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Article

Sustainable Tourism and the Rehabilitation of Cairo's Historical Districts: The Case of the Bazaar Area and the Cities of Dead

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Abstract: The current paper examines the impact of recent tourism-related official policy for rehabilitation of historical Cairo and for gentrification of surrounding inner city areas on urban poor's right to the city and their resistance actions against eviction. Despite the main objective of introducing sustainable -tourism principles by improving the environmental quality standards within Historical Cairo through pedestrianization, urban landscaping and public parks, the overall government policy favored business investments more than interests of urban population . This is evident in proposed plans for forced relocation of local residents from Bazaar area and for eviction of squatter tomb dwellers within northern cemeteries 'Cities of the Dead' to the eastern desert of Kattamiya (New Cairo City). Consequently land developers and investors intend to clear these sites and hold empty land for property speculations and tourism development projects. This could follow the precedent of the Agha Khan organization's development of the Al-Azhar Urban Cultural Park, opened in 2004, and the associated upgrading along the Ayyubid Wall and Darb Al-Ahmar district fringing the eastern edge of historical Cairo. Combining information from interviews with primary stakeholders , local residents from Bazaar area and squatter tomb dwellers within Bab al-Nasr northern cemeteries (Cities of the Dead) , and with secondary stakeholders, NGO activists, policy-makers and urban planners, the paper examines the on-going struggle between advocates of urban poor's needs and business and real estate interests over the use of inner city areas for tourism related development. For a critical

analysis of spatial contestation and sustainable tourism, the article attempts at weaving official urban policies with local peoples' narratives through historical Cairo's global tourism. Whilst historical Cairo is reinterpreted as a glocal venue for new claims and contestation between global heritage tourism investment and between local urban poor population, the current paper regards the Bazaar area and Cities of Dead as contested sites for collective memory and urban resistance, and for tourism consumption . The study emphasized the need to link the rehabilitation of historical Cairo to concepts of sustainable tourism process based upon the mainstream conservation-for-development perspective, whilst taking into account alternative environments and interpretations of conservation which are the product of socio-cultural, political and economic aspects of local communities. In conclusion therefore the study advocates radical policy action and collaborative planning in consolidating bottom up urban governance and in generating new opportunities for the (re)production of public sphere for sustainable tourism consumption.

Keywords:

Keywords: Historical Cairo; rehabilitation and pedestrianization; sustainable tourism development; Bazaar area; Cemeteries

1. Introduction

Within the context of planning in historic environments, a dichotomy exists between preserving the past for its intrinsic value and the need for development in response to changing societal values. Such dichotomy arises from the new sense of historicity and a romantic nostalgia for the past in relation to heritage management [1]. Nasser argues for a sustainable approach to planning heritage places based on a community and culture-led agenda [2]. Her study presents the idea of sustainability as an overarching framework for managing tourism in heritage places based on the balance between socio-cultural needs, economic gain, and the protection of the heritage resource. Closely relevant is D'Auria's suggestions for integrating sustainable development aspects within spatial planning mechanisms, whilst encouraging local participation in preserving the cultural heritage [3]. This was also recognized by Grimwade and Carter (2000) who considered social inclusion and sustainable conservation of heritage sites as providing socio-economic advantages for local communities [4].

Since the 1980s increasingly more cities have developed pedestrianized city centre districts, creating new urban consumption spaces for public activities, as noted in Dokmeci et al's study which investigates the pedestrianization of the main street of Beyoglu in Istanbul's Central Business District [5]. The revitalization process was attributed to Beyoglu's distinguished architectural character and accessible central-city location. Whilst the pedestrianization of Beyoglu's main street was based on public and private cooperation, afterwards it became a market-led restructuring with the opening of international commercial stores, thus contributing to the functional transformation and changed land prices within surrounding neighbourhoods.

Gotham (2005) highlights the broader social forces and critical issues that affect gentrification, such as urban restructuring, socio-cultural changes and actions of large corporate firms in redeveloping certain heritage spaces into spaces of entertainment and consumption [6]. According to Smith and DeFilippis, “the frontier of gentrification is more than ever coordinated with the frontiers of global capital investment making the newest wave of gentrification in cities one part of a larger spatial restructuring of urban areas associated with the transformations of production, social reproduction and finance” [7].

As a result, gentrification is largely driven by mega-sized financial firms and entertainment corporations which formed new institutional connections with traditional city boosters (chambers of commerce, city governments, service industries) to market cities and their neighbourhoods. Local elites use tourism as a strategy for economic revitalisation, incorporating tourism services and facilities into redevelopment zones. In this new urban landscape, gentrification and tourism amalgamate with other activities such as shopping, restaurants, cultural facilities and entertainment venues, leading to an altered relationship between culture and economics in the production and consumption of urban space.

As more attention is paid to the conservation of those areas of the historic city that are intensively used by tourism, this results in land use selectivity, with upward inflationary pressure on local economies [2]. Land and property prices become neither affordable nor responsive to local needs. This will ultimately result in higher rent. Moreover, if land is sold as freehold to the developers, it means loss of sovereignty for the locals, translated into loss of control in decision making. Inflation from tourism pushes prices up beyond the reach of locals. This is related to Chang's argument that urban areas are popularly viewed as sites of conflicts or contested landscapes between groups of people with divergent claims on the city [8]. This is presented in the literature as tensions between ‘yuppies’ and ‘yuffies’ (young urban failures) in downtown redevelopment zones (Short, 1989) and conflicts between the bourgeoisie and the urban poor in gentrified districts [9].

Islamic (medieval) Cairo was originally pedestrian-based similar to the medina (Historical city) cores of North African cities [10]. They differ from the historic centres of European cities, with respect to accessibility [11]. Whereas the latter can offer limited vehicle access, the medinas were largely constructed as zones for pedestrians [12]. The prospects for cultural heritage management within historic environments have been discussed in terms of conservation planning options of restoration, renovation and rehabilitation as illustrated in previous studies of Cairo’s Islamic city [10,11]. Restoration of monuments focuses on certain individual significant listed edifices while neglecting other historical buildings within the surrounding urban fabric, thus resulting in a 'museum town', for tourists rather than for residents. Renovation, which may be necessary if buildings collapse and are cleared, has become associated with demolition and the eviction of people, and might be accompanied by land speculation and gentrification. Rehabilitation focuses on whole quarters or districts, with the cultural built environment heritage being considered part of the present population’s everyday life. The rehabilitation of the built environment is related to the more general maintenance of the entire city and the enhancement of local activities and accessibility to heritage buildings through finding new uses for restored buildings. However, rehabilitation still leaves questions about what should be safeguarded and for whom? Can gentrification of residential areas be avoided or is it indeed desirable?

In the current study rehabilitation within historical districts is closely related to environmentally and socially specific forms of sustainable tourism ranging from ecotourism, alternative tourism or responsible tourism. The design of ecotourism (and, implicitly, sustainable tourism) projects based upon the mainstream conservation-for-development perspective needs to account for alternative environments and interpretations of conservation which are the product of socio-cultural, political and economic processes [12]. Cater points to the more general criticism of sustainable tourism that its principles and objectives are manifested in sets of prescriptive guidelines based upon managing the limits of acceptable environmental and social change, thus failing to account for the diversity of tourism development contexts and the meaning, knowledge and understanding of those environments amongst local communities [12].

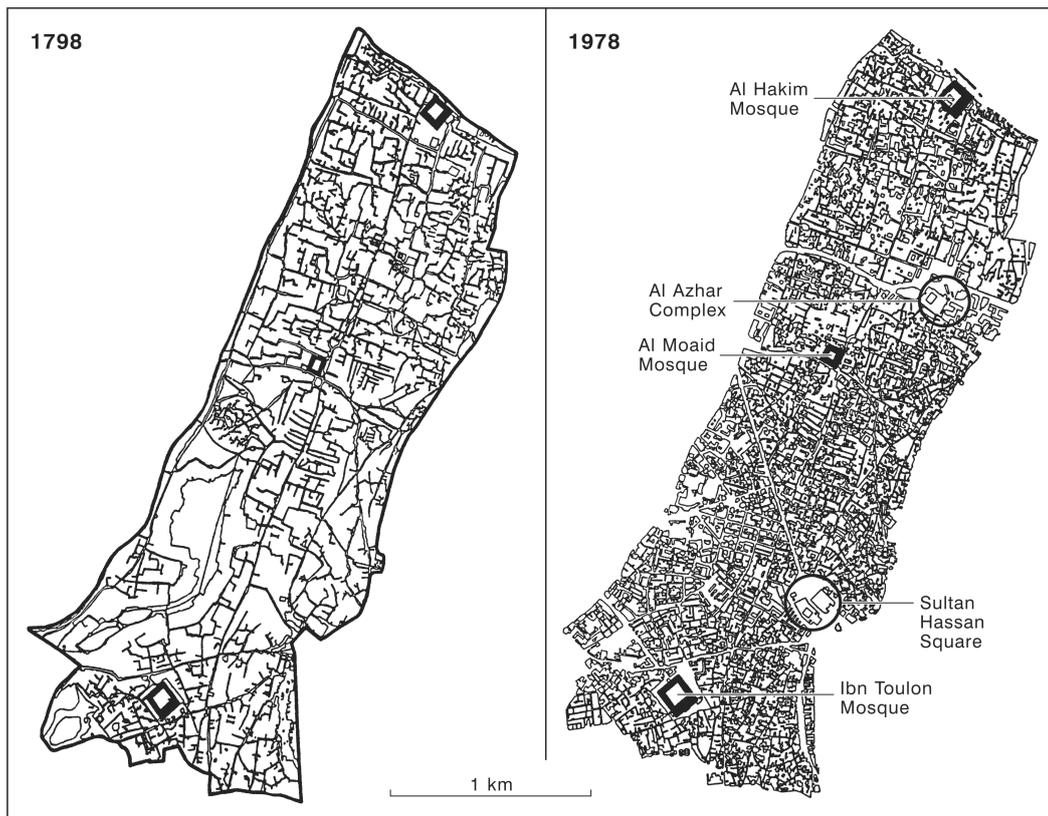
This will be examined hereafter in relation to the impact of rehabilitation and pedestrianization projects for tourism development within Cairo's historical Bazaar and Cities of the Dead on contested public spaces and heritage and on local communities.

