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Which Tools Can Aid the Management of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Community Based Heritage Organizations in Cairo? A Case Study of Shubra's Archive

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Executive summary

This thesis provides a comprehensive overview of cultural heritage management in Cairo, focusing particularly on intangible heritage and the potential benefits of digital tools in this field. It highlights the marginalization of community-based organizations in the broader narrative of heritage management in Cairo, along with the limited alignment and collaboration between local, national and international heritage institutions. Drawing from ethnographic research conducted at the Shubra's Archive (SARD), this study identifies the challenges faced by such organizations, including the reliance on volunteers and international funding for mission implementation. It emphasizes the importance of strategic planning and collaboration with municipal and national entities to further the goals of community-based heritage management initiatives. The study also delves into the potential of digital tools in heritage management, highlighting their positive impact when implemented at the grassroots level. Based on empirical insights and conversations with SARD's founder and volunteers, strategic recommendations are offered to enhance the organization's effectiveness and sustainability. These recommendations include continued digitization efforts, community engagement, and collaboration with governmental bodies and other stakeholders. Looking ahead, the study advocates for ongoing research and innovation in heritage management. It emphasizes the importance of continual collaboration and adaptation to evolving contexts, both locally and globally, to ensure the preservation and promotion of intangible heritage in Cairo.

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1. *Introduction, research question and methodology*

The field of cultural heritage preservation is subject to societal, economic and technological developments. Heritage management is subject to financial allocation, interests from heritage organizations and other stakeholders, and the capabilities of professionals in the field to document and archive sites, artifacts and rituals. Identities and narratives produced by governing entities interact with heritage management and funding priorities. Often, state narratives omit local narratives or those of marginalized communities. This in turn can lead to skewed heritage management practices, as they do not always serve those that practice them or derive identity from it.

Since the integration of the internet as a valuable tool in our lives around the beginning of the 2000s, cultural heritage institutions have made it part of their modus operandi. AI, NFTs and blockchain technology have proven to be useful tools for the documentation of heritage, as well as for archival and reconstruction work (Jia et. al, 2023, p. 15). Digitisation of heritage is used to safeguard it, disseminate it and make it widely accessible through public websites and online archives. Furthermore, it can be used to give agency to communities over their own heritage as they can create their own archives and websites. As mentioned above, this is not always ensured in current heritage management practices and research surrounding heritage.

Due to climate change, conflict, and demolition of cultural heritage, sites and artifacts are coming under pressure worldwide. In Cairo, bad air quality and groundwater issues have affected the built heritage, but current government demolition of heritage sites in the city presents a greater and more imminent threat (Maher, 2023). Globalization and digitisation also leads to a homogenisation of practices that can result in loss of intangible heritage (Stefano, 2019). Specific traditions and rituals that are part of Cairo's intangible heritage are disappearing. This type of heritage is particularly hard to preserve and archive, as it cannot be put in a library or museum. It is - as is the case with all heritage - deeply human and requires knowledge disseminated between and within communities.

To summarize, intangible heritage in Cairo is under threat due to an array of factors, specifically through government policy and skewed government and international narratives that are not in line with local identities and heritage practices. Moreover, digitisation is permeating into heritage management, proving to be a helpful tool in order to give agency back to local heritage practitioners and safeguard its heritage. In this thesis the research will focus on the following research question: *Which tools can aid the management of intangible cultural heritage in community based heritage organizations in Cairo? (case study of Shubra's Archive)* I will elaborate on the research question in the introduction. Furthermore, I will highlight the structure of the thesis and my methodology as well as the case study this research will center around: Shubra's Archive.

There are many foreign and national actors within the heritage management sector in Cairo, which means Egyptians in some cases do not have access to their own heritage management processes (Osman, 2019, p. 2909). This in turn can lead to skewed narratives, produced by individuals and entities that do not necessarily participate in the heritage practices. Heritage professionals have argued for the implementation of digital tools in heritage management as a way to give communities power over their own heritage narratives, expelling the power of foreign actors to allocate heritage funding and narratives. Due to the wide-spread availability of the internet, digital tools can become a way in which the top-down conceptions of heritage can be eliminated or amended. Local archives and community efforts to preserve heritage give agency to the heritage practitioners directly, without having to abide by regulations of international entities such as UNESCO and ICOMOS. Among others, Trček (2022) and Ben Yehia and Bouslama (2023) have sought to understand the implications of the digital revolution on cultural heritage preservation. Furthermore, they advise cultural heritage professionals on how to best integrate new technologies in safeguarding historical artifacts, sites and other cultural expressions. The articles mention the democratizing factor these emerging technologies can have on the preservation process in the Global South, which remains largely in the hands of international institutions and foreign research bodies. The upkeep, research and documentation of these sites remains largely in the hands of UNESCO and other non-Egyptian entities. I will critically discuss 'democratization of heritage' and the influence of foreign actors in the research.

Flows of funding, as I will highlight in the stakeholder analysis chapter of my research, often do not originate from the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, but from European and North American embassies and NGOs. This leads to the promulgation of an imperialist structure which was created in the 1800s, when looking at the ways in which states in the Middle East and North Africa have to fund preservational work (McNiven, 2014, p. 1911). I will highlight the history of this colonial structure and the implications it has on current heritage management practices in Cairo today in the historical contextualisation of the research. The flows of funding that do originate from Egypt often have traces of Orientalism and colonialism within them which omits or marginalizes some expressions of heritage (Daher & Maffi, 2014, p. 4). An example is the continued hypernationalism in Egypt under president Sisi which uses Ancient Egypt as a marker of a glorious past and present, culminating in ceremonies such as the Pharaohs Golden Parade in 2021. This ceremony promulgates the Orientalist notions found in 19th century 'Egyptomania' of Europe. This notion will be further unpacked throughout the literature review.

As the internet is widely used in Egypt, it can be a tool that grants access to individuals and grassroot organizations that want to enter the field of heritage in Cairo in a more equitable way. According to a Datareporter report written by Kemp (2024), 80 million Egyptians are currently using the internet in some form. This is 72.2 percent of the population. As the internet is so widely used in Egypt, it can aid heritage organizations that are active within the field to safeguard their work through digitalisation and explore new ways of transmitting their archive and message. I will explore digital tools in chapter 8.

This research will deal with these themes in the following way. First, the research will present the case study that is at the center of the research: Shubra's Archive. Throughout this research, I will refer back to it at various points as a way to anchor its work into overarching academia. This organization focuses on the central role of oral narratives, local heritage and personal practices. In other words, most of its preservation and archival work centers around intangible heritage. An example of this is the project '*Archiving Everyday*' in which Mina Ibrahim has done research on '*The Home as an Archive of Neighborhood and Community'* (Noshokaty, 2024). This project marries tangible objects found in the home with family traditions and other intangible practices. By analyzing SARD's digital capabilities, I will be able to give recommendations on the

practical ways in which this organization could benefit from digital tools, while maintaining an autonomy in its management of heritage.

I will then present the conceptualisation of 'cultural heritage' as a way to create the framework for the rest of the research. By understanding the definition of cultural heritage and the narratives that surround it, I have highlighted the complex nature of studying the topic as well as the discussions that exist in academia today. I will give special attention to the definition of heritage that is adjusted to the specificities of the region. Furthermore, I would like to unpack the definition and development of *intangible* cultural heritage as a subspecialty within heritage studies.

The literature review will survey the current state of research regarding digitalisation and cultural heritage. First, it will historicize the current status quo of heritage management in the city of Cairo. By providing historical context, the research presents an understanding of how we got to the current state of affairs. By looking at the development of heritage management in the city of Cairo, I will understand how the current structure of heritage management has emerged. Furthermore, the review will survey current intangible heritage conservation projects. After this, the literature review will pay specific attention to the democratizing elements of digitalisation as well as the novel trends within digitalisation and intangible heritage. It will also analyze case studies from across the world that highlight ways in which digitalisation of (intangible) heritage has a successful impact. By doing this, I will have an understanding of the ways in which I can best go about applying digital tools in the case of Cairo. Furthermore, I will seek case studies of instances in which digital tools give agency to communities in their own heritage, rather than national or international organizations that can have a different view on what cultural heritage should be presented as or perceived as. In the case of Egypt, there is a clear distinction between funding and narratives surrounding ancient Egypt and Islamic or Coptic heritage. This is in many ways due to the government's utilization of this 'Pharaonic' heritage in positioning itself in a grand history of Egypt. Some academics refer to the current allocation of funding as the shaping of a 'civilisation-state', using its historical culture and identity as a way to shape its current identity (Moneer et. al., 2024). Moreover, the Pharaonic heritage attracts tourism from all over

the world, a crucial source of revenue for the government. I will delve into these themes throughout the literature review and my analysis of cultural heritage organizations in Cairo.

The sixth chapter of this research will map out all stakeholders of cultural heritage preservation in Cairo and their practices. By understanding the methodologies of the stakeholders, the research will be able to assess the issues that the cultural heritage sector is facing and the way in which digitalisation could play a role. The stakeholder analysis will look at international, national and local funding and the ways in which *intangible* heritage is managed in Cairo.

Then, the research will present current day developments in digitisation of cultural heritage and the benefits this has on intangible heritage management. It will also critically review the concept of 'democratization of heritage'.

After surveying the stakeholders in Cairo's cultural heritage network, as well as zooming in on Shubra's Archive, the research will be able to present tangible solutions to issues cultural heritage organizations in Cairo deal with while maintaining a community-based approach.

Methodology

The case study research will be conducted by speaking to heritage professionals in Shubra's Archive. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted in order to get a general understanding of the status quo of their modus operandi regarding intangible heritage and the use of digital tools. These interviews will be conducted in English. Furthermore, I will conduct ethnographic research through observing the day to day activities of *Shubra's Archive*. By assessing my observations, I will be able to better advise those working at the organization on how to implement digital tools.

Then, the research will center around a comparative literature review incorporating academic works found in the AUC Library and in external online archives of UNESCO, ICOMOS and the *Comité de Conservation.* These entities have extensive repositories that include intangible heritage preservation practices that will help create the framework for the rest of the research. Furthermore, web searches will aid in making a general overview of the network of cultural heritage organizations that are active in the city of Cairo. Finally, a survey of other heritage organizations and their use of digital technologies will aid in understanding which practices are successful in achieving sound and equitable heritage management.

When conducting anthropological ethnographic research, it is vital to adhere to ethical and institutional guidelines to make sure the individuals that are subject to the research are respected, while being mindful of their position within their community and organization. Some key values must be considered:

- Informed consent and cultural sensitivity. Before I conduct the research (both interviews and observations) I have to communicate the purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits of the research. I need to obtain informed consent. It is vital to acknowledge the cultural sensitivities (for example conducting the work in English as a European woman) and power dynamics that come into play. Respect for the cultural norms, beliefs and practices are paramount in the research. It is vital to reflect on my own biases, assumptions, and technical background as a set of beliefs that could impact the outcome

of the research. I have to be transparent about these beliefs and about my intended outcomes.

- Confidentiality and anonymity: if participants request to participate anonymously in the research, this is of utmost importance. Personal and sensitive information must be stored securely and only accessed by me.
- Minimization of harm: Take measures to minimize any potential harm or negative consequences that may arise from the research. This includes avoiding exploitation, stigmatization, or unintended negative impacts on individuals or communities.
- Partnerships and collaboration: the intent of this research is to collaborate with the organization rather than see them as subjects and want to include them throughout the research and outputs. By seeing the participants as partners rather than subjects, more fruitful outcomes can be achieved.
- Mutual benefit : the research must contribute to the overall well-being of the individuals and communities. The research findings are intended to promote positive change. For me as a researcher, the research will increase my academic abilities.

2. *Shubra's Archive*

As I will let the literature review and general research center around the case study of Shubra's Archive, it is important to introduce this organization and the work it does. I have decided to choose this organization for several reasons. I will elaborate on these reasons in the following chapter of the research. Firstly, Shubra's Archive recognizes the importance of incorporating 'the normal' or 'the everyday' in their work as a way to truly capture the essence of an identity of a community. The everyday is an abstract term that encompasses rituals of normality, things that are in no way outstanding to the practitioners but do shape their identity in the bricolage of their life and of the lives of members of the community. Things such as groceries, cooking, cleaning, marriage and death highlight identity in a profound way. By moving away from extraordinary practices such as religious holidays or dance rituals, and into the ordinary, heritage professionals can assess daily life and daily practices of which most of life is composed. Notwithstanding, 'extraordinary' practices such as the birth of children, weddings or religious holidays add context to the everyday. A combination of 'the extraordinary' (traditionally presented in national museums and world heritage) and 'the ordinary' (including daily rituals of communities) include a more diverse set of narratives. Heritage, as I will discuss at length, is a tool to negotiate identity as presented by Latour (2005). Heritage can be anything in this argument, anything that can be used as a benchmark to derive identity from. I would like to present my case study with this idea of intangible heritage in mind. After presenting a general overview of Shubra's Archive and the work they currently do, I will assess the digital needs of the organization based on the literature review regarding digital tools. In the appendix of this research, I have added preliminary recommendations that can be implemented within the organization.

2.1 Shubra's Archive: an overview

Shubra's Archive (SARD Center) is an independent research organization that was established in 2021 by archivist and anthropologist Mina Ibrahim. The aim of Shubra's Archive is to build grassroot, accessible, open-ended and participatory archives in the neighborhood of Shubra, in Northern Cairo. Ibrahim started Shubra's Archive after seeing the area he grew up in being represented in academic and non-academic work. However, there was no space in the community in which residents could reflect on or engage with the work that had been written about them. Furthermore, it was started with the idea that although this space contributes to the production of knowledge in books, journal articles, novels and movies, they are not circulated and preserved there. Shubra, in Ibrahim's opinion, was a place that was written *about* rather than *with.* Ibrahim recognized that there was no community archive in which the narrative about the area could be created *by* the inhabitants, not *about*, through various state-led research institutes, media companies (such as Dalida's glamorous visit to her home in Shubra in the *Helwa ya Baladi* videoclip) or foreign universities. In an interview with Ibrahim, he mentioned that he found it important to make communities *visible* that had long been *invisible.* Ibrahim believes in the power of the mundane as a way to highlight community dynamics and changes throughout history. Ibrahim has chosen Shubra as the area of his research as he grew up in this area, his family still resides there and he recognized the lack of research done in *with* the area, not just *about* it.

Figure 6: Map of the Shubra area. Source: Cairo.gov.eg

SARD brings together a team of researchers who are interested in history, anthropology, and documentation practices. They combine their knowledge and skills in order to create an archive for the popular neighborhood through oral history narratives, archives, and secondary resources that are connected to people's stories and family archives (such as letters, receipts and marriage certificates). In other words, SARD tries to capture the aspects of Shubra's identity through its most mundane acts, in combination with documentation of life events. SARD rests on two pillars: research and learning. In 2021, a group of scholars convened in Shubra to learn about oral history, family history, methods of archiving, digital humanities, ethnography, photography and film. The outset of this project was different from many other heritage archives. Ibrahim and his team started with no collection at all. Rather, he started to ask people in the community for ordinary things, things that individuals often do not see as a noteworthy thing to archive. After this initial phase, SARD's core team allocated a space (the family home of founder Mina Ibrahim) and chose a first topic of research. The challenge of choosing this topic was not to isolate Shubra from its surroundings through the research, but also not to confine the research to one specific discipline. Thus, the first project of researching the several aspects of tram lines was born - connecting both the physical space through trams as well as the disciplines.

SARD's goal for the organization is twofold. Firstly, they would like to encourage members of the community to have their own personal archives. By teaching them the value of curating a personal collection of things that tie into their everyday lives, they can come to understand how their identity is shaped and how it changes over time. Then, Ibrahim and his team would like to add all the personal collections into a shared network of individuals and families within Shubra, as a way to truly create a *community* archive from the bottom-up. The narratives of individuals are paramount in this process as they decide what they deem relevant and what encapsulates their identity. According to Ibrahim, if SARD had a comprehensive online archive that could be presented through a website, more individuals within the community would understand why their input is relevant. To this end, enhancing the digital capabilities of the organization is very important. Their approach to heritage management and data collection falls into the community based approach as presented by Sedky (2009). This approach should ensure the inclusion of all types of narratives, expressions and narratives. Ibrahim aspires to have the SARD office as a community center, where residents can come and speak freely about their experiences, rituals and share their personal archives. By having the office in the middle of the neighborhood, this goal becomes more feasible: the community gets to know the organization and vice versa. Somewhat frequently members of the community will come to the office to deliver a box of documents, photos and stories. Slowly, the mission of Ibrahim is spreading in the area. However, SARD does not yet have the proper instruments to archive these documents without damaging them.

SARD currently has several grant applications pending. We have recognized 3 goals to implement SARD's mission using these funds:

1. Obtain a professional scanner to further digitize the archives without damage.
2. Hire a web developer that can maintain the archive and the website and graphic designer to transmit the archive and share the mission with a larger audience.
3. Curate an exhibition out of the collections. The exhibition will be held in Shubra as a way to show residents of Shubra about the work of the organization. However, the exhibition will be open to all that are interested. It will be an introduction to the neighborhood for those that have never visited, engaging new audiences to the intangible heritage of the area.

Figure 1 and 2: The current archive of SARD, in which some parts are digitized through a scanner. Most of the archives however, are not. The archives are sorted based on their source (individual, municipality). An example is photo's of residents of Shubra. If SARD cannot trace back to the exact person, they will categorize it under the photo studio the photo was taken in. This is often marked with a stamp. But if the person in the picture is known, the collection will be built around the person. This way, as the archive grows, so can personal collections. If a picture of the French school in Shubra needs to be archived, it will be archived under 'French school' rather than that of the photo studio that has taken the picture.

Figure 3 and 4: A selection of documents in possession of SARD. Top photo: letters that were sent to Shubra throughout history (categorized based on address). Bottom: a marriage certificate including dowry and other agreements between the bride and groom (categorized under the municipality).

2.2 Grant applications

SARD is collaborating with the Dutch and Flemish institute in Cairo (NVIC) to apply for the grant for a scanner. NVIC has offered to share their network and knowledge of grants to SARD and NVIC can act as a mediator and mentor in the application process. I found it important to mention the pending grant applications as I will be able to anchor this in the stakeholder analysis that I have made of heritage management in Cairo, as well as to show foreign flows of funding. Currently, SARD does not have any funding and all the work is done voluntarily, on top of the other academic and non-academic commitments of the volunteers. By increasing funding, SARD can expand their work and have full-time employees. The entities SARD has currently applied to are:

- EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture) Arts and Culture grant. Every year, Open Calls for grants are issued for Egyptian artists and creatives who wish to realize their artistic projects in Egypt, with no restrictions based on age or theme. The primary requirement is that the applicant must be Egyptian, their project must relate to arts and culture, and it must be executed in Egypt. Examples of eligible artistic and cultural projects include, but are not limited to: dance, music, theater, visual arts, design, crafts, cinema, painting, photography, and literature.
- Werner Mark Linz Memorial Grant. This award funds academic research projects that touch on history, art history and religion of the region during *any* time period. The grant is aimed at academic researchers based anywhere in the world, as long as they engage with the aforementioned topics. They specifically welcome collaborative projects involving researchers from the MENA region and the West, researchers based at academic institutions in the MENA region or those that plan to return to the MENA region, and regions/countries in which there is limited financial support for research. This grant, if awarded to SARD, will be allocated to a new project about documental missionary spaces in Shubra. The project is currently being planned but will involve documentation of sound, photography, videos and documents.
- AFAC (Arab Fund for Arts and Culture) grant. Specifically, the National Cultural Opportunities Fund (NCOF) with the North Africa Cultural Program (NACP). The NCOF scheme is dedicated to arts and culture institutions and spaces in each of the five

North African countries. It offers institutional and programmatic support for entities with a track record of strong public programming, and who contribute to the diversification of cultural activities in city centers and peripheries equally. SARD is encouraged to apply to this grant in union with other heritage institutions in Egypt, as a way to collaborate and strengthen each other's capacities. SARD has applied with Wekalet Behna - an artistic institution in Alexandria focused on cinema, participatory art and education - and Cimatheque - an alternative film center in Downtown Cairo that supports independent Egyptian filmmakers.

Pending grants

SARD will potentially apply to the UCLA Modern Endangered Archives Fund in the upcoming months. This grant can be used to further digitize archives and curate already digitized assets. UCLA recognizes the full lifecycle of digitisation: from imaging, content description, creation of metadata and delivery of digital assets.

Overall, I can conclude that all of the funding of SARD continues to originate from outside of Egypt. With the exception of AFAC, they also all originate from outside of the region. This solidifies my argument that there is still a certain level of foreign or even neocolonial (in the case of British funders) influence in heritage management in the city. I will discuss this more in depth in the stakeholder section of this research. Furthermore, SARD shows that local community-based organizations have trouble collaborating with national entities for their funding or overall policy-making.

2.3 Current digital technologies used by SARD

After my initial research of SARD I assessed the current use of digital technologies within the organization through an unstructured interview with Mina Ibrahim and Yasmin Ismail, researchers at SARD. Furthermore, I engaged with the researchers through Zoom meetings of the SARD team discussing updates about funding and other advancements of the organization. This analysis is important for the rest of the research as, at the core of the idea of this research, I believe digitisation of heritage has a generally positive impact on intangible heritage management and could help local heritage organizations safeguard their archive as well as increase their outreach to people in Cairo and in the rest of the world.

SARD publicizes its archives and knowledge production through Facebook and Instagram profile. These social media profiles present their ongoing and past projects, events and stories from within the archive. The main language of the social media profiles is Arabic, with some posts having English captions beneath. SARD has also been interviewed by a few local and national news outlets. When searching for the organization, these articles also pop up. This means there is a significant amount of local and national interest for the organization as the first in its kind in Egypt.

Data storage is done using Google Drive. As most of the material that is archived is made of paper (letters, certificates, photo's) the researchers use a small photocopier to digitize them. For fragile documents, either with a thin type of paper or if they are very old, are not suitable to be photocopied using their copier. They currently do not have the funding to acquire a more advanced copier and thus cannot digitize part of their archive. Recordings of oral stories are done using a mobile phone that belongs to the researcher conducting the conversations with the inhabitants of Shubra.

SARD expressed that they would like to build their own server and website as a way to share their archive and safely archive their collection, both the analogue files and the files that are currently on their Google Drive. They currently do not have extensive expertise or funding for this. An issue that we discussed with this application had to do with the stability of the internet and electricity in Shubra. Cairo currently faces almost daily power outages which are scheduled

for one or two hours throughout the city, as a way to alleviate the burden on the power grid. This affects the router and the computers that should be on continually to ensure the server continues to function and no data is lost. It is thus important to factor this into the digital recommendations.

Now that I have presented the case study that will be at the heart of my research, I will analyze core concepts that are at the basis of the numerous debates surrounding cultural heritage management in the current age, as well as a historical context of Cairo's heritage. I will place SARD into this debate throughout as its existence has emerged from this history and the debates surrounding heritage management in the city.

3. Definitions and conceptualisations of heritage

There is a lively discussion within heritage studies about the exact definition of the term 'cultural heritage.' The issue with defining cultural heritage is, to put it shortly, that there is no agreed upon definition (Blake, 2000, p. 63). Rather, heritage is deeply intertwined with individual identity and expressions, which means that definitions vary based on who is giving the definition. Defining cultural heritage is intertwined with the construction of a cultural and national identity, making a definition even more complex (Blake, 2000, p. 63). Without a working definition of heritage, however, the danger exists of creating tools and institutions to protect it in the absence of any agreement over what should be included in these efforts or over what these efforts should be. Furthermore, a lack of definition can lead to the absence of solid principles to govern the designation and management of heritage.

As a starting point, Blake (2000) defines heritage as the following:

> First, is the sense that it is a form of inheritance to be kept in safekeeping and handed down to future generations. Another important aspect of cultural heritage is its linkage with group identity and it is both a symbol of the cultural identity of a self-identified group, be it a nation or a people, and an essential element in the construction of that group's identity. This characteristic of cultural heritage is thus "less a substance than a quality'' and is some kind of added value which carries an emotional impact, such as the colonial architecture which may inspire a sense of familiarity and even pride. In this way, cultural heritage is less of an objective, physical existence than the range of associations which accompany an object or monument and which provide the sense of being part of a group. (Blake, 2000, p. 84).

Blake (2000) argues that cultural heritage is a vehicle for the expression and the basis of a community or national identity. This definition is a good place to start, but would like to amend it on certain points, specifically with regards to the Islamic and Arab context. As well as being a symbol strengthening a sense of identity, heritage is also an "inheritance" that is "handed down" to future generations. This suggests that there is a consensus over what should be recognized as a valuable and valid component of identity. Furthermore, the definition presents heritage as an

abstract thing, leaving out its physical characteristics. I will discuss the notion of ‘politics of heritage’ later in this research, but it is important to note that the allocation of heritage is not a unified process, but rather is a process of discussion and diverging conceptions between class, ethnicity, gender and so on.

Latour’s (2005) contribution to the idea of objects and agency through the actor-network theory may be helpful in understanding the idea of heritage further. He proposes that humans and non-human entities (also referred to as actants) participate in networks of relationship and have agency. Objects, according to Latour (2005) are thus not passive entities but active participants that shape social interactions and processes. They are not static but rather part of the general network that comprise the heritage making process. Objects have agency as they can influence human behavior and arrangements that are made in communities. They can mediate social interactions. Objects, according to him, do not have inherent agency but rather emerge from interactions within the network of associations. Furthermore, Latour (2005) emphasizes the concept of "immutable mobiles," referring to objects that have the ability to travel across different contexts and retain their significance and influence. These objects, such as maps, documents, or artifacts, play a crucial role in shaping knowledge, power, and social order. How do we use this theory in understanding cultural heritage? In line with Blake (2000), Latour (2005) gives agency to inanimate objects, spaces or traditions. It is not so much the objects themselves that are a source of heritage, but rather the relation it has with humans and the way it falls within the process of shaping identity. Latour (2005) emphasizes that heritage objects such as monuments, documents and even intangible heritage practices are not representations of the past, but rather actants in shaping social relations and identity. These objects or practices influence collective memory, thus in this way have agency. Finally, Latour (2005) highlights the role of assemblages (networks) in producing and maintaining heritage. Heritage objects are not static but emerge from dynamic networks between actors such as communities, institutions, experts, governments and individuals. This comes with processes of negotiation, contestation and power struggles. In these processes, objects and practices are central.

