage:** the establishment of international and governmental institutions.
- III. **The third stage:** the establishment of heritage organizations and associations.
- IV. **The fourth stage:** specializing in managing heritage resources.

The management of heritage resources has developed, and the scientific and practical foundations have been laid down due to the systematic processes. Moreover, general rules and applications have been developed and placed within the responsibilities of concerned authorities that take a holistic view of heritage. The main concerned bodies within Historic Cairo Site are shown in Figure 2. Today, heritage management is characterized by having multiple objectives concerning all stakeholders with different and conflicting organizational and institutional frameworks from other factors such as possible conflicts between the goals of the current and future generations. Most of the time, such factors work within a complex network, so they need an appropriate method, approach, management, and clear boundaries (National Organization for Urban Harmony, 2008).

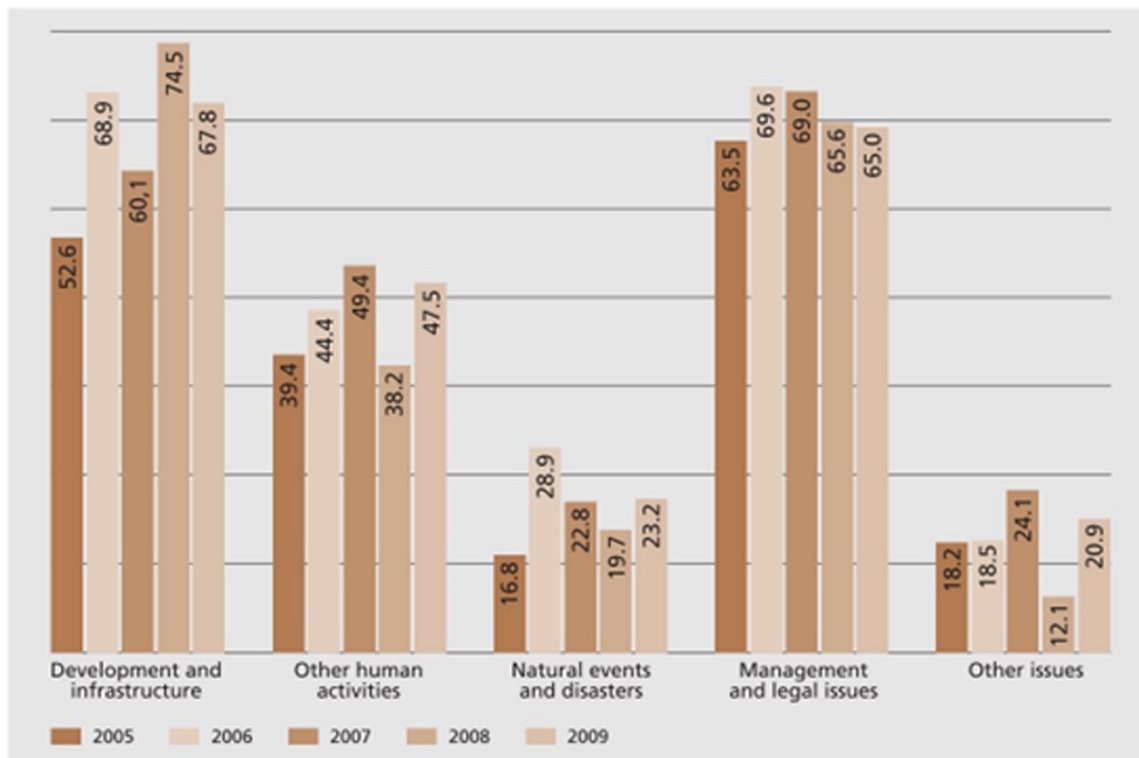
The concept of heritage management has developed in partnership with several actors, so that management is subject to direct supervision from all parties with a mechanism for joint decision-making (Martin & Piatti, 2009). Then, the management system evolved to make more complex decision processes due to the diversity of stakeholders especially when covering a large area of land. Such as what happened in the management of the cultural natural site of the province of Bali in Indonesia (Martin & Piatti, 2009).

### 2.2.6 Significance of urban heritage management

The significance of urban heritage management lies in the fact that good/correct management leads to its preservation while bad/wrong management leads to its damage and/or loss. Therefore, the administration must apply accurate and innovative economic, social, historical, and cultural criteria to stimulate development scenarios appropriate to historic Cairo. It includes the concept of sustainable development and helping the people to find investment opportunities proportionate with the nature of such a historical city. The following points summarize the significance of urban heritage management:

- Identify the matrix of relations between development partners, coordinating between them, and balancing efforts between various stakeholders and to benefit from what they can offer.
- Defining responsibilities, increasing the efficiency and capabilities of urban conservation projects, and maintaining them in a sustainable manner.
- Making the best use of heritage sites and preserving their heritage, identity, and authenticity.

