

Abstract

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THE UNPLANNED MORPHING OF SOCIAL HOUSING IN CAIRO: A POSITIVE NEGATIVE PHENOMENA?

Social housing in Egypt was and still is one of the main concerns of the state. With the unprecedented growth of the informal settlements occurring during the last decades – especially in the Capital and around it – delivering affordable dwellings becomes crucial. Such necessity constantly stimulates the mass production of new developments all over Egypt, however, the developed housing schemes tend to be more concerned with immediate needs without considering the future needs of their residents. In Cairo many locations exist where the residents have developed interesting solutions to deal with such shortcomings. In this paper, the morphing process of such developments is documented and classified on a macro scale. The focus of the classification will be the changes executed by the residents. Afterwards, a case study is chosen and analysed on a micro scale. The micro-analysis of the changes are on the form with respect to additions to building's geometry, changes in skin, ground floor and roofs. The analysis investigates the changes occurring in the buildings' activity functions as well. In the light of the literature of sustainable and energy efficient urbanism, the development's original and modified states are then qualitatively compared. The study demonstrates that there are lessons to be learned from the residents' intervention and recommends more flexible designs for housing schemes in the future. Such flexibility should account for and anticipate such changes instead of frustrating them.