Harrison's (2012) book critically reviews the notions used when defining cultural heritage. In line with Blake (2000) he agrees that this 'conveniently ambiguous' concept has been used for social and political goals (Harrison, 2000, p. 14). This ambiguity becomes more obscure when viewed through the lens of 'global heritage management' or 'world heritage' – terms suggesting that cultural heritage can be owned by humanity as a whole, rather than by a single nation or community. The Pyramids in Cairo are often cited as being one of the main sites related to 'world heritage'. In this narrative, the Pyramids do not belong to their surroundings but rather something to all human beings. Stripped of local context, the definition of world heritage becomes problematic and vague. Harrison (2012) argues that heritage is not a 'thing' or historical and political movement, but rather a set of attitudes to, and relationships with, the past (Harrison, 2012, p. 14). The forms of the relationship or attitude vary, and can manifest in relation to an object, building, place or intangible thing or practice. Heritage thus can be many things - in fact any 'thing' that symbolizes a relationship to a past, a memory and an identity. Harrison (2012) also discusses the development of heritage throughout history, by way of explaining how it arrived at its present conceptualization. He argues that the creation of 'world heritage' was fueled by colonialism and Western expansionism, as a way to appropriate foreign cultures and identities as their own (Harrison, 2012, p. 44). Furthermore, Western understandings of heritage tend to leave out intangible, abstract or even spiritual and magical values that are given to heritage by other cultures. By historicizing the term, I can unearth it in a decolonized form long before globalism or 'world heritage' became widespread ideas. I will engage with this argument throughout the historical overview chapter.

Simpson (2018) argues that traditional notions of heritage stemming from the West prioritize tangible heritage, in the form of monuments and sites (Simpson, 2018, p. 1). Furthermore, these definitions fail to capture the dynamic and highly diverse cultural practices and sets of values that are found in non-Western notions of heritage. Simpson (2018) draws on examples from Africa, the Pacific and Asia to highlight alternative understandings of heritage. Oral traditions, performing arts, poetry and spiritual beliefs make up a vital part of heritage that is often left out in world heritage conventions or heritage organizations that deal with preservation and management. Furthermore, Simpson (2018) urges heritage practitioners to recognize that heritage is not static but can actually be altered or added to in ways that allow it to survive and

evolve in contemporary life. However, as my research will highlight, heritage professionals are slowly broadening their understanding of heritage and specifically intangible heritage. Simpson (2018) also describes the democratization of heritage - something that will be discussed extensively within this research. Democratization of heritage facilitates the participation of groups or 'heritage communities' - actors within the realm of heritage that value the heritage and work to sustain it and transmit it to the future (Simpson, 2018, p. 4). Heritage discourse and management should have a bottom-up approach according to Simpson (2018), in which there is space to reinterpret its history. There should be space for the voices of those who were previously unheard or marginalized. As a result, 'dissonant heritage' can be created: historical narratives and multiple viewpoints within heritage that challenge dominant or conventional versions. This way, traditional views, often dictated by Western powers, can be understood as something other than a 'national' or 'universal' set of ideas surrounding heritage (Simpson, 2018, p. 4). A set of local heritage organizations such as SARD can contribute greatly to local interpretations of heritage and embody 'dissonant heritage' as actors contributing to the network of organizations that challenge national identity and heritage.

Daher and Maffi (2014) propose introducing a definition of heritage in the context of the Arab and Islamic world. The book firstly highlights the emergence of cultural heritage, and the Orientalist gaze that quickly followed (Daher & Maffi, 2014, p. 4). Firstly, which pre-colonial notions of cultural heritage exist in the Arab world? The words used to designate heritage in Arabic are *turath, athar* or *turath sha'bi* (Colla, 2007, p. 72). The first word, *turath,* covers the area of inheritance or heritage (both tangible and intangible). The word has long existed, and only recently been adopted to refer to what the English language describes as *heritage.* Our first clue of the difference in cultural views towards heritage thus presents itself here. Before the rise of the categorisation 'heritage' Arab geographers would often refer to monuments of the past as '*ajaib'* or wonders. The monuments would include buildings (dating from pre-Islamic and Islamic times) as well as animals such as hippos and crocodiles. The term *athar* (material traces of the past such as ruins) only started to be used during colonial times when colonial powers created *services des antiquités.* The term *turath sha'bi* was used in the 1950s, a time when Arab nationalism was at its peak (Colla, 2007, p. 74). To create nations in the post-colonial era, newly independent states and governments created a strongly *Arab* and *nationalistic* set of heritage,

ranging from folklore tales to songs, poems, dances, handicrafts but also rugs, costumes and artifacts. Even during the colonial period, countries such as Egypt utilized heritage as a way to shape their identity, starting with Mohammed Ali Pasha. I will discuss this further in the historical context.

An important part of the region's intangible heritage is embodied in Arabic poetry. Before Islamic oral traditions emerged, there was already a strong production of poetry. The pre-Islamic poetry can be characterized as having a strong emotive language rather than soft phrases, short ideas but with loosely connected verses. The poetry during this time would start with romantic or nostalgic preludes (Allen, 1998, p. 126). The thematic unit or *nasib* that precluded the poem would remember beloved women, deserted homes and the ruins of their homes. This concept is referred to as "*al-woqouf `ala al-atlal*" (الوقوف على الأطلال / standing by the ruins) because the poet would often start his poem by saying that he stood at the ruins of his beloved and ruins of all he knew. The aspect of ruins alludes to a consciousness of history, one of a beloved place that is embodied through forms of heritage. Oral traditions through poetry thus become a way in which the identity of those consuming the poetry is collected and preserved, similar to artifacts or monuments that are referred to as heritage. In line with Latour (2005) poetry thus becomes something with agency. It plays a significant role in the process of shaping identity, as it actively embodies the past in the present negotiation of heritage allocation and network of humans interacting with each other. Poetry becomes an anchor of such, something that the contemporary can consume with and interact with.

Hodjat (1995) has done unique research on the ways in which ‘the past’ or ‘heritage’ in the modern sense of the world was discussed in the Quran (Hodjat, 1995, p. 5). This research is a useful way of understanding one of the main guiding principles Muslims follow towards relics of the past in relation to the present as a way to utilize heritage objects as a tool to shape identity. Certain verses of the Quran acknowledge the instructive nature the past can have. Furthermore, verses encourage people to travel the earth and learn from the remains of the past and previous civilizations. Significantly, there was a specific reference not to the physical remains of the past in the forms of buildings or relics, but rather the messages they convey for future generations (Hodjat, 1995, p. 9). Heritage, as interpreted by Hodjat (1995) and according to Islam, becomes a far more abstract thing than modern conceptions describe it as. It is not related to buildings or

artifacts per se but rather ideas and identities that guide the present and future. In this way *anything* can be heritage if it provides humanity with a sense of guidance or belonging.

According to Daher and Maffi (2014), heritage is sometimes understood through the terms *habous* or *waqf*, which refer to religious endowment. It is important to mention however that the terms were not traditionally used to indicate something of historical, cultural or artistic value as the world heritage does currently (Daher & Maffi, 2014, p. 9). They were however networks of humans and objects - tangible or intangible - that had to be preserved for eternity as charitable foundations or protected natural areas. In the modern age the Arab world still knows the concept of *waqf*, which is often found in an institutional setting. Institutions that are engaged with *waqf* preserve and manage Islamic heritage. Interestingly, there is a conflict between ministries of tourism and *waqf* in some countries, highlighting the overlap between cultural heritage and Islamic heritage. In Cairo we see this in the conservation of buildings; the line between which ministry is responsible for what is blurry. It highlights the deeply political nature of heritage management that is subject to a variety of interpretations and interests. I will further discuss this in the stakeholder analysis section.

In sum, management of heritage has existed in the Middle East for as long as humans lived in communities, shaping their identity based on the world around them. The designation of heritage in the European sense however did not reflect much of these types of heritages. On the contrary, a colonial ideology shaped the designation of heritage in many ways. Firstly, cultural heritage as we know it today is an imported concept, introduced in the nineteenth century by European officers, functionaries and diplomats (Daher & Maffi, 2014, p. 10). These representatives of the colonial powers were initially less focused on Arab or Islamic built heritage - they perceived this as exotic and uncivilized. Civilized, in their interpretation, was European culture which included art, music, science and architecture. Rather, they focused on pre-Islamic monuments, looking for the roots of Western civilization. The remains of Sumerians, Acadians, Babylonians, Romans, Hellenics and Byzantines were of more interest to them as they could be linked back to their own civilizations. Only later did anthropologists and ethnographers start to heavily document this Islamic and Arab heritage, guided by the work of the Comité. Their definition of cultural heritage in the region (mostly in the North African coast and Levant) was thus ethnocentric and did not recognize Arab-Islamic heritage to be on the same level as these remains were. The

heritage management projects of these colonial representatives only centered around preservation and maintenance of heritage that could be (falsely) linked back to their own history. The Islamic, Jewish and Christian *waqfs* that had been in place for centuries were responsible for the maintenance of religious heritage.

The Orientalist gaze has had a significant influence on global perception of Middle Eastern cultural heritage. If, in line with Edward Said's theory of Orientalism, Europe was rational, scientific, virtuous, mature, beautiful and 'normal', the Orient must be the complete opposite. As Europe sought to assert its monopoly over the production of legitimate knowledge, it impacted the way in which the past and tradition were viewed by various societies and state institutions. Furthermore, it led to the marginalization of heritage that did not belong to Europe (Daher & Maffi, 2014, p. 4). As the dichotomy centered around 'good' and 'bad' or 'uncivilized' heritage, heritage that was not European did not receive the same care or treatment than European heritage. Orientalism impacts how the image of the nations in the Middle East were constructed to fit the imaginary or desired reality of Orientalist institutions in Europe that were occupied with heritage definition through academia, education, museums and schooling. Because of this Orientalist gaze on heritage, some urban and rural realities that did not fit the European discourse were marginalized or omitted in the imagined discourse about the region and impacted the practical execution of heritage management in the city (Daher & Maffi, 2014, p. 5).

Daher and Maffi (2014) thus warn academics working in the field of cultural heritage about a built-in Orientalist framework that might be applied inadvertently when studying it. In which way can research be culturally sensitive when it comes to this term? Daher and Maffi (2014) acknowledge the great diversity of attitudes and multiple pasts that shape cultural heritage in the region. Perceptions of heritage vary based on who is defining it, but also which historical period is being studied, and finally the economic, political, social, religious and cultural context in which the attempt to define cultural heritage occurs (Daher & Maffi, 2014, p. 6). Cultural heritage practices and notions can be underpinned by governments and institutions on an international, national and local level. There are many practices however that are not in line with institutional levels, but nevertheless represent the identity of a community or individuals. An important marginalized reality that is important to this research is that of heritage in the Arab world associated with the recent past. Examples that Daher and Maffi (2014) mention are the

urban heritage that emerges from newer cities such as Amman, Manama and Muscat (Daher & Maffi, 2014, p. 6). Granted, Cairo is by no means a new city in the way Amman is, but current Western discourses surrounding heritage in the city often omit the more recent past and focus on Ancient Egypt, together with a handful of Islamic sites and artifacts. Cairo, in many ways, matches the Orientalist model of an ‘Arab’ or ‘Islamic’ city. Daher (2007) argues that many of the Orientalist stereotypes regarding cultural heritage persisted after the end of colonialism in the region in an attempt to create a new national identity. The Orientalist 'Egyptomania’ that accompanied colonialism in Egypt and continued after is an example of this, as well as the regional struggle for power and relevance as presented by Andraos (2021). This definition of an ‘Arab’ or ‘Islamic’ city is a risky one as it is based on stereotypes, while also claiming to categorize concepts as large as it. However, the term ‘Arab’ and ‘Islamic’ seem to evoke imagery and ideas in modern schools of thought, by architects, historians and scholars that inspire the interaction with contemporary and future cities in the region (Andraos, 2021). Andraos (2021) argues that seeing cities as ‘Arab’ lets us move away from traditional debate approaches to understanding cities in the region - understandings that exoticized the region or even made spectators fearful. We have been seeing, for more than a generation, the destruction of old city centers and the creation of new ones. Old centers, such as in Beirut, Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo embody a complex relationship with modernity - as a struggle and embrace - that is manifested through literature, poetry, art, philosophy and political thought (Andraos, 2021). It is also manifested in architectural and urban experiments that launched in the 19th and 20th century during the end of the Ottoman empire. Newer centers, such as Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Doha, are in stark contrast to these old cities, and seem to fast track from tradition to modernity. Nevertheless, they are ‘Arab’ cities, which challenge the traditional conceptions there are of this category of cities. The design of cities embody a battle for power and struggle for identity within all of the Arab cities: attempts to engage modernity versus conservative efforts to maintain. This battle helps to understand the vast number of nuances that exist with ‘Arab’ or ‘Arab-Islamic’: battles of ethnicity, tradition, religious identity, of which architecture and heritage management is used as both a tool and a symbol. There is thus an active conversation within the Egyptian government regarding the definition of Egyptian or Cairene heritage. This constant negotiation of heritage and its allocation is at the heart of identity shaping.

Mahdy (2019) underlines the notion of marginalization of Arab and Islamic forms of heritage management and preservation. Arab and Islamic societies have developed a highly sophisticated level of recognition for the importance of heritage, specifically intangible heritage. These practices have often been ignored by Eurocentric conservation practices (Mahdy, 2019). This, in line with Foucault's (1972) theory of power/knowledge dyad - as discussed in the next paragraph - has led to an indifference or hostility towards professionally managed heritage. Mahdy (2019) acknowledges a shift towards a values-based conservation and importance of the democratization of heritage practices, but still argues that heritage professionals ignore Islam as a world view and value system through which management should be designed. A values-based conservation approach suggests that the belief system of the community dictates the way heritage is managed, as this heritage is at the core of the identity of the community. Democratization of heritage management would mean that local communities are at the center of heritage management, rather than governments or international institutions.

Mahdy (2019) recommends the following for those seeking to work with heritage in the Arab and Islamic context. Firstly, Mahdy mentions the importance of identifying the causes of conflicting attitudes within the Islamic context in an effort to bridge the gap between conservation professionals and local stakeholders, such as religious communities (Mahdy, 2019). The different values should be taken seriously, and should always show deep respect for the local cultures. Furthermore, Islam should be seen as a way of living and a framework in which heritage was created and continues to exist. Heritage values cannot be seen separately from ethical values. Furthermore, scientific values - and by default scientifically approved archaeological values are equally as important. Tools, mechanisms, and methods of identifying and assessing the integrity and authenticity of heritage that were developed throughout the long history of Islamic civilization should be studied, respected, and when applicable implemented. Built heritage should be in harmony with a sustainable management of its environment, with the revitalization as something that is seen as uplifting not just a building but its surroundings too. Islamic methods, tools and approaches should be reconciled with international conservation practices in order to ensure the best outcome of preservation practices (Mahdy, 2019). An example is the emphasis of 'recycling' older buildings to give them new functions rather than demolishment and replacement. This is synonymous with a core Islamic value that opposes

wastefulness. The Mosque of Abul Hajjaj in Luxor, for instance, was built in the 13th century, but incorporated within its construction parts of the ancient Egyptian Luxor Temple (Mahdy, 2019).

Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996) reiterate the immense power formal agencies such as ministries and international heritage organizations have in the definition, production, shaping and transmission of heritage. This means that formal agencies have the power to perpetuate Orientalist stereotypes on heritage in the Arab world. This has an impact on knowledge of heritage on a local level. Foucault (1972) exposes the reality of 'local' heritage. According to him, 'local' knowledge, narratives or stories do not exist outside of official ones, but are more like an aspect of them. This would mean that local heritage initiatives such as SARD do not have the same bottom-up approach we understand them to have. Rather, they promote the same stereotypes as top-down approaches. I would like to oppose this idea by highlighting the radically different approach SARD has to national heritage management in Egypt. As I will discuss when understanding the current recognized practices in Egypt, the 'everyday' is not recognized as being part of the list of intangible heritage. This suggests that there are differences between bottom-up and top-down approaches. However, funding of SARD and the educational backgrounds of the volunteers of SARD are, at least in part, Western and/or national institutions. This would suggest that this local organization exists within official narratives of Egypt and the world. With regards to intangible heritage, which I will dedicate the next part of this research to, based on Foucault's (1972) theory of the power/knowledge dyad, Melis and Chambers (2021) argue that the importance of safeguarding intangible heritage is constructed through the discourse that posits it as fragile and immaterial (Melis & Chambers, 2021, p. 3). The mere fact that academia and international heritage institutions understand intangible heritage as something that is difficult to preserve and something that *will* go extinct earns it the right to be documented and preserved.

3.1. Intangible heritage

As intangible heritage and the management practices around it are central to the rest of this research, I will delve into this concept thoroughly. Akagawa and Smith (2019) explore the concepts of intangible heritage, specifically its complexities and the implications of defining something as 'intangible'. Smith and Akagawa (2019) define the following things as intangible heritage: living traditions, practices, knowledge systems, skills, rituals, ceremonies, oral traditions, music, dance and more broadly 'cultural expression'. This list is long and incredibly diverse, making a definitive definition challenging, similar to defining cultural heritage more generally. Intangible heritage is not an object that can be held, or a physical space, although in many cases it is connected to these artifacts and spaces as well. What is clear is that the seeming dichotomy between 'tangible' and 'intangible' is not as sharp as international organizations such as UNESCO present it. Tangible items or spaces can aid intangible practices such as religious ceremonies, dances or handicrafts. Much like the definition of 'cultural heritage' more broadly, intangible heritage contributes to a sense of belonging, community, history and national identity. As mentioned by Latour (2005), practices are central to shaping identity as an actant in the negotiation process between humans. It is as much a repository of these things as tangible heritage is, albeit harder to put in a museum or visit as a tourist. Something that makes defining intangible heritage more challenging is the fact that it often encompasses the 'everyday' or the 'daily' rather than artworks or architectural feats that are often associated with tangible heritage. Something as ordinary as a community using a certain mode of transportation to go to work or a certain dish to feed the family can be regarded as intangible heritage. The *community* that derives identity from a heritage practice are those that share the same perception of this practice within the network of their identity-shaping negotiation. For example, all that live in a community and recognize a dish to be an actant in their identity, share heritage and thus share identity.

Akagawa and Smith (2019) highlight the challenges that defining intangible heritage presents. Issues include cultural appropriation, globalization (as discussed in the introduction of this research), technological advancements and social change. It is thus important to acknowledge the way in which tangible and intangible heritage is connected and how important it is to include individuals and local communities rather than national governments in the documentation and preservation.

Christie (2021) studies intangible heritage in the case of the Americas. Although there is a difference in local specificities within the studies, her definitions of intangible heritage are valuable. Firstly, Christie (2021) refers to the definition of intangible heritage of UNESCO. As I have highlighted, this definition of 'world heritage' through an international heritage organization is problematic. The definition is both static and omits most communities and individuals from heritage politics (Christie, 2021, p. 7). 'Heritage politics' in this context means the processes of allocation of heritage - what gets to be recognized, documented, financed and protected by UNESCO and other international and national heritage institutions. Christie (2021) as well as Robinson and Silverman (2016) question the static nature of intangible heritage and the practices that come with that. It is impossible to see something such as intangible heritage as static, as it emerges from the dynamics of popular culture. In turn, popular culture is prone to change, spontaneous cultural production which is free of state ideology (Christie, 2021, p. 7). Thus, intangible heritage must be defined, preserved and managed from within the communities that produce them - bottom-up rather than top-down. Beglia (2006) argues that the shift in heritage studies from 'heritage as artifact' to 'heritage in practice' is in line with the acknowledgement of intangible heritage as a valid form of heritage. This transition shows a certain decolonization and de-institutionalization of heritage. Intangible heritage, in this way, emerges from the relationships and expressions of people, objects, places and practices. Heritage is not a static thing but rather a link of chains of identity that keep the past alive in the present and future (Christie, 2021, p. 7). Chains of identity describe the constant negotiation that exists in categorizing oneself or one's community through the use of heritage. The transition also breaks down the divide that existed between bureaucracies (embodied in international heritage organizations and universities) and laypeople,who use artifacts as an actant to extract identity from heritage. It shows a deeper respect for indigenous people and minorities, those that have been sidelined in international practices of heritage management. SARD fits into the recent developments of heritage management. 'Local' artifacts as simple as bank statement or receipts from the supermarket become central to navigating the complex identity of the community of Shubra.

Mahdy (2019) highlights the great emphasis on oral and written expressions within Islamic and Arab intangible heritage. Examples include religious texts of the Qur'an and *hadith.* In the

secular context, poetry and prose are important examples of intangible heritage (Mahdy, 2019). Eurocentric theories of heritage management, including those institutionalized through organizations such as UNESCO, encouraged the separation of tangible and intangible heritage practices, and the exclusion of Islamic and Arab traditions within the field. Within this context, tangible and intangible heritage cannot be separated. Examples of this are the rites that exist in mausolea, with the physical spaces having little to no meaning without the practices that happen within it. The same goes for mosques, churches or synagogues in the Arab world that garner their intrinsic value through the practices that are in symbiosis with the spaces.

Intangible heritage has been under threat not just due to the Eurocentric approach of heritage management, but also through the marginalization of minorities in the Middle East and within Islam. Arnal (2021) uses the framework of international and Islamic law to understand the protection (or rather, unprotected nature) of cultural heritage, specifically intangible heritage. Islam can be, as I will highlight, an intrinsic motivator to preserve heritage through a belief system. She does, however, underpin a larger significance of intangible heritage protection within Islamic law than international law. Several Quranic passages highlight the protection of heritage. "*Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for Allah loveth not transgressors."* (Quran, 2:190, rendered by Yusuf Ali, 2001). This verse highlights the importance of proportionality in combat and in life - and can be interpreted as a request not to destroy enemy property (Arnal, 2021). The Syrian jurist al-Awza'i (774) constitutes this destruction as going against the Quran: everything in the world belongs to God, and Muslims have the responsibility to preserve this as a way to contribute to civilization. 'Everything in the world' means that there is unlimited heritage that must be protected. The Quran does not provide a distinction in heritage, which means that all property and all expressions of humanity are on equal footing and deserve protection in name of Allah. The Quran thus provides the protection of heritage as a religious commitment, one that ensures the continuity of civilization.

At a risk of making it seem like there are only two religions that shape the way in which humans have an intrinsic urge to preserve heritage and intangible practices, I would like to present the constant negotiation of the Coptic community in Egypt. Beyond these two belief systems, there are many other ways in which individuals shape their way of living. However, it examines the role of religion in Cairo's heritage management. This assessment will further highlight the

inseparable link between religion and intangible heritage as tools to shape identity. Van Doorn - Harder (2017) has compiled extensive work regarding the Coptic identity and the way in which heritage is a tool to this end. I will use this example to highlight the relation between heritage and identity, which is interwoven with a belief system. Identity, in her view, is a self-understanding of a certain group, its sense of belonging and the connections and commonalities between and among its members (Van Doorn - Harder, 2017, p. 3). Practices and cultures including values, traditions, idioms and peculiarities shape a communities heritage and identity. What then, is the intangible heritage of a Copt in Cairo? Theologically, those that are baptized into the Coptic Orthodox Church and those that are allowed to participate in the rituals of the church. Here, intangible practices are a benchmark to identity. Culturally, the identity of Copts in Cairo is anchored in ancient Egyptian heritage, dating back thousands of years (Van Doorn - Harder, 2017, p. 3). Speaking Arabic and interacting with Islamic heritage is however also part of Coptic identity. This highlights the constant negotiations surrounding identity and heritage. Language is one of the most important elements of Coptic intangible heritage in Cairo that is used as a tool for identity formation (Miyokawa, 2017, p. 151). According to Miyokawa (2017), the revival of the Coptic language has been a tool to distinguish this religious group from others in Cairo, not as being a non-Muslim group in Egypt, but rather an ethnically authentic Egyptian (Miyokawa, 2017, p. 156). Again, intangible heritage is an actant in the constant construction and negotiation of identity.

Two examples highlight the precarious nature of intangible heritage in the region. Sufism as practiced in Timbuktu, Mali, involved many rituals such as the recitation of prayers, poems, dances and chants. These rituals, or expressions of intangible heritage, are under threat due to ongoing conflict and religious extremism in the region (Arnal, 2021). Another example is the highly intangible nature of Yezidism that has come under extreme threat in recent years, again through religious extremism and marginalization. Yezidism focuses less on specific beliefs, but rather on the participation of intangible rites and behaviors. These rites have been prosecuted under Daesh and other religious groups. Arnal (2021) highlights that there is a focus within heritage management on visible destruction of heritage rather than the destruction of intangible practices. The threat to this type of heritage, through displacement, destruction or deprivation, jeopardizes the very elements of a culture that can shape identity. Furthermore, Arnal (2021)

argues for a ‘human rights’ approach to heritage management. This means that every human has the right to their own religious or non-religious practices, and the protection of the spaces that house these practices. Not only does Arnal (2021) argue for the acknowledgement of a protection of intangible heritage in international and Islamic law, she ties tangible and intangible heritage together and elements that cannot be distinguished. With this significant nuance, Arnal (2021) highlights how important a focus on intangible heritage is, as it is more marginalized and vulnerable than tangible heritage due to its humanistic and personal nature.

Overall, the literature regarding the definitions of heritage and intangible heritage highlight a shift in recent years. In many ways, academics are attempting to decolonize the terminology and definitions that categorize heritage. By moving away from the static nature in which cultural heritage is treated by international organizations through their vast lists of what can be recognized as such, the definitions of heritage can become flexible and can change throughout time. Furthermore, the shift in definitions has led to a more inclusive understanding of heritage: both in who can participate and in what constitutes heritage. The flip side of this is that heritage is even more abstract than ever before, that everything and anything can constitute heritage as long as it ties the present to the past and the past to the future. Furthermore, heritage is a tool that is used to create identity norms; of an individual, community or nation. It aids in the negotiation of a community in relation to other communities. In some cases, although this definition is oversimplified and problematic, it can even define humanity as a whole, if labeled as part of a compilation of achievements of humankind.