- Establish a set of quality indicators and standards in the management process so that the site is integrated with the urbanization of the city.
- Pushing all partners to comprehensively participate in heritage management and distributing responsibilities of who manages it, who maintains it, and determining the amount of benefit for each party.
- Investing in the relationship between heritage and the community and emphasizing the idea of sustainable development urban sustainability in order to achieve the preservation of heritage.
- Make informed decisions on what changes are acceptable or unacceptable and analytically choose between different alternatives available.
- Organizing the establishment of regular and irregular activities (i.e., exhibitions, celebrations, etc.) through the reuse of spaces and streets in the region. This should not only be done after developing administrative plans that go in accordance with international and local standards in addition to quality standards.
- Threats to heritage sites as a result of wrong administrative policies. Figure 3 demonstrates the percentages of a group of five threats that affected World Heritage sites from 2005 to 2009. It shows that the highest percentages of risks which continue to rise are administrative and legal issues.



**Figure 3** Affected World Heritage properties documented between 2005-2009 (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2013).

From what has been discussed earlier, managing heritage has clearly become more demanding, and the outputs and results expected from such management are greater. The heritage management system helps to preserve the property in a way that protects heritage values, especially the exceptional values if the property is a world heritage one, and promotes its social, economic, and environmental benefits on a wider scale outside



the boundaries of heritage buildings. Such administration prevents harmful practices from occurring. Moreover, it facilitates the identification and promotion of heritage values as well as providing a role for heritage in promoting human development; thus, increasing the sustainability of the heritage itself. The future success of any heritage management system depends on investing in the relationship between heritage and the society, continuing to study its impact on the society, presenting an approach to managing heritage, and anticipating any possible societal changes before it occurs.

Considering the importance of management, in 2005, the UNESCO issued guidelines related to the management of World Heritage sites and guiding principles for world heritage sites (Yousry, 1995). Although it is generally applicable to all parts of the world, Paragraph 78 specifies that every World Heritage site must have an appropriate system of protection and management in order for it to be considered of exceptional value (Drury & McPherson, 2008).

### **2.2.7 Guidelines and principles for heritage management by ICCROM**

In 2015, the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) prepared a guidance note for management principles to provide local authorities with some guidance, including the importance of having clear boundaries for the heritage property as well as for the buffer zone. The guiding principles for heritage management can be summarized as follows (Centre, 2012):

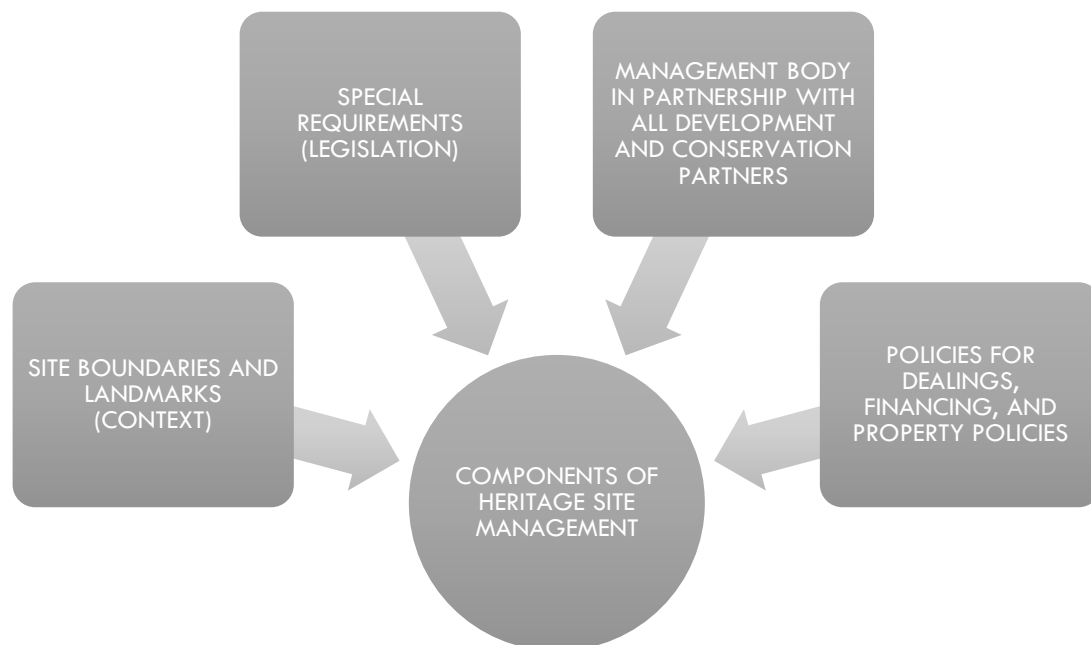
- Management of the historical property in the urban areas and adapting planning mechanisms to suit local situations (UNESCO, 2011b).
- The need to respect the nonmaterial cultural traditions of such a historical city.
- Limiting new constructions in the historical surroundings and not allowing buildings or practices outside the scale, style, and character of such historical city, such as tall buildings and markets for chemicals or cleaning materials, and to avoid all distortions that are harmful to the urban fabric and architectural character.
- The importance of integrating the existing historical fabric with the rest of the city in the general planning and policy processes.
- The importance of periodic maintenance using traditional materials and building techniques.
- The principle of environmental carrying capacity should be a defining criterion especially regarding transportation and traffic (ICCROM, 2019).