2. Cairo's Historical city, context and urban problems

Ahmed and Kamel divide Cairo up into three 'cities': Medieval Cairo, European Cairo and Contemporary Cairo. Their 'Islamic or Medieval or Historical Cairo (969-1863 AD)' covers the area built up during the Fatimid, Ayyubid, Mamluk, and Ottoman periods [14]. The historical city of Cairo currently retains a prominent physical urban character and a strong social identity, with several monuments dominating its townscape, along a north-south axis from Bab al-Nasr and Bab al-Futuh to Ibn Tulun mosque, and along an east-west axis from the ancient city wall to Port Said Street (Figures 1–3). Many elements of the original street pattern as surveyed in 1798-1800 are still evident in the present (1978) layout and morphology of Historical Cairo despite the construction of two major new streets cutting across the old urban fabric, al-Azhar street in the north and Mohamed Ali street further south which links Sultan Hassan mosque and nineteenth-century Cairo. The north-south al-Mu'izz street, which links these two new streets, continues to be the main axis articulating the historical city [15].

Whilst several historical wakala (collective multi-occupancy dwellings), usually degraded, remain in this quarter, a lot of buildings are relatively recent. During the late 19th first half of the 20th century a lot of old traditional buildings in Historical Cairo were replaced by more modern single and two storey buildings, with older buildings being modified through the addition of further storeys, thus overstraining the poor water supply and sewerage systems. The urban fabric was thus "modernized" within the long-established street pattern and the old landownership framework [16], as demonstrated for the 1990s by Aboukourah for the al-Ghuriya quarter where, numerous new buildings up to 8 or 10 storeys have been constructed [17]. Recently constructed high-rise buildings emerged along al-Azhar Street (linking east-west axis which splits the main historical spine into northern and southern sections), changing the urban fabric and altering patterns of land use. Such processes of urban development widened the gap between different districts within the Historical City, with no evident relevance to the traditional urban fabric.

Figure 1. Street pattern of Historical Cairo in 1798 and 1978 [11,18]



Economically and socially Historical Cairo is more significant and central to the wider city's economy and society, linked to the numbers of visiting foreign tourists. Workshops, with its retailing and artisan activities have recently moved into the central bazaar area which experienced an economic revival reflected in the increase in the number of small manufacturing enterprises producing consumer and tourist goods (Meyer, 1988). This economic growth has occurred despite population decline by one third in the Historical City since the 1960s.

Environmentally polluting activities such as metallurgy, marble and timber workshops and storage facilities have posed problems within the historical areas in terms of waste, noise and pollution, contributing to environmental degradation. The deteriorating urban fabric can be partly attributed to traffic congestion together with inadequate infrastructure and insufficient service provision. Traffic congestion particularly affects the main axis of accessibility, al-Mu'izz Street, and the northern gates in the city wall in the Gamalia district. The Historical City is generally characterized by a decaying housing stock, a lack of public spaces, and increased population densities. Homeless people occupied as squatters the historic buildings that subsequently decayed through over-occupancy and neglect. There is also the problem of historical monuments being misused for inappropriate and damaging storage and commercial purposes. Thus a cycle of decay and demolition ensued [19].

Table 1. Historical Cairo, heritage and conservation events, 1798 to 1998 [11]

1798–1801	Napoleonic expedition occupies Lower Egypt.
1800	Detailed map published of Cairo by Napoleon's surveyors.
1880	<i>Comite de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe</i> established.
1950	List of 622 Islamic monuments drawn up.
1952	<i>Comite de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe</i> dissolved.
1977	Association for the Urban Development of Islamic Cairo set up.
1979	Historical Cairo designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.
1980	UNESCO Plan for Historical Cairo produced.
1988	<i>Greater Cairo Region</i> Master Plan - Historical Cairo as part of Homogeneous Sector No. 1.
1988–1991	<i>GOPP/AURIF</i> Plans for rehabilitation of <i>Sayeda Zeinab</i> Quarter, <i>Gamalia</i> Quarter and <i>Darb al Asfar</i> Quarter.
1992	Earthquake damaged many monuments in Historical Cairo.
1997	UNDP Rehabilitation Plan for Historical Cairo
1998–1999	<i>Al-Azhar</i> road tunnel constructed

More significantly, the area has experienced major changes induced by a number of large-scale projects which would change land use from residential to commercial and tourism related activities. Such projects range from the construction of al-Azhar Street underground tunnel for traffic and pedestrian square between al-Azhar and al-Hussein Mosques (Urban Plaza), the development of new parking and commercial facilities near al-Hussein Hospital and the creation of the 30-hectare al-Azhar Park on the Darassa hills, between the Fatimid city, the Mamluk cemeteries and the Citadel (Figures 2, 6).

3. Critique of conservation and rehabilitation plans within Historical Cairo

In 1880 an initial effort was made at conserving the significant historic buildings of Historical Cairo with the setting up of a *Comite de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe* which undertook the annual maintenance and rehabilitation of virtually all the medieval monuments of Cairo [20, 21]. This organization was dissolved in 1952 and its functions were taken over by the government, which was partly rectified by the creation in 1977 of an Association for the Urban Development of Islamic Cairo by a group of Egyptians architects (Hassan Fathy) [22]. As early as 1973, Cairo's structural master plans stressed the need for upgrading Historical Cairo's central bazaar area through its pedestrianization and improvement of access to its residential quarters, the transfer of polluting activities, the continued restoration of monuments and the related amelioration of their surrounding built environment.

Back in 1950 a list of 622 monuments was drawn up in order to merit 'world heritage' status according to the UNESCO criterion of 600 historic buildings [23]. Some 130 buildings on the list already did not exist, and since 1950 another 20 to 30 buildings on the original list have been

demolished. Following designation of Historical Cairo by a World Heritage Site in 1979, a 1980 UNESCO Plan defined six priority zones within which new development would be restricted, suggesting that conservation action should be concentrated along the main North-South spinal route which links the main monuments while also acting as a focus for economic activity [24].

3.1. The Greater Cairo Region (GCR) master plan 1988

The development and upgrading of the Historical City (categorized in the Greater Cairo Region Plan as Homogeneous Sector No. 1) aimed to preserve the traditional fabric through building control regulations combined with development of public spaces in North Gamalia and Darb al-Asfar areas and provision of mixed land uses [25]. The conservation of monuments was prioritized with their reuse for various social and cultural activities such as the Beit al- Sehimi in the Darb al- Asfar district (a restored 17th Century house). These proposals identified the need to upgrade the surrounding built environment and to raise local people's awareness.

The official policy aimed at improving tourism potentials as well as preserving historical heritage, through the transfer of wholesale commercial and industrial activities to the eastern New Settlements number 3, whilst keeping retailing and handicraft workshops within the main historical spine [26]. According to the GCR plan, the proposed evacuated areas within Historical City would be used to improve road network, to create parking areas, tourist services, open spaces and community services.

3.2. The General Organisation for Physical Planning (GOPP) and Institut d'Amenagement Urbain et Regional de Ile de France (IAURIF) Plans, 1988–1991

The GOPP/IAURIF rehabilitation strategy (1988-1991) proposed to enhance both the historic buildings and their urban environment through the introduction of new public spaces in the style of European plazas, through the reuse and renovation of monuments and through pedestrianization and traffic control measures, whilst removing various encroaching buildings. GOPP/ IAURIF suggested three projects to rehabilitate whole districts focused on the Sayeda Zainab Quarter in the South, Gamalia Quarter in the North and Darb al- Asfar Quarter in the East [27, 28]. This collaborative research body produced general guidelines for the improvement of the built environment, seeking to develop the northern and southern gates through the creation of a ring road around the Historical City.

The GOPP/IAURIF Darb al- Asfar Scheme identified priority areas for action plans according to the significance of monuments and to the predominant commercial activities (Beit El- Sehime, a house constructed in 1648, and the house of Mostafa Ga'afar, built in 1713) [29]. Policy guidelines stressed the rehabilitation of the urban fabric, the development of public spaces, and the transfer of industrial activities out to surrounding settlements such as Manshiet Nasser. Then followed the redevelopment of housing and public services such as sewers and garbage disposal systems plus the introduction of tourist facilities, including a culture centre and hotels [30].