4. Heritage management

I will now present the framework through which academia understands *heritage management.* Which approaches are understood to be sound and useful in governing contemporary heritage management practices? Specifically, as this thesis centers around conservation in the city of Cairo, I would like to look at urban conservation as well as Arab and Islamic practices that were dominant throughout part of Cairo's history. Urban conservation practices in the form we know today arose in the nineteenth and early twentieth century as a mix of nostalgia and nationalism. Theory surrounding these practices emerged from French theorists such as Viollet-le-Duc, did not make a distinction between restoration and conservation at the time, and had a purely stylistic approach (Jokiletho, 1999, p. 202). Restoration of urban spaces was focused around government ideologies and expressions of nationalism. Later, theorists such as Loos (1870 - 1933) and Dvorak (1874 - 1921) emphasized the importance of local identities, in combination with historical characteristics. Victor Hugo (1802 - 85) recognized that urban spaces were not just archeological entities and heritage sites, but rather as living communities. Hugo argued that good urban preservation can only be achieved if the efforts are a continuation of the city's identity and heritage. Gustavo Giovannoni (1873 - 1947) went a step further, and highlighted the importance of protecting 'minor' pieces of architecture and heritage, as a way to include 'the everyday' or 'the mundane' as a cultural construct within heritage. Giovannoni looked for symbiosis between the old historical areas of a city and the new, while protecting the integrity of historical sites and not obstructing progress (Sedky, 2009, p. 40). Nevertheless, conservation and restoration were still conflated during this time. The intervention of Cesare Brandi (1906 - 88) changed this in many regards. He recognized conservation to be something of an art form, giving it a creative and sensitively critical approach. His writings inspired the charters that still govern heritage management via international heritage organizations today (Sedky, 2009, p. 41).

A helpful example of how I would like to understand heritage management and presentation is presented by Orhan Pamuk in his *Modest Manifesto for Museums* (Pamuk, 2013). In this manifesto, Pamuk (2013) urges museums and heritage organizations to embrace artifacts from homes and from the everyday. He argues the future of museums is novels, homes, stories, people, individuals - it can be small and cheap. This is in stark contrast with the current way in which museums select heritage: through epics, 'representation, monuments, history, nations, groups -

large and expensive (Pamuk, 2013). SARD's work is, in line with Pamuk's (2013) vision for the future of heritage management and museums. They too embrace artifacts from the home, from the everyday - centered around personal stories that feed into the bricolage of identity of Shubra.

Cairo exists in a heavily globalized world and is subject to charters that govern the way in which its heritage is managed. I would like to present the most important approaches to heritage and charters as a way to understand dominant ideologies within heritage preservation that have been, in some ways, implemented on a national level.

4.1 Approaches to heritage management

Before presenting a brief historical overview of the charters that have been adopted by international heritage organizations, which serve as a basis for heritage management globally, I would like to highlight the distinction between several approaches the charters have. First, the physically oriented approach to heritage management. The physically oriented approach to heritage management primarily focuses on the tangible aspects of cultural heritage, such as buildings, monuments, archaeological sites, and artifacts (Sedky, 2009, p. 41). This approach emphasizes the conservation, preservation, and restoration of physical structures and objects as a means of safeguarding cultural heritage for future generations. The physically oriented approach does not emphasize intangible heritage or the intangible qualities tangible heritage can have. Rather, management centers around maintenance of buildings, artifacts and neighborhoods in line with international guidelines of heritage conservation. There is also a focus on heritage tourism as a way to create revenue which can ideally be put back in the management of the sites.

The community oriented approach, as the name suggests, has a nuance on community involvement in all aspects of heritage management (Sedky, 2009, p. 42). The prioritizes the active involvement and participation of local communities in the identification, preservation, interpretation, and management of cultural heritage resources. This approach recognizes that communities are the custodians of their own heritage and emphasizes their rights, interests, and perspectives in decision-making processes. Key strategies in this approach include: participatory decision-making, empowerment and capacity building, cultural inclusivity, and a focus on economic development outside of just the heritage site or touristic areas. This approach is in line with the work of SARD. It encourages the community to reflect on its own identity and the way individuals within the community see themselves in relation to *others* - either other neighborhoods, the city of Cairo and Egyptians generally. SARD asks the question: what makes us *us?* Which artifacts or practices highlight this?

The general consensus to recognize communities and their identity within conservation has expanded past just tangible forms of heritage management. The awareness of the importance of intangible values within heritage have led to a more subjective approach to heritage management (Assi, 2000, p. 61). There is more emphasis on meanings and identities. Heritage is more of a

dynamic concept that evolves over time rather than something that can be put in a museum or can be fenced, so that people cannot damage the site. This approach highlights the importance of personal and collective narratives. These narratives shape the perceptions of the past, present and future and can be incredibly diverse. The diversity must be embraced, not to create exclusionary heritage management practices. It should promote dialogue and understanding, recognizing the diverse set of interpretations of narratives. It advocates for a participatory style of management that empowers individuals and communities, rather than having a top-down approach. The practices should center around stories, memories and knowledge which leads to a sense of ownership over the heritage resources. Thus, heritage becomes a dynamic performative process rather than a static entity. Heritage is related to emotion. It can evoke feelings of nostalgia, pride, belonging and attachment. Heritage management must recognize these emotional connections to an artifact or practice.

4.2 International and regional heritage charters

Now I would like to present the charters that govern international policy with regards to heritage. Specifically, I will look at intangible heritage and the ways in which this aspect of heritage is recognized and protected. I am presenting these charters here as way to understand the ways in which the complex concepts of heritage have been codified and the way in which they (attempt to) govern heritage management.

The first real charter that laid down the principles for the conservation of monuments and sites was the Venice Charter (1964) adopted by ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites). The charter was primarily focused on tangible heritage, specifically the principles and technological details of proper conservation and restoration of monuments and sites (ICOMOS, 1964). It did however set the precedent for the charters that emerged after, specifically in emphasizing the importance of preservation of heritage for future generations (ICOMOS, 1964). The charter emphasizes the importance of preserving the authenticity, integrity, and significance of heritage sites while allowing for necessary interventions to ensure their survival. Key principles outlined in the Venice Charter include respect for the original materials and design of heritage structures, avoidance of over-restoration or falsification, and documentation of interventions for future reference.

The Nara Document on Authenticity (1994) was co-created by ICOMOS, ICCROM and UNESCO during the *Nara Conference on Authenticity in Relation to the World Heritage Convention,* organized by UNESCO. It highlights the importance of living traditions and cultural contexts when creating a heritage management plan. The document highlights that cultural and heritage diversity is an essential aspect of human development and the expression of tangible and intangible heritage should be respected worldwide (ICOMOS, 1994). In line with UNESCO's conception of heritage, the document acknowledges that the cultural heritage of each is the cultural heritage of all. The responsibility of care for the heritage lies firstly in the cultural community that generated it. However, as the heritage belongs to all, conservation should adhere to international guidelines. It is thus desirable to balance the community's requirements with that of the international community , as long as the balance does not undermine fundamental cultural values (ICOMOS, 1994). As discussed, UNESCO's view on world heritage is problematic as it

omits cultural contexts in practice - regardless of the theoretical framework it presents in documents such as this one.

Another document created by UNESCO is the *UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003). This is the first convention in which a framework was established to safeguard intangible cultural heritage at an international level. The convention defines intangible cultural heritage as follows:

The "intangible cultural heritage" means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development (UNESCO, 2003). This tension between intangible cultural heritage and human rights institutions lies in the fact that heritage protection campaigns can serve ideological and political purposes such as nationalism, thus forcing the assimilation of minority groups into the dominant culture (Logan, 2009, p. 14). This is a threat to human rights.

The convention not only defines intangible cultural heritage, it presents mechanisms for inventorying and safeguarding as well as the encouragement of international coordination. The coordination, of which UNESCO acts as a forum, can be through best practice, technical assistance, and financial support through the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund (UNESCO, 2003). States parties are encouraged to establish inventories of their intangible cultural heritage and to document and raise awareness about its significance. State parties are also required to take the appropriate measures to protect intangible heritage, including capacity-building, research and community participation.

As UNESCO's approach to heritage is national, not local, little distinction has been made in *where* exactly the practices take place. The following practices and rites have been attributed as being intangible heritage of Egypt.

Regional intangible heritage as recognized by UNESCO

- Arts, skills and practices associated with engraving on metals (gold, silver and copper) (Shared with Iraq – Algeria – Egypt – Mauritania – Morocco – Palestine – Saudi Arabia – Sudan – Tunisia – Yemen)
- Date palm, knowledge, skills, traditions and practices (Shared with United Arab Emirates – Bahrain – Egypt – Iraq – Jordan – Kuwait – Mauritania – Morocco – Oman – Palestine – Qatar – Saudi Arabia – Sudan – Tunisia – Yemen)
- Arabic calligraphy: knowledge, skills and practices (Shared with Saudi Arabia – Algeria – Bahrain – Egypt – Iraq – Jordan – Kuwait – Lebanon – Mauritania – Morocco – Oman – Palestine – Sudan – Tunisia – United Arab Emirates – Yemen)

National intangible cultural heritage as recognized by UNESCO

- Festivals related to the Journey of the Holy family in Egypt
- Handmade weaving in Upper Egypt (Sa'eed)
- Traditional hand puppetry
- Tahteeb, stick game
- Al-Sirah Al-Hilaliyyah epic

There is an issue with the aforementioned charters and with the recognized intangible heritage in Egypt: they are abstract, oversimplified and vague at best. The mechanisms do not provide real tools or substance, but rather are left to the signatories to interpret and shape institutions or frameworks for heritage management in their specific context. If tangible or intangible heritage is under threat, there is no real mechanism of sanctioning states or any legal ground to enforce preservation (Lixinski, 2011). Furthermore, no distinction is made in urban and rural heritage expressions.

I must also discuss the positive aspects of working within the UNESCO framework for heritage practitioners and organizations. Receiving recognition for an intangible heritage practice from UNESCO offers an opportunity for the practitioners to work around state recognition. By being recognized by UNESCO, they can count on institutional support and global awareness. This offers opportunities to preserve the practice and even, at a later moment, get national recognition too. For marginalized communities this might be a good way to still gain recognition as UNESCO's interpretation of what can be allocated as intangible heritage can be different to that of the state.

I would like to present charters that govern heritage management in a more culturally sensitive manner to the Middle East. These charters are in relation to heritage management, specifically in the urban setting. By understanding the difference between international and regional charters, I seek to understand which contextual details should be kept in mind while creating heritage management recommendations. I will discuss the most important charters.

The Doha Charter for the Preservation of Islamic Architectural Heritage (1986) was adopted at the First International Conference on Islamic Architectural Heritage in Doha, Qatar. It outlines principles and guidelines for the preservation and restoration of Islamic architectural heritage, including mosques, palaces, and urban centers. It is the first charter to specify the Islamic nature of heritage and asks heritage professionals to keep this context in mind when creating a heritage management plan.

The Cairo Declaration on Cultural Heritage in the Arab Region (1992), created by the League of Arab states, emphasizes the importance of preserving and promoting Arab cultural heritage and calls for collaboration among Arab states to safeguard their shared heritage. To add on to this, the Charter of Medina (2007), which was adopted by the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), is a charter that focuses on the conservation and development of historic Islamic cities, with an emphasis on preserving their cultural identity and promoting sustainable tourism.

Overall, the charters that seek to govern cultural heritage management - even those that have been created specifically for the Islamic and Arab context - are vague and have a top-down

approach to heritage management. Granted, UNESCO has sought to adopt a community-based approach but the choice of communities or allocation of funding is at the discretion of governments. The protection of marginalized communities through mechanisms of recognition is not discussed. The existence of such communities is merely acknowledged. Top-down approaches decide which groups or practices receive funding and institutionalized recognition. Funding is vital to preserving and managing any heritage, and without it organizations can face problems with their mission. As the stakeholder later in this research will highlight, organizations such as SARD have little interaction with these charters and their organizations as there is little collaboration between national and international heritage entities and local organizations. SARD deals with *'the everyday',* artifacts and lives of a small community in Shubra. The charters surrounding intangible heritage recognize a community-based approach as a way to conduct sound heritage management, but do not give tools as how to preserve the everyday as a tool to understand local identities. The charters, according to the volunteers of SARD, are too 'far away' from their organization to utilize in any profound way.

5. *Historical overview of Cairo's heritage management*

The first chapter has sought to contextualize and conceptualize some of the key notions that are at the center of this research. It has presented the framework in which the rest of this thesis will evolve , as well as some cultural nuances that are important when working in Cairo. Now, I would like to shift my attention towards existing literature on the topics that will aid in answering the research question as posed at the beginning of this thesis. The literature review will seek to present the work that has been written about heritage management practices in the city of Cairo. It will zoom in on work that has been written on intangible heritage conservation in the city, critically reviewing the practices through a community-based lens. Before understanding the current practices regarding cultural heritage management, I have created a historical overview of heritage management in the city of Cairo. This historical context will serve as the basis for the stakeholder analysis of the current framework of organizations that will be presented later in the thesis. The historical context will highlight the shift in heritage management practices through Egypt's history, specifically after Egypt became a British protectorate.

'Pre-modern' understandings of heritage management in Cairo

For as long as the city of Cairo has been inhabited, practices we now view as heritage preservation and management have been a part of the social and religious landscape of the city. This segment of the literature review will highlight work that has been written on the history of heritage management practices in the city of Cairo. It will be presented in chronological order, but also provides overarching non-European heritage management practices implemented throughout Cairo's history. This is by no means an exhaustive overview of the history of heritage management in the city of Cairo, but rather it touches on important sentiments, practices and policies towards heritage throughout history.

Cooperson (2010) delves into writings of Islamic scholars with regard to ancient Egyptian monuments and built heritage. Specifically, he highlights the ways in which Cairene and Egyptian society interacts with the legacy of previous civilizations from 640 AD onwards. Firstly, some caveats before understanding the history of the city in relation to heritage

management practices. Although Egypt came under Islamic rule in 640 AD when Amr ibn al-As led the first Muslim armies in conquest, society was by no means composed of a majority of Muslims at this time. The great majority were, and remained for quite some time, Coptic speaking Christians. Their practices are thus as important as Islamic practices - not just throughout history but in the present day too. Secondly, the name 'Cairo' or *'Al-Qahira'* was only allocated during the period of the Fatimids. Before this time, the area had several different names, as outlined in the extremely brief history of the city that I present in the following paragraphs.

Amr ibn al-As conquered Alexandria in 640, and founded *al-Fustat,* a new administrative capital, in 641 or early 642. The new city was founded more inland than the previous urban center of Alexandria, along the Nile and in line with the strategic priorities of the leader between what is now North Africa and the Levant. From 661 to 750 the Umayyad dynasty of Damascus ruled over Egypt, before being overthrown by the Abbasids of Baghdad. The new rulers made their own settlement to the northeast of Fustat, naming it *al-Askar* or 'the military camp.' A residence for the governor and the Amr ibn al-As mosque were also constructed in 786. The Tulunids conquered the Abbasids in 868 and ruled until 905, followed by the Ikhshidids. The city of Cairo was founded by the Shiite Fatimids in 969, followed by the Ayyubids (until 1250), Mamluks (1250 - 1517) and finally the Ottomans (1517 - 1798). After this, Napoleon briefly ruled over the city until Muhammad Ali assumed power in 1805. Many historians argue that the rule of Napoleon marked the beginning of the 'modern' era of Cairo, however it is a-historic and Eurocentric to refer to the period after Napoleon as 'modern' and the period before as being 'pre-modern'. Identities such as those from the Copts, Muslims, Arabs and Nubians from before Napoleon's period in Egypt still played a vital role in heritage and identity. It did however see a shift in the way heritage was managed, as will be highlighted throughout this chapter.

Before focusing on the Cairene context, I would like to present a body of research that highlights the *intangible* nature of intangible heritage that nevertheless is paramount to identity shaping practices in the 'pre-modern' time. Abed (2018) presents a highly relevant theory of identity shaping through intangible heritage. The example is not related to Cairo specifically, but rather the Abbasid Caliphate, under which Cairo was subjected. The article explores the significance of water rituals and their role of maintaining cultural identity as described in Ibn Fadlan's Risala.

The Risala is a travelogue detailing his journey to the Volga Bulgars (around the modern day Black Sea) in the 10th century. Abed (2018) argues that Ibn Fadlan's 'obsession' within the Risala of washing rituals is linked to identity preservation and as a way to maintain a constant under different cultural conditions. Moreover, the rituals that are linked to cleanliness in the Risala juxtapose the 'primitive customs of the northern people'. It gives identity through being superior to the pagan Western Europeans that Ibn Fadlan encounters in his travels (Abed, 2018, p. 167). This document may be a strange side-step to utilize in research on Cairo's intangible heritage, but I have added it to show the way in which intangible cultural heritage works as a tool to shape identity, both as a ritual for everyday life and as a way to distinguish oneself and one's community from 'others' that surround the practitioner. Ibn Fadlan's work in some ways captures the zeitgeist in which Cairo existed in the 10th century, due to his Islamic values, and how intangible cultural heritage was documented at this time.

Possibly one of the earliest documents discussing heritage have been written by the historian and geographer al-Masudi (Cooperson, 2010, p. 1114). Al-Masudi was born in Baghdad and traveled to Persia, Oman, the Indus Valley, East Africa, Yemen, northern Syria, Iraq, the Caspian Sea and Caucasus before moving to Egypt. From 940 to 956 he lived in Fustat under the Fatimids. During his time in Egypt, he worked on a series of books describing the world around him. The books encompassed what we now see as natural, tangible and intangible heritage descriptions such as the configuration of the earth, cities, oceans, valleys, minerals, sacred buildings and the houses of noblemen. He also focused on the stories of creation, origins of human race and diversity of nations (Cooperson, 2010, p. 1114). His books about how the Islamic-period scientists perceived the world, and specifically Ancient Egypt, give great insight into the way in which this society interacted with heritage.

Al-Masudi describes the way in which he wanted to place Egypt within the history of the world he had seen so much of. He saw, as chronicled with much detail, ancient monuments and scripts in Fustat and the rest of the country that attested to the great civilizations that had walked the land he was visiting (Cooperson, 2010, p. 1115). Much to al-Masudi's frustration, no one could tell him what the writing said or what the monuments had been created for. He tried, however, to describe natural phenomena such as the flooding of the Nile. Furthermore, he studied the ancestry and culture of the Copts who had descended from the Pharaohs. To support his findings

of this culture, he described the drawings found on temples and the magnetic force that the temples appeared to exert (Cooperson, 2010, p. 1116). Al-Masudi even noted that Egyptians have built temples that can protect knowledge from a natural disaster. Although it is not clear what the disaster is, he describes early signs of knowledge and heritage preservation and natural occurrences that shape the identity of Egyptians. Oral traditions are an important source of heritage within the region. Al-Masudi surveys Copts in their ability to reproduce their ancestral language which signals that intangible heritage through language links present times to the past. (Cooperson, 2010, p. 1117). Although the term 'heritage' didn't exist for another 1000 years, these are early examples of heritage management in a magical sense. The example as presented by Al-Masudi describes the act of tomb raiding. The legend takes place during the caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik (658 - 705 AD). The governor of Egypt, Abd al-Aziz ibn Marwa, sends an expedition out to dig out a tomb. At the entrance of the tomb is a statue of a rooster. When one of the workmen puts his foot on the step, two swords emerge from the ground and cut the man in half, while the rooster flaps his wings. The curse of the rooster cannot be beaten, the workmen cannot enter the tomb and raid the treasures inside. *"Of the thousand men involved in digging, working, hauling earth, surveying the ground, and issuing orders, all died. Terrified, 'Abd al-Malik said: 'This is a strange ruin, and an unbreachable one; let us take refuge in God!'* (Cooperson, 2010, p. 1117).

The story highlights the magical nature of heritage, the otherworldly forces that make a place sacred and the forces that have an impact throughout history. Although it is hard to authenticate the validity of this story, the sentiment of the protection of a sacred space, one with treasures from the past is clear. It highlights the need for protection from outside forces - long before the modern notion of heritage came into the international vocabulary.

Another tale of historical interactions with heritage comes from Ja'far Muhammad Abdalaziz al-Idrisi, born in 1173 in Upper Egypt. As a boy, he had visited the temple of Karnak with his father. While there, his father witnessed people removing blocks from the temple to be used for other building sites. He exclaimed that the temple should not be disturbed as it serves as a reminder of the ever-present human glory. A passage of al-Idrisi's books reads the following:

‘’Among the events of bygone days and the scenes of life now passed away is a visit I paid to the temple of Karnak with my father, may God rest his soul... At that time, the hand of ruin had not yet struck the halls, nor effaced the writing that adorned the walls. It was a spacious temple and wide, with lofty walls on every side. Yet the marks of crowbars marred its stones, which seemed to feel the scars and moan. My father said: ‘‘Behold, my son, a temple raised by Pharaoh’s might, toppled now by foolish spite. Yet such temples, if allowed to stand, serve to chasten mortal man!’’ (Idrisi 1991: Arabic text 45–6)

The temples, in the eyes of al-Idrisi, represent something that surpasses the present and remind us of our mortality, as opposed to the immortality of these buildings. His father implies the needs for protection and preservation of places. The places have the power to discipline ‘mortals’, and remind them that they are nothing without their past and future.

Al-Idrisi’s book *Anwar ‘ulwiyy al-ajram fi l-kashf ‘an asrar al-ahram* (‘‘Lights of the translunar bodies: on uncovering the secrets of the pyramids’’) presents, in line with the traditions of Hadith scholars, citations that are traced back to their sources. The book was meant to be read out loud by students of Al-Idrisi (Cooperson, 2010, p. 1118). Al-Idrisi combines five different Arabic sources to highlight stories of al-Mamun’s (786-833 AD) conquest of the pyramids. The caliph was intrigued by the pyramids and decided to take one apart to see what was inside . Furthermore, he was fascinated by the hieroglyphs and set out to decipher them. While setting the pyramid of Cheops - the pyramid that Al-Mamum had decided to take apart in order to see what was inside - on fire and then demolishing it - the workers came across a vessel. The vessel had a market value of exactly the amount that the cost of the demolition had been up until that point. The caliph realized the accuracy in which the builders of the pyramids had predicted this event, and stopped the search for any treasures inside of the pyramid (Cooperson, 2010, p. 1110). Different scholars have sought to verify this story. Whether or not it truly happened, it serve as cautionary tales for those that try to taint the sacred spaces created by ancestors. The story shows that there has always been a fascination with understanding the past and the implications of its legacy on today, as well as an intrinsic feeling of sanctity towards them - even if they could not decipher the meaning or understand the writings.

Many other tales describing the magic of the pyramids and other sites across Egypt stem from Greek, Syriac and Coptic sources. The sources are often told from person to person, full of grandeur and blood. They act as a warning not to penetrate the spaces as they could topple your leadership or kill your men. One author however was more thorough in his work, describing the monuments in great detail while also relating them to the present day - including the management of spaces and monuments.

Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi approached heritage by detailing the objects and buildings he saw in great detail (Cooperson, 2010, p. 1122). This is somewhat unique compared to many of the other authors at the time. Abd al-Latif lived from 1162 and lived until 1231. The only piece of his work that survived entirely was a description of Egypt, both ancient and modern (Cooperson, 2010, p. 1122). This book, *Information and Contemplation*, is one of the first sources that was written in Arabic that became known to European academics. His descriptions of Memphis, some 20 kilometers south of what is now known as Cairo, marvel at the overwhelming and transcendental beauty of the monuments. He comments that although they have been subject to 4000 years of 'ravages', the beauty of the objects and tombs are unlike anything he has seen before (Cooperson, 2010, p. 1122). Not only does Abd al- describe the things he witnesses in great detail (something at the basis of any heritage work), he seeks to understand the rationale behind them. Although he cannot make sense of the things he sees, he understands they have great meaning and symbolize a vibrant past civilization. Abd al-Latif does however comment on preservation, or rather, the absence of preservation. The rulers of his time ''*turn first to what they love the most, namely the dirham and the dinar"* (Cooperson, 2010, p. 1124). They did not respect the tradition of preserving the monuments as a way of respecting the genius of the ancient. Rather, they searched for the treasures, toppled the statues and drilled through walls. They were in constant search of mummies who were known to be covered in a layer of gold. His book thus highlights once more the tradition of preserving heritage as a way to pay respects to ancient civilization. In the twelfth century, however, there was not much respect for these practices - rather, leaders were after the treasures that could make them money.

As Latour (2005) has argued, heritage shapes identity, and identity shapes heritage. An example that highlights the intangible nature of identity, that is tied to rituals of a community, is presented

by Abed (2021). Her article highlights the highly abstract nature of a community's heritage that plays an integral role in shaping identity. The Mamluks originated as an enslaved group of soldiers that rose to power in 1250 and maintained the ruling position for more than 250 years. Cairo became the capital of their Sultanate. Cairo, under their rule, became one of the most important centers of power in the medieval world (Abed, 2021, p. 323). Their identity is characterized by Abed (2021) as in-between, liminal in nature. Their identity as 'slave' or 'slave-soldiers turned into leaders' is reductionary, according to Abed (2021). There is more to their identity than just these descriptions. Their rise to power highlights progression on the social hierarchy. The progression however did not overshadow their liminal status as 'haves' and 'have-nots' at the same time. An integral part of Mamluks narrative and story-telling, even as rulers, was resisting their precarious status (Abed, 2021, p. 323). Oral traditions, as I have discussed at length, are at the heart of intangible heritage and the preservation of heritage. People living in the city of Cairo were aware of the differences between themselves and the Mamluks, as well as the difference between previous rulers and the current ones. Their identity lies in defying the expected, in being 'the other', and 'the inbetween'. This article highlights that shared heritage through story-telling and perception can come from abstract ideas. Mamluks left a lasting mark on the cultural fabric of the city of Cairo, while existing in the liminal space of the ubiquitous yet absent, the accepted leader and disputed one at the same time. Their existence was undoubtedly present yet misunderstood at the same time. I would like to incorporate this way of looking at heritage in the rest of my research. The presence of communities may be disputed, however their lasting impact on heritage and identity of a state cannot be underestimated. From the margins of perception come the most valuable expressions of heritage.