### **2.2.8 Components of heritage property management**

The fundamental elements of the management system for heritage property appear on the management plan and property management strategy. Understanding the nature, importance, and capabilities of a heritage site forms the basis for its management as well as shedding light on the opportunities and constraints imposed on by any changes and how to manage them. The management of historical sites includes a wide range of issues related to the management strategy of the authority and that relate to the proper care of the historic site. This administration seeks to ensure the best real estate value for the properties and identifies the different needs of stakeholders. The management

strategy also includes defining the organizational structure responsible for the authority itself. The identification of the heritage value may include details of the heritage site registration, imperative data, operational needs, value, development, accurate evaluation, and key performance indicator to monitor the interest in the heritage site. The following are the most important of these components:

- **The region of the heritage site (the borders of the heritage property):** This region contains material and non-material elements such as the economic aspects of urbanization, the region, and the social and economic characteristics. Therefore, all sources of information for the region must be known, as well as administrative and environmental boundaries.
- **List of legislations, systems, and regulations** (whether international or local legislation): that work to protect the features and sites of urban heritage on the global, regional, and national levels.
- **Policies for dealing with historical areas (funding):** These include ownership and different and innovative methods of financing as well as the policies that can be dealt with at different levels, either for removal and replacement, reconstruction, protection, reuse and rehabilitation, preservation and maintenance, urban renewal, or restoration.
- **Formation of an administrative body with the participation of all stakeholders:** they can be divided into three administrative bodies which are official local/central government, official international bodies such as UNESCO, and non-official bodies which are civil society organizations and the private sector. This research focuses on forming an administrative body. The components of heritage site management are demonstrated in Figure 4.



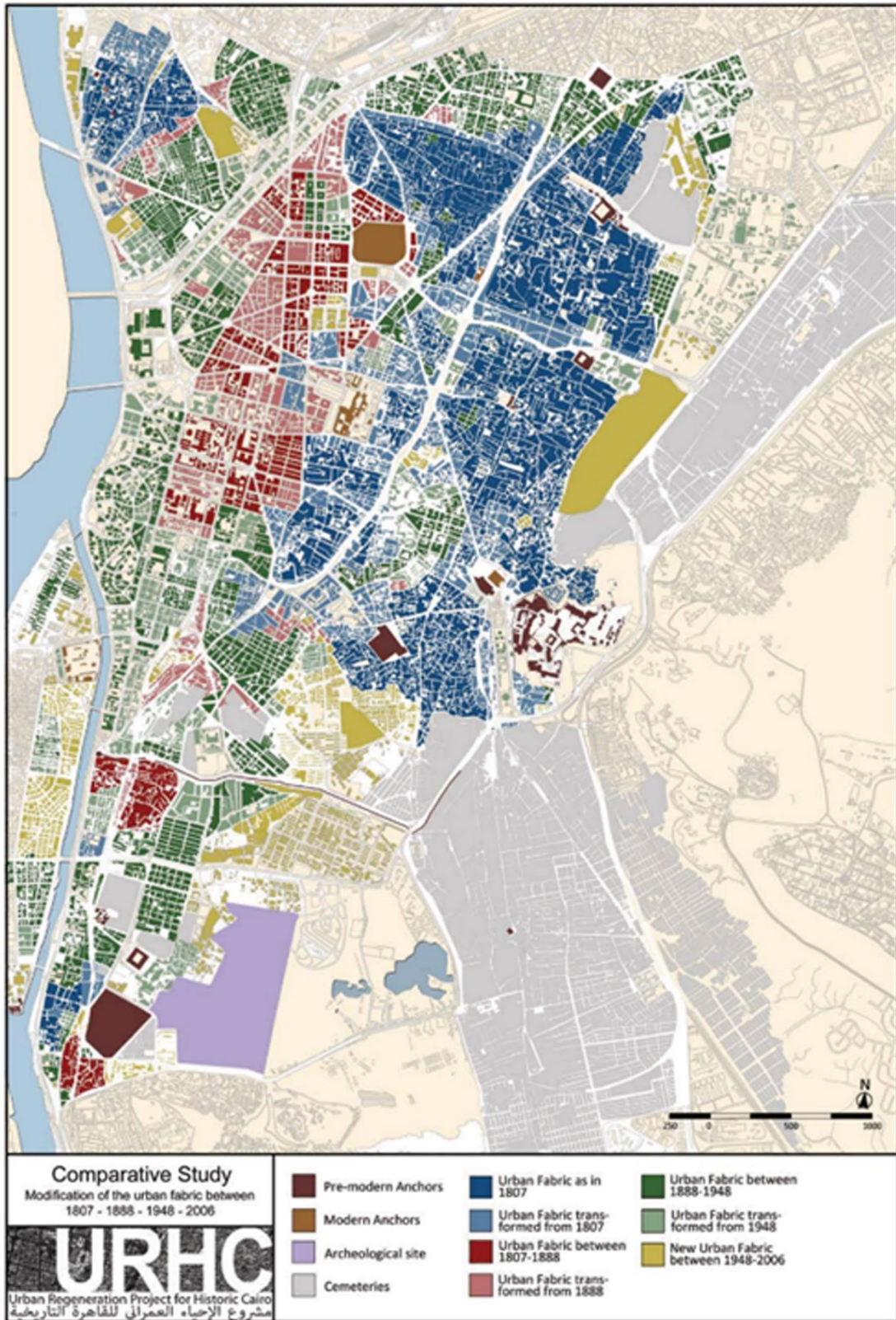
**Figure 4** Components of heritage site management (UNESCO World Heritage Convention, 2017).