3.3. *The 1997 UNDP rehabilitation plan*

The 1997 UNDP plan, which has yet to be comprehensively put into action, covered an area of about four square kilometers in Historical Cairo from Bab al- Futuh in the North to Ibn Tulun mosque in the South; an area containing about 310,000 people in 1986 (compared to 1966 population of 433,000) (Figures 2, 3) [18]. In seeking to achieve a broad-based rehabilitation the plan combined two contrasting approaches:

Firstly, a tourism-based rehabilitation in order to attract investment to restore and re-use monuments and then re-use them for business and even housing so involving some limited gentrification. Vacant-land tax would seek to encourage development on unused and abandoned plots for recreation purposes, services, and facilities for the gentrified communities, thus ensuring the protection of monuments.

Secondly, community-based rehabilitation which would restore and improve local residents' housing, empower local community through educational facilities, with restored monuments re-usage serving the community (through social services), the business sector (through licenses for private sector use), and the tourist industry (re-use as museums, information centers). New projects, such as using vacant land to lodge the homeless and squatters, would be labor-intensive to provide local jobs with few profit-generating opportunities for private investors. With six of the clusters being similarly identified in the 1980 UNESCO study, the 1997 plan identified nine clusters of historic monuments, each being a primary target for rehabilitation, upgrading and conservation, with streets providing continuity of traditional activities. The clusters and their linking streets made up the Heritage Corridor which represented the first rehabilitation approach focusing on business interests and tourists, with the blocks of community orientated activities located either side of the Heritage Corridor representing the second approach. (Figure 3).

The 1997 UNDP plan included the pedestrianization of the central spine, along al-Mu'izz Street, and some other streets, between 9.00 a.m. and 9.00 p.m, with one-way streets being suggested to ease traffic congestion. A key contribution would be "adaptive reuse" of restored buildings, suggesting that a significant *sabil-kuttub* (former fountains and koranic schools combined) be used as a tourist information centre. The plan aimed to resurrect the old 'al-fina' (outside courtyard) concept, whereby shops and workshops can extend their activities out on to the street in front of their premises. Therefore streets in Historical Cairo would again consist of central public space for pedestrians and traffic and semi-private space that can be used by local residents for trading and other uses. Several demonstration projects were advocated around al-Azhar mosque, al-Darb al-Ahmar district in the centre-east area and Gamalia quarter in the northeast part (which contains monuments from the Fatimid to the Ottoman era together with a variety of socio-economic activities and a poor residential population)

Figure 2. UNDP rehabilitation plan, 1997 [11, 18]

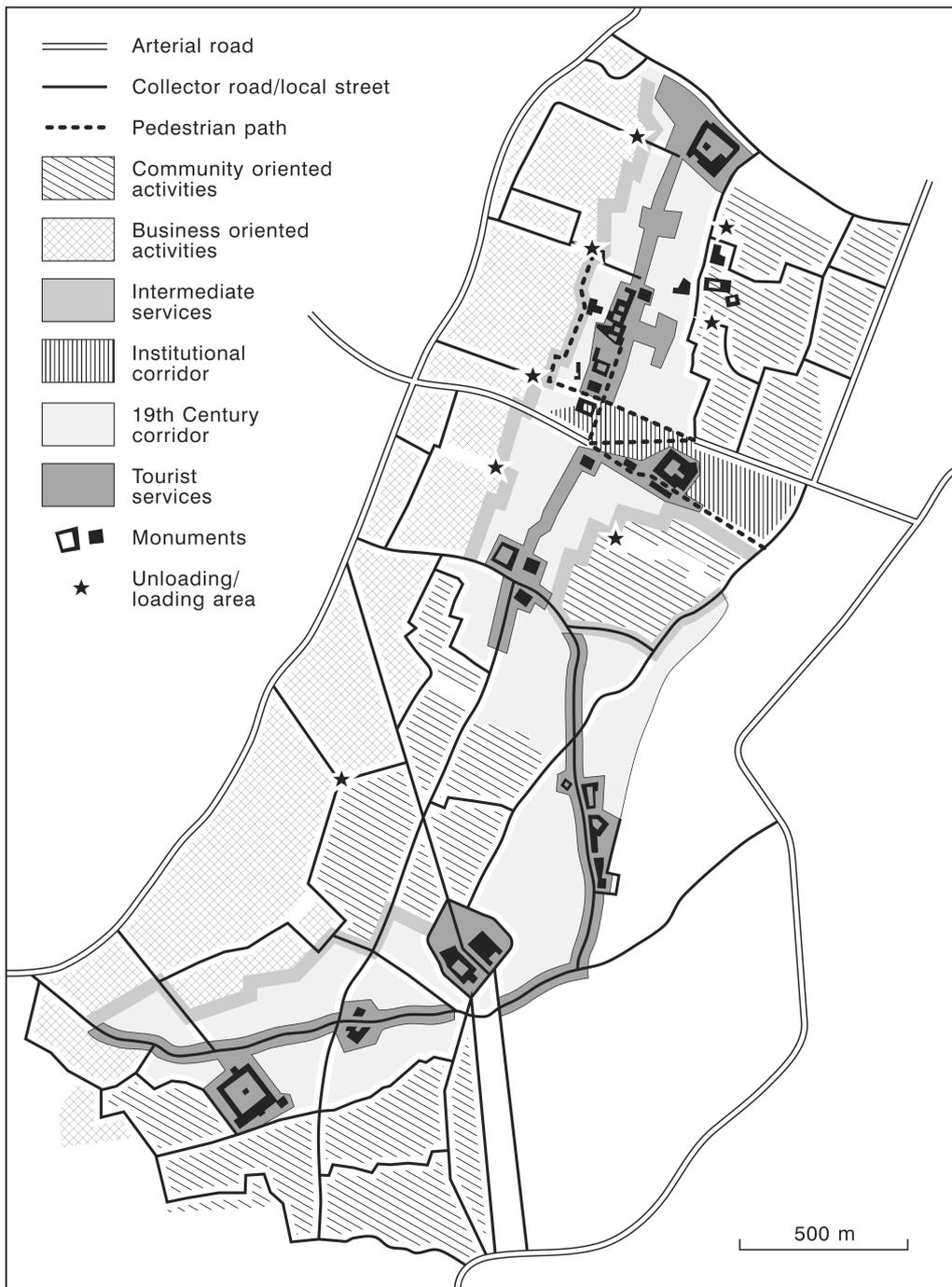
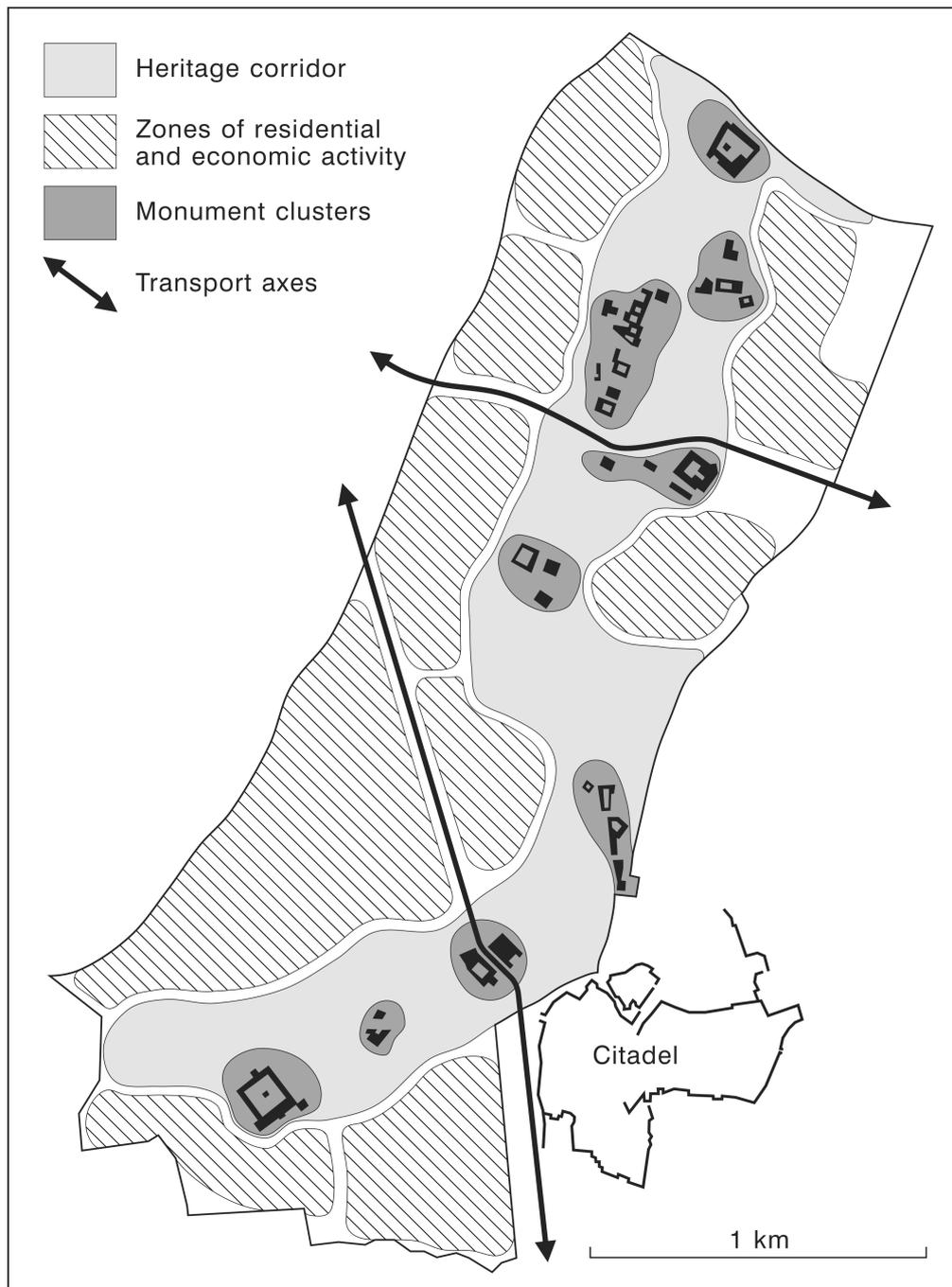