Al-Ibrashy (2004) contextualizes the relationship between heritage and Cairene society in the late medieval period, while embracing the aspect of 'liminality' that shapes heritage and identity in line with Abed's (2021) article. Specifically, she focuses on the narratives of living next to cemeteries: one of the most concrete forms of a communities and families heritage. The first cemetery in Cairo, called al-Qarafa, was established at the foot of al-Muqattam hills to the east of al-Fustat. The cemetery continued to expand outside of the city proper, with the exception of the grave of Sayyida Nafisa. Sayyida Nafisa was the granddaughter of the grandson of the prophet. Her husband pleaded not to remove her body outside of al-Fustat, as her absence would

take away the opportunity to go to her and pray if misfortune struck the city. Her grave thus symbolizes both tangible and intangible heritage: the ritual of pleading for help in a physical space, tying the past to the present and future through rituals and buildings. When the Fatimids made al-Qahir9\9a the center of their rule (north of al-Fustat), more cemeteries emerged. The funerary complex, built between 976 and 1126, not only provided a final resting place for the deceased but also included a mosque, palace, bath, bakery, garden, cistern, mill and animal stables (al-Ibrashy, 2004). The activities that were held within the funerary complex went - and still go - against accepted Western concepts of what an urban space or funerary zone should look like. Although the space was not acceptable according to general standards of urban space, it was indispensable to the city at the same time. Al-Ibrashy (2004) seeks to understand this funerary space through Turner's theory of 'liminal zones' (Turner, 1969). Liminality, according to Turner (1969) is a space between two modalities of social relationships - the structures in which individuals are segmentalized into their roles and statuses. The modalities offer a space for essential human bonds, otherwise known as communitas, to shape society. Anti-structures refer to the reversal or inversion of social hierarchies, roles and norms during the liminal phase. Traditional social distinctions can be temporarily suspended during this time and new forms of social organization can emerge. The cemetery symbolizes a liminal space: it gives space for social structures and mundane activities such as buying bread, but also for alternative activities or quasi-religious ones, less structured by mainstream religious institutions (al-Ibrashy, 2004). There is both a structure and anti-structure in the cemetery: roles are traditional there and yet reversed. What then is the relation between these cemeteries, liminal spaces and heritage management in the city? Al-Ibrashy's example of the cemetery highlights the 'magic' or 'sacred' of heritage through a living and breathing space. The cemetery was managed through humans living inside of it and interacting with it. The dichotomy between the sacred and the secular keeps the space accessible yet holy, functional yet a place that should be respected and maintained. Islamic stories highlight how believers are active participants in their own heritage, rather than passive recipients. Sanctity cannot be reached through observing but through participation. It is believers themselves who endow a space with value (al-Ibrashy, 2004). The Muslims who interact with the space are, according to religious texts, the seedlings of heaven, and must preserve the space in the name of God.

A sacred space is thus something inclusive, something that can be achieved through being a good believer and protecting all that is on God's earth. As discussed before, this is mentioned in the Quran: God has put everything on this earth, believers must be the custodians of the holy. This method of heritage 'management' is practical in nature, since it mandates building tombs next to religious establishments (the madrasa, khanqa or charitable sabil). Ulama lived in the vicinity of the religious institutions, thus in the vicinity of the cemeteries. Heritage becomes a living thing that is a part of the everyday, something that could be visited and maintained as a part of the mundane. The cemeteries were also frequently visited during holy days, when the rich would distribute money to the poor and the Quran would be recited. People could come and visit their deceased in the cemetery, or pray there in times of need (al-Ibrashy, 2004). To conclude, this example highlights the 'living' aspect of heritage management as well as the religious. Mortal humans were the custodians of the spaces that linked this life to the next and lived within these spaces. The ultimate believer thus takes care of these sacred spaces, as the purest form of 'holy' heritage management - before this term even existed.

Finally, Denizeau and Denoix (2013) illuminate the role of leaders during the 'pre-modern' period. Through the promulgation of the *waqf* system, those ruling over Cairo could promote arts, handicrafts and cultures. Sultan al-Nasir for example established a waqf in 1317 that was focused on land, real estate and urban operations in Cairo (Denizeau & Denoix, 2013, p. 168). Essentially, he set out to implement urbanizing measures in the city through the development of public spaces and plots for families. The establishment of this and other waqfs highlight the importance of understanding urban history. Illuminated by Mamluk chroniclers, this document gives meaning to all of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's urban operations and, most importantly, allows us to observe a large-scale urban promotion operation in 14th century Cairo; it provides legal vocabulary that informs about certain legal procedures preceding urbanization. Furthermore it mentions a large number of place names - which we can link to lineages and families. It provides details on the road network and the type of land use, gives area measurements; finally, it provides a long list of personal names, titles, types of property (individual, family, collective). The operation consists of leasing a set of lands located to the west of the Ḫalīǧ, between it, al-Maqs, Bāb al-Lūq, and Qanāṭir al-Sibā' (Denizeau & Denoix, 2013, p. 169) . This vast expanse of land emerged as a result of the river shifting westward, which the sultan will attempt to exploit by

mounting a complex operation: this land is divided into plots leased in ḥikr within the framework of a waqf so that they can build there and this area can be urbanized. The work of Denizeau and Denoix (2013) further highlights the approach to heritage management, spatial awareness and importance of passing on spaces and ideas from generation to generation.

5.2. 'Modern' understandings of heritage management

As I have briefly touched upon before, heritage management in Cairo changed drastically through the presence of colonial powers. In this section of the historical overview of the research, I will present the shift in heritage management that occurred when French and British academics, conservationists and diplomats largely took control of heritage and knowledge creation in the city as part of their colonial project. The research will show that the presence of these actors led to racist narratives surrounding Cairo's heritage, and have left its mark on the city's heritage management framework today. I will critically examine the Western approach to heritage management in the city before going into Nasser's nationalist policy that leads to the modern day. The historical context is in no way a comprehensive overview of heritage management in the 'modern' era but rather a survey of the sentiments of nationalism and modernism coming from the Egyptian monarchy and foreign powers, namely France and Britain during this time. Furthermore, I would like to highlight the lack of intangible heritage management practices in the city of Cairo. As I will argue, the lack of intangible heritage management practices during this time has led to the generally small number of organizations and government entities that engage in intangible heritage preservation today. This is due to national and international trends within heritage management.

I will present modern theories of heritage conservation and conservation of the urban - as the research will take place in an urban setting - before looking at the specific history of Cairo. The development of these theories focuses on built environments primarily, and the community and their practice secondly. (Urban) conservation is an idea of the modern times. This body of work was created under the auspices of Viollet-le-Duc and Sitte after the French Revolution as a way to aid a sense of community, identity and pride. These ideas about urban conservation were created in the nineteenth century, at a time when a new social and economic order was developing in Europe and the rest of the world due to colonial expansion (Bandarin & van Oers, 2012, p. 1). The modern vision of cultural heritage was thus linked to the recognition of historic monuments and their role in shaping national and international identities. Urban cultural heritage was seen as a tool to establish a 'modern' nation's traditions and identities. By celebrating national epics and creating institutions that preserve significant sites, the nation-state could be consolidated (Bandarin & van Oers, 2012, p. 1). This early conception of heritage related mostly

to monuments and sites, and less to intangible heritage. Furthermore, heritage allocation was driven by the dominant identity and did not leave space for minority heritage expression.

The institutionalization of heritage with specialized bodies of conservators, a core aspect of modern heritage preservation, was a way for nation states to acknowledge its importance in the public domain. Before the French Revolution, heritage management happened as people lived with the heritage. As different areas of life were subjected to industrial modes of producing and being, institutions and committees were established under the umbrella of the expanding bureaucracy. They were designed to take over the communities' role and thus to serve a national goal (Bandarin & van Oers, 2012, p. 6). This institutionalization went hand in hand with intellectual debates around conservation methodologies and practices, with most modern concepts of heritage management being created some 100 to 150 years ago. Preservation of monuments – indeed, the act of monumentalizing – was, in the eyes of these academics, at the very heart of social and cultural development. It was a 'romantic' approach, in opposition to the heavy modernization and destruction happening in Europe due to the Industrial Revolution (Bandarin & van Oers, 2012, p. 6).

5.3. History of Cairo under colonial rule

How does this revolution in heritage management translate to the Cairene context? I will present an overview of the developments during and after the nineteenth century. First, a brief overview of the political situation and leadership of Egypt in order to assess foreign and national spheres of influence and developments within the country. I am presenting this historical context as a significant amount of governance and policy regarding all aspects of Egyptian life were decided by foreign entities. Furthermore, some colonial structures are still prevalent in today's governmental system.

In 1517, the Mamluks were conquered by the Ottomans, making Cairo and the rest of the current territory of Egypt a province of the Ottoman Empire. The province however was weakened and did not have a strong military to protect its territory. The brief invasion of Egypt led by Napoleon Bonaparte, as I will present later in relation to heritage management, began in 1798. During this time Napoleon's project *Description de l'Egypte* commenced when he brought a team of scientists and ethnographers to the country on his military conquest. Napoleon and his Armée d'Orient were initially successful in conquering large parts of the region; they were however eventually defeated by Ottomans, Mamluks (who were still present in the country albeit not in power) and British forces in 1801. What followed was a four year struggle for power by Ottoman, Mamluk and Albanian militaries. The Albanian commander Muhammad Ali emerged victorious and was appointed as the viceroy of Egypt by the Ottoman Sultan. Although his title implied he was subordinate to the Ottoman Sultan, in practice it meant that Ottoman power in Egypt was over. Muhammad Ali Pasha would establish a dynasty that would be in power until 1952.

Muhammad Ali Pasha's primary focus as ruler was military - annexing both Northern Sudan in 1820, Syria in 1833 and parts of the Arabian Peninsula and Anatolia. Furthermore, as further research on his reign will show, Muhammad Ali sought to modernize the country. Eager to adopt the industrial technologies of great powers in the West, he sent engineers and scholars to Europe and invited missions to Egypt in order to train bureaucrats, architects and academics.

Muhammad Ali Pasha was succeeded briefly by his son, Ibrahim Pasha in September 1948 who was sickly and could not effectively rule the country. Ibrahim Pasha was followed by Muhammad Ali Pasha's grandson Abbas I (November 1848), who was said to be lazy and a true womanizer that did not leave his palace much. After this, Said - a son of Muhammad Ali Pasha (1854) and Ismail (1863) - a grandson, were in power. Ismail Pasha was a great modernizer and he founded the Suez Channel. However, he also made large debts to European (mainly French and British) banks. To solve part of the debts, he sold 44 percent of the Suez Channel to the British Government in 1875. This was an opportunity for the British and French to impose themselves in the governing of Egypt. Representatives of both countries were appointed as controllers and sat in the Egyptian parliament. As they had strong financial power and a large control of the Suez Channel, they had significant power in the Egyptian government.

This period has historically been referred to as the 'Veiled Protectorate' period. The Khedivate of Egypt under Ismail Pasha was officially still an autonomous province of the Ottoman Empire. The British however, without legal basis, constituted a *de facto* protectorate in the territory through economic power and military presence. It was not a part of the British Empire. This changed in 1914 when the First World War commenced and the Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers, the adversaries of the Allied Powers of which Britain was a member. The British declared a protectorate over Egypt. Abbas II was deposed as khedive, who was replaced by his uncle Hussein Kamel, who became Sultan of Egypt, independently of the Ottoman Empire.

After the First World War (1919), the nationalist *Wafd* party under Saad Zaghloul led the Egyptian nationalist movement which resulted in the first revolution against British occupation. He became the first elected prime minister in 1924. There was however still instability in the country and its government, due to the remaining British influence and political involvement of the King of Egypt. The British continued their occupation of key parts of Egypt, including the Suez Channel, until the 1952 nationalist revolution under Nasser.

Nasser overthrew the monarchy and established an Arab republic. He pursued Arab nationalism, pan-Arabism and socialism during his rule. He nationalized the Suez Canal in 1956 and built the Aswan Dam starting in 1960 as a way to show Egypt had arrived in the modern age. Egypt became a key player in pan-Arab and non-aligned movements during this time, something that

also translated into his heritage management. He specifically focused on heritage that highlighted the Arab nation and relation to the rest of the Arab world. Anwar Sadat succeeded Nasser in 1970 and strived for a more open economy, opening Egypt to foreign investment and market reforms. Hosni Mubarak, who was in power from 1981 to 2011 furthered this political ideology by strengthening Egypts relationship to Israel and the US, as well as implementing neoliberal policies. His period as president was marked by growing political repression, corruption, a growing wealth gap and stagnant heritage development - with a focus on ancient Egyptian heritage for tourism purposes. Following the 2011 revolution, Egypt faced a phase of political transition. In the first elections after 2011, Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood party was elected but later removed by the military. Abdel Fattah el-Sisi then became president in 2014 and continues to be president until this day. His heritage policy is controversial at best and has been described as hyper nationalist, with a focus on foreign visitors to ancient Egyptian sites and starchitecture projects such as the New Capital. I will discuss the current day threats to Cairene tangible and intangible heritage in chapter 12.

5.4. 'Modern' approaches to heritage management in Cairo

The earliest modern approaches to heritage management appear in Egypt with the arrival of Napoleon in 1798. French soldiers uncovered the Rosetta Stone by accident in 1799. Over two decades later, Jean-François Champollion deciphered the hieroglyphs on the stone and laid the basis for modern-day Egyptology. Europeans thus played a key role in shaping the way in which Egypt's heritage would be studied, presented and preserved. This was exacerbated further by Western imperialism and the industrial revolution that demanded large amounts of cotton and other raw materials to be imported from Ottoman territories. The expansionist ideology of European countries engulfed Egypt. It was thus not just merchants and diplomats who arrived in Cairo, but also scientists and academics who intended to study the world and spread their sciences to the uninitiated citizens of Egypt. Heritage science and imperialism went hand in hand in Cairo (Reid, 1992, p. 60).

As in pre-modern times, there was a sense of mysticism or magic under Western observers of Egypt that drove the fascination for heritage. Florence Nightingale, the famous British nurse, waxed lyrical: *''Here Osiris and his worshipers lived; here Abraham and Moses walked; here Aristotle came; here, later, Mahomet learnt the best of his religion and studied Christianity; here, perhaps our Saviour's Mother brought her little son to open his eyes to the light."* (Reid, 2003, p. 2). Egypt was, and still is, seen as a space for occult wisdom through 'pyramid power', a place of mystical powers and otherworldly Gods unknown to Europeans. Travelers would marvel at the energetic power that the pyramids exuded, attributing the supernatural to the structure and the surroundings. Another view depicted Egyptians, especially rural and Bedouin populations, as 'noble savages' or 'natural aristocrats'. The different filters through which foreigners saw Egypt forced Egyptians into colonial narratives. Significantly, the lore surrounding Egyptian heritage was largely focused on Ancient Egyptian monuments. Specifically at the beginning of the Napoleonic era, this was at the heart of research and the diaries of travelers. Granted, the hyperfocus on Ancient Egyptian heritage shifts over time slightly, with academic focus moving towards Arab, Coptic and Islamic heritage. The foundation of the *Comité de Conservation* was paramount to the shift in focus. Nevertheless, the remnants of this *Egyptomania* translate into Egypt's modern day policy, as a source of both national identity and tourism revenues.

European scholars were clearly not just interested in artifacts of the Pharaonic era. They established the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria in 1892 and the Museum of Arab Art (now Museum of Islamic Art) in Cairo in 1880. The foundation of the Coptic Museum in Cairo, founded in 1908, was also inspired by Europeans. The museums represented European approaches to heritage management and an aspect of Egypts history that continues to be a source of identity today (Reid, 2003, p. 7). The three museums, all with European founders, remained European-funded until the 1950s, a turning point in Egypt's heritage management ideology. The museums, although inspired by European models of museology, also served local interests in preserving heritage and promoting the diverse culture of the city and the country. The first attempt to create a national collection of antiquities by an Egyptian stems from Mohammed Ali (Riggs, 2013). In 1826, he prevented the British from taking Pharaonic lintel back to Britain Rather, he gave orders to archeologist Hussein Bek Heider to excavate the areas to ensure the artifacts would not go to Europe. The viceroy issued a decree in 1835 banning the export of antiquities. This decree also gave Sheikh Rifa'a al-Tahtawi the leading role in preserving and excavating ancient Egyptian monuments. Al-Tahtawi had studied in France as part of a delegation of students Muhammed Ali had sent to France to study. Furthermore, he established the Egyptian Museum in Boulaq as a way to collect antiquities and display them. These efforts highlight the intrinsic need to protect and develop Egyptian heritage outside of the colonial realm. Mohammed Ali was however heavily criticized during this time for the destruction of other archeological monuments, as part of his modernisation policy. I will discuss this policy later in this chapter. Mohammed Ali's successors continued to maintain the Egyptian Museum, albeit under the auspices of French Egyptologists Auguste Mariette, Gaston Maspero and Eugene Grebaut (Riggs, 2013). By 1887 the museum founded by Mohammed Ali was overcrowded. The khedive and successor of Muhammed Ali Tawfik Pasha noticed this and, in an effort to further solidify Egypt's diverse identity, donated one of his palaces in Giza as a museum. This museum however was not big enough, so the khedive decided to build another museum in Cairo. In 1902, during the reign of Khedive Abbas Helmi II, the Egyptian Museum that still stands today was opened.

Similarly, it was not solely Europeans that designed the structure of the Museum of Islamic Art. The museum, which was originally known as the Museum of Arab Antiquities, can be traced to

significant arcs in Egypt's modern national and political history (Berger, 2017, p. 396). The development of Egypt into the state it is today is mirrored in the museum: from early nationalism to colonial occupation, Nasserism and Mubarak neoliberalism until today: hyper-nationalism with a heavy emphasis on anti-Islamism and anti-Islamist terrorism. Although the museum was initially created by the Comité de Conservation, and implemented enlightenment values with orientalist discourses intended to speak to European audiences, it was also the first time a collection of Arab art had been created in the city (Berger, 2017, p. 396). It certainly served as a tool to shape *Arab* and *Islamic* identity, albeit under colonial rule. By compiling heritage artifacts for the first time under the Egyptian ruler Khedive Tawfik, the museum laid the basis for an increase in national and international interest for heritage not linked to the Pharaonic time.

The British occupation was mainly preoccupied with Ancient Egypt. Until the 1850s, Egyptology had been confined to exclusive societies and academies, museums and wealthy individuals that were the patron of expeditions to Egypt. After the 1850s, Egyptology became an academic discipline, spearheaded by German scholars and state institutions. Two European academic societies were created in Egypt as a forum for discussions around heritage management. The Institut Égyptien (1859) in Alexandria and the Khedival Geographical Society (1875) in Cairo supplemented the Museum and Antiquities Service that was run by Western academics that were influenced by the heightened obsession with the Orient and Egypt in particular (Reid, 2003, p. 94). During the British occupation of 1882, Egyptomania had reached its peak. The 'Orient' was marketed to Western consumers through fairs and world exhibitions as a place to see Pharaonic history (Reid, 2003, p. 95). Tourists from all over Europe came to Egypt to marvel at the ancient society and its treasures. Under the decree of Muhammed Ali who attempted to make sure there was minimal looting and sales of heritage to Europe, tourists could visit artifacts found across the country in Cairo. The selective image of a glorious past in the museums of Cairo, the Pyramids and the Sphinx had been carefully marketed by the British, French and to a lesser extent the Germans as a way to generate revenue and solidify their presence in modern-day Egypt. Cairo became the gateway for European tourists to visit the monuments of Egypt.

French academics tended to focus more on heritage that was not related to ancient Egypt, as opposed to the British. Volait (2010) highlights the influence of French ideas regarding heritage

and conservation in the city of Cairo. These ideas, which fall under the set of ideas known as *Grand Siècle*, were prevalent well into the nineteenth century and serve as the basis for the work of the Comité de Conservation, which I will discuss later in this historical contextualisation. Furthermore, ideas coming from the *Grand Siècle* embody the large-scale documentation of the city through artists, travelers and scientists that engaged in the *Description de l'Egypte* at the end of the eighteenth century under Napoleon (Volait, 2010, p. 231). According to Volait (2010), three key aspects of French enlightenment culture were engagement with critical political thought, tension between grand theory and erudition, and a reliance on science. The central role of philosophy also shaped the way in which French architects, artists and amateurs viewed Cairene monuments. Rather than studying monuments as individual 'things', French visitors mobilized Eurocentric theoretical projects and broad generalizations as a frame of reference. At the center of the French enlightenment was rational analysis through mathematics and precise science that was anchored in Orientalist stereotypes and scientific racism. This is, as the first part of this historical context has presented, radically different from the way in which Cairenes interacted with their heritage and heritage management. For them, there was a spiritual and magical element to heritage, something a community lived within and interacted with (Volait, 2010, p. 232). Heritage was interwoven with 'the everyday', with daily and special rituals that were omitted from colonial heritage descriptions. I will highlight this throughout this chapter.

The body of work known as the *Déscription de l'Egypte,* a series of publications running from 1809 to 1829, provides the first clues as to how heritage was managed in Cairo in the 'modern' era. The full collection consists of an Imperial edition consisting of 23 books and a Pancoucke edition, consisting of 37 books. It is the compilation of work of around 160 civilian scholars and scientists who traveled with Bonaparte on his expedition to Egypt. 2000 artists and technicians were also included in the work, including 400 engravers who created extensive depictions of heritage sites and artifacts from Egypt and in Cairo. French scientists sought to describe and document all aspects of modern and ancient Egypt. Examples are a detailed engraving of the details of Qaitbey fortress and drawings of religious leaders and Egyptian women. Although the *Déscription*'s ambition was to serve as an encyclopedic source of information about Egypt at the time, it exhibits several flaws. Racist conceptions of human diversity were ingrained in the way the French viewed Cairo, as were themes of 'historical progress' (with French society being the

end-goal and the question of tyranny or ‘Oriental despotism,’ which – once posited – was used to extol the virtues of to liberal European society (Volait, 2010, p. 233).

I have briefly discussed the presence of France in Cairo as a core actor that has shaped heritage management in the ‘modern’ era through their ‘enlightened’ thinking. El-Husseini and Hafez (2020) highlight the development of modern heritage management in the city of Cairo since the nineteenth century (El-Husseini & Hafez, 2020, p. 823). Under Muhammad Ali Pasha (1805 - 1848), Khedive Ismail (1863 - 79), and in line with the presence of French ideologies, Cairo was defined by the idea of becoming a ‘modern city’ - one that no longer belonged to Africa but rather to Europe (El-Husseini & Hafez, 2020, p. 823). Principles as dictated by Hausmann, such as boulevards and open spaces, led to the construction of Khedival Cairo. This city would lie next to the old city (what is now known as Islamic Cairo) to create a dual-city structure. Khedive Ismail wanted to further Europanize Cairo by importing the best European - specifically French) scientists that could further distance the city from the rest of ‘uneducated’ Africa that did not utilize these experts in shaping their national identity (Volait, 2013, p. 107). At the same time, Khedive Ismail employed oriental art historians, conservationists, writers, scientists and travelers to document ‘Medieval’ Cairo and make plans for its preservation (El-Husseini & Hafez, 2020, p. 823). The local community was kept out of the decision-making processes and were rather seen as a subject of the newly designed policy which led to a Orientalist gaze on heritage in the city, stereotyping of the citizens and a hyperfocus on tangible heritage such as monuments and artifacts. Intangible heritage, which is inevitably connected to communities, was not described in much detail.

The imported scientists organized themselves in an organization concerned with the preservation of the city through a formal institution in 1881: *Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe.* The *Comité* was founded by Khedive Tawfiq - responsible for the preservation of Islamic and Coptic monuments in Egypt. It was dissolved in 1961 and passed from the ministry of *Awqaf* to the ministry of education. Although the institution was Egyptian on paper - part of the ministry of *Awqaf* (religious/charitable endowments) - daily operations were run by French conservationists and scientists (Islamic Art Network, 2013). The *Comité* was established partly to address the neglect and destruction of medieval Cairo which became rampant at the beginning of the 19th century under the reign of Muhammad Ali Pasha (1805 - 1848). His policy was, as

described in the previous paragraph, driven by modernisation of Cairo through the construction of a new city in line with Hausmann's conception of European cities. French intellectuals such as Arthur Rhoné and Gabriel Charmes had visited Cairo and were shocked at the state of its heritage. They publicized the issue in France leading to pressure the Egyptian leadership into creating the *Comité* (Volait, 2006, p. 19). The *Comité* engaged in different types of heritage management. The first was created to index all Islamic and Coptic monuments in Egypt, assess which ones needed attention and recommend the best course of action for their preservation and management. The management ranged from preservation of the structure or decorations to restoration of monuments. The 'strict' preservation was characterized by reinforcement, repair and cleaning (Islamic Art Network, 2013). Restoration involved the reconstruction of monuments based on historic sources, either to be made suitable for use by the community (for example a mosque or madrasa). However, a large number of monuments were also monumentalized and taken away from its original use in the community (Williams, 2008). In some cases, the monuments were in such a poor condition that the *Comité* decided to dismantle them. The elements of dismantled monuments would be transferred to the Museum of Arab Art, which is now known as the Museum of Islamic Art. The *Comité* held 303 official meetings and commissioned 919 technical reports - going into the state of monuments - throughout its existence. The procedures were presented in *bulletins* that were published by the IFAO (French Institute of Oriental Archeology). A comprehensive index of all bulletins, that was guided by an alphabetical list of all monuments registered by the *Comité,* was published in 1914. The index, including photographs, plans and drawings, remains the best record of monuments in Cairo, and in some cases the only record due to the demolishment of monuments as the modern city developed (Islamic Art Network, 2013).