## **2.2 Applied Study**

### **2.2.1 Historic Cairo** (UNESCO World Heritage Convention, 2017; UNESCO World Heritage Convention, 2019; UNESCO World Heritage Convention, 2021).

Cairo is one of the most ancient centers of cultural heritage because of its unique cultural, artistic, and architectural assets. The heritage sites, especially Historic Cairo, are an open museum of Islamic antiquities in the world. It has about 450 monuments, and this region is surrounded by the largest population, commercial and dense tourism since ancient times. The historic city of Cairo was included in the World Heritage List in 1979.

Fatimid Cairo was founded in 969 by Jawhar Al-Siqilli, where he began building a new city for the Fatimid Caliph Al-Muizz li-Din Allah. Since then, Fatimid Cairo became the capital of a vast empire, and Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi established a new defensive wall and made Cairo the capital of the Ayyubid state that is crowned by his castle on the Mokattam Mountain. In the days of Mamluk rule, Cairo expanded, and rulers and princes competed in building mosques, schools, book houses, palaces, khans, and estates. The city remained almost static until the rule of Muhammad Ali and Khedive Ismail. Tracing back the modifications made on Historic Cairo urban fabric from 1807 to 2006 are shown in Figure 5. The name of the heritage site of Historic Cairo was also changed from Islamic Cairo in 2007, in addition to that, each ministry or authority established an administration within it for Historic Cairo, even if the names differed as shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 5** Urban fabric modifications for Historic Cairo from 1807-1888-1948-2006 (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2012)

### 2.2.2 State of conservation through the World Heritage Centre reports

The World Heritage Centre has been assessing the heritage conservation status of Historic Cairo annually since 1993 after the earthquake of 1992 in order to assist the government by providing recommendations on the state of such a historical site. The following is a summary of these reports focusing on what constitutes the composition of the management authority (World Heritage Centre, 2012):

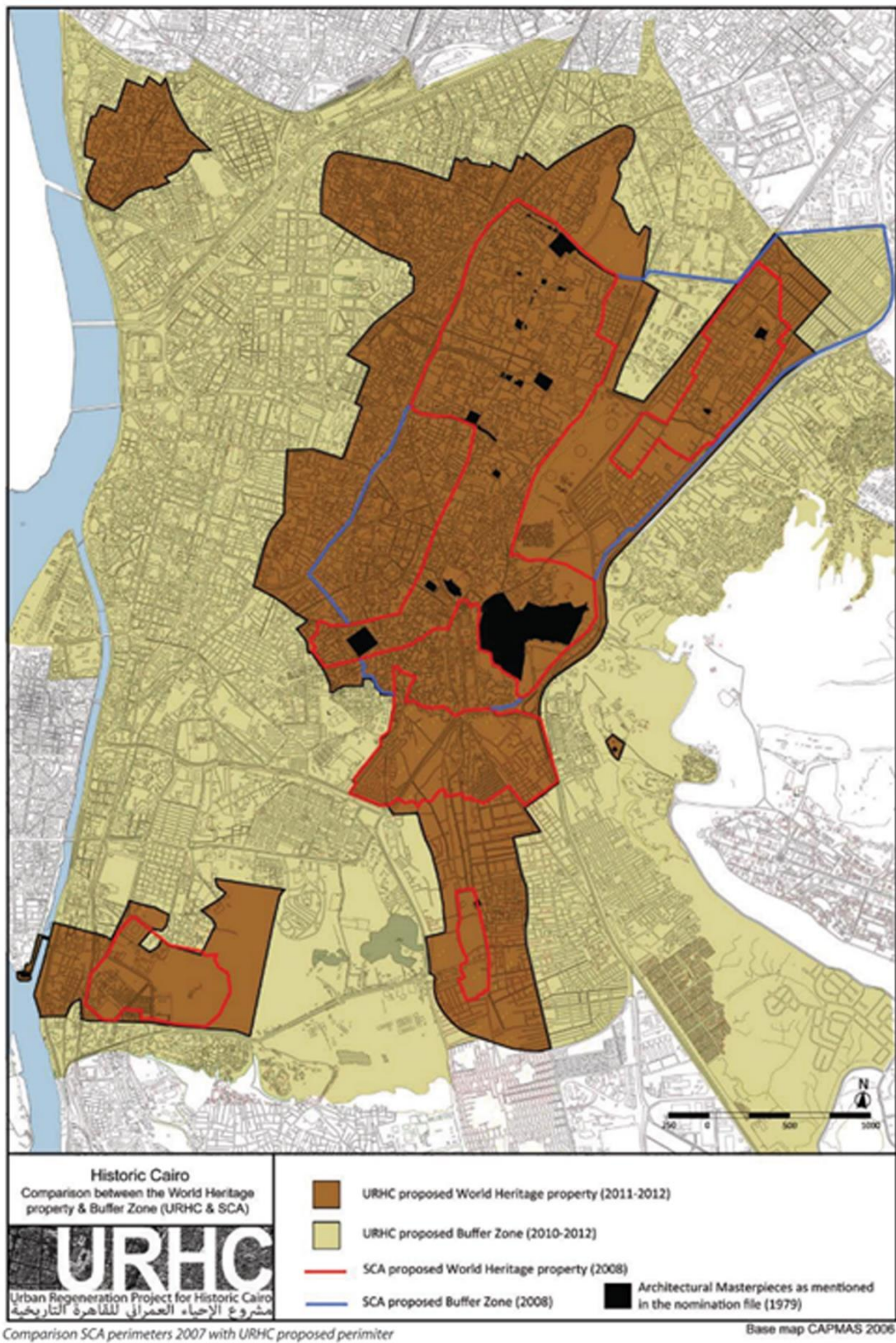
- In 1993, the World Heritage Centre indicated that the quality of works that are being implemented suffer from the lack of unified preservation standards.
- In 1997, the World Heritage Centre recommended stopping the restoration work of Al-Azhar. The Ministry of Culture implemented such a recommendation, as it appeared in the preservation report in 1999.
- In 2000, the World Heritage Centre asked the ICOMOS to organize a mission to study the case of preserving Islamic Cairo properties. They pointed to the difficulty of managing the city's urban heritage due to its large scale.
- In 2001, the World Heritage Centre referred to the lack of coordination in restoration projects. They discussed the complexity in managing Historic Cairo as a World Heritage Site, an effort undertaken by several ministries, without sufficient coordination, and no plan for the restoration of such buildings. Moreover, they indicated that the city does not have a master plan.
- In 2002, the center praised the role of the Ministry of Culture in holding an international convention on the preservation and restoration of Islamic Cairo in cooperation with UNESCO on projects implemented by the Supreme Council of Antiquities.
- In 2003, 2004, and 2005, the reports called for the implementation of what was stated in the 2002 conference.
- In 2006, the World Heritage Centre noted with great concern that the main recommendations contained in the 2002 report were not implemented, regarding defining the boundaries of Historic Cairo, the status of Historic Cairo as a Special Planning District and generating a comprehensive urban plan for the preservation and development of the historic city.
- The World Heritage Centre urged the government to implement the main recommendations contained in the convention report for 2002, which was later approved by the World Heritage Committee in 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006.
- In 2009, the government welcomed the decision to involve the World Heritage Centre in this process in consultation with its advisory bodies. The lack of maintenance, legal, and planning policies was stressed, especially:
  - The absence of defined and operational boundaries of the heritage site.
  - Lack of coordination between various governmental organizations concerned.
  - Lack of specific urban planning tools to protect unlisted buildings.
  - Determining the boundaries of the buffer zone of Cairo's historic sites on clear maps.