Figure 3. Monument clusters and heritage corridor [11,18]



The UNDP report does suggest a very hierarchical organization, dependent on the Egyptian Government ministries and hardly involving local people at all, whereas a bottom-up NGO would probably be preferable [18]. Nevertheless the UNDP consultancy team considered that the (1997) situation was acute enough to necessitate immediate action on a large scale to save the fabric of Historical Cairo and its many monuments. The UNDP report considered that "such an outcome would be a major loss for Egypt and the whole world" [18]. Due to lack of official action, Historical Cairo's safeguarding efforts remained limited to the piecemeal restoration of a limited number of its monuments and to a few demonstration projects [11].

4. Late 1990s planning activities in Historical Cairo, Al-Azhar tunnel and North Gamalia axis

Despite the availability of the UNDP 1997 Rehabilitation Plan the government has pursued its own conservation policies, particularly the Al-Azhar tunnel and North Gamalia axis.

4.1. Al-Azhar Axis

Given its tourist potential al- Azhar square was considered a priority area by government officials, as a result of al-Azhar bridge's heavy traffic and its serious environmental consequences on the safety of historical monuments within al- Mu'izz Street's main spine and Khan al- Khalili bazaar area (Figures 4, 5).

After two years devoted to the restoration of al- Azhar and al- Hussein mosques, an underground tunnel was constructed under al-Azhar Street. As a result the area between the two mosques will be pedestrianized and transformed into a new plaza which would directly have access to the central spine of al- Mu'izz Street and Khan al- Khalili bazaar area. Traffic would be diverted largely on to an inner ring road around the historical city which initially included the creation of North Gamalia axis outside the northern City walls as an alternative to the proposed pedestrianized al-Azhar Street. The North Gamalia axis has resulted in the partial removal of Bab al- Nasr Cemeteries .

Figure 4. Location of al-Azhar axis in Historical Cairo [10]

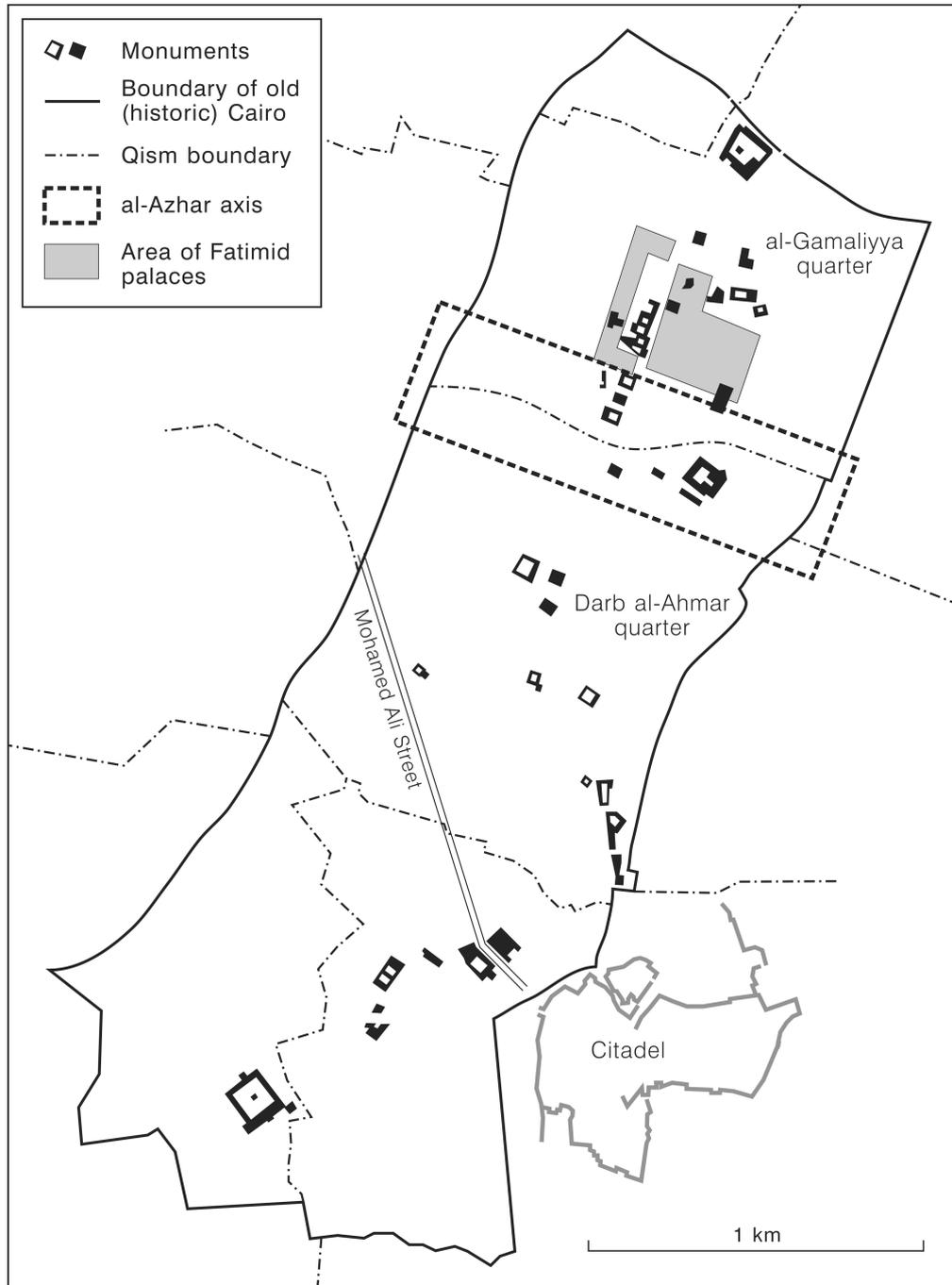
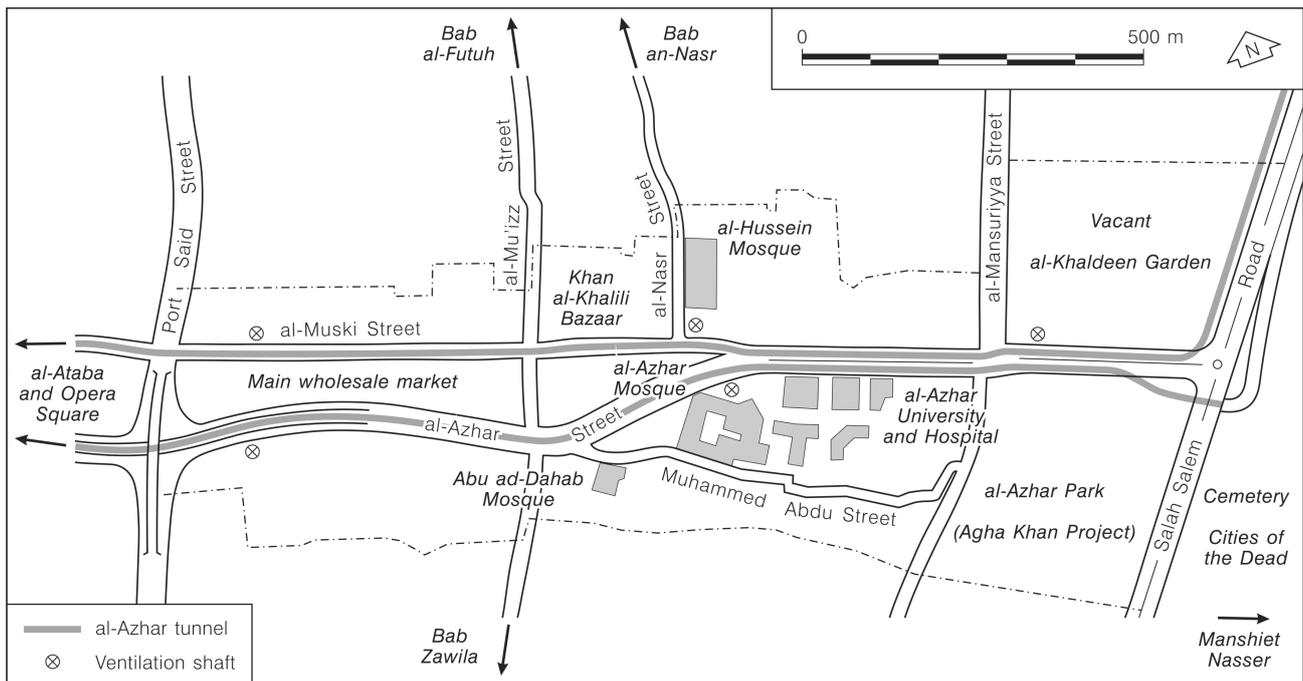