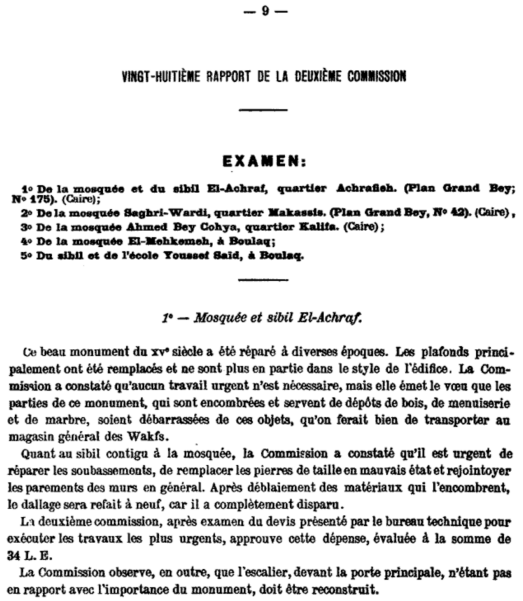
There were several reasons given to the motivation of the *Comité* to engage in these extensive works in the city of Cairo and Egypt at large. The *Comité,* as early as 1898, spoke of the satisfaction of tourists in Egypt (Renan, 1878). The true reality of their presence must however be found in a different, more Oriental realm of thinking. Conserving the 'Global South' has been anchored in problematic narratives. Appropriating the heritage through making it 'world heritage' - also known as 'worlding heritage' is a highly simplified way of managing heritage that omits the oppressive structures in which they have existed and continue to exist. French

oriental scientists coming to Cairo and studying the sites as if they themselves were the foremost experts on Egyptian heritage is an example of this. Their European knowledge was in no way truly adequate in preserving heritage in a culturally sensitive way. Rather, they placed European values of conservation on non-European heritage as a way to educate local communities. Furthermore, phrases such as 'bringing them to being' and 'making them present' - which are phrases used frequently by international heritage organizations, are closely linked to biopolitics (El-Husseini & Hafez, 2020, p. 826). Biopolitics is a set of ideas around governing people/places and territory/population through their built environment, which disciplines, controls and represents them. El Husseini and Hafez (2020) present a framework through which to understand the intentions of foreign actors in Cairo's heritage management. This framework does not just aid in understanding the position of the *Comité,* but of many other international heritage organizations that are present in current day Cairo. They critically look at the impact of these organizations within a community and for a national identity.

Conserving by aesthetics is at the heart of the framework as presented by El Husseini and Hafez (2020). This approach centers around preserving historical structures to maintain their beauty and style together with a mission of civilizing 'the other' - the inhabitants of the spaces around the preserved (El-Husseini & Hafez, 2020, p. 826). The rationale behind it is to claim inferiority of natives who lack scientific knowledge and an inability to conserve. By beautifying and monumentalizing heritage, further decay due to its surroundings or negative impacts of 'the inferiors' can be stopped (El-Husseini & Hafez, 2020, p. 826). The *Comité* is a prime example of this approach as the institution sought to govern 'the uncivilized' through critiquing their heritage and intervening in community spaces. The *Comité* gained legitimacy in Europe by patronizing Arabs, and highlighting their inability to value their past or take care of their heritage. Furthermore, their taste was inferior to those of the French. Rather, superior scientists must step in to engage with the heritage that was subsequently seen as a testament to the beauty of *all* of humanity. An example of the perceived inferiority of the Egyptians was the ibn-Tulun conservation plan. The mosque was then stripped of all of its original functions (being a mosque, commercial area and madrasa). The urban 'encroachments' that threatened the structural integrity of the mosque were removed, forcing many inhabitants of the area into homelessness. The mosque was then monumentalized as a way to preserve in the most optimal way. It would

also be a good chance to attract tourists, through which the *Comité* could then generate revenue (El-Husseini & Hafez, 2020, p. 827). The house next to the mosque was considered government property, thus confiscated by the French. For years the *Comité* worked on evicting the original inhabitants of the house to make it into a museum. In the 1920s they succeeded in evicting the tenants of the house and would later give it to a retired British army colonel, Gayer-Anderson. The house was remodeled to add *mashrabiya* (wooden panels placed in front of windows for temperature management) and tiling in line with Mamluk traditions. He filled the house with Oriental artifacts from his travels around the world, and made it into a museum (El-Husseini & Hafez, 2020, p. 827). The house would be called the *Gayer-Anderson House*. By changing the name the native origins of the house were deleted and omitted from the narrative of heritage in the city. The redecoration of the *Gayer-Anderson House* shows an overarching theme in the *Comité's* heritage management. It essentialized visual heritage imaginaries of the city, giving a '1001-nights' feeling to the preservation-work. *Conserving by aesthetics* in the case of the *Comité* is thus defined by white supremacy, an Oriental gaze and colonial power over the natives. Controlling heritage is a governance mechanism, it is an instrument to discipline body, building, space, ideology (El-Husseini & Hafez, 2020, p. 828). Western imperialism was in conflict with Egyptian nationalism. French, British, German, Italian, Austro-Hungarian and American had an imperialist approach to heritage preservation pre-1914. Westerners would carry the mantle of progressive science, denouncing Egyptians as simple chauvinists (Reid, 2003, p. 13). In the words of Frantz Fanon: ''*For the native, objectivity is always directed against him"*.

Overall, the *Comité* had no real mention of intangible heritage or its preservation. Their reports highlighted communities and the religious importance of monuments, but centered little around the documentation of rituals, religious expressions, handicrafts, cooking or social traditions. An example from a *Comité* bulletin highlights this.



— 9 —

VINGT-HUITIÈME RAPPORT DE LA DEUXIÈME COMMISSION

EXAMEN:

1° De la mosquée et du sibil El-Achraf, quartier Achrafieh. (Plan Grand Bey; N° 175). (Caire);
2° De la mosquée Seghri-Wardi, quartier Makassis. (Plan Grand Bey, N° 42). (Caire),
3° De la mosquée Ahmed Bey Cohya, quartier Kalifa. (Caire);
4° De la mosquée El-Mehkemeh, à Boulaq;
5° Du sibil et de l'école Youssef Said, à Boulaq.

1° — *Mosquée et sibil El-Achraf.*

Ce beau monument du XV^e^ siècle a été réparé à diverses époques. Les plafonds principalement ont été remplacés et ne sont plus en partie dans le style de l'édifice. La Commission a constaté qu'aucun travail urgent n'est nécessaire, mais elle émet le vœu que les parties de ce monument, qui sont encombrées et servent de dépôts de bois, de menuiserie et de marbre, soient débarrassées de ces objets, qu'on ferait bien de transporter au magasin général des Wakfs.

Quant au sibil contigu à la mosquée, la Commission a constaté qu'il est urgent de réparer les soubassements, de remplacer les pierres de taille en mauvais état et rejointoyer les parements des murs en général. Après déblaiement des matériaux qui l'encombrent, le dallage sera refait à neuf, car il a complètement disparu.

La deuxième commission, après examen du devis présenté par le bureau technique pour exécuter les travaux les plus urgents, approuve cette dépense, évaluée à la somme de 34 L. E.

La Commission observe, en outre, que l'escalier, devant la porte principale, n'étant pas en rapport avec l'importance du monument, doit être reconstruit.

Comité de Conservation bulletin number 28, 1886 (Islamic Art Network)

The *Comités* approach to heritage management is technical and descriptive. It describes a mosque and sabil (water fountain) that are in need of restoration. These monuments are both directly linked to Islam, as a house of worship and as part of *zakat* and *sadaqa* (involuntary and voluntary charity). The description discusses the flaws - much in line with the superior biopolitical stance as presented by Al-Husseini and Hafez (2020) - but do not mention in any way how the site is used, how the community interacts with it or what traditions are tied to it. It falls in line with the overall omittance of intangible heritage in academia until the middle of the 20th century. As meticulously as the *Comité* documented the monuments in the city of Cairo, as ignored as the humans interacting with those monuments were. Other than very clinical descriptions of removing urban 'encroachments', which led to the displacement of families that had lived in neighborhoods around monuments for centuries, little was described regarding way of living at the time, family life, Egyptian encounters with their surroundings or things that shaped *local* identity.

Using this lens I would like to discuss heritage management in Cairo from the First World War - when Egypt was still under British rule - until the time of Nasser. From 1914 to 1919, Egypt was under colonial British rule. Following the national uprising of 1919, and in an effort of the

British to maintain their strategic position in the region, they declared Egypt independent - although with several restrictions. The three decades of semi-colonisation were frustrating for Europe and Egypt alike, as Egypt was steadily developing their own national identity in which they utilized many parts of its heritage. This heritage was, as the research highlights, previously utilized to solidify Europe's identity as the superior, scientific center of the world that had come to the Orient to educate inferiors. The struggle between the colonizer and the (semi-) colonized and their claim for national identity was highlighted through the foundation of university degrees that permitted Egyptians to study Egyptology, archeology and art history (Reid, 2019, p. 3). The French and British were also slowly losing their control over cultural institutions and museums. This trend was in line with global developments within heritage management. In an effort to decolonize and create a new national identity, without the direction of colonizers, museums and cultural institutions were at the heart of the struggle for independence (Reid, 2019, p. 5).

The 1922 to 1952 'semicolonial' period has been characterized as Egypt's age of parliamentary monarchy in which, as mentioned above, the British were fighting to remain in the country as an influential actor. 1952, which is the year in which Nasser and his Free Officers overthrow King Faruq, marks a radical shift in heritage management in the city of Cairo (Reid, 2019, p. 343). Nasser removed all French functionaries from their positions at the Egyptian Antiquities Service, after dominating the organization for almost 100 years. Within a year of the revolution, all high-raking heritage positions in the country were held by Egyptians - much thanks to the educational programmes that had been established during the semi-colonial period in a struggle for independence. The expulsion of foreigners in high positions led to the loss of some of the brightest (albeit colonial and Orientalist) academics such as Drioton (Egyptology), Cresswell (Islamic Architecture), Wiet (Islamic Art) and Adriani (Greco-Roman heritage).

Conserving by development is the second aspect of the framework in understanding the current flaws of heritage management as presented by el-Husseini and Hafez (2020). This is a paradigmatic shift in the way the 'developed' world interacts with 'the other' which intersects with conservation approaches. As the name suggests, this type of approach stems from transnational cultural organizations, defined by philanthropy and benevolence, who are focused on *developing* the developing world. It focuses on heritage management but engages communities as the recipient of philanthropic organizations (El-Husseini & Hafez, 2020, p. 826).

We see this approach to heritage management rising in the seventies and eighties (El-Husseini & Hafez, 2020, 831). The Orientalist structures still persevere, but this time in a neoliberal jacket: a choreographed dance between residents, spaces and heritage organizations that operated from the top down. As it is neoliberal in nature it ensures profits as much as a facade of benevolence or community-development. In many ways heritage management in Cairo was and is appropriative in nature: the 'international community' vowed to save heritage in the city. Furthermore, it shows the ways in which heritage is selectively utilized. It becomes the battlefield of a debate on identity between actors.

A debate that in many ways highlights the debates between international, national and local efforts to preserve cultural heritage in Cairo is the question of the 'Bohra Restoration' (Sanders, 2008, p. 118). There has been a 25-year debate about the aesthetics approaches to the reconstruction of Fatimid monuments. UNESCO had placed Islamic Cairo on the World Heritage List in 1979. Its placement led to outrage from local advocacy groups that engaged in monuments in this part of Cairo, who argued the restorations were unacceptable and a-historic (Sanders, 2008, p. 118). Issues also arose which the definition of this site as UNESCO used 'Islamic' 'medieval' and 'historic' interchangeably. The area was described by international heritage professionals as an intact, historic area which was unaltered by previous preservation efforts. The work of the Comité was barely mentioned in the application process of UNESCO (Sanders, 2008, p. 120). The underlying assumption of this: the work of restoration has no implications for the *history,* conservation only makes visible what was already there. This is false and problematic to say the least. Foreign entities such as UNESCO assume that their work only brings out what has always existed, rather than altering the social make-up of a space, possibly changing the original purpose of it. UNESCO's approach to intangible heritage lacks an understanding of the link between tangible spaces and intangible practices linked to them. It is important to recognize how previous heritage management work alters a space and the relations inhabitants have to it. Practices and rituals can also be altered through preservation work, specifically if they are top-down and include actors that do not know enough about the context in which they are working. Why am I highlighting this approach here? It is through this critical lens that I will present the stakeholder analysis of cultural heritage management institutions governing Cairo's landscape, with a specific focus on intangible heritage practices.

Another issue that lies in the allocation of heritage is its *politics.* Politics of heritage refer to the interplay of power dynamics, interests and ideologies that are involved in the identification, interpretation, preservation and promotion of cultural heritage - which I will generally refer to as the allocation of heritage. The politics of heritage involves a large number of stakeholders, from governments and national cultural institutions to local communities, marginalized groups, academics, tourists and historical interpretations. Furthermore, the allocation of heritage is subject to varying class dynamics, as well as racial and gendered interpretations that possibly lead to the omission or hyperfixation of one expression of heritage - often of a dominant group in society. A poignant example of this in Cairene society is the existence of an array of Facebook groups that plead for the preservation of Cairo's heritage. For example, the Facebook group 'Le Vieux Caire - Old Cairo - القاهرة' posts extensively about the 'good old days' of Cairo through street photography, photos of leisure activities such as Gezira Club in Zamalek and information about the monarchy. The 'good old days' are implicitly pitted against the 'bleak present' (Elsherif, 2021). This Facebook page, an online archive, highlights the heritage and identity of a specific class in Cairene society. Arabic is not the only language used on the page, but also English and French, and in some cases even Greek. These languages, specifically French and Greek, are traditionally only used by upper-class Cairenes and those that belong to Christian groups. The photos highlight upscale neighborhoods as well as pro-monarchy sentiments, which were widespread under the upper class of Egypt until the revolution in 1952. These photos of the 'high life' and identity that individuals extracted and still extract from this, could lead to disagreement with other groups shaping their identity through heritage. It shows the great diversity of heritage within one city: the photos posted on the Facebook groups are a source of memory and nostalgia for some groups, and a source of disdain or protest for others. This highlights the notion of *politics of heritage*: the allocation of heritage and the identities that are extracted from heritage are subject to class, gender and ethnic dynamics. Only on a small number of occasions does the heritage of a nation truly correspond with *all* of the nation. More often, the ruling elite decides that heritage belongs to the identity of the state. The role of nostalgia is important in politics of heritage. Nostalgia is a cultural practice that provides a moral critique of the present (Saleh, 2021, p. 30). In a way, nostalgia imagines an alternative future, by understanding the past in relation to the present through 'what has happened' vis-a-vis 'what could have happened'. This act of analyzing the past is driven by how individuals within a

community imagine their collective history, present identity and alternative future (Elsherif, 2021). The Facebook groups such as 'Le Vieux Caire - Old Cairo - القاهرة' in the case of Cairo, as well as 'ذاكرة السويس' (Suez Memory) and 'الاسماعيليه وثائق وتاريخ' (Ismailia Documents and History) embody a collective nostalgia, a thought exercise in what current day Egypt could look like. The yearning to the past is however one that belongs to upper-class Egyptians. It highlights how selective heritage as a tool for identity can be, and that it is hard to shape a national identity when nostalgia, from which heritage can be derived, is so fragmented. When thinking about this in relation to SARD, it is important to understand that many Egyptians will not relate to the archives or projects of Shubra. Shubra is generally seen as a populous, lower-middle class area of Cairo. It is not an area that is often mentioned in these Facebook groups, much less in nostalgic narratives about the glory of Egypt at the center of the metropolitan world. It does not fit in the discourse of Cairo as a city that has an aesthetic of purity, beauty and order, as is so often presented on the Facebook groups by conservative upper-middle class Egyptians (Elsherif, 2021). These categorisations seek to distinguish what is 'really Egyptian' as a way to recycle nationalist narratives about Cairo in its 'good old days'. This could be a clue as to why SARD has trouble collaborating with the ministries that engage in the preservation of heritage in the city. It does not fall into the traditional understanding of what intangible heritage in Cairo is or the classist and imperialist stereotypes that those with funding want to perpetuate.

As my historical contextualization has presented, foreign actors have heavily influenced the heritage landscape in Cairo and implemented a European approach, namely museumification and monumentalisation, to manage heritage sites. During this time there was little attention to intangible heritage practices or the way in which monuments related to them. Through the stakeholder analysis, I would like to understand the remnants of foreign actors in Cairo's heritage management organizations. The institutionalization of intangible cultural heritage is a more recent phenomenon, which could explain its general absence in historical documents. It is thus important to give extra attention to the ways in which it is managed in the city of Cairo. Specifically, I would like to highlight which organizations and governmental institutions act in Cairo's heritage management.

5.5. Nubian tangible and intangible heritage practices and documentation

A frequently overlooked set of heritage that is indispensable to the history and cultural fabric is that of the Nubians. The Nubians are a Nilo-Saharan group that inhabit Northern Sudan and southern Egypt - with an estimation of 300.000 to 5.000.000 currently living in Egypt. Nubians originate from the early inhabitants of the central Nile Valley and are believed to be one of the oldest civilizations. Between 1960 and 1970 a significant number of Nubians were forcibly removed from their ancestral lands due to the construction of the Aswan High Dam under Nasser. This displacement has had a great influence on the preservation of Nubian heritage, both tangible and intangible. I will discuss the efforts here. As the preservation spans over many centuries, and there are significant cultural differences, I have chosen to add this chapter after the ‘pre-modern’ and ‘modern’ approaches to heritage management in Cairo. Most of the management of this heritage does not take place in Cairo, but is in some cases subject to policy originating from the city and subject to heavy marginalization from academia and Egyptian society alike. Furthermore, an increasing number of Nubians are moving to Cairo from their native lands in the south of Egypt and north of Sudan.

I will use an extensive collection of proverbs, or short sayings that express a simple truth, as a first look into Nubian intangible cultural heritage and identity that has been passed down throughout generations. Habbob (2022) has made an overview of some 500 Nubian proverbs. In addition to this overview, his collection comprises tales, songs, photographs and lullabies related to Nubian culture. He argues that these proverbs encompass the spirit and identity of the Nubians. This oral tradition thus highlights the extensive history of Nubian culture and the way in which this tradition is still used in current vernacular. To paraphrase a citation Habbob (2022) uses at the beginning of his collection:

"Proverbs give a wonderful insight into a culture. To some African ethnic groups proverbs are not explained but rather they are self-explanatory. Their meaning is straightforward. In fact, proverbs in a nutshell communicate truth. Truth is sometimes bitter and can be corrupted by logical grammatical usage in language. Nevertheless, proverbs spare the corruption of truth" (Okeke Onyeka Augustine, Tanzania). (Habbob, 2022, p. x).

The proverbs highlight interpersonal relations as well as the relations Nubians have with animals and nature. Specifically, there is a great importance of the Nile in Nubian oral tradition. I have added an interpretation of the Nubian script, which is currently being revitalized by Nubian scholars as a way to further preserve Nubian heritage. Some examples of proverbs that highlight Nubian identity:

ⲃⲁⲅⲁⲣ ⲟⲩⲗⲟⲩⲙ ⲕⲓ□□ⲓⲗ ⲅⲟⲩⲥⲥⲁⲛ ⲕⲟⲃ.

Bahar ulum kinynyil hussan koc.

Swim freely in a river without crocodiles.

> [Said to advise a person to seize the opportunity in the absence of those who may deter him, or as a mockery of seizing opportunities in an unethical manner.] (Habbob, 2022, p. 37)

ⲕⲓⲇ ⲱⲉⲕⲕⲁ ⲥⲟⲕⲕⲁ ⲧⲓⲕⲕⲁⲛ□ⲟⲛ ⲥⲉⲅⲉⲇ ⲱⲉ ⲫⲁⲗⲁⲕⲓⲛ.

Kid weekka sokka tikkangoon seged wee falakiin.

Whenever you lift a stone, a scorpion comes out.

> [Advice to avoid dealing with certain people.] (Habbob, 2022, p. 141).

ⲃⲁⲅⲁⲣⲣⲁ ⲅⲟⲛ ⲥⲁⲛⲧⲉ ⲟⲕⲕⲁⲫⲓⲛⲁ.

Baharra goon santee okkafiina.

Even rivers have a pot/amount.

> [An advice to save and not to waste.] (Habbob, 2022, p. 23)

The proverbs thus call for respect towards each other, towards nature and to be cautious about who to trust. The awareness of the dangers of nature, be it scorpions or the water of the Nile running out, are clear in this collection. This highlights that the Nubian identity is innately connected to ancestral lands.

Rowan (2011) highlights the history and contemporary practices that Nubians engage with to keep their heritage alive. She starts her article by presenting the perverse dichotomy between UNESCO's rescue operation of Abu Simbel and many other ancient Egyptian sites due to the construction of the Aswan Dam on the one hand - seen as the biggest heritage rescue operation in history, and the obliteration of the core of Nubian lands on the other. Granted, a small team of anthropologists and ethnographers salvaged what they could in the short amount of time they had, but much of the heritage has been lost forever (Rowan, 2011, p. 178). The Dam construction, displacement of Nubians and the marginalization of their history have sparked an urgency within the community to safeguard their intangible practices. The activities include documentation of language and practices, as well as legal and physical protection and promotion of the heritage. In line with the ongoing 'Egyptomania' element that plays into heritage management in Cairo and Egypt as a whole, there was a lot of attention given to tangible heritage in the region in which Nubians had long resided. The same high-profile attention was however not given to the 100.000 Nubians that were displaced and the profound impact it would have on their intangible heritage. The loss of intangible heritage was only predicted by a small group of anthropologists and social researchers of the American University in Cairo. AUC's Cairo Social Research Centre traveled to the displaced Nubians to survey, record and analyze their cultural and the organization of the Nubians post-displacement from 1961 to 1964 (Rowan, 2011, p. 179). The study, named the Nubian Ethnological Survey, mixed salvage anthropology and development anthropology. It documented a life that seemed it may disappear due to the extensive changes to the community and loss of physical spaces such as temples that could not be reconstructed far from the banks of the Nile, the river that was central to the life of the Nubians (Hopkins & Sohair, 2010, p. 3). This extensive research was paramount in highlighting the great importance of preserving the heritage of the Nubians, and has enabled Nubians and academics alike to reiterate the threat there is to this culture and that ongoing preservation is necessary.

To this end, several cross-border community-based initiatives have been working towards preserving and promoting Nubian cultural heritage. The Nubian Culture and Tourism Festival, sponsored by the DAL Group Company (the largest Sudanese conglomerate engaging in food/beverages/real estate/development and agriculture based in Khartoum). The first festival

took place in Sudan and included talks on architecture and languages - specifically Nubian script (Rowan, 2011, p. 181). As the script is one of the oldest in Africa, scholars are attempting to revie its use in written language transmission. There were also film screenings, fashion shows, craft techniques, history talks and a book fair: all aspects of the intangible heritage of Nubia. The aim of the festival is to strengthen the bonds between Nubians between Egypt and Sudan as well as reinforce cultural ties, economically revitalize the area and promote tourism (Rowan, 2011, p. 181). The DAL group continues to support dialogue between Nubians and the rest of Egyptian and Sudanese society, as well as supporting practitioners in their preservation practices.

In Aswan, a different type of intangible cultural heritage preservation has emerged since the displacement of Nubians in the 60s and 70s of last century. In these centers, Nubians can reminisce about their life before the displacement as well as promote Nubian culture to visitors. There are music performances, as well as lessons in playing traditional instruments. Nubian language lessons are given here, outside of regular Egyptian schools that do not have Nubian in their curriculum. Children of displaced families also regularly attend the events at these centers, making it an important place for intercultural transmission to those that could not live in their ancestral land. Furthermore, smaller social centers are emerging in cities in which Nubians have migrated to after the displacement, namely in Cairo, Khartoum and London.

Finally, the Nubian Languages and Culture project is a team of Nubians and scholars of Nubia that include linguists, ethnographers, folklore specialists and music scientists (Nubian Languages and Culture Project, n.d.). The project was launched to assist the Nubian community in safeguarding their intangible cultural heritage. It was launched at the School of Oriental and African Studies in 2016 and is affiliated to community-based groups in Nubia and the diaspora. The project records videos of oral histories, memories, descriptions of traditions (such as Nile navigation), myths and folktales and descriptions of areas that have now been lost due to flooding by the Egyptian and Sudanese governments.

