

Improving Sustainability Concept in Developing Countries

The Eastern Necropolis in Cairo and its Buffer Zone (Towards a Sustainable Conservation Strategy)

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Abstract

The Eastern Necropolis is part of the World Heritage property of Historic Cairo in the URHC 2010-2012. It underlies a diversity of forces that lead to urban informality and ruins the sky line of Old Historic Cairo. Applying a sustainable conservation strategy will supposedly stop further slum formation and achieve urban equality. The research is divided into: 1) Pilot study, 2) Field Work and Survey; Evaluation for the study zone and creating a Base Map for the Eastern Necropolis, 3) Documentary studies; Conservation of heritage areas as an approach to regional planning, 4) Research results and final conclusion.

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1. Introduction

People migrate to Cairo from suburbs and other Provinces to search for a new life and seek shelter in a city that is already exploding. Millions of people tend to afford shelter in informal housing and those who cannot afford it seek shelter in grave yards and warren like structures.

1.1. Point of Research

In July 2010-2012, the WHC together with the Egyptian Government launched the project “Urban Regeneration project for Historic Cairo (URHC)”; one of its tasks was to define the World Heritage property and its buffer zone.

The EASTERN NECROPOLIS is part the Heritage property and has been given protection measures although it has not been evaluated or graded for security reasons. Also its buffer zone that has been determined by the URHC happens to be Manshiet Nasser one of the world's most populated slums (according to several reports: about one million inhabitants). The EASTERN NECROPOLIS has been chosen out of the rest of the Cemeteries area due to its crucial position and its more powerful direct impact on the rest of Old Cairo, where any unwise informal development in it will have an extremely strong negative impact on the Heritage of Historic Cairo.

1.2. Question

Can we change unplanned development into planned development?

1.3. Aim

This research is an attempt to reach sustainable conservation measures for further development of such an important area in the heart of Cairo (The Eastern Necropolis). Accordingly this will preserve the sky line of Historic Cairo, and will also contribute in reaching urban equality for such a poor and neglected area.

1.4. Hypothesis

Following a sustainable conservation strategy can change people's behaviour to stop further growth of slum areas inside the Eastern Necropolis, which if left un-dealt with will destroy the skyline of Historic Cairo on the eastern side.

1.5. Objective

Evaluating the study zone using the same criteria set by UNESCO used to evaluate the world heritage of Historic Cairo.

Creating a Base Map for the Eastern Necropolis for documentation, listing, and for further studies and field survey.

1.6. Research Results

- Recommendations: Proposed conservation strategy for the Eastern Necropolis and its Buffer Zone
- Base Map of scale 1/800 for the Eastern Necropolis in Cairo for documentation and further filed studies and development

2. METHODOLOGY

Methodology applied in this research was as follows:

First: Pilot study for the study zone and has been divided into three stages:

- Over view about the study zone:

Second: Field work and survey and is divided into the following:

- Evaluation and grading for the study zone by using the same criteria that the UNESCO has applied over Historic Cairo.

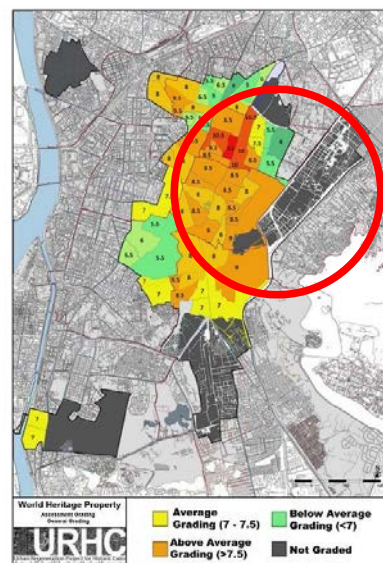


Figure 1: The assessment of Urban Heritage values where the cemeteries area is stated that it is not graded. Source: World Heritage Property (2011)

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