Figure 5. Al-Azhar axis – main streets, buildings and localities [10]



4.2. North Gamalia Axis

North Gamalia is characterised by its historical heritage, high population densities, derelict and decaying urban area and metallurgical industries. The GOPP/IAURIF proposal recommended the creation of a new boulevard along the Northern walls together with the development of open spaces [31]. The North Gamalia Project sought to create public spaces surrounding the monuments, with the rehabilitation of 60 hectares, half of which constituted Bab al-Nasr cemetery north of the Fatimid Walls which were to be restored and evacuated from tomb dwellers [32]. However the main policy to be implemented in North Gamalia was concerned with relocation of small-scale industrial activities. Such policy implied the removal of these activities and relocating them in the New Settlement no. 3 east of Cairo. The evacuated areas within Historical City would be used to improve road network, and to introduce services such as parking areas, tourist services, open spaces and community services. Additionally, families dependent on the relocated activities will vacate those housing units within congested area in Historical City, providing an opportunity to upgrade old areas, to improve living conditions as well as to assist in the provision of insufficient services and infrastructure. Such policy aimed at improving tourism potentials as well as preserving historical heritage [33].

Covering about 60 hectares, North Gamalia comprises a dense historical heritage with nearly 40% of job supply of Greater Cairo region (mainly in metallurgical activities), with a population 14% of GCR [25]. High population densities have reached 600-800 person/ha, with urban decay being noted within the area as well as deficiency of utility network, lack of public spaces, difficult access to neighborhoods and existence of polluting industries. The GOPP/IAURIF recommended the creation of a new boulevard along the city walls to improve access to the city, to facilitate links with outside districts, and to develop new urban spaces and landscaped zones [31]. Real estate opportunities were

to be provided for within 25 hectares of northern Bab al- Nasr cemetery (which proved to be a difficult task to implement as a result of people's reluctance to move out of cemetery areas). In addition 10 hectares of industrial zone were to be developed as part of the rehabilitation strategy plan which proposed:

- Reduction of population densities and environmentally polluting activities through the transfer to new settlements;
- Support activity development corresponding to particular vocation of the area for national and regional service tourism;
- Reduction of traffic congestion while improving internal linkages within the sector and between other sectors;
- Improvement of living conditions through upgrading services and creating public spaces; and
- Development control of strategic areas within Historical City.

Therefore an urban project was due to take place (which was halted later on as a result of disputes regarding the removal of the northern cemeteries). This scheme consisted of 6 main components:

- The wall boulevard to provide new connection towards the eastern highway and autostrada roads;
- The renewal of Bab El Sharia Square to facilitate linkage between three urban routes and a new main transport station;
- The Gamalia urban park which act as environmental outlet within central Cairo;
- The upgrading of Historical City Walls in order to beautify monuments and historical patrimony;
- The tourist development which would create new hotel and service complex; and
- The garden district characterized by a new neighborhood at the gateway of Historical City accommodating population and amenities to enhance the image of Historical City.

5. Analysis of Al-Azhar pedestrianization scheme and North Gamalia proposals

The author administered a field study (2002 and 2003) which employed ethnographic techniques which included unstructured interviews with secondary stakeholders (planners, local authorities) involved in the (Historic Cairo Restoration Programme HCRP - Al- Azhar Scheme and North Gamalia Project), and with director of local NGO (Association for the Urban Development of Islamic Cairo-AUDIC).

A small area survey which employed direct observation and structured interviews with randomly sampled primary stakeholders within two areas:

1. The area between al-Husseini/al-Azhar Mosques (Khan al-Khalili Bazaar and al-Mosky wholesale market [10,11])

- 50 local residents (heads of households)
- 10 wholesale merchants (al-Mosky Street and Wholesale Market)
- 20 retail shop owners (Khan al-Khalili Bazaar between al-Mu'izz and al-Nasr Streets)

- A number of stallholders (wholesale market and Bazaar areas)

2. North Gamalia area [34]

- 40 tomb dwellers of Bab al-Nasr Cemetery area (Cities of the Dead).

6. Pedestrianization of al-Azhar Street and Bazaar area

6.1. Planners and local authorities view

Planners and local authorities regarded the project as a tourist, commercial, cultural and recreational axis which will provide inhabitants of the area, visitors and traders with sustainable services and will become an attractive cultural hub for both national and international tourists. The project will be concerned with landscape and architectural characteristics (ranging from colors of facades, tiling of plazas and promenades, types of trees, etc.), reusing existing buildings, constructing a multipurpose commercial and cultural wekala, whilst providing tourist services (restaurants, coffee shops, bazaars, etc.) within vacant lands.

Three axes were proposed. Firstly a tourist axis as an eastern entrance to the area (coming from Salah Salem and al-Mansuriyyah streets) with a concentration of bazaars, three-star hotels, restaurants and coffee shops. Secondly a commercial axis as the western entrance to the area (from Port Said and 'Ataba streets) characterized by a tourist market and kiosks or stalls to house street peddlers who currently occupy al-Musky Street. Thirdly a cultural axis between the western fence of al-Azhar University and the eastern facade of al-Azhar mosque, starting from al -Azhar square to Muhammad 'Abdu street, which will house second-hand books market, linked to the cultural centre within restored houses of Zaynab Khatoon, al-Harrawy and al-Sitt Wassila.

Whilst the plan aims at pedestrianization of al -Azhar Street, a network of secondary streets will be used for accessing services to the area, with parking areas for local inhabitants and shop owners within proposed multi-storey garages (at the intersections of al-Azhar and al-Mansuriyyah and al-Azhar and Port Sa'id streets). This part of the plan allocates specific locations for loading and unloading vans serving wholesale market in the area.

Officials expressed the need to generate awareness and support amongst primary stakeholders, particularly wholesale merchants, of the benefits of the pedestrianization project of al-Azhar Street. A critical view was expressed by local NGO Association for the Urban Development of Islamic Cairo (AUDIC), emphasizing the fact that closing the al-Azhar area to car traffic will result in the decline of traditional markets and crafts which are not available in modern department stores (textiles, leather, gold and silver jewellery, perfume essences, spices and household goods). According to AUDIC,

“ Whilst the al -Azhar area has only four historic monuments, it is arguably the least appealing street within the Medieval Cairo area , this being attributed to the construction of a modern buildings, which are hardly an attraction to tourists, the *raison-d'etre* of this project.”

“The proposed intervention would devastate and disperse the community, since the historic city has been the main commercial and industrial centre of Cairo since the end of the 19th century and remains the main commercial focus. Thousands of families' livelihoods will be affected by the decision to turn al-Azhar Street into a pedestrian street . Wholesale and retail shops will lose their clients if they have to reach their destination on foot from al-Azhar Street and surrounding areas”.

6.2. Bazaar peoples' reactions

During focus group meetings, primary stakeholders expressed their future expectations/ interests which contributed to their satisfaction with the al -Azhar pedestrianization scheme. Stakeholders' attitudes and evaluation of the project were dependent on socio-economic characteristics, future expectations and awareness of the project's real objectives, whilst considering the "influence" primary stakeholders had on the project procedures and the "importance" actually given by the scheme to satisfying their needs and interests.

Most respondents (80%) (n= 40) mentioned that one direct effect of the al-Azhar pedestrianization project was the disruption of their economic structure, social ties and community networks. They were concerned about the immediate socio-economic effect of pedestrianization of al-Azhar Street on vehicular access to storage areas within the commercial and industrial zones (al -Mosky and Gamalia areas) and within the historical axis (al- Mu'iz Street). They expressed the need for accessibility of vehicles through the main service road and secondary streets.

Official plans to relocate commercial and industrially polluting activities caused anxiety amongst workshop owners, concerning the future. Despite problems of noise and pollution caused by workshops and small-scale industries, people were discontent with alternative sites (Eastern New Settlements), which would disrupt their socio-economic conditions and their prospective markets (established within the Historical City). The study survey revealed that there was a considerable number of low income people, residing alongside the main historical axis, who were threatened of being forcibly moved out of their houses as a result of al -Azhar land clearance plan .

Resistance to planned eviction scheme was expressed by two-thirds the interviewed local residents, with elderly members of the community (59 years and above) expressing more anxiety about their relocation, as compared to younger age groups (between 15-39). The issue of compensation was raised in terms of who would be eligible, with questions being posed of whether there would be enough replacement housing, and whether it would be accessible to employment and to services such as education and social facilities.