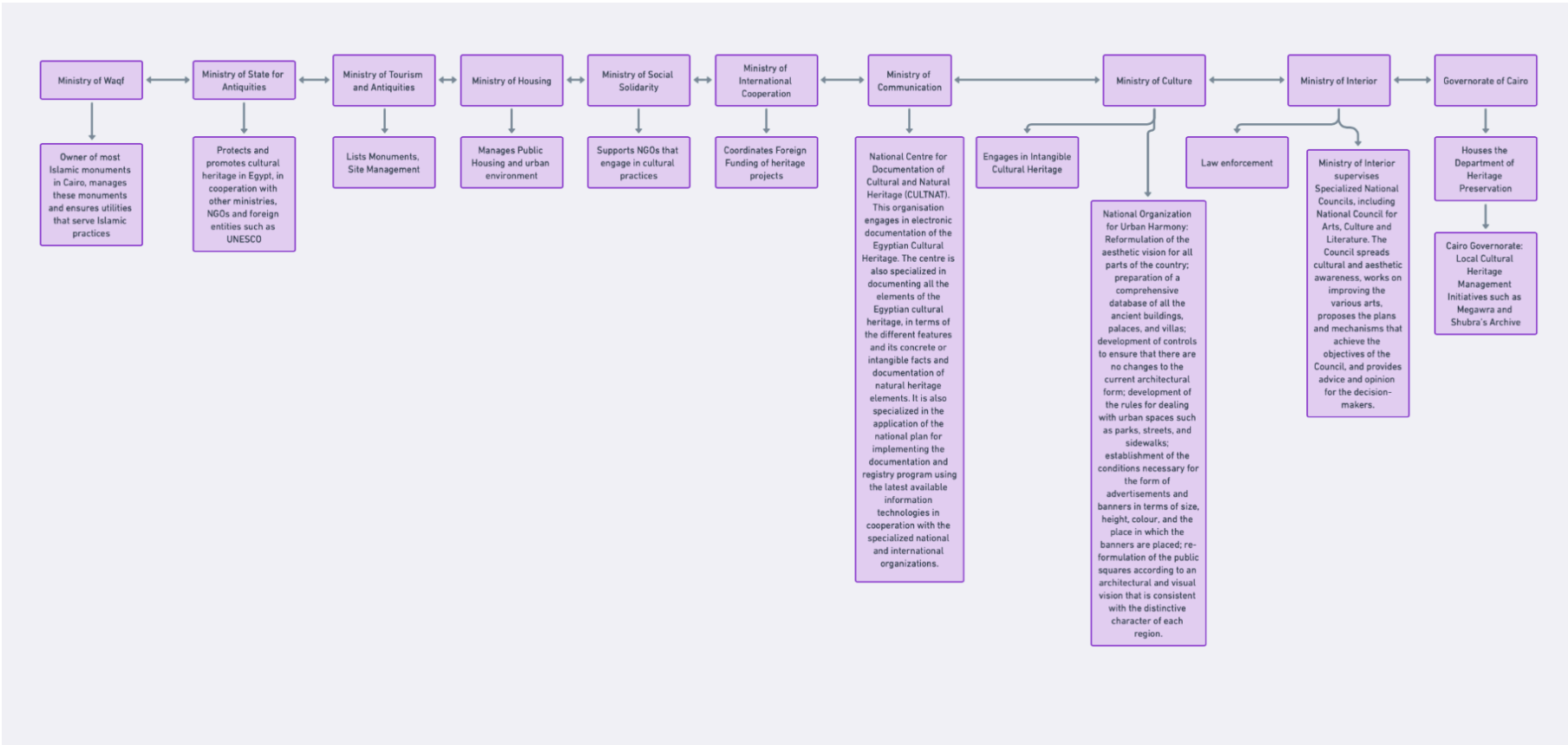
The absence of Nubian heritage in most of the narratives around heritage in Cairo or Egypt in general highlights the nature of exclusionary politics of heritage. This marginalized community, that is an integral part of the ethnic makeup of Egypt, is subject to omission in narratives from

the dominant identities in Cairo. This leads to a lack of recognition for the traditions and practices of this community, as well as a lack of funding to ensure the correct management. For example, after UNESCO's 'Nubia Campaign', their work in heritage preservation for this group has stopped. Local (and in some cases national) entities recognize parts of the importance in the ongoing commitment to the preservation of this heritage. However, in the case of Egypt, this generally centers around tourism and museums in Aswan. The commodification of heritage can be a valid way to continue the Nubian way of living as it can create revenue, as long as it is done simultaneously with sound ethnographic work and other forms of proper management such as digital archives. This is however still minimal in Egypt.

6. *Stakeholder overview*

I would now like to present the actors that engage in heritage management today. The stakeholder analysis had been derived from two main articles: *Heritage conservation management in Egypt: A review of the current and proposed situation to amend it* by Osman (2018) and *Living with Heritage in Cairo: Area conservation in the Arab-Islamic city* by Sedky (2009). I will present the stakeholders that are engaged on a governmental level first. As the analyses will show, several of these ministries liaise with foreign NGOs and international organizations throughout their policy cycle, from creating guidelines for heritage management to funding projects and delivering expertise. I will also present streams of funding. Lastly, I would like to present the actors that engage in intangible heritage management in Cairo.

Government entities engaged in heritage management on a national, municipal and local level (figure 1) on next page:


Ministry of Waqf
Owner of most Islamic monuments in Cairo, manages these monuments and ensures utilities that serve Islamic practices
Ministry of State for Antiquities
Protects and promotes cultural heritage in Egypt, in cooperation with other ministries, NGOs and foreign entities such as UNESCO
Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
Lists Monuments, Site Management
Ministry of Housing
Manages Public Housing and urban environment
Ministry of Social Solidarity
Supports NGOs that engage in cultural practices
Ministry of International Cooperation
Coordinates Foreign Funding of heritage projects
Ministry of Communication
National Centre for Documentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage (CULTNAT). This organisation engages in electronic documentation of the Egyptian Cultural Heritage. The centre is also specialized in documenting all the elements of the Egyptian cultural heritage, in terms of the different features and its concrete or intangible facts and documentation of natural heritage elements. It is also specialized in the application of the national plan for implementing the documentation and registry program using the latest available information technologies in cooperation with the specialized national and international organizations.
Ministry of Culture
Engages in Intangible Cultural Heritage
National Organization for Urban Harmony: Reformulation of the aesthetic vision for all parts of the country; preparation of a comprehensive database of all the ancient buildings, palaces, and villas; development of controls to ensure that there are no changes to the current architectural form; development of the rules for dealing with urban spaces such as parks, streets, and sidewalks; establishment of the conditions necessary for the form of advertisements and banners in terms of size, height, colour, and the place in which the banners are placed; re-formulation of the public squares according to an architectural and visual vision that is consistent with the distinctive character of each region.
Ministry of Interior
Law enforcement
Ministry of Interior supervises Specialized National Councils, including National Council for Arts, Culture and Literature. The Council spreads cultural and aesthetic awareness, works on improving the various arts, proposes the plans and mechanisms that achieve the objectives of the Council, and provides advice and opinion for the decision-makers.
Governorate of Cairo
Houses the Department of Heritage Preservation
Cairo Governorate: Local Cultural Heritage Management Initiatives such as Megawra and Shubra's Archive

Explanation figure 1: This figure shows the relevant ministries that engage in heritage management. They have shared values of heritage and all seek to promote Egyptian heritage and culture. The ministries interact with one another and carry out government policy vis-a-vis heritage and culture more broadly. As this first stakeholder analysis highlights, the government of Egypt is not a 'black box' in which policy is made unilaterally and then executed in Cairo. The ministries are in a constant negotiation with one another about resources. Moreover, each of the ministries have their own interpretation of what heritage and identity are. It shows that even within government institutions of the same government, there are different interests - from solutions to housing problems in Cairo to cooperation with foreign institutions and the collaboration with other heritage organizations. The interpretation of identity also differs between the ministries. For example, the ministry of Culture would like to maintain historic structures and preserve traditional practices more than the ministry of Housing, who would like to present new development projects as highly modern and new.

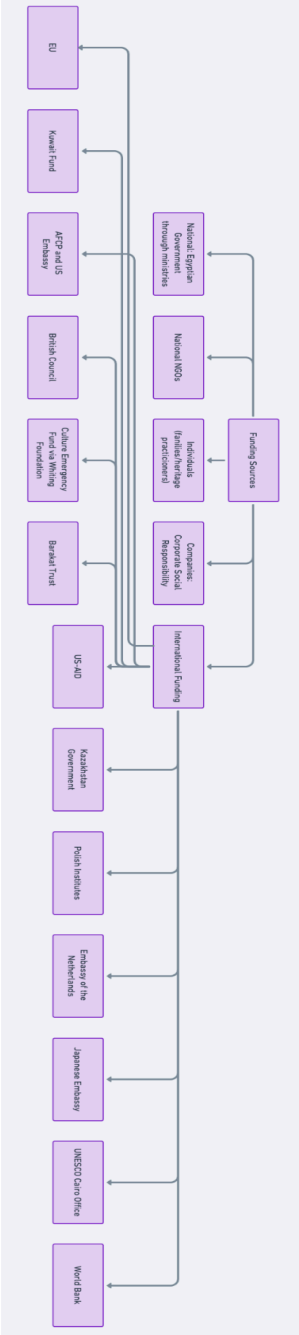


Figure 2: Funding overview (national and international)

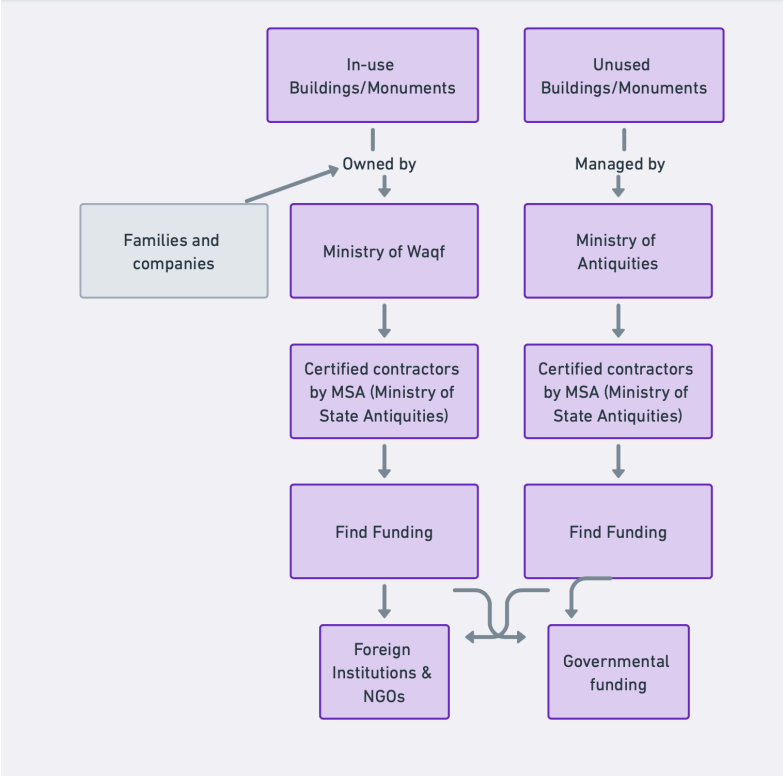


Figure 3: Funding of monuments in Cairo stakeholder overview

In this stakeholder analysis I have made the distinction between buildings that are currently in use and those that are not. The focus lies on funding in the upkeep of monuments. This stakeholder analysis is unrelated to intangible heritage management, but does highlight the governmental institutions that are mainly concerned with monuments in the city of Cairo. Buildings that are currently in use are either owned by families or companies, or by the Ministry of Waqf in the case of mosques and other religious buildings. Contractors must be certified by the Ministry of Antiquities to ensure the preservation work is carried out according to the national and international standards of heritage management.

Figure 4: Design practices overview

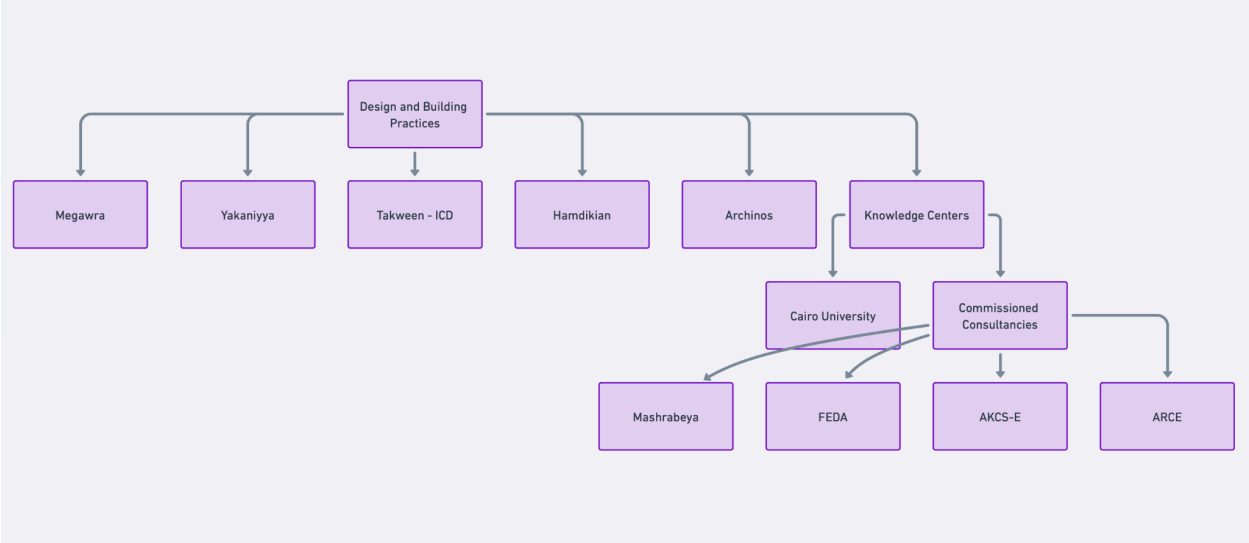


Figure 4 highlights the different actors, both national and international, that serve as sources of knowledge for the management of heritage. It refers to the technical support that is required to preserve, conserve, reconstruct and document heritage. The overview thus encompasses architects, engineers, IT-specialists, anthropologists and sociologists. SARD uses guidelines from both national and international institutions as a way to inspire their own archive.

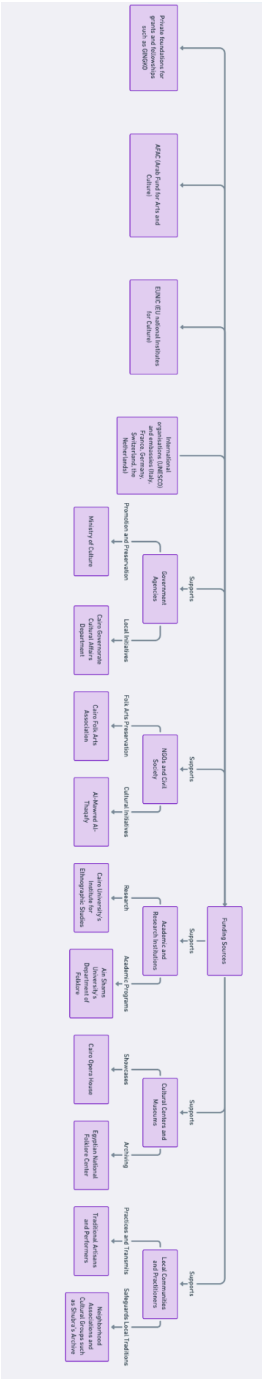


Figure 5: Stakeholder overview specific to intangible heritage

Within the stakeholder analyses I have separated national and international actors and funding entities as a way to highlight the seeming dichotomy. On the one hand, ministries have several projects and entities that are active within the field of heritage management. They are also taking the first steps towards institutionalizing intangible heritage management into their funding. This is however still limited. As the *intangible heritage management in Cairo* chapter of this research will highlight, there are growing interests in implementing digital tools in heritage management. This is often done in collaboration with, as the stakeholder analysis shows, foreign entities such as UNESCO, ARCE and Archinos. The funding of heritage management projects stems from both the Egyptian government and foreign embassies, research institutes and heritage organizations. Foreign entities however seem to have a larger portion of the funding and, through talks with SARD volunteers, are more accessible to contact than the Egyptian government.

I would like to analyze the stakeholder analyses through the lens of my case study. As I mentioned, there is an incredibly diverse set of actors and interpretations of heritage in this stakeholder analysis. To start with SARD's collaboration with national governmental entities. Ibrahim mentioned that SARD had a potential project or collaboration with the Egyptian Ministry of Culture. However, this collaboration did not happen as the conversations with the ministry depended on personal connections with employees on the 'inside'. These people either changed their position within the ministry, left it or there was no follow-up with those still working there. This same dynamic happened when SARD wanted to collaborate with Egypt Post, a governmental organization that is paramount to Egyptian identity. SARD wanted to collaborate with Egypt Post by compiling historic letters that would be at the center of telling the story of the neighborhood. However, it was not possible to have durable conversations with employees of Egypt Post to make this collaboration happen. The conversations with SARD have highlighted something important for my understanding of intangible heritage management in Egypt. There is little synergy between governmental and local institutions. This can impede profound heritage management as national policy has an impact on a local level. If the ministry of Housing or municipality of Cairo decides to make structural changes to Shubra, this will impact traditions and practices. This could lead to a loss of heritage.

SARD highlights the significance of foreign actors for funding. This is in line with figure 2 of the stakeholder analysis. This leads to certain (inevitable) concerns. Firstly, there is a dependency on foreign actors for the existence or promulgation of these organizations. This leads to a continuation of colonial structure. As the historical context of this research has shown, there was a significant period in which foreign entities (specifically British and French) dominated the way in which heritage was managed and even *which* heritage was selected to receive funding and research. Ongoing foreign funding, as highlighted thoroughly by Coslett (2019), reinforces the colonial relation between former colonizers and colonized. Furthermore, funding within the current framework is never certain. Local heritage organizations are often in heavy competition with other organizations for a grant or sponsored project. Not only do they have to compete for limited funding, the projects sometimes have a specific theme or topic that the organization must adhere to. Examples could be a focus on music heritage (Agha Khan Development Network) or the heritage or marginalized communities. If a local heritage organization does not fall into this categorization, they also cannot apply for the money. Foreign states with funding for heritage preservation often have the final say in *which* type of heritage deems 'relevant' or 'endangered' enough to be preserved. This also highlights the diverse interpretations of heritage that exist. As I have highlighted, the interpretation of what heritage is practically endless, and varies based on which individual, community, state or institution is asked. This also means that community-based heritage organizations, such as SARD, are subject to the diverse interpretations.

I have highlighted that SARD recognizes the importance of 'the everyday' as a way to present intangible heritage practices in Shubra. This is in stark contrast to intangible heritage practices that the Egyptian government recognizes as intangible heritage that symbolize Egyptian identity. The same goes for intangible heritage practices that UNESCO presents for Egypt. In conversation with SARD it became clear that they in no way recognize the practices national and international institutions mark as intangible heritage or aspects of identity for Shubra. It highlights the disconnect between governmental and international institutions vis-a-vis local identities. It is, however, often these governmental and international institutions that have the funding to keep local organizations going. Without a solid collaboration between different entities, it is hard to soundly manage heritage in an inclusive manner.

7. Cultural heritage management: the benefits of inclusion

I would like to present academic work that has been written on implementing digital tools in heritage and its transformative impact on the field. This segment will be both technical and sociological in nature, highlighting the practical tools as well as democratizing effects the tools have on heritage management. Finally, the literature review will compare case studies of digital tools implemented in heritage management from around the world to highlight the beneficial impact it can have. Special attention will be given to non-Western case studies. As I have highlighted previously, Eurocentric approaches to non-Western intangible heritage is often reductive and selective, and fails to embrace the nuances and differences that make the heritage so significant to a community. The US and Europe also tend to have a different approach to archiving and overall heritage management, as well as more funding for digital tools such as a sophisticated online repository.

In the emerging field of digital heritage, academics have sought to understand the implications of the digital revolution on cultural heritage preservation. Moreover, practical guides have been dedicated to advising cultural heritage professionals how to best integrate new technologies in safeguarding historical artifacts, sites and other cultural expressions. Throughout, articles mention the democratizing factor these emerging technologies can have on the preservation process in the Global South, which remains largely in the hands of international institutions and foreign research bodies. Academia has both presented broad theories about how heritage institutions can adopt new digital technologies, as well as case studies regarding the application of these technologies. This literature review will present an overview of some of the most important works in the field. It will recognize similarities in the work regarding the digitisation of cultural heritage as well as highlight shortcomings. Specifically, the review will argue that most of the academic work still focuses on European heritage institutions. Firstly, it will look at broader topics of digitisation of heritage, as well as the notion of democratization, revitalization of heritage management and increased accessibility. Then, it will use case studies from around the world to practically understand which digital tools can be used in relation to heritage management, specifically of intangible heritage.

Nyhlén and Gidlund (2018) stipulate that digitisation has the power to deconstruct power structures and exclusion in society (Nyhlén & Gidlund, 2018, p. 1362). Often, we see that digital spaces reproduce the existing suppressive narratives that exist offline. But, with some provocation of the status quo, digital tools can be used as a tool to alter the norms that dominate cyberspace. The authors call for an intervention in order to prevent the reproduction of discriminatory norms (Nyhlén & Gidlund, 2018, p. 1365). With regards to cultural heritage, the authors created a regional digital heritage portal that served as a place of safekeeping and archive as a way to highlight their argument about the benefits of digitisation in heritage management. They highlight the risk of documenting a certain narrative online, as it could perpetuate exclusionary practices - such as omitting local entities from heritage preservation and deciding which narratives are suitable for eternal documentation. The portal that was created was an online space that was owned by a regional network of institutions. The network included a County Administrative Board, county museum, library and the regional National Archive (Nyhlén & Gidlund, 2018, p. 1367). Simply put, the combined knowledge was aggregated and entered into the portal. The aggregation led to new insights and attempted to decolonize the institutions, by giving the public - who participate in cultural heritage rites - space to participate. I will include this notion when looking at recommendations for the case of Shubra's Archive.

Another article that highlights the importance of digitisation practices for revitalization of the cultural heritage section is *Path renewal dynamics in the Kyoto kimono cluster: how to revitalize cultural heritage through digitalization* (Sedita & Ozeki, 2022). More specifically, they also focus on the importance of streamlining knowledge and aggregating it into a joint archive between several institutions. Sedita and Ozeki (2022) call for the recombination of knowledge, the critical review of the information at hand in the local community. The process of renewal and recombination occurs through the medium of digital technology (Sedita & Ozeki, 2022, p. 1737). They conclude that the embrace of digital technologies, specifically the use of online archives for knowledge aggregation, have let the cultural heritage sector flourish. Furthermore, the economic sphere of cultural heritage has shown to receive a boost. Giving the community access to heritage management is a way to revitalize and democratize the process.

Academic works from around the world underpin the revitalizing effect digitisation has on cultural heritage, specifically in a post-crisis context. Ben Yahia and Bouslama (2023) underpin the positive effect digital tools have on boosting the economy of cultural heritage institutions (p. 22). Technologies that were embraced included 3D modeling, VR, augmented reality, AI and the aggregation of big data to make virtual representations of the expressions of cultural heritage (Ben Yahia & Bouslama, 2023, p. 18). The article gives an excellent overview of digital enhancements to the promotion of cultural heritage in Tunisia, specifically after the Arab Spring. Tunisian cultural heritage professionals are embracing VR and AR technologies as well as applications and interactive websites to attract tourism and promote heritage. Ben Yahia and Boslama (2023) conclude that these techniques have indeed revitalized the cultural heritage economy while including local heritage professionals (p. 25).

Paschalidou, Fafet and Milios (2022) shift their attention to integrating sustainability into the discourse around cultural heritage preservation. They call, much like Nyhlén and Gidlund (2018) for the reassessment of current cultural heritage institutions and their practices. In essence, the article looks at intersectional ways in which cultural heritage professionals can reshape cultural heritage to make it more inclusive, democratic and sustainable. They conclude that digital tools that enable preservation and dissemination play a key role in preserving heritage that is under threat due to climate change by re-assessing the sector's top-down approaches to heritage management (Paschalidou, Fafet & Milios, 2022, p. 1068).

Most academic work regarding democratization through digitisation of heritage is generally positive, with an important caveat that there is a level of expertise required as well as financial means. One aspect is overlooked: archiving and digitizing intangible heritage, such as letters or photographs in the case of SARD, removes the artifacts from the original owner and places them in an institution. Ryzova (2014) problematizes the current trend surrounding preservation of cultural heritage in Egypt through archival initiatives. This current trend is motivated by the need to ‘save endangered photographs and documents’ for artifacts ‘laying out there’ (Ryzova, 2014, p. 1028). There is a notion to this trend that the ‘enlightened academic’ must save the heritage from those that do not value or recognize the treasures within. This power dynamic reminds critics of the plunder of heritage artifacts some centuries before, that have resulted in most of

Egypt's treasures still being in European museums rather than in their country of origin. As mentioned previously in the research, this was due to the colonial powers' ownership of knowledge, arguing that they could take 'better care' of the artifacts due to their Western scientific approach. The difference with the colonial expeditions is however that the new wave of archiving efforts are done by local actors. The local actors, including that of SARD, have derived their knowledge regarding archival work and heritage preservation from foreign universities or existing colonial organizations in Egypt - such as IFAO or the German Archaeological Institute. The existing structures in which heritage practitioners work within Cairo stem from colonial and nationalist genealogies, further promulgating problematic structures in archival work (Rysova, 2014, p. 1028).

When taking any kind of artifact that embodies an intangible heritage practice to be archived, the issue arises that this artifact then cannot be freely shared or shown. Rysova (2014) uses the examples of the National Archive and the Egyptian Geographical Society, which are both in Cairo (Rysova, 2014, p. 1033). Rather, for the duration of the agreement and process of digitisation (if there even is an agreement), the artifact is in the custody of the institution. Egyptian archives are notoriously hard to access and getting permission to see photographs or other artifacts, be it ones that once belonged to you as an individual, is challenging. To this end, Rysova (2014) poses a series of questions that any heritage professional must keep in mind when creating a digital archive. Firstly, *what* exactly is being saved when it is digitized and stored in an archive? In what way can we put value to a photograph or recording, especially when it embodies intangible heritage? The idea that all of the value of an intangible heritage practice falls into tangible objects is logical, but could potentially remove focus from the *practice* itself. This would then make preserving a photo or video more important than preserving the heritage itself. Granted, it is easier to preserve a photo or video than for example a ritual or dance, but the focus on digital archives must not take away from preserving the actual heritage.

The next question that arises is who the artifacts are being saved *from* (Rysova, 2014, p. 1029). Is this just from failed institutions that - according to local state actors - are not archiving artifacts in the correct way? Or is it particular segments of society, defined by class and culture, who believe that they can do a better job at preserving? As mentioned before in this research, the

element of ‘politics of heritage’ is fueled by class dynamics about which heritage should be preserved and how. Storing artifacts in an archive that is run by an upper class, be it through Western education or wealth, can lead to archives being taken away from other groups of society. As the current trend of archiving in Egypt is driven by local actors rather than international ones, the framework of ‘local’ and ‘global’ lose their analytical power. Rather, we require a new framework in order to understand the issues in democratization of heritage that combines foreign and local entities, as well as cultural and class approaches to the ownership and management of artifacts.