However, nothing has been done so far.

- In 2011, the World Heritage Centre indicated that the Egyptian authorities did not submit a report of the management plan, and the World Heritage Centre launched a program to develop a plan for preserving and managing Historic Cairo. This project focuses on the following:
  - Determining the boundaries of Cairo's historic sites and buffer zones and indicate the OUV that has been formulated.
  - Preparing a management plan for preserving the World Heritage sites in Historic Cairo.
  - Establishing an institutional and legal framework for establishing and developing a sustainable urban conservation policy and enhancing coordination and cooperation between various authorities and departments involved in managing the heritage site.
  - Establishing an appropriate and public information platform for urban conservation.
  - Knowledge and awareness of Cairo's urban fabric.
- In 2012 and 2013, the World Heritage Centre noted that the government established a national committee for all World Heritage sites in Egypt. This is considered as a first step towards establishing an administrative authority for Historic Cairo. However, administrative authorities are unable to stop violations or enforce demolition orders.
- In 2015, a ministerial committee was formed under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister to supervise all activities related to Historic Cairo and to determine the boundaries of the heritage site and its protection area. This was developed by the UNESCO Urban Regeneration Project for Historic Cairo (URHC). The government submitted a document showing efforts to control new constructions.
- In 2017, the State of Conservation report valued the progress made in dealing with the recommendations of the previous mission in terms of developing short and long-term policies and administrative procedures to address urgent problems. However, the report considered that the World Heritage site of Historic Cairo and its protection area extends over an area of 5 km<sup>2</sup>, which must be reviewed, since the real area of the site in the application document is 32 km<sup>2</sup> as shown in Figure 6 and Figure 7.