Other respondents pinpointed security of tenure as a problem as they often had no official documents to prove their ownership of buildings, thus facing possible eviction with minimal compensation. Nearly 20% (n=10) of the respondents squatted into abandoned historical monuments in Northern Gamalia, with 30% (n=15) already occupying evacuated informal housing units, which were less affected by the 1992 earthquake. Other long-term and low-income residents have constructed unauthorized buildings adjacent to certain monuments in order to accommodate their increasing household sizes. Many utilities and services (proper garbage disposal and refuse collection system, and a sewage system) were urgently needed in some areas, with inadequate infrastructure

contributing to most respondents' dissatisfaction . Respondents mentioned the need for educational, medical, and recreational facilities and open spaces including children's playgrounds

Despite skepticism expressed by 40% of the respondents (n=20) about the government's ability to deliver appropriate services, improvements within the urban environment were invariably regarded as being the local authorities' responsibility. Primary stakeholders regarded the proposed environmental improvements ranging from landscaped open spaces, paved main street and reduction of noise pollution as serving tourism investment rather than local residents' needs.

Respondents' narratives recorded during interviews reflected their views about recent changes occurring in the Bazaar of Khan al- Khalili, and low income people's anticipations regarding their proposed relocation to eastern New Settlement No. 3 (Kattamya) [10].

" Those who had little money rented a place in Manshiet Nasser or somewhere else nearby. They said that at least they were close to their source of livelihood in the bazaar and Gamalia. If we had some money, maybe we would also move somewhere close to our work place. The Officials will do nothing for us." (respondent householder)

" Life in the Bazaar of Khan al-Khalili has changed drastically in recent years. Only twenty years ago, the Khan's crowded streets and alleys were still medieval with the merchants and craftsmen all living in the market, in the warren of small houses branching off the busy shopping areas." (respondent householder)

" Recently the Historical City has experienced a decline in its population who moved to other parts of the City, with many goods being manufactured outside the market. This situation will further aggravate once the al-Azhar Street is pedestrianized."(Respondent householder and shop owner)

"Previously I could just move from my flat upstairs to the shop downstairs, in five minutes. We used to work in front of the shop. It was good for business because the customers could see how much work it took to make our goods." (respondent householder and shop owner)

6.3. Attitudes of wholesale merchants and retail shop owners

The influence of community leaders and strong social relations were instrumental in developing awareness of the project objectives, particularly amongst those wholesale merchants, within al -Mosky market and the Bazaar, who seemed well aware of what the authorities have been proposing. They were initially interested in the project and its potential for creating urban development activities as they appreciated the government's tentative approach in seeking to test local opinion in advance of definitive action. When they realized that this was not going to happen, many of the Bazaar shop owners opposed the pedestrianization plan.

Wholesale merchants suggested a six-months long trial to ascertain the possible damage to the local economy of the closure of al-Azhar Street to vehicle traffic and the introduction of electric cars for shoppers. Interviewees proposed closing al-Azhar Street just for two or three days a week, so as to

preserve the area's commercial role, as they expressed worries that the al-Azhar mosque and its environs would become just a tourist area, losing much of its local Cairene clientele.

The situation was more stressful for those who have set up temporary stalls, as they feared losing their source of livelihood, this being attributed to local authority's reluctance to regularize their enterprises; a process which involves a complex procedure full of bureaucratic delays and considerable expenses.

6.4. New activities expected to be introduced to al-Azhar area

The current study indicated that the proposed al - Azhar regeneration project has ignored UNDP's 1997 proposal and GOPP/IUARIF's early 1990s recommendations with respect to the identification of nine priority areas or clusters for protecting Medieval Cairo's immense architectural heritage, mainly along al-Mu'izz street which has nearly 21 significant monuments. There should be more emphasis on both al- Mu'izz North- South historical and commercial spine, and on the Gamalia commercial street, linking the northern gates of Bab al- Nasr and Bab al- Futuh to the southern gate of Bab Zuweila. Both spines pass through the Khan al- Khalili bazaar area together with al- Hussein / al -Azhar Square (Grand Plaza) and both intersect the East-West semi-pedestrianized al -Azhar Street.

Whilst the official plan would strengthen an East-West Development along al -Azhar Axis, this will weaken the traditional North -South axis . Much of al -Azhar street could remain a road for vehicles but strictly for access in and out of this central part of historic Cairo and not as a through route (which has been taken over by the tunnel and by the proposed third metro line. Only the central section of al -Azhar street ought to be pedestrianized, incorporating the junction with al-Mu'izz Street, open spaces between al-Azhar and al-Hussain mosques together with narrow streets around Khan al-Kalili bazaar area.

Table 2. New activities expected to be introduced to al-Azhar area according to official plans [10]

Northern side of *al-Azhar* Street

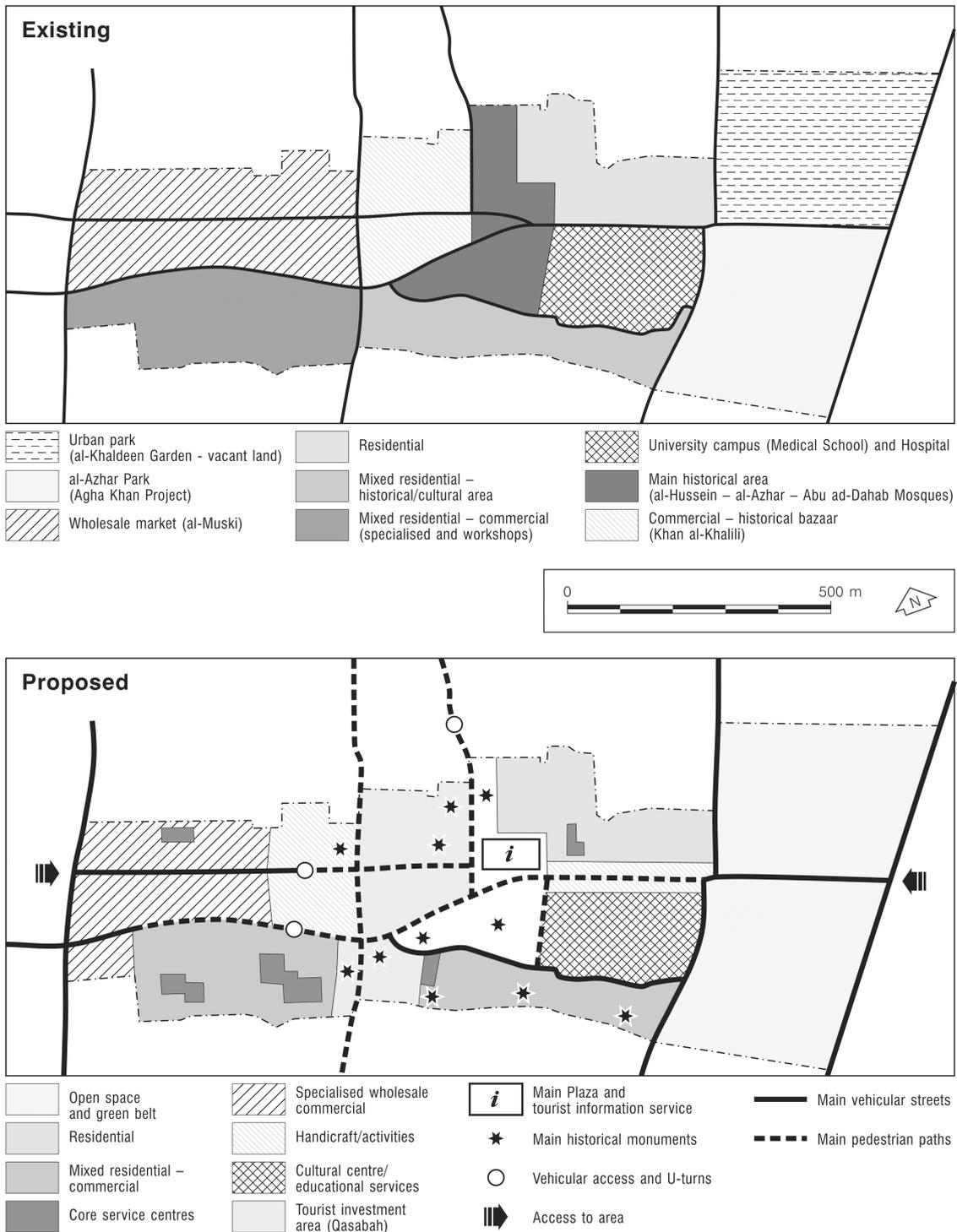
- ◆ Business centre and new office-administrative developments,
- ◆ Newly refurbished housing stock (and perhaps some newly-built structures) for upwardly mobile urban professionals,
- ◆ Tourists' open museum with a commercial centre for marketing handicrafts,
- ◆ Investment centre and specialized commercial center,
- ◆ Potential commercial district with both traditional wholesale and newly introduced activities.

Southern side of *al-Azhar* Street

- ◆ Business centre and new office-administrative development,
 - ◆ Cultural hub,
 - ◆ Main historical core and tourists' activities – plaza and open museum,
 - ◆ Potential mixed use and new investment development area,
 - ◆ Main commercial district with mixed residential functions (gentrified at the expense of traditional wholesale markets),
 - ◆ Business-orientated service area.
-

One problematic issue may well involve land values and land speculation. What will be the effect of these pedestrianization proposals on local property prices? Will such economic issues prevail in a location where aesthetic and cultural values ought to be pre-eminent? As authorities delayed plans for closing al-Azhar street, partially or completely, as a result of public opposition, it could be anticipated that a degree of gentrification might occur along this east-west axis, as suggested in Figure 6 and Table 2 [35].