Finally, (Rysova, 2014, p. 1029) presents the issue of *how* artifacts should be preserved, and for *who*? Digitisation and privatization are two trends that are prevalent in contemporary archiving and heritage management generally. Both of these trends pose threats to the very essence of heritage: availability to those that derive identity from it. In the case of SARD the team has reflected on all these questions. For them, it is important to make the archives accessible to all in the neighborhood. SARD’s office is in Shubra rather than in another part of the city, making the space of archiving easily accessible as they are *in* it. Furthermore, the team plans on having ‘scanning days’ in which members of the community can come to scan their artifacts -from photos to letters and bank statements - and then take it back home. This way SARD does not keep the artifacts from their owners but can still use them for their online archive. The founder of SARD is from Shubra, removing part of the cultural or class disparity that Ryova (2014) describes. The team must be mindful of the issues surrounding internet access within Shubra. By having community days and local exhibitions of the archive, visitors without access to a computer can also access the work of the organization.

8. Cultural heritage management of the future: digital tools

After concluding the importance of inclusion of communities and heritage practitioners in heritage management, this segment of the literature review will highlight the various practical digital tools that have been utilized in cultural heritage preservation and archiving. This preliminary exploration of tools will serve as the basis for the recommendations that will emerge from the stakeholder analysis, in which specific technologies could aid in the digitisation of heritage management in Cairo at Shubra's Archive. The review of the digital tools will be distinguished based on technology type. First, a brief overview of the academic work that has been written on digital heritage in relation to democratization of the field. One of the goals of my research is indeed to make the heritage preservation and documentation more accessible to the communities that participate in heritage practices, rather than governments or foreign institutions that manage it with a top-down approach.

8.1. Democratization through digitalisation

Within the cultural sector, including in heritage management, democratization refers to efforts at increasing access, participation, and representation. Democratization in the cultural sector seeks to promote diversity, inclusivity, and equity in cultural production, consumption, and representation. Graves (2005) explores concepts of cultural democracy and implications for the art sector, public policy and the development of community. By democratizing the cultural sector, it can better serve the interests of communities and nations in which the communities exist. Belfiore et. al (2023) further underpin this notion, while adding that the current status quo in the cultural sector exert heritage to a traditional elite (ie. white, upper class, rich, capitalist). Democratization in the field can thus be used as a tool to shift these existing oppressive structures (Belfiore et. al., 2023, p. 165). Before going further into this part of the research, I would like to problematize the term 'democratize' slightly. It carries a normative assumption that implies that democratization or 'democracy' is inherently positive and desirable - the 'end-goal' for the Global South. However, this term varies heavily based on the context and is not always the most positive road to change, if it is not accompanied with profound reforms that promote social justice and empower marginalized groups. It can also have imperialistic undertones. The

term has often been used to justify interventions or impositions from the West that not only have led to any positive changes, but have been utilized to prioritize their own interests in local communities or governments in the Global South. Thus, it can perpetuate colonial attitudes towards other forms of governance, which undermines agency and sovereignty. Finally, 'democratization' is an oversimplification of complex processes that goes beyond just introducing inclusion or other 'democratic' institutions. There needs to be a far larger transformation including a shift in power dynamics, social norms, and neocolonial and neoliberal policy as perpetuated by the West. To this end, when I use the term 'democratizing' I recognize the problems surrounding this term and intend to use it critically.

The digitisation of cultural heritage is fostering democratization by democratizing access and participation in preserving and engaging with diverse historical narratives. In their 2019 paper presented at IFLA WLIC (International Federation of Library Associations World Library and Information Congress) 2019, Trtovac et al. elucidate how digital technologies empower communities to contribute to the documentation and interpretation of their cultural heritage. By digitizing artifacts, monuments, and oral histories, marginalized voices gain visibility and agency in shaping collective memory. Online platforms and virtual exhibits transcend geographical and socio-economic barriers, enabling global audiences to explore cultural heritage. Collaborative digitisation projects forge partnerships between institutions, scholars, and local communities, democratizing the preservation process. Through democratized access to cultural heritage, individuals develop a deeper appreciation for their own heritage while engaging with and respecting the heritage of others. Overall, the digitisation of cultural heritage promotes inclusivity, diversity, and democratization in preserving and sharing the richness of human history.

The focus should be on maximizing access to digital cultural data while ensuring appropriate acknowledgment of institutions and creators, with minimal transaction costs (Markellou, 2023). This approach contrasts with broad access prohibitions and emphasizes cooperation with communities. Protecting the public domain for cultural heritage is paramount, given challenges like excessive exclusive rights application and constraints due to legal grounds. Openness, transparency, partnership, and consensus among stakeholders are essential for a holistic national

strategy for cultural heritage in the digital age. The increasing openness observed in major institutions, like the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the French Ministry of Culture, indicates momentum towards wider knowledge dissemination and creative reuse. This trend towards open source archives leads to a wider access of heritage. Empirical studies however show no realization of fears regarding misuse of images. Legislative solutions should result from collaborative dialogue, aiming to encourage public participation, preserve sensitive information, satisfy general interest objectives, and adapt to technological disruptions flexibly (Markellou, 2023).

Laužikas et. al (2022) explore how emerging technologies, specifically 3D scanning and artificial intelligence (AI), can democratize urban heritage preservation efforts. The paper highlights how these technologies facilitate wider participation and engagement in heritage preservation by enabling more accessible and inclusive approaches. By digitizing urban heritage sites with 3D scanning and utilizing AI for analysis and interpretation, communities gain the tools to actively participate in documenting, conserving, and sharing their cultural heritage. This democratization is characterized by increased access to heritage data, enhanced community involvement, and the empowerment of diverse stakeholders in decision-making processes. The case study presented demonstrates the transformative potential of novel technologies in democratizing urban heritage preservation practices, paving the way for more inclusive and collaborative approaches to safeguarding cultural heritage for future generations (Laužikas et. al. 2022).

Based on this literature review, I would like to argue that the overall impact on engaging communities in heritage management through the implementation of digital tools is a positive one. Granted, there are discussions about which types of digital tools are most suitable in easy implementation for cultural heritage professionals - as some are highly complex and need experts throughout the implementation and operations. All articles advocate for digital advancements in this field. Furthermore, due to the increasing accessibility of the internet, the digitisation of cultural heritage can lead to an opportunity to reshape existing narratives and give agency to actors that are not traditionally engaged in context-specific discourses. By using the existing literature I will be able to present a cohesive theoretical framework and have understood which gaps in academic literature there are. The current state of academia on this topic is highly

Eurocentric and assumes a relatively high level of organization within the cultural heritage archives. This is often not the case outside of the European context as funding is lower or obtained through foreign streams which also influences the decision-making processes.

8.2. Blockchain and NFTs

In essence, blockchain technology is a digital ledger system with no central regulation. It records transactions across multiple computers and between servers. This is done in a highly secure and transparent manner. Every transaction, be it for example a message or payment, is grouped into a block. This block is linked to the previous block emerging from the transaction. The series of blocks forms a chain of interconnected information groups. This chaining mechanism ensures that any attempt to alter a block will affect all blocks that follow it, making the blockchain resistant to tampering and ensuring the integrity of the data stored within it. The chain is maintained by a network of computers, which makes it almost immune to fraud or tampering. It ensures the secure exchange of digital information or assets without an intermediary computer.

Non-Fungible tokens (NTFs for short) are an applied blockchain technology. They are different to cryptocurrencies: these are fungible and can be exchanged between buyers and sellers. NFTs are unique, they cannot be replicated or exchanged. So, NFTs are tokens that are recorded on blockchain to represent ownership or a proof of authenticity of a digital asset, most often an artwork, video or piece of music. The unique identity of NFTs stem from their own identifiers, metadata and ownership history which is stored on the blockchain sequence. NTFs allow creators to tokenize their digital assets and sell them as such, then ensuring copyright protection and agency over their work. The downside of NTFs (which can also be seen as a positive) is the fact that they cannot at all be altered after use. In the case of artworks this is positive, but for a living description or set of narratives, such as in the case of applications within heritage, the technology is too static.

Vacchio and Bifulco (2022) present an extensive literature review on the ways in which blockchain technology has impacted the cultural heritage sector. They recognize the importance and positive effects that digitizing the cultural heritage sector has. From the analysis of 15 academic works, they extract three main uses of blockchain technology: authentication, tokenization and digital protection/rights management (Vacchio & Bifulco, 2022, p. 6). The article presents an accurate overview of the literature that has been produced on the subject of blockchain technology in relation to cultural heritage. An important note is that all articles used

in the literature review have been written before 2022. In fastly evolving field using the newest information is essential, but their information can serve as a basis for future research and it identifies valuable aggregated data on the subject. A more recent literature review has been written by Stublić, Bilogrivić and Zlodi (2023). They review literature written on blockchain and another digital tool, NFT's from 2017 to 2022 (Stublić, Bilogrivić & Zlodi, 2023, p. 3804). Libraries, galleries, museums and archives are, according to the article, starting to realize the benefits of embracing these technologies. Stublić, Bilogrivić and Zlodi advocate for a joint approach between heritage professionals in order to optimize preservation and management of cultural heritage. The call for cooperation between cultural heritage professionals working both in international and local organizations is something requested throughout the academic literature working on this field.

Denis Trček has written two valuable articles regarding the implementation of blockchain (2022a) (2022b). He highlights that contemporary preservation practices will be complemented more and more with digital tools and presents a new technological architecture specially made for the heritage sector (Trček, 2022a, p. 6). Trček specifically links it to tourism as he believes that there is an organic link between tourism and cultural heritage, and tourism can generate funding for further digitisation (Trček, 2022, p. 6). On a more applied level, Trček presents a new architectural layout that is energy sustainable and suitable for smartphones embedded in the Internet of Things (IoT) network. IoT devices are devices that can interact with other devices (Trček, 2022b, p. 2). Both these works are highly practical and present a set of tools on how to implement blockchain technology successfully.

Mucchi, Milanesi and Becagli (2022) make an interesting argument for the integration of blockchain technology in museums, specifically in the loan systems that are in place between museums. The article seeks to understand the management of the loan of cultural objects and how blockchain technology can facilitate the circulation of these times, streamline organization and possibly improve the influx of tourism (Mucchi, Milanesi & Becagli, 2022, p. 3051). For my research, I would use the technological background of this article and the benefits blockchain has for archives and exchange of stolen cultural artifacts. The article lacks a critical note about the artifacts that are housed in European museums. Although the conclusions of the article are

promising, it is hard to extrapolate the findings to the Egyptian context. ICT infrastructure and funding are less advanced in Cairo - or anywhere in the Global South for that matter. The article is Eurocentric and limited. As I will highlight throughout, most academic work has this flaw. Granted, the article uses case studies as their methodology, but I have to be cautious which parts of their recommendations can be used in my own research.

Some research has also been conducted regarding the implementation of 3D technology in Egypt. However, this research centers around ancient Egyptian artifacts. The article "Ancient Egypt, New Technology: The Present and Future of Computer Visualization, Virtual Reality, and Other Digital Humanities in Egyptology" explores the intersection of ancient Egypt studies and modern technology. It focuses on computer visualization, virtual reality, and digital humanities. Published in a collection edited by Lucarelli, Roberson, and Vinson, the article delves into the current landscape and potential future directions of utilizing digital tools in the field of Egyptology. The authors examine how advancements in computer visualization and VR technologies have revolutionized the study and presentation of ancient Egyptian artifacts, monuments, and sites. They discuss various applications, such as 3D modeling, interactive reconstructions, and immersive experiences, which offer new insights into the architecture, art, and daily life of ancient Egyptians. The research is useful in providing an overall framework in the exploration of the digitisation of Egyptian heritage. However, it is focused on ancient Egyptian artifacts - a subset of heritage within Egypt that is better documented globally. This also leads to an overall advantage in the digitalisation processes, as there are often higher budgets and a more established archive. Digitalisation can be costly and requires a certain level of bureaucratic organization to be executed optimally. This research will focus on heritage related to a more recent timeframe in Cairo. To sum up, the article presents a good overall base to understand the application of digitalisation in Egypt, but requires more specific research on other types of heritage.

8.3. 3D imagery

Another promising tool is 3D technology. This technology enables documenting an object of any size by utilizing a large number of overlapping photographs that are taken from different angles. The photographs are then used to extract geometric data and generate a 3D representation of the image. Basic software used for 3D imaging can be found in mobile phone app stores, making the technology relatively accessible to those that have a mobile phone and internet access. More advanced versions require high-resolution cameras that take thousands of photos a minute. Other examples of this are photogrammetry, visual reconstruction of partially destroyed buildings or objects, and texture-mapping. The tool is highly valuable in creating accurate digital replicas of for example static objects, monuments and instruments that enable intangible heritage practices. Additionally, 3D models can be used for virtual tours, interactive exhibits, and digital reconstructions. This enhances public engagement with cultural heritage and facilitates and improves accessibility for remote audiences. Beraldin et. al (2005) presents one of the first instances of the comprehensive application of 3D-technology in cultural heritage management. The opportunities highlighted in the article revolve around the transformative capabilities of 3D technologies in capturing, preserving, and presenting heritage sites in a virtual environment. These technologies offer a means to digitally document cultural artifacts and architectural structures with a high level of precision, facilitating remote access and conservation efforts. Moreover, virtual reconstructions of heritage monuments enable immersive experiences for educational, research, and tourism purposes. This fosters a deeper understanding of cultural heritage. This form of heritage transmission enables an aspect of *experience* and *tangibility.*

Conversely, the article outlines several challenges inherent in the virtual reconstruction process. These challenges encompass technical issues such as data acquisition, processing, and storage, as well as the complexities associated with accurately representing historical contexts and materials. Additionally, ethical considerations regarding the authenticity and integrity of virtual reconstructions are raised, underscoring the need for transparent methodologies and interdisciplinary collaboration.

The article "3D Multispectral Imaging for Cultural Heritage Preservation: The Case Study of a Wooden Sculpture of the Museo Egizio di Torino" by Es Sebar et al (2023). explores the

application of 3D multispectral imaging in the preservation of cultural heritage, focusing on a wooden sculpture housed at the Museo Egizio di Torino. The authors investigate how this advanced imaging technique can contribute to the documentation, analysis, and conservation of cultural artifacts (Es Sebar et. al., p. 2786). In their study, the researchers employ a combination of 3D scanning and multispectral imaging to create detailed representations of the wooden sculpture. This approach allows for the capture of both geometric and spectral information, enabling a comprehensive examination of the artifact's physical characteristics and surface properties. Through their case study, the authors demonstrate the efficacy of 3D multispectral imaging in uncovering hidden features, detecting alterations or damage, and informing conservation strategies. By analyzing the multispectral data, they are able to reveal previously unseen details and gain insights into the material composition and condition of the sculpture.

In Cairo, a visual researcher called Karim Fouad has been working to document heritage by using 3D-photogrammetry technology in his project *Mogasam.* Fouad is attempting to preserve the details of the city and the threatened heritage. This digital archive documents buildings and visual cultures through 3D-photogrammetry. He photographs all elements of the city, from doors to food carts, spaces, buildings and objects of daily use. He believes that by adding the 3D element to already existing photos of heritage, practitioners and viewers unlock a new aspect of the image, something that is less static (Dessouky, 2022).

8.4. Chatbots and AI

Chatbots are conversational agents, powered by AI. They are designed to interact with users for an array of applications. They use algorithms and machine learning to comprehend user queries, provide responses and manage data flows. In heritage management, there are a large variety of applications for this technology such as engaging visitors, analyzing data related to conservation and preservation and transmission of knowledge.

Labib, Metawie and Marzouk (2023) have published the only article on this topic in the Egyptian context. The article provides a holistic perspective on the sustainable conservation of heritage buildings through outlining the factors that influence the preservation, operational performance and maintainability of heritage buildings and the application of new methodologies and technologies. Labib, Metawie and Marzouk (2023) propose a chatbot framework that incorporates blockchain in order to manage the maintenance of the Tekkeyet el Golshany heritage building in Cairo. The article presents a technological framework that also allows stakeholders to access information and share insights with each other. Blockchain securitizes the exchange of information due to the chain-like structure of data storage as well as making it difficult to alter to serve a political narrative or justification of destruction (Labib, Metawie and Marzouk, 2023, p. 22). The downside of blockchain is that it is not dynamic in nature: once information has been saved in a certain way, extra information cannot be added later. Rather, a new blockchain must be created. As heritage is ever-changing, with new findings and studies being conducted, there must be space to add new information to the online databases. This technology needs a high level of technical know-how to be able to access. This is something most heritage practitioners, specifically on a local level, do not have. Based on the research on blockchain technology, I do not believe this technology is the best solution for digitalisation questions for intangible heritage management.

8.5. Virtual reality technology

Melo et. al (2022) describe VR technology as a computer-generated simulation of an immersive environment. Users can interact with this reality by immersing themselves into it. In line with current VR-technology, it involves wearing a headset that covers the eyes and ears. The headset is often connected to motion-tracking sensors that are handheld. This provides a sense of presence of immersion in the virtual space.

Virtual reality technology is an interesting form of digital technology that has been implemented in the field of cultural heritage. Donghui et. al (2017) explore the possibilities of VR in cultural heritage in the context of China. The authors investigate how VR technology can be employed to create immersive and interactive experiences that enhance the preservation, interpretation, and dissemination of cultural heritage assets. In their study, the researchers examine various applications of VR technology in the digitisation process, including 3D modeling, virtual reconstructions, and immersive simulations. They highlight the advantages of VR in providing users with realistic and engaging experiences that facilitate deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural heritage (Donghui et. al., 2017, p. S10066). VR in this regard can be applied as a way to envision destroyed heritage - through for example conflict or climate change.

9. *Intangible heritage and digital tools, how is it applied?*

The review of literature on the application of digital technologies in heritage management serves as a good starting point for this research. One issue however arises: the articles are written with *tangible* heritage in mind. The literature shows that tangible heritage such as monuments and artifacts are indeed suitable for digitisation. But what happens when heritage cannot be held or entered, as is the case for artifacts and monuments? How do we go about implementing digital technologies? In this chapter, I would like to present case studies that highlight the ways in which intangible heritage management can benefit from digital tools and which tools are most suitable. I will do this as an exploration for my own research, in an attempt to extrapolate effective methods for Shubra's archive.

Baker, Shahab and Tadros (2021) present an interesting theoretical framework in which I would like to position my own research. Their article highlights the intricate nature of digital technology in intangible heritage management as a monitoring tool as well as a storage method. The act of documenting cultural heritage serves a dual purpose: preservation and access. Conducted by memory professionals, community activists, or volunteers, documentation functions as an audit, aiding in the management of heritage and its transmission to future generations (Baker, Shahab & Tadros, 2021, p. 85). Moreover, it facilitates access to cultural heritage and knowledge about it, serving diverse purposes for communities, outsiders, educators, researchers, and collectors. By combating the entropic forces of forgetting and neglect, documentation endeavors to ensure the survival of cultural heritage, allowing it to evolve alongside communities (Baker, Shahab & Tadros, 2021, p. 85). Particularly crucial is the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, which lacks tangible form and thus requires focused attention, especially in conflict-affected contexts. The advent of digital technologies has further intensified efforts to capture and safeguard intangible heritage, resulting in its preservation in a digital realm, representing a complex but necessary response to the challenges of preservation in an ever-evolving cultural landscape. It results in the preservation of intangible heritage in an intangible form (Baker, Shahab & Tadros, 2021, p. 86). Moreover, the article argues that dominant forms of intangible heritage preservation do not accommodate the world views of Egypt and other predominantly Arab contexts as they are not at the center of archival power. Being at the center of this power means being able to shape narratives over one's own heritage.

My ‘pre-modern’ historical context highlights the different views as a juxtaposition to ‘modern’ notions of heritage and thus aligns with this argument. Baker, Shahab and Tadros’ (2021) participatory approach to heritage collection and digitisation seeks to shift the center of archival power, giving more agency to the community heritage is practiced in rather than state led and nationalist approaches to the intangible aspect of heritage. In the case of SARD, their view would be particularly helpful in understanding which digital options for archiving there are.

The writers proceeded to engage the ‘heritage gatherers’, integral to community-based heritage management in secure cyber-practices in order to safeguard their information. Examples were backing up data on a laptop, using passwords and making sure there are enough batteries that can be used in audio equipment. A fundamental belief their research presents is the assumption that digital archiving best practices are inseparable from looking after heritage that exists in centers of archival power. There is a demand that preservation requires attention and investment, and to record the underrepresented and oppressed (Baker, Shahab & Tadros, 2021, p. 89). However, heritage creators and professionals must then ask themselves if the existing power structure in which heritage management exists is serving these purposes rather than harming them. The authors found that current approaches to digital heritage management can still be exclusionary in those that do not have the adequate skills. Furthermore, a technocratic approach could lack the emotional investment that is paramount to intangible heritage.

As emotion, truly *feeling* the practices and what it means to a community, is so vital, heritage professionals must encourage heritage contributors to refrain from giving ‘static’ or ‘binary’ information about their practices. In my research, it is important to acknowledge a number of challenges regarding the collection of data that can be aided by digital technologies. These issues were mentioned by Baker, Shahab and Tadros (2021). Firstly, most heritage gatherers or participants of the intangible heritage have little experience in describing things in a textual form. Things that exist and in which you take part are not automatically things that can be put into words easily, especially not when trying to convey the emotional aspect of these things. Furthermore, cultural heritage are often things that are inherited orally rather than textually. Lastly, there seems to be an idea that there is a ‘correct’ way to describe cultural heritage - fueled by Western views on heritage management (Baker, Shahab & Tadros, 2021, p. 91). In my assessment of Shubras archive I must be mindful of these preconceived notions. Furthermore, it

is important to embrace the ‘vagueness’ of the descriptive process, the undocumented parts of collective memory and local ways of approaching heritage. It is a vital function of intangible heritage management to describe what is done and what is felt, in all its diversity, before trying to translate this into the binary (or non-binary) of the digital (Baker, Shahab & Tadros, 2021, p. 91).

The implementation of digital tools in intangible heritage management must amplify work that investigates, explicates and reflects on positional distortions all that contribute in heritage management have, while honoring the practices and preserving them for generations to come. All those working in the field must be wary of the ways in which the dominance of ideological systems and standards can weaken the memory or description of intangible heritage practices. There must be space for vagueness, for messiness and for deep emotion in every stage of digitisation.

With this in mind, I would like to present case studies and other academic work engaged in intangible heritage and the implementation of digital tools, as a way to gather information on which types of tools would be most appropriate for my advisory section. Special attention will be given to understanding *what is* intangible heritage, and what role this plays in its management practices.

10. Case studies of digital tools in intangible heritage management

I would like to briefly survey practical implementations of digital tools in intangible heritage around the world. Cozzani, Pozzi, Dagnino and Katsouli (2017) present the i-Treasures initiative, an online platform that seeks to preserve European intangible heritage practices: dancing, singing and pottery. The i-Treasures platform architecture adopts a distributed approach, utilizing two repositories: a local repository for storing raw recordings and low-level features on users' websites, and a central repository on the main i-Treasures website containing medium-level features processed to extract high-level features and metadata. This design enhances efficiency by reducing the need for transferring large datasets over the network, thereby minimizing infrastructure, storage, and bandwidth requirements. The platform caters to various user needs by providing access to informative pages for general knowledge, multimedia files for research purposes, and structured learning paths with textual, audio, and video resources for cognitive learning (Cozzani et. al, 2017, p. 257). The platform also utilizes 3D imagery of dance, in which users can observe the dance and practice it (Cozzani et. al, 2017, p. 258). Examples of informative pages, multimedia files for the Tsamiko Dance, and structured learning paths for the Canto a Tenore course are illustrated to demonstrate the platform's functionality in meeting diverse user requirements. I do believe that the i-Treasures platform provides an important contribution in transmitting intangible cultural heritage in Europe. Little is however mentioned about how easy the platform is to use for heritage practitioners or heritage professionals that do not have a technical background. The research is from 2017, making the technology slightly outdated. I will now focus on more recent research regarding this topic.

Chang (2024) works with an online platform as well as 3D imagery and a VR head-mounted display in order to archive the intangible heritage. Her research centers around Cantonese opera performances in Hong Kong (Chang, 2024, p. 210). The work explores sentiments of the practitioners of the rituals towards the implementation of digital tools in archiving and preserving their performances. It is important to survey this before implementing the digital tools as successful implementation can only be achieved if the practitioners wish to do it. First, Chang (2023) presents digital technologies that have already been used in the preservation of intangible heritage. The rapid development of technology has brought opportunities for experimentation, multidisciplinary collaborations and tapping into new audiences for cultural heritage, both

tangible and intangible. An example of this is the Virtual Dance Museum, which presents folk-dance performances of 3D characters in virtual interfaces (Andreas, Ariel & Yiorgos, 2019, p. 3). Another example Chang (2023) mentions is the Immersive Virtual Environments project, which seeks to preserve historical rock concerts through VR technology. The VR technology is used to recreate the feeling of ‘being there’ (Aristidou et al., 2015)

Several studies underpin the impact of using digital technologies in cultural transmission, including Burlingame (2022) and Liu et. al (2022). Both articles highlight digital tools as a way to leverage public engagement as a way to enrich the overall process of heritage management. Lui et. al (2022) specifically highlights the use of VR systems to boost audience engagement and awareness of diminishing intangible heritage expressions.

Lvping (2021) utilizes blockchain technology in intangible heritage management, specifically as a way to manage digital archives. Using blockchain gives inherent uniqueness to data, as well as a tamper-proof security. Digital archives however do face more risks than paper archives due to network attacks, data loss, malicious software or forgery through external attackers. Lvping (2021) combines blockchain technology with encryption algorithms in order to manage intangible heritage files. Enhancing methodologies by integrating blockchain technology for safeguarding the authenticity of electronic archives, and conceptualizing and constructing an archive management system grounded in blockchain technology, contributes to addressing a range of challenges encountered in the management of intangible cultural heritage archives.

In the system structure, the file management subsystem is built on Microsoft's .NET platform, employing object-oriented development and adhering to the design principles of "high cohesion and low coupling" and the three-tier system architecture. It comprises three layers: the interface layer, business logic layer, and data access layer. The interface layer serves as the user-system interface, facilitating user interaction and transforming user inputs into specific requests forwarded to the logic layer (Lvping, 2021, p. 2). The business logic layer processes user inputs into business processes and performs data access operations through the data access layer. The data access layer accesses local data through database calls and interacts with the blockchain data protection subsystem via RESTful interface calls (Lvping, 2021, p. 2).