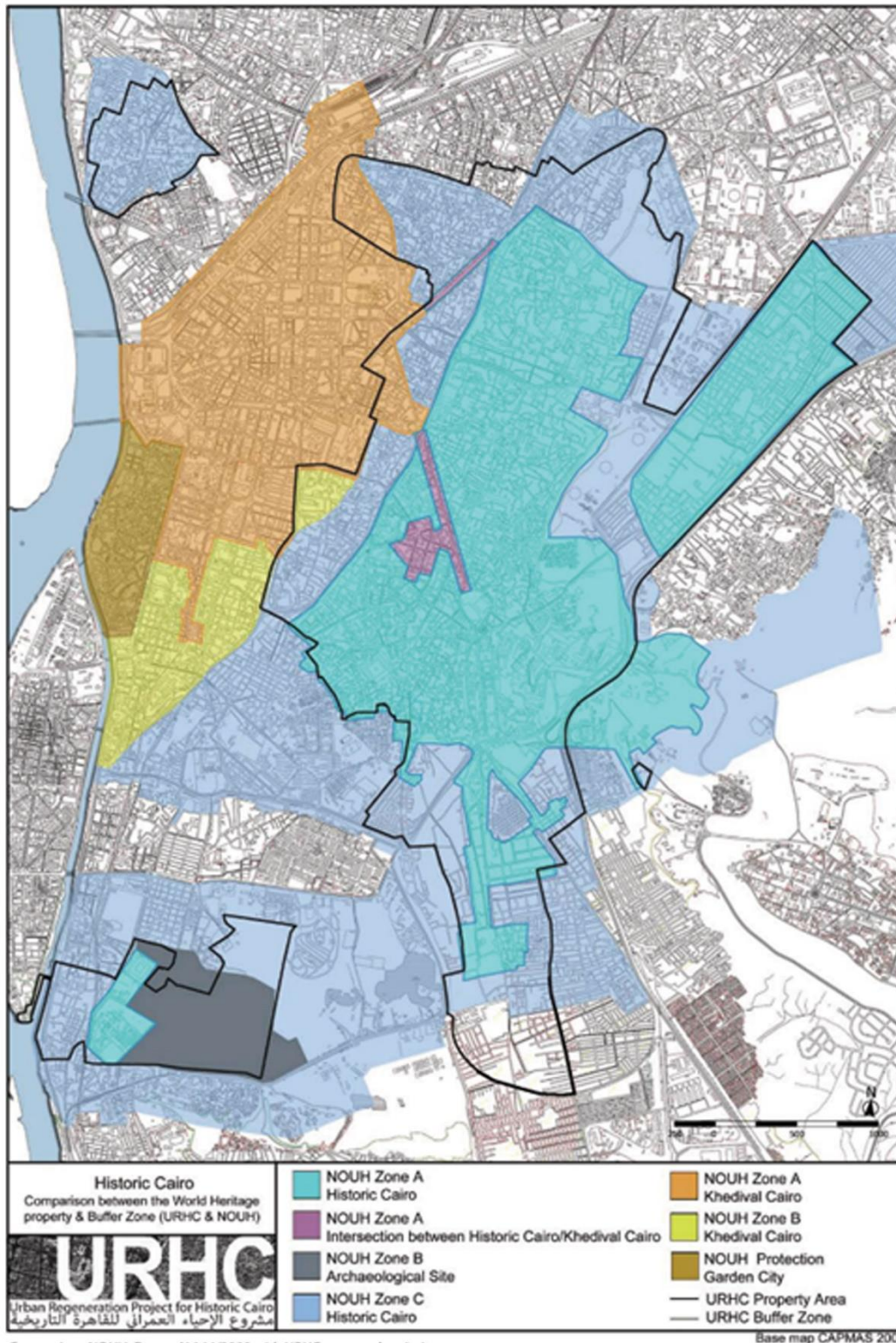
From the foregoing, it is clear that setting up an authority and developing a management plan for Historic Cairo have been the main and repeated demands of the World Heritage Centre since 1979. Especially after 2002, and the development that took place in this regard was in 2012 due to the start of the Urban Regeneration Project for Historic Cairo, which was funded by UNESCO and supervised by the World Heritage Centre. A higher management plan (the steering committee) was prepared. However, it met only a few times and did not issue any directives.





**Figure 6** Comparison between the proposed perimeter of State Council of Antiquities (SCA) and URHC (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2012)





**Figure 7** World heritage site and buffer zones (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2012)

### 2.2.3 Strategic vision for Historic Cairo Authority

Achieving sustainable development of a special area to serve the local community, local investors from within and outside the community, and visitors is by setting requirements for development, investors, taxes and stimulating investments and businessmen, tourism, and urban requirements. Moreover, the cultural development of

the local community, providing services and training for new job opportunities, and raising the efficiency of craftsmen and current workers in all fields are crucial in order to efficiently achieve sustainable development.

Urban reuse, not only buildings, but also streets and clusters of buildings for various purposes for the local community as well as local and international tourism, such as converting a small street into a place to display local culture, converting a building into tourism services, proposing an extension of a craft or an industry along a part of a street, and other development proposals.

Preserving the current commercial practices and strengthening the role of Historic Cairo in the wholesale trade, as well as stressing the role of many important retail markets, is crucial. Studies of popular local markets and the economy have shown that this will give any proposed development plan a societal and economical depth. Furthermore, encouraging local celebrations associated with the history of the region, associated folklores, and traditional culture as well as transforming historic Cairo into an attractive area for residents of various social and economic groups is important to confirm the principle of sustainability.

#### **2.2.4 Historic Cairo Administration Authority**

Having a plan for management and protection is one of the conditions for registering World Heritage Sites. This has been included as a requirement for the Heritage Centre since 1993, after the conservation status reported in the World Heritage Centre report. It was also a recurrent request every year from 2002 to 2008, and the development that occurred in this regard was in 2012.

The Architectural Heritage Centre has always focused on dealing with the site as an area of special nature. Therefore, it can be defined as the urban and geographical space that has been identified as a World Heritage site in Historic Cairo. This allows for sustainable development, investment, social, craft, industrial, and tourism development in a way that preserves the historical character of the region without preventing development and allowing modern buildings according to the charters and recommendations adopted by UNESCO and ICOMOS in this field. Moreover, the permitted urban development for this region must comply with the requirements that have been set for the Urban Regeneration for Historic Cairo as well as studies and research that have been provided by the technical support unit as per the request of the steering committee or the administrative unit or the executive unit where investment in services and crafts has a special priority since it provides tax and investment incentives granted by the steering committee, especially for small investors whose investment ranges from one to three million.