Figure. 6. Actual and potential land use along *al-Azhar* axis [10]



7. North Gamalia scheme and eviction of Bab al-Nasr cemeteries (Cities of the Dead)

Historically Bab al-Nasr cemetery houses the graves of Badr El-Gamaly (the founder of the Gamaleya quarter), El-Maqrizy (the great historian), Ibn Khaldoun (the pioneer social reformer) [36]. In 1984, a decision was announced to demolish this cemetery and replace it with a large public garden. This decision was followed up by a partial demolition in 1989 that has resulted in the destruction of some important graves. Protests by professionals and historians led to the formation of a committee the transformation of the cemetery into a public garden, whilst preserving the significant tombs; a proposal which was not supported by the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

According to the 1990 proposal the northern Bab al-Nasr cemetery partly occupied by squatters was to be transformed into a park, keeping some significant tombs such as that of Ibn Khaldoun. Real estate opportunities were to be provided within 25 hectares of the cemetery for a proposed development containing two luxury tourist hotels and a commercial centre, modeled on the Khan- al - Khalili bazaar area [34]. North Gamalia project proposal is characterized by an over-orientation towards international tourism, as the social improvement was forgotten in the tourism-dominated GOPP/IAURIF1990 plan [16]. A four-star tourist complex has little relevance in a zone of low class housing, creating a segregated space orientated more to tourists than to original inhabitants. Eventually many of the residents would indeed be resettled in the new eastern settlements on the fringe of Greater Cairo (Kattamiya in New Cairo City), with 500 dwellings and 280 economic activities disappearing to be replaced by 1000 apartments and 10,500 square meters of shopping space [32].

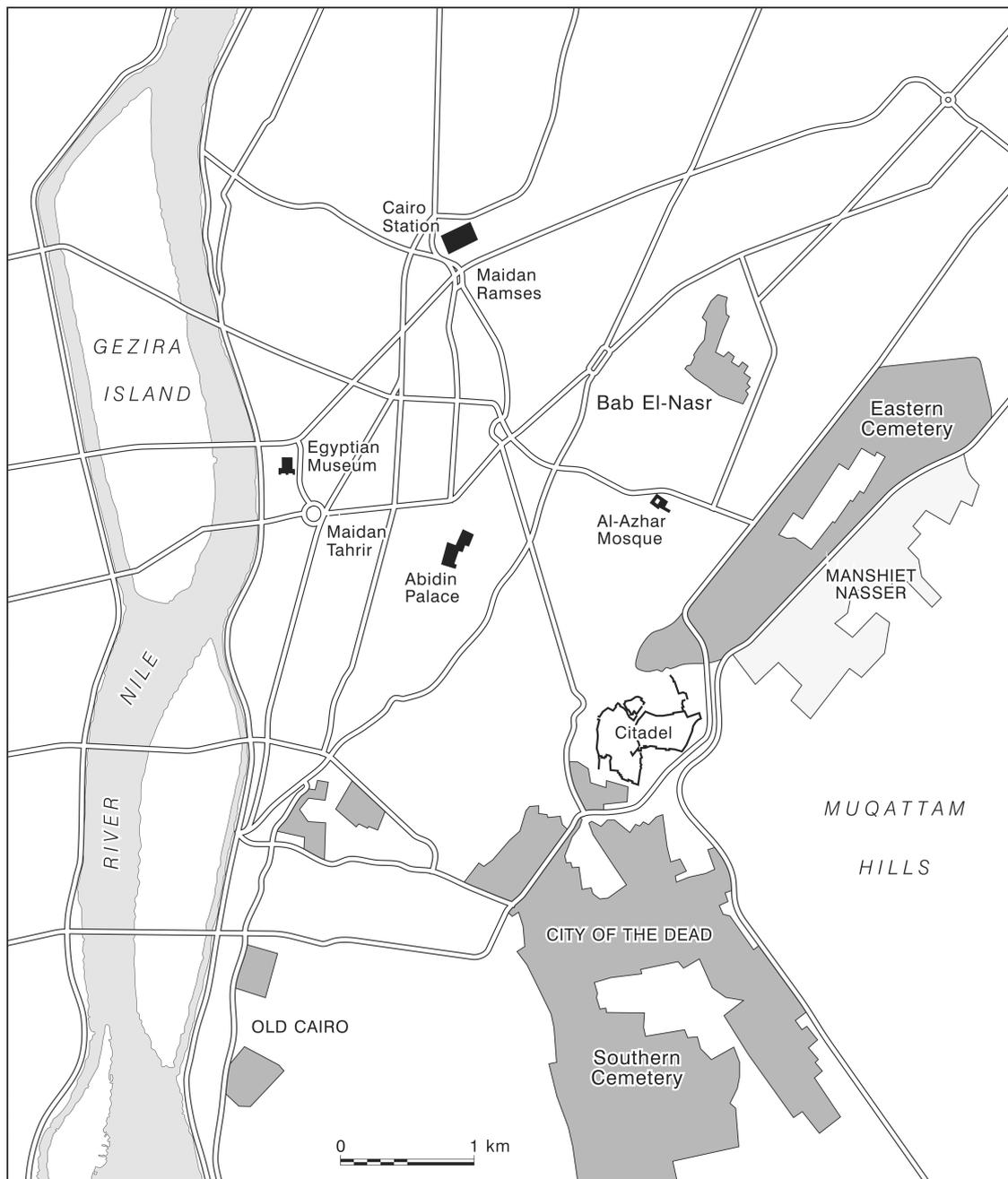
7.1. Tomb dwellers' attitudes

In 1984, a decision was announced to demolish Bab-El Nasr cemetery and replace it with a large public garden. The cemetery is famous for its unique architecture of wooden tombs, varying between one and two floors, with balconies and loggias ornamented by lace-like wood works and timber domes, adopting Ottoman styles with Roman and Coptic architectural details . This decision was followed up by a partial demolition in 1989 that has resulted in the destruction of some important graves. A committee of professionals and historians arranged a documentary exhibition on the origins and development of this cemetery, proposing the transformation of the cemetery into a public garden, whilst preserving the significant tombs within the natural topography, and emphasizing the varied architectural forms. With landscaping and improved accessibility recreational and touristic use could be made of the area, extending the nearby Citadel's tourist activity into the cemeteries. The proposed redevelopment approach to the North Gamalia cemetery district of Bab El-Nasr could be extended to the whole of the Cities of the Dead .

Part of the North Gamalia Project concerns the area north of the Fatimid walls and the Bab El-Futuh, which is largely composed of a cemetery plus some polluting industrial units. Along with the relocation of the industries the cemetery area will be converted into a green space or garden district within which tourist accommodation composed of two hotels plus a commercial centre and car parks would be constructed. According to Sutton and Fahmi, plans for clearing Bab al-Nasr Cemetery (Cities of the Dead) were already under way as part of the North Gamalia project despite disputes over compensation to cover the evacuation and demolition of the tombs (Figure 7) [34]. Consequently, the

people residing in this cemetery were to be relocated to new communities outside of Cairo's urban fringe and the tombs replaced by upper and middle class houses, public parks, and a new luxury hotel development. The plan was to redevelop the cemeteries to focus on their historical, architectural and heritage significance. Following an official removal of part of Bab al-Nasr Cemetery by mid 2001, in order to create the North Gamalia axis, the author administered a small area survey of 40 households (40% of relocated households), employing direct observation and open-ended interviews with affected relocatees and heads of households

Figure 7. Location of *Bab al-Nasr* Cemetery in relation to *al-Azhar* axis [34]



The study survey revealed that there was a considerable number of people residing in tombs, with nearly 100 households being forcibly moved out of the cemetery's tombs as result of land clearance procedures. Resistance to the eviction scheme was noted among 75% of the sampled households (n = 30). Whilst 25% of the sampled households (n = 10) were relocated to eastern New Settlement No. 3 (Kattamya), 15% (n = 6) squatted into unused historical monuments in Gamalia close to the northern gates of the Historical City. Nearly one-third of the respondents (n = 12), with rural background and affiliation with relatives living in surrounding settlements, moved east to the spontaneous urban district of Manshiet Nasser.

Householders who worked as tomb guards (ghafeer) or gate keepers (torabi) (30% of the sampled households, n = 12) resorted to more conventional squatter huts and tents in vacant land pockets between tombs in the Eastern Cemetery . As a result, a shantytown started developing on the vacant land close to Salah Salem Street and the Autostrada. Such encroachment would affect the proposed immediate intervention plan to develop newly created open areas within the Eastern Cemetery, (while upgrading Manshiet Nasser settlement, and enhancing its connection with the Historical City core).

Most respondents (80%, n = 32) mentioned that one direct effect of tomb dwellers' eviction and removal of Bab al-Nasr Cemetery was the disruption of economic structure (especially among guardians of tombs), social ties and community networks. Residents' reactions ranged from skepticism about the government's ability to provide them with appropriate alternative housing (30%, n = 12) to those extremely poor tomb dwellers who welcomed any official proposals (25%, n = 10). Other respondents were content with their lives in the cemeteries (45%, n = 18), regarding the area now as their home.