In the system monitoring platform architecture, the objective is to monitor the operational status of server hosts and applications in the blockchain-based file management system, collect and process abnormal and error information, and ensure system stability (Lvping, 2021, p. 2). The platform consists of two components: server status monitoring and application error monitoring. Server status monitoring utilizes the Zabbix monitoring solution to collect information from target servers through the Zabbix Agent client and transmit it to the Zabbix Server. Application error monitoring is conducted via the HTTP interface to gather error information within the system and implement corresponding alarm strategies.

The Server Status Monitoring Module serves as the central component of the monitoring platform, responsible for monitoring the hardware parameters and software operating status of server hosts. The Zabbix Agent client offers two operational modes: active monitoring and passive monitoring. In active monitoring, the client initiates a TCP connection with the Zabbix Server after collecting monitoring data and transmits it. Passive monitoring, on the other hand, involves the client waiting for the server to establish a connection and then transmitting the data (Lvping, 2021, p. 3). Due to cost and security considerations, most server hosts operate within local area networks without public IP addresses, potentially spanning different networks. To monitor all target servers effectively, the module employs an active monitoring structure. A single server of Zabbix is configured with a public network IP to facilitate distribution across various geographic locations and network areas. For server monitoring, the Zabbix Agent client is installed on each server to collect data, while a Zabbix Proxy program is deployed for each local area network to aggregate and summarize monitoring information. Finally, a TCP connection is established between the Zabbix Server's public IP and the Zabbix Proxy programs to report monitoring data (Lvping, 2021, p. 3). The article thus suggests that blockchain technology is an effective way of storing and safeguarding data that is derived from intangible heritage (such as video, photo, sound and 3D imaging). However, blockchain technology is rigid in nature and can limit dynamic narratives that can be attributed to the heritage over time. I will discuss the downside of blockchain technology in intangible heritage now.

Taking this research into consideration, it becomes apparent that digitisation of intangible heritage often requires a high level of expertise and financial means. This is often not readily available, especially for smaller heritage organizations that work with community heritage.

Within smaller organizations, the employees often wear several hats: from researcher to fundraiser and social media manager. I would thus like to present an option that would serve digitisation requirements, while being relatively easy to implement and maintain. As a way to archive and transmit the work of heritage organizations, I would like to suggest creating a website using an existing content management system (CSM). By using an existing CSM, an organization can bypass the need for an expensive web developer and maintain control over the look of the website and mitigate high costs. The most common CSM's are Wordpress, Joomla and Drupal. Each of these platforms offer users the ability to design their own website and customize it to their liking. The most frequently used CSM is Wordpress, with more than 40 percent of websites on the internet currently being hosted by it. The added benefit of using Wordpress is that extensive availability of plugins. Plugins are a type of application that enhance the capabilities of your Wordpress website. By using the plugins, users do not need to use code to optimize their website. In the case of small heritage organizations this is beneficial as they do not have to spend money on an IT-specialist.

One Wordpress plugin in particular seems perfectly suited for intangible heritage transmission and archival work. Tainacan emerged from a research project from the University of Brasilia, Federal University of Goiás and the Brazilian Institute of Information Science and Technology. A group of researchers and developers wanted to unite scientific knowledge and technological solutions in cultural institutions. The research group wanted to develop open source software that could be utilized by heritage professionals with a Wordpress website. The plugin, which is available for free in the Wordpress repository, allows the management and publication of digital collections with the same ease as publishing blog posts, while adhering to dominant standards of professional archives (Tainacan, n.d.). Notable users of Tainacan include the cultural institutions *Portal Brasil Digital – Língua e Literatura* and *Memorial da Resistência de São Paulo* as well as the educational platform *Educator's Fake News Toolkit*. The institutions are relatively small in size and incorporate tangible and intangible heritage on their online platforms. This further highlights the suitability of this digital tool as a massive asset to any cultural heritage institution that does not yet have a website or would like to digitize their archive while making it public if they like.

Tainacan has incorporated key aspects of ‘analogue’ archives into their software in order to adhere to the general archival system of cultural institutions. At the core of the plugin is the ability to create collections, based on the way in which museums or other archival institutions would do this without computers. This is a group of items that share the same metadata. Each item that is uploaded to a digital repository, which will be shown on your Wordpress hosted website. An example of a collection could be *Paintings* with each item within the collection being an photograph, text document or video. Tainacan allows users to allocate metadata to each collection. In this example, metadata could be ‘painter’, ‘title’, ‘country’, ‘date’ etc. Another collection could be *performance art* with different metadata such as ‘title’, ‘artist’, ‘duration’, ‘country’ etc. The software however does give the possibility of having common taxonomies between collections. By sharing taxonomies you can browse metadata that is shared. In this example, Tainacan gives the option to browse all collections for countries or titles.

Tainacan also offers a wide range of tutorials through their Wiki-page. This means heritage professionals working with the software are able to constantly improve their skills and enhance their online repository. The community profile hosts a discussion forum on which users can ask questions and engage with other heritage professionals and practitioners.

11. Digital tools in intangible heritage in Cairo

There have been some instances of implementation of digital tools in intangible heritage management in Cairo. I will present these instances here, critically engaging with their methodology and overall outcome. I have described the work of SARD but would like to compare their work to others within the city. In this way, I seek to understand how these other heritage organizations understand heritage in the city and collaborate with organizations in the field. First, UNESCO has curated an overview of the activities the organization engages with in terms of this set of heritage. I have previously commented on the limited nature of UNESCO's definition of intangible heritage in Cairo. The defined practices are either broadly practices throughout the Arab region - excluding national differences - or highly specific which could lead to little Egyptians related to the practice. Heritage practices are a way in which individuals and communities relate to identity. This becomes hard when the defined practices are either too broad or too specific. The website acts as a portal that highlights the latest events related to intangible heritage in Egypt, reporting activities of the UNESCO Cairo to UNESCO headquarters in Paris, the recognized listings and ongoing nominations (all of which are regional practices, not national), funding and linked NGOs (UNESCO, n.d.). The website has basic mentions of community engagement in intangible heritage management. It does not, however, use digital tools such as 3D imaging, blockchain or VR to present the heritage practices. Rather, it serves as a tool of transmission of UNESCOs recognition of the heritage and the ways in which the organization manages them *offline.*

On the 14th of March 2023, the Supreme Council of Culture announced the launch of the National Archive of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The initiative was headed by Nahla Imam, Egypts representative at UNESCO and heritage consultant at the ministry of Culture. The national archive will fall under the ministry of Culture and collaborate with various entities including the committee of intangible heritage within the Supreme Council of Culture (Ahram Online, 2023). Iman recognizes the fragmented nature of intangible heritage management and argues that Egypt requires their own archive that compiles the collections of civil society, private sector, governmental organizations and individual practitioners. She adds that Egypt must utilize modern digital technologies and IT professionals to compile the archive.

The intangible heritage practices that must be added to the archive, according to the Supreme Council of Culture, are, according to the Ahram Online article (2023):

- Tunis Village (Fayoum) heritage tourism: pottery and palm leaves
- Handicrafts
- Tarboush, a traditional head cover
- Coptic Apocrypha, a Coptic literary manuscript
- Female Quran recitation
- Sabooa rituals around birth of a child
- Various games and toys

Furthermore, the Supreme Council of Culture recognizes the outstanding work of Ahmed Morsy, who spearheaded the conservation of literary heritage and folklore stories in Egypt. Literary heritage is an indispensable part of intangible heritage.

The initiative has recognized an interesting and diverse set of heritage practices, both within the city of Cairo as nationally. However, the archive does not yet exist so I cannot review the digital tools utilized to manage the archive. They have not yet announced that they will be collaborating with local heritage organizations, which could potentially be interesting for SARD.

Based on this research, both international and national heritage actors have not yet been able to implement digital tools in intangible heritage management in the city of Cairo or in Egypt more broadly. There are plans to embrace the rapid digitisation of heritage management, but nothing concrete has been implemented at the time of this research. On a local level however, there have been promising projects that serve as inspiration for the work with Shubra's archive. The first case study does not take place in Cairo, but rather in Siwa. Throughout history, a large number of recordings have been made of aspects of life in Siwa: from chants of women, children, music and singing. The most significant set of recordings was made by musicologist Brigitte Schiffer (1909 - 1986). However, most of the recordings were stored in archives in North America and Europe which meant they were not accessible to local Siwans. To enhance accessibility, dr. Nadia Bahra and dr. Matthias Pasdzierny developed an open global search interface focused on sound: ArabicPhonogramSearch (AGYA, 2023). ArabicPhonogramSearch is a comprehensive database

and search engine of audio recordings from the region. The recordings of dr. Brigitte Schiffer, which are integral to this aspect of Siwa's intangible heritage, were engraved on wax cylinders and focused on the Amazighis distinct oral and musical traditions (AGYA, 2023). The project sought to digitize the wax recordings and upload them to the already existing ArabicPhonogramSearch.

The compilation, comprising approximately 50 wax cylinders, comprises recordings encompassing a variety of vocal and instrumental expressions, including chants performed by women and groups of children, street vendors' calls, as well as songs sung by laborers and rural inhabitants. These recordings are presently housed in Berlin as constituents of the Phonogramm-Archiv collections. This repository preserves a compilation of phonograph cylinders containing historical recordings of Arabic vocalizations, musical compositions, and linguistic samples from diverse Arabic-speaking territories such as Tunisia, Yemen, Syria, Palestine, and the Siwa Oasis in Egypt (AGYA, 2023). The recordings, dating from 1885 to 1940, were captured by Western ethnographers, archaeologists, and other scholars. Brigitte Schiffer's recordings specifically document Siwi, the Amazigh dialect unique to the Siwa region, in an early developmental stage, rendering them indispensable for both academic inquiry and the indigenous community. Through the highly functional search engine, the archives have become accessible to all those that are interested, including practitioners or local inhabitants in Siwa with access to the internet. This access gives means to further research into local oral traditions, comparison with other types of chanting and music in the region and comparison throughout history.

Moustafa (2022) highlights the indispensable impact cinema has had on the identity of Cairo and its lasting intangible heritage practices. Cairo is known for the export of cinema throughout the region since the emergence of this art form and continues to produce films and television series that export Egyptian identity throughout the Arabic-speaking world. Moustafa (2022) argues that although there has been progress in the digitisation of historic film, it is still far from adequate (Moustafa, 2022, p. 121). Most of the archives are still analogue or in private collections, making their accessibility limited to the public. Furthermore, there is no comprehensive search engine that has compiled cinema, specifically that from the 20s and 30s (Moustafa, 2022, p. 121).

The work of the Agha Khan Development Network (AKDN) has been of immense importance for both tangible and intangible heritage in Cairo, specifically for its preservation and promotion. AKDN's mission in Cairo is to safeguard the diverse heritage of the city, as well as promoting sustainable development and the engagement of the community. With relation to tangible heritage, AKDN has restored and revitalized historic sites, buildings and neighborhoods. Specifically, their work in revitalizing the Darb al-Ahmar and al-Muiz Street. Most famously, AKDN has created al-Azhar park which combines water management, leisure, tourism and sustainability in the execution (Agha Khan Development Network, 2017). Their focus on economic revitalization and community participation led to the success of the projects. The digital aspect of this heritage management is in the use of a comprehensive website in which the values and achievements of AKDN are transmitted.

With regards to intangible heritage preservation, AKDN focuses on the promotion of cultural practices. With the development of tangible heritage in the Darb al-Ahmar area, they recognized the integral role of artisans housed in this area. AKDN estimated there to be some 1000 workshops in the area, ranging from brass and metal work, textiles (including the tradition of khayamiya that I will discuss more in depth), glassware, silk, and carpentry. These skills have been amassed over hundreds of years and are integral to the identity of the area (Wilton-Steer, 2018). The preservation and promotion of tangible spaces and monuments was only seen as one part of the work of AKDN. Intangible heritage was indispensable to the urban fabric of the area, thus warranting as much care as the monuments or creation of the park.

As mentioned above, the tradition of khayamiya is a practice that is part of the intangible heritage of Cairo. Khayamiya is a style of textile decoration using applique's in order to create geometric designs and other figures such as plants, trees, flowers and animals on individual panels of textiles. It also refers to the making of large tents (*khayma* translates to tents). The tradition can be dated back as far as the Fatimid era, around the 10th century (El-Rashidi & Bowker, 2018, p. 3). The practice is still executed today, in the same geographic location as it started in. This is an incredibly important tradition that, through tourism, has been able to sustain itself until now. However, imports of cheap fabric from Asia and other globalization processes have put the tentmakers under pressure. The final product is relatively expensive due to the

amount of labor that goes into the tradition. Local initiatives and education (as organized partly through AKDN) is thus important to preserve the tradition and teach young Cairenes the craft.

Finally, the integrated work of Athar Lina in Cairo - who recognizes and utilizes the indispensable relation between intangible and tangible heritage, must be mentioned. Athar Lina is a conservation initiative that centers citizen participation in heritage management. In their vision, monuments are a resource and not a burden. The community, in their vision, is at the center of conservation of community heritage (Athar Lina, n.d.). The focus of the organization is tangible heritage preservation. However, their activities and conservation work ensures the management of intangible heritage practices that are linked to physical spaces. An example is the project ‘Patterns of Cairo’. The Patterns of Cairo project endeavors to document, digitize, and democratize knowledge of Historic Cairo's intricate patterns, with the objective of broadening accessibility to a diverse audience. Its central output will be an online platform featuring a curated selection of 200 patterns, supplemented with downloadable resources, historical insights, and articles exploring alternative pattern applications. By facilitating access to Historic Cairo's pattern heritage, the project seeks to contribute to Egypt's creative economy, nurturing collaboration and innovation among artists, artisans, and designers. Through activities spanning 30 months, including content generation, knowledge dissemination, and community engagement, the project aims to create a lasting impact by preserving cultural heritage and fostering a sense of pride and ownership among local communities. The primary output is the online platform, serving as a comprehensive resource for creators and scholars. Patterns representing various time periods, styles, applications, and media have been selected to highlight the diversity of Historic Cairo's patterns, and the platform is continually updated according to new research. Extensive work involves producing detailed drawings, photographing, and researching each pattern to offer complete profiles. The platform features a user-friendly interface available in both Arabic and English (Patterns of Cairo, n.d.).

12. Threats to intangible and tangible cultural heritage in Cairo

An important aspect of moving towards sustainable heritage management in Cairo is understanding the threats there are.

When thinking about developments that characterize Cairo, rapid urbanization is one of the main trends in the city. This is, as recent developments in the Qarafa funerary complexes, an imminent threat to tangible heritage and the intangible practices that are tied to this space (Amin, 2023). The urban sprawl, additions to infrastructure and redevelopment of populous areas put heritage sites at risk of encroachment or demolition. The strain that densely populated areas have on infrastructure and heritage sites is significant. In relation to pollution, the built environment is under threat due to pollution, ground water management issues and waste management issues. These issues can lead to intensified erosion, corrosion and discoloration.

There is also a level of neglect and decay of historic buildings, monuments, cultural sites and archives (al-Zafarany, 2011, p. 23). Without proper conservation and repurposing the structural integrity of the built heritage could be lost. With regards to archives, the artifacts or documents could be damaged beyond repair, which leads to the loss of valuable intangible heritage documents. In the case of SARD, a lack of funding for community archives poses a serious threat to the preservation of intangible heritage. The equipment used to preserve heritage is limited and could potentially damage documents. Furthermore, the space that SARD has is small and there is little space for expansion of the archive, which means they cannot document all artifacts that they would like.

Urban renewal projects and gentrification efforts in Cairo may lead to the displacement of local communities and the loss of cultural diversity. The commodification of heritage can erode intangible heritage practices and disrupt social cohesion within neighborhoods. Moreover, the impact of globalization is significant (Herrera et. al, 2021, p. 68). Globalization has been characterized as being monocultural and neoliberal. Neoliberal globalization can homogenize cultural expressions and practices, which leads to the loss of diversity. Neoliberal ideology drive cultural homogeneity (centered around North-American culture) and the global consumer culture. This means that intangible heritage practices either become marginalized or commodified, leading to oversimplification of the tradition or practice. Neoliberalism and globalization also emphasize privatization and the importance of intellectual property rights. This

can contribute to the erosion of traditional knowledge systems that are at the core of identities (Herrera et. al., 2021, p. 70). Examples such as indigenous knowledge, medicine and philosophy may be appropriated by external actors or even ridiculed. This leads to the loss of diversity and the undermining of people's rights to their own intangible heritage practices.

When analyzing the threats that Cairo's intangible heritage is facing, I must be mindful of government policy. Generally, the neoliberal policy of the Egyptian government currently poses the biggest threat to heritage generally: from the building of new neighborhoods and infrastructure, to the commodification of intangible heritage practices such as khayamiya. I must note that not all Egyptians view this policy as disruptive or destructive. The promotion of the practice of khayamiya leads to increased revenues through tourism. Moreover, some Egyptians are eager to match their infrastructure to the Gulf as a way to show that Cairo is also a modern, future-proof country which is not stuck dwelling over past civilizations. This debate highlights the dichotomy as presented by Andraos (2021). There is a constant debate or negotiation between individuals that belong to the same community (in this case, Cairo) over what their identity is. Heritage is at the very center of these negotiations: In what way do we relate (or not relate in the case of demolition) to these places or artifacts to structure Cairo's identity as being 'traditional' or 'modern'. Furthermore, the government of Egypt would like to present Cairo as the home of ancient Egyptian civilization. An example is the emergence of images of ancient Egyptian heritage such as statues and hieroglyphs on the side of houses on the Ring Road. Generally, people in these neighborhoods would not derive much identity from this heritage. However, it is a road on which many tourists pass when going to the Pyramids. In this way, the presentation of Egyptian heritage in Cairo becomes directed to foreigners. It becomes apparent when critically analyzing the position of SARD and other small community-based organizations in Cairo that their work does not typically fall into the understanding the Egyptian government has of identity, both nationally and towards foreigners. SARD moves away from the *extraordinary* which is against the identity the government would like to present. This is one of the reasons why it has trouble getting national funding and recognition. Thus, this misalignment in perceived heritage could lead to the loss of intangible heritage practices.

13. Final conclusion and next steps

I have presented the history of cultural heritage management in the city of Cairo, as well as digital tools that could aid intangible heritage management generally. Key takeaways of this research are that intangible heritage management is still in the beginning stages in the city, and often do not have a community-based approach. There is also a level of marginalization of Shubra in the general narrative of heritage management in Cairo. There is little alignment or collaboration between local community-based organizations and national governments or international heritage organizations. This means that local community-based organizations in the Global South, such as SARD, have to work around existing heritage management frameworks to attain their goals and aspirations. In the case of SARD, this means that they rely on volunteers as well as international funding to implement their mission. To this end, SARD is reliant on their volunteers and funding. This means that a significant amount of their time is dedicated to applying for fundraising and grants.

This study has aimed to provide an in-depth analysis of the current landscape of intangible heritage management in Cairo. Moreover, it has delineated the contemporary scholarly discourse surrounding the advantageous implications of digitisation in heritage management, offering a comprehensive survey of digital methodologies and applications both globally and within the Cairo context. It has highlighted the challenges that these organizations face, both in misalignment of the interpretation of intangible heritage and its relevance for Cairo's identity, as well as national and international policy. The implementation of digital tools in heritage management are overall positive, specifically when implemented in the community. However, the implementation can be costly and requires a level of technical expertise. The aspect of technical education as a way to further heritage management in communities needs to be studied further and should be implemented in digitisation projects.

Leveraging this thorough scholarly groundwork, the study has endeavored to offer strategic recommendations to SARD based on empirical insights derived from ethnographic investigations of the daily work of the organization. Moreover, I have talked with the founder Mina Ibrahim and volunteers who are engaged in the archival work. This endeavor has been instrumental in delving into the practical applications of heritage management at the grassroots level. Given the

relatively young age of the organization, having been established in 2021, there exists a large scope for experimentation and innovation. Looking ahead, the trajectory of this research entails a continued personal collaboration with SARD, progressively digitizing their archive while collaborating with the community of Shubra and fostering the expansion of their archival resources. As SARD continues to grow, so will the engagement with the community. SARD must also seek to collaborate with municipal and national entities such as the Ministry of Culture and the Department of Heritage Preservation of the municipality of Cairo. Furthermore, I will remain vigilant in tracking emerging digital tools and methodologies, recognizing the dynamic nature of this domain with novel technologies that can be applied to heritage management and specifically intangible heritage continually surfacing. Applications such as 3D photogrammetry would be interesting to start applying, as it is a good tool to document the ever-changing streetscape in all its intricate details. I have presented the first set of recommendations in the appendix of this research. I will continue my work with SARD after finalizing this research and continually survey digital and non-digital approaches to further the work of SARD, both in the community as well as nationally and internationally. Based on the received funding, we will be able to collaboratively implement the digital recommendations as well create the framework of the archive.

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A*ppendix*

Digital recommendations for SARD

After reviewing existing digitisation practices in cultural heritage organizations on an international, national and local level, and after reviewing the needs of SARD, I would like to present my recommendations. I have considered the following factors in making them.

1. Limited budget. Currently, SARD is seeking funding for their organization. This is to acquire a professional scanner that can aid in digitizing their analogue archive. Other funding could be used in aiding their transmission techniques, such as server to securely store their data. I will refer back to the cybersecurity recommendations later in this chapter.
2. Limited knowledge of coding and website design. The organization consists of volunteers who are engaging in data-collection and archive management, but do not have a background in computer science. It is thus paramount to offer a digital tool that is easy to use and ensure ongoing maintenance when the archive expands.
3. An expanding archive. The work of SARD continues to grow and new artifacts, images, videos and recordings are added to the archive frequently. This means that the tool of transmission must be adapted to this need: there must be space to upload new documents and collections with ease.
4. Power outages and unstable internet connections. Cairo is facing power outages that could potentially damage computer systems or lead to loss of data on computers, if the archive is not saved properly.

Taking this into consideration, as a first step in digitizing the intangible heritage management of SARD, I would like to advise building a website through Wordpress. The Tainacan plugin provides the perfect software to build the digital archive. Tainacan has a sound overall structure, where heritage professionals can utilize metadata to organize the archive per category (letters, tramline archive, receipts etc.).

The reason I have opted for the use of Wordpress rather than developing a website comes down to financial and technical constraints. The basic digital infrastructure of Wordpress has an easy

interface and offers virtually unlimited tutorials. Through the plugin of Tainacan SARD can shape their digital archive with relative ease and maintain the website. By allowing SARD to design the website themselves, they have full control over the narrative of their transmission and can cut costs significantly.

The first step would thus be to collaborate on creating a Wordpress website that has space for the different projects and a categorisation of all the documents (letters, photos, governmental documents). Furthermore, we could create an interactive map in which users can see where in Shubra the documents and photos are from.

Mina, the founder of SARD, states that he was interested in a space within the website that allows people in the neighborhood to upload objects of 'the everyday' onto the website as to include the community in the archival work of their own heritage. Wordpress allows for this functionality and the website can be designed to utilize permission of a moderator before any document is uploaded.

It is important to safeguard the archives in light of the unstable electricity and internet situation in Shubra. To this end, I would recommend the purchase of portable harddrives that can store large amounts of data SARD already has. This portable harddrive has to be manually updated any time the archive expands their collection which can make its use cumbersome. However, it does offer safe storage when there is no electricity or internet connection. Secondly, SARD could consider hosting their website outside of Egypt. By having a foreign web host, the website can bypass any technical difficulties that a local server could face. Furthermore, it ensures privacy and cybersecurity as foreign hosting platforms ensure anonymity and safeguard websites for malicious attacks. I will touch on other cybersecurity practices in the next segment of the recommendations.

Further digitisation could be implemented when their basic website and digital archive is created and running smoothly. SARD could start to utilize 3D imaging, VR-experiences of the streets of Shubra and even basic blockchain implementation to ensure a secure storage of the documents. These implementations cost a lot of money, require a high level of digital knowledge and require a significant amount of storage and electricity, which is also costly and energy consuming. I

would recommend that these further digitisation tools could be implemented in the future, when there is sufficient funding. The most important investment into SARD is a professional scanner that does not damage the fragile documents that require scanning and currently do not have a digital copy. This requires funding as professional scanners are costly. As mentioned before, SARD is currently applying for grants to attain this.

Cybersecurity measures

To ensure cybersecurity for this website, I would like to present recommendations that can be implemented in the online practices of SARD.

1. Ensure a secure hosting provider. A hosting provider is a company or service that offers the infrastructure and technology needed to store and serve websites and web applications on the internet. Hosting providers typically operate large data centers in Europe or the US with servers connected to high-speed internet networks. A creator of a website can then host their domain name with a provider where the register. They offer various hosting options to meet the needs of different types of websites. It is important to select a reputable hosting provider that ensures security and offers SSL/TLS encryption, firewalls, malware scanning and regular backups of the archive. A good hosting provider would be IONOS or HostGator.
2. Implement strong authentication measures. This could entail complex (generated) passwords and a multi-factor authentication using an external application on phone or through a text-message. By ensuring authentication, the website prevents unauthorized access to the Wordpress account and other sensitive documents.
3. Update Wordpress and the Tainacan plugin regularly in order to remove known security vulnerabilities. It is also possible to enable automatic updates whenever possible so that security flaws can be addressed as soon as possible.
4. Have a continual review of the accounts that have access to the interface of the website. When giving contributors access to the editing tools of the website, make sure to educate them in the best practices for password security.
5. In addition to the Tainacan plugin, install security plugins that are offered on Wordpress to enhance the security of the website. Wordfence Security, Securi Security and iThemes

Security can detect common security threats and then mitigate these. Examples of the security threats are malware infections, force attacks and suspicious logins.

6. Make sure data is frequently backed up. The hosting domain can help with this. Furthermore, it is good to have an external harddrive that stores the archive in combination with the online archive. By storing the archive in an external harddrive, there is a backup regardless of internet or electricity issues.
7. Monitor website activity through monitoring tools and security plugins and detect suspicious behavior, such as unauthorized file changes, malware infections, or unusual login attempts. Set up alerts to notify you of potential security threats in real-time.