#### **2.2.5 Steering committee**

The idea of founding and managing one single and clear administrative body that controls and manages Historic Cairo was the most important demand. Positive signs in this regard appeared after 2014 after handing over the Urban Regeneration for Historic Cairo which was approved by the government to establish the steering committee headed by the Prime Minister. The decree issued by the Prime Minister's Article no. 4 specified a period of one year for this committee that may be renewed for another year,

and it has completed its work. In 2016 and 2017, the World Heritage Centre praised this committee.

### **2.2.6 Administrative unit for Historic Cairo**

The administrative unit transforms the decisions of the Steering Committee into annual plans. It directs which projects and investments are allowed and opens the door for applicants to develop urban services and define cultural and social development. It deals directly with investors and specialized consulting offices regarding everything related to Historic Cairo on a daily basis. Development projects are also guided and approved by the Steering Committee. The Urban Regeneration for Historic Cairo was left behind after it ended. The administrative unit is considered the consultant for the development of such areas, and it meets once or twice a month and monitors the quality work of the executive unit. This unit also includes representatives of civil society, stakeholders, and members of parliament as representatives of the people and the population. Moreover, holding periodic meetings to inform the continuity and transparency of the implemented projects.

### **2.2.7 Executive unit for Historic Cairo**

It coordinates between different consultants and technical offices as well as different service directorates (health, education, industry, and endowments, etc.) within the borders of the heritage site on a daily basis in order to ensure compliance with the requirements, implementation plans, faltering projects, dealing with investors, daily implementation challenges, and supervising all project components through different service directorates.

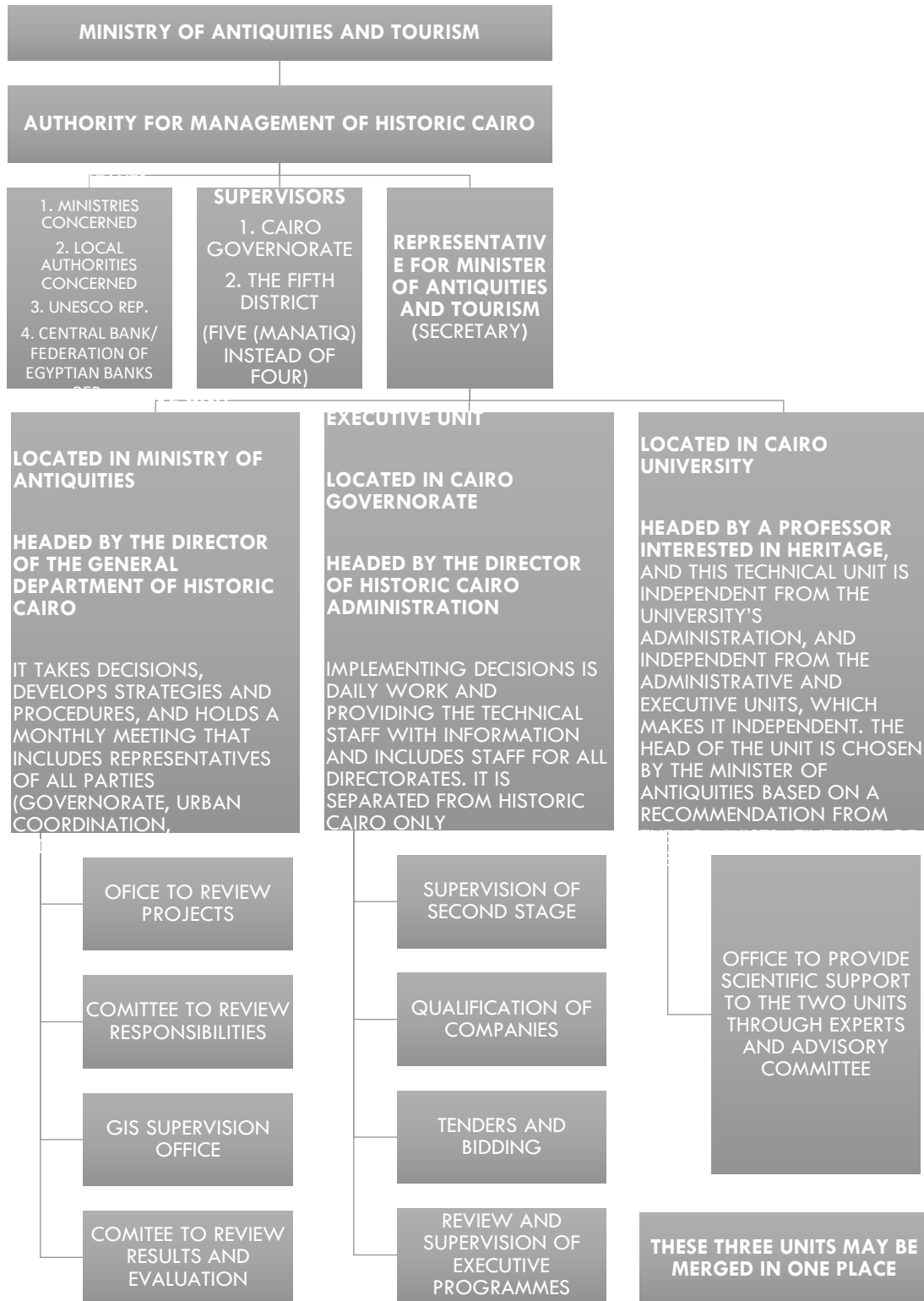
### **2.2.8 Technical support unit for Historic Cairo**