7.2. Local narratives in the eastern New Settlement No. 3 (Kattamya)

The study survey illustrated case histories of various heads of tomb dweller households who described their lives after eviction from Bab al- Nasr Cemetery to the Eastern settlements [34]:

"Out here, there is nothing... Look what we have got... nothing. There is no water, no electricity... Nobody is going to help us. What would happen to our children? How will we feed them? What about our homes ? "

"The local authorities arrived with the police and told us to pack our things, saying that they were going to move us to Kattameya eastern desert communities. We couldn't do anything, so we packed up our belongings, tried to salvage what we could from our homes. We had managed to save some money to introduce modifications to the tombs with such great difficulty and they were now going to be destroyed."

"At least in Bab al- Nasr Cemetery we were in the centre of the city, we could get jobs. Most men were involved in burial activities within the tombs, earning a daily wage. Some worked as hawkers. This place is so far from the city that we have to spend LE 5 a day on transportation. We spend at least two hours going and coming to work "

7.3. Tomb dwellers' right to the city

The official relocation program aimed to stimulate upper and middle-class residential construction by clearing such strategically central areas of the historical city from the presence of the poor. This was done in the name of government's concern for the welfare of 'less favored' families, with legislation to 'protect the environment' as a justification for securing access to land for development. Recent evictions were clearly not motivated by purely aesthetic factors, where financial gains were made from reclaiming illegally occupied land, much of which has increased substantially in value in the recent past.

The eviction of Bab al- Nasr tomb dwellers was therefore attributed to "redevelopment", to use the cleared land more intensively, where developers could make large profits by doing nothing more than clearing the site and holding the empty land for speculation. Once cleared of cemetery settlements characterized as a major obstacle in the path of "prosperity and development", this land can be sold at great profit to commercial developers who will then construct "luxury" accommodation and shopping centers.

8. Future scenarios in relation to current development approaches

Future scenarios were explored in relation to various development approaches, These scenarios were anticipated as a result of ongoing and proposed official state intervention within Historical Cairo.

8.1. Short term plans

These short term plans are anticipated to be more likely applicable, within the Historical City, both to the central monumental area along the main spine of Al Mui'iz street, and to the transitional area leading to the entrance of the main spine from the newly created grand plaza between Al Hussein/Al Azhar mosques.

Conventional urban conservation and cultural heritage approach (restoration) preserves the original urban fabric and restores historical monuments, whilst moving local people out of the Historical City, hence leading to the depopulation of The Heritage City regarded as a Conservation Area.

Urban renewal for tourism and restoration approach moves section of the local population out of the Historical City (partial depopulation), whilst restoring historical monuments and upgrading part of the surrounding built environment in order to create The Touristic City regarded as open museum for tourism.

8.2. Long term plans

Urban gentrification approach aims at the relocation of local population and the transfer of their economic activities to surrounding Manshiet Nasser settlement. A new social and economic class, mainly young professionals is moved in, thus leading to a process of repopulation of the Historical City. This approach involves the restoration of historical monuments, infrastructure development with

major renovations to the urban fabric, leading to gentrification of the Historical City which eventually becomes part of The Modernized City. Such gentrification process is likely to occur both within the commercial area and Khan Al Khalili district, and within the public service area which provides accessibility to the historical north – south axis (through Gamalia and the northern gates of Bab Al-Nasr/ Bab Al-Futuh and through Al-Khayamia and the southern gates of Bab Zuewela) .

Urban sustainable approach which adopts a rehabilitation process and urban participation strategy which aims at integrating historical built environment with existing urban fabric, and improving socio-cultural and economic lifestyles of the local community. This will lead to the preservation of both urban and human fabric of The Sustainable City, mainly initiated within Darb Al-Asfar residential district surrounding Historical Cairo's main spine.

9. Alternative Approaches to Sustainable Urban Regeneration within Historical Cairo

According to the abovementioned approaches, there is a need to view the process of production and consumption of various contested urban spaces in the form of :

- The residential district (within the Historical City and the Northern Cemetery Areas) where sustainable public spaces will be created expressing integration between people's socio-economic and cultural characteristics and the built environment. This is achieved through the adoption of a rehabilitation process and urban participation strategy
- The commercial district (The Bazaar District - Khan Al Khalili) will experience the merging of old and new development, accompanied with a process of depopulation of local community and replacement of professional upper middle class groups. The newly formed Post Modern/Entrepreneurial public spaces, attributed to a process of renovation and gentrification of the Historical City, will incorporate more private investment and land speculations, whilst restoring historical monuments and introducing infrastructure development; and
- The transitional area of Al-Hussein/Al-Azhar Mosques' Square and Al-Mu'izz Street will create heritage/ touristic public spaces, in the form of an open museum with old monuments being restored, old fabric being preserved, and built environment being upgraded. As a result, people will be moved out of the Historical City, thus replacing local residential uses by tourism activities and facilities, as a result of urban conservation, renewal and restoration approaches carried out under the government's technical supervision..

As a consequence of the production and consumption of such multi-layered contested public spaces, there is a need to explore future development and urban dynamics within the Historical City in relation to :

- Cultural sustainability which exhibits identity, local distinctiveness, social cohesion, and skills enhancement;
- Socio-political sustainability in relation to housing improvement, social equity, solidarity and citizenship, accessibility, partnership and empowerment;

- Economic sustainability with respect to socially responsible businesses, job provision, and generation of small scale enterprises; and
- Environmental sustainability regarding energy saving, resource management, reduction of pollution, preservation and enhancement of local eco-systems.

**Conceptual Framework of Future Sustainable Tourism development
within Historical Cairo**

Cultural Industry

(tourist related activities versus local folklore events)

Physical Redevelopment

(gentrification versus urban upgrading)

Cultural Identity	Social Lifestyle	Economic Development Regeneration	Infrastructure	Upgrading Residential Environment	Restoration of monuments
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Sustainable (Tourism) Approach

Cultural/ Socio-Economic

Physical/Environmental

Stakeholders

Local communities	Government/ Public sector	Private developers	NGOs	International agencies	Cairenes in general
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**Future Anticipation In Relation
To Current Development Approaches**

Short Term Plans

Long Term Plans

Urban conservation	Urban renewal and Restoration	Urban gentrification	Sustainable Urban Rehabilitation
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**Alternative Integrated Approaches
To Urban Regeneration Of Historical Cairo**

Rehabilitation sustainable local environment	Gentrification and Renovation modernized/entrepreneurial inner-city	Restoration heritage museum
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**Concept Of The City
As Complementary /Multi-Layered Zones**

Creative City	Entrepreneur City	Cultural City	Intelligent City
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10. Study Findings

The government's approach has been regarded as too 'tourism-orientated' and so has ignored local attitudes, which could lead to the 'disneyfication' of the Historical City, turning it into an open museum whilst opening the possibilities for increased land prices and more property speculation. Gentrification appeared to prevail over upgrading aided by the official plan to move people out of the Historical City, causing land use changes from residential to tourism. This involves an upward filtering of housing to the benefit of the more upwardly mobile middle classes through total renovation or renewal.

Plans tend to knock down houses but preserve major historic buildings, with greater tendency to move residents to Cairo's new eastern settlements rather than to re-house locals in the main historical spine. Rather as many of the present local inhabitants should be encouraged to remain plus some new younger residents, students or urban professionals living in rented dwellings resulting from the rehabilitation and re-use of older vernacular buildings.

Rehabilitation should regard the socio-cultural aspect of the historical area and should not primarily be economic development orientated, with tourism and a 'disneyfication' kind of renovation program for the monuments only. The built environment context or fabric of the many significant monuments should be maintained and upgraded together with some development of associated open spaces to better display the various mosques, sabil-kuttubs, etc.

Restoration of an old monument without making it functional again invites a second phase of decay and dereliction. So community activities, commercial uses or tourist functions could all be introduced to help perpetuate the built environment heritage represented by Historical Cairo's hundreds of currently threatened historic buildings. Community involvement should be encouraged through reform of the local governance systems to establish conservation-orientated committees with local stakeholder groups.

The study revealed that no strategic plans have been developed and endorsed by the Egypt's highest legislative and executive authorities, beyond the general objectives of conservation and enhancement of the architectural and cultural heritage contained in Cairo's Historical City. Nor has a clear set of conservation and rehabilitation strategies been adopted to guide action at the program level. Each central and local agency is responsible for one aspect or another of the built environment, economic activity, or social life in the different quarters and houses. Each agency devises and implements interventions based on its own objectives, mandates, perspectives, capabilities, and resources [37]. The lack of an integrative framework to give structure and coherence to the range of public and private activities that could be initiated in the historic districts is clearly reflected in the array of unrelated projects and ad hoc initiatives sponsored by international and bilateral organizations and donors [37]. However, Helmy and Cooper demonstrate the important role offered by sustainable planning and management of heritage sites, arguing for more coordinated policies between official authorities and tourist authorities, whilst highlighting the difficulties of involving diverse stakeholders' livelihoods and interests [38].

Nevertheless, UNESCO emphasized the need for co-ordination among the various institutions involved in the rehabilitation of historical districts [39]. UNESCO stressed the importance of adopting a comprehensive institutional Master Plan framework which would ensure better management of the area, with clear strategies and land-use and building regulations, proper management mechanisms for

restored monuments [39]. There is a need for more concern with decaying housing stock, improving awareness of the resident population about the objectives of the restoration campaign within their historical environment.

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