The technical support unit conducts research, consultations, and studies at the request of any of the three levels of steering committee, administrative unit, and executive unit. It's an independent administrative unit based on one of the professors specialized in heritage and chosen by the Minister of Antiquities based on the recommendations of the administrative committee and is not directly subject to either the executive or administrative units. Its allocations are directly from the steering committee so that the results are independent. A copy of the results of all studies will be given to the Steering Committee and it may also be sent to the World Heritage Centre. Also, a group of consultants, experts, and specialist teams in all available disciplines may be assembled according to a particular project according to the need. There must be legal tools for this public body and the transfer of capacities from the rest of the bodies so that it won't conflict and/or contradict the laws governing the authority. In addition, it is preferable to merge these units and committees into one headquarters, preferably a repurposed building within the borders of Historic Cairo.

### **2.2.9 Division of heritage property into smaller units**

In the 2014 report, the site was divided into smaller units according to five different criteria which are architectural heritage, preservation of historical streets, continuity of

patterns in plot divisions, continuity of urban fabric, and activities and uses of space. A set of other criteria were not addressed such as administration and facilitating the management of that area, or that this region includes elements of touristic attraction or investment incentives by which the region can be managed and developed. Moreover, dividing the area into smaller zonation units that can be managed based on the area that the engineers or officials in charge can cover, based on crafts and industries, based on touristic paths, and based on monuments and archaeological buildings.



**Figure 8** Proposed plan for Historic Cairo management system.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

As conventions expressed that the required information regarding such heritage site as insufficient and that the name and address of the owning authority is crucial, the main purpose for this research is to identify the current situation and authorities involved in of the administration of Historic Cairo and to propose one authority that coordinates and is responsible for the rest of the authorities concerned to facilitate the implementation of a clear and effective management system that is consistent with the guidelines issued by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. Therefore, in order to achieve such a goal, this research conducts a descriptive research approach and then the deductive research approach. It starts with tracing back the current condition and the authorities concerned in managing Historic Cairo through different eras, the significance of managing Historic Cairo, and the development of the concept of historical site management. The deductive research approach is conducted through research on successful global practices and guiding principles then drawing conclusions and validating their suitability to the local context of Historic Cairo in order to recommend a management system for such heritage site as exemplified in Figure 8. Hence, the concluded challenges can be summarized as follows:

- Lack of coordination between various concerned ministries and authorities.
- Lack of appropriate legal and planning tools for the entire historical area.
- A management system and forming clear borders dealing with historic Cairo as a special area were the most important demands in the World Heritage Centre reports since 2001.
- Egyptian authorities repeatedly indicated their willingness to address the absence of legal, institutional, and planning frameworks; however, this has not been implemented yet.
- The boundaries of Historic Cairo have not been approved by all the ministries concerned.
- Having no defined boundaries for the buildings and having ownership issues in Historic Cairo creates difficulty in dealing with them.
- There are no clear requirements for approximately 57% of such historical area which results in the overlapping of general laws and regulations governing urbanization and the Unified Building Law. This impacts the urban fabric in such historical area, especially the buildings on Port Said Street.

Practical implications are demonstrated through the suggested management framework which supports sustainable measures, planning tools, and detailed action plans. However, such recommendations have to be supported by law and coordinated between all authorities concerned in order to prevent further damage to the urban fabric and buildings of such World Heritage sites. Hence, the following recommendations have been concluded:

- Considering Historic Cairo as a special planning area for its special nature.
- Since it is difficult to deal with some quarters (shyakhas) that form Historic Cairo, the research proposes either to combine the parts of the concerned districts so that they would be completely within the borders of Historic Cairo



or to change the boundaries of some of the concerned districts so that historic Cairo would have clear boundaries.

- Changing the division of Cairo Governorate to make the historical borders of Cairo fall into one area by creating a fifth district hence subdividing Cairo city into five districts (manatiq) instead of four.
- The Supreme Council of Antiquities and the National Organization for Urban Harmony were affiliated with the Ministry of Culture. The research suggests that the proposed authority should either be affiliated with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities or transferring its expertise in the field of heritage to it in order to avoid any future conflicts.
- Issuing a new decision to reconfigure the Steering Committee to become a permanent committee and to include the Minister of Higher Education AND Scientific Research in his capacity as responsible for UNESCO in Egypt and to include a representative from the Central Bank or the Federation of Egyptian Banks to this committee for investment ideas. It also recommends that this should be a Presidential decision such as the Cairo Heritage Development Committee (CHDC), which is chaired by the Assistant to President for National and Strategic Projects.

Future research on the suggested management framework or similar suggested framework versus the current situation is recommended to enhance the state of coordination between the concerned ministries/authorities as well as the legal and planning tools for the whole historical area to prevent any further harm to both the urban fabric and the buildings of this invaluable World Heritage